

Belarus

STRUCTURE OF HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM

Description:

The Belarussian system of higher education includes educational, research and governing institutions that use unified official standards and rules in the processes of teaching, management, assessment and research. Higher education is provided by public (State) and private (non-State) accredited higher education institutions (HEIs). Education in public HEIs is free of charge for students who passed the entrance competition. In private HEIs, all students pay tuition fees. Higher education is under the supervision of the Ministry of Education, which is responsible for the accreditation and licensing of HEIs and developing and applying the State Educational Standards. Since 1994, the higher education system included: a diploma of higher education after 5 years of study (specialist diploma); a bachelor degree certificate after 5 years of study and a master after one additional year following the first degree. Now, the implementation of the two-level system of higher education is underway and comprises a Bakalavr in 4 years and a Master or Specialist Diploma in one to two years depending on the field of study. In 2005, Belarus has 44 state higher education institutions (25 universities, 9 academies, 4 institutes, 5 colleges and 1 technical school) with 272,900 students; and 13 private higher education institutions with 163,500 full-time, 1,800 part-time and 107,600 distance students.

Stages of studies:

University level first stage: Bakalavr

From 2002, the first level of higher education is leading to the Bakalavr (Bachelor's degree). It provides with professional proficiency and entitles to work and take the positions for which a certain level of education is mandatory. The Bakalavr is awarded in all fields except in Medicine after defending a Diploma project and sitting for a final state exam. In Medicine, this first stage lasts for 6 years.

University level second stage: Specialist Diploma / Magistr

The second level of higher education leads to the Specialist Diploma or the Magistr (Master's Degree) after one -or two years of study following upon the Bakalavr's degree. Access to these programme is competitive. The Magistr is awarded after one year of study and the presentation and defence of a thesis. The Specialist Diploma (Diplom o Vyshem Obrazovanii) is awarded upon completion of at least one year's study after the Bakalavr or in five to six years' study beyond the Attestat o Srednem Obrazovanii in some fields. The Specialist Diploma is a professional qualification that gives right to the exercise of professional activities and to apply for doctoral programmes.

University level third stage: Aspirantura and Doktorantura

This stage corresponds to the training of scientific and pedagogical personnel. There is a two-level system of scientific degrees. The first is that of Candidate of Sciences. It requires at least 3 years of study in postgraduate courses, special examinations and the public defence of a thesis. Following this, the student is awarded the degree of Kandidat Nauk (Candidate of Sciences).

The second level is that of Doctor of Sciences. Holders of the Kandidat Nauk can prepare a Doctorate. After following the required research programme, candidates are awarded the highest scientific degree of Doktor Nauk (Doctor of Sciences). The thesis is also defended in public.

The Dissertation Councils are supervised by the State Supreme Certifying Committee (Vysshij Attestatsionnyj Komitet, VAK) of the Republic of Belarus.

It is possible to do doctorate research and sit for a scientific degree while not following postgraduate courses. Higher education and research establishments support such persons and provide them with a supervisor.

Distance higher education:

Distance training is provided by virtual universities (through Internet) such as Hagen Correspondence University which provides studies leading to a Master of Humanities and started operating in Belarus in 1996. Students must hold a secondary school leaving certificate. There is no age restriction and no entrance examination. There are also franchising institutions which are branches of foreign higher education institutions functioning in Belarus.

ADMISSION TO HIGHER EDUCATION

Admission to non university higher education studies:

Name of secondary school credential required: Attestat o Srednem Obrazovanii

Admission to university-level studies:

Name of secondary school credential required: Attestat o Srednem Obrazovanii

Minimum score/requirement: satisfactory

For entry to: All accredited higher education institutions; all programmes

Name of secondary school credential required: Diplom o Srednem Spetsialnom Obrazovanii

Minimum score/requirement: satisfactory

For entry to: All accredited higher education institutions; all programmes

Name of secondary school credential required: Diploma of Vocational Education

Minimum score/requirement: satisfactory

For entry to: All accredited higher education institutions; all programmes

Admission requirements: Examination in three-four subjects for most universities.

Numerus clausus: Higher education institutions are given the academic freedom to establish or not privileges for entrants having followed advanced training at lyceums or gymnasiums or for entrants having finished school with excellent marks. Special ability requirements are set for artistic studies, physical education and architectural preservation studies. A certain age limit is set for full-time students.

Other requirements: There can be an interview in one subject instead of several exams. The applicant can enter a preparatory department and study for one year before trying to enter the higher education establishment.

Foreign students admission:

Definition of foreign student: A foreign citizen who trains at a Belarussian higher education institution and does not have Belarussian citizenship

Admission requirements: Students must hold a secondary school-leaving certificate or an equivalent qualification to that of general secondary school in Belarus. They must submit a valid passport, a notarized copy of their secondary education qualification, a medical certificate and 6 photos. They are then sent an invitation so as to obtain an entry visa. For postgraduate courses, students must hold a Master's Degree. The rules of admission and instruction are specified in the Regulations concerning Training Foreign Citizens in the Republic of Belarus approved by the decree of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus of July 7, 1993. Admission documents must be submitted at least two-and-a-half months before classes begin in Belarussian, Russian, English, French or Spanish. Admission requirements for foreign students are adopted by the higher education institutions if they are not otherwise provided for by inter-state agreements. Foreign students sign a contract with the institution.

Entry regulations: Students must hold a visa and have financial guarantees.

Health requirements: A medical certificate is required.

Language requirements: Foreign students who have no command of the language of instruction can follow a one-year course at a preparatory department of the institution where they study the language of instruction and specialization subjects that are relevant for the chosen course. At the end of the year, they must sit for an examination. Successful students obtain a graduation certificate and are admitted to the basic course of study in the chosen speciality. Those who fail are dismissed from the institution and asked to leave the country.

RECOGNITION OF STUDIES

Quality assurance system:

Higher education institutions that are accredited by the Ministry of Education may issue State Diplomas which are recognized within the country. Non-accredited HEIs have no right to issue diplomas.

Bodies dealing with recognition:**National'nyj Tsentr Ekspertiz I Priznanija Documentov i Kvalificatsij Obrazovanija (National Centre for Evaluation and Recognition, Belarusian ENIC)**

Executive Director: Ludmila Rudova

Ul. Moskovskaja 15

Minsk 220001

Tel: + 375(17) 209 5955

Fax: + 375(29) 698 1574

Services provided and students dealt with: Recognition of foreign studies, diplomas and degrees; evaluation and recognition of partial studies undertaken or experience obtained abroad.

Development of normative quality assurance and recognition system. Organization of seminars. Publication of materials and methodological documents on problems of quality assurance and recognition system.

Supreme Attestation Committee - VAK

Scaryna Avenue 66

Minsk 220072

Tel: + 375(17) 284 0855

E-Mail: mail@vak.org.by

WWW: <http://www.vak.org.by/>

Services provided and students dealt with: Recognition of doctoral degrees

Special provisions for recognition:

Recognition for non-university level studies: Applicants must submit complete official academic documents together with their application form to the institution.

Recognition for university level studies: Applicants must submit complete official academic documents together with their application form to the institution.

For access to advanced studies and research: Applicants must submit complete official academic documents together with their application form to the institution or research institute.

For exercising a profession: Applicants must submit complete official academic documents together with their application form to the appropriate Ministry.

NATIONAL BODIES**Ministerstvo obrazovanija Respubliki Belarus (Ministry of Education)**

Minister: Aleksandr Radkov

Ul. Sovetskaja 9

Minsk 220010

Tel: + 375(17) 227 4736

Fax: + 375(17) 200 8483

WWW: <http://www.minedu.unibel.by>

Role of national body: Provides state education policy, controls quality of education, finances educational establishments in the limits of budget allocations, licensing of new institutions, granting accreditation.

National Institute for Higher Education

Ul. Moskovskaja 15

Minsk 220001

Tel: + 375(17) 228 1313

Fax: + 375(17) 222 8315

WWW: <http://www.nihe.niks.by>

Role of national body: Responsible for educational research and information on higher education, the Institute also provides training courses to new rectors, deans and department heads and acts as Belarussian ENIC.

Data for academic year: 2005-2006

Source: IAU from the Belarussian ENIC, 2006

Bodies updated in 2008