

Belarus

Country Overview

Generated: 2024-12-01 10:46:19



Country name

Belarus

Author of this description

- Margarita Kolcheva

Reviewer

Nadia Koltcheva, Department of Cognitive Science and Psychology, New Bulgarian University

Introduction

The Ministry of Education of Belarus' main focus is on improving accessibility, especially for children with disabilities and low socioeconomic status, ensuring the quality of preschool education and improving the basic conditions. From the literature we had access to, no information regarding national practises for development of children's social and emotional skills was found. International organisations, such as UNICEF, have projects in the country, but it seems that they are mainly oriented towards children with developmental delays and special needs. Some alternative educational approaches have also found their place in private kindergartens, for example, the Montessori method of education that has been implemented in Zorachki kids kindergarten (Zorachki kids club. The first Belarusian network of Montessori kindergartens (tilda.ws). No specific information regarding assessment methods or programs that are applied and/or used in the country regarding development of children's social and emotional skills was found.

Development

The Ministry of Education of Belarus' main focus is on improving accessibility, especially for children with disabilities and low socioeconomic status. The second focus is on ensuring the availability of quality preschool education and improving the basic conditions. In this regard, the educational policies in Belarus are focused mainly on providing the basics for as many children as possible. It is difficult to find information for the country regarding social and emotional skill development at the national level. From the literature we managed to reach, the focus is on the assessment of secondary and vocational education as teenagers are engaged in monitoring the educational processes at their schools and professional colleges. There is no information available in the sources we reviewed for social and emotional skills development in early childhood in mainstream kindergartens. We also didn't find information regarding any local developments organised by specific municipalities.

There are however non-governmental organisations who operate in the country. UNICEF is the biggest non-governmental organisation engaged with the Belarusian educational system. They have been implementing a project for "Early Childhood Intervention, Special Education and Inclusion", where the focus is on children with developmental deficits or other special needs (Vargas-Barón et al., 2009). UNICEF together with the World Bank actively work on developing conditions and providing resources for children with developmental disabilities and disorders. The World Bank has successfully completed a Higher Education Modernization Project (Combined Project Information Documents, World Bank, 2019) and plans to implement a project for early childhood education in the near future. UNICEF is supporting Development Centres for support and rehabilitation in all central regions of Belarus, but none of them focus so far on developing the social and emotional skills, or at least no such information was provided. UNESCO also supports the educational process in Belarus for gifted and talented children; children with learning

difficulty; with health problems; with psychophysical peculiarities; with behavioural disturbances and deviant conduct; from ethnic minorities and from families with a low social-economic status. The EU finances some educational interventions who specifically target children at risk.

At some point, social and emotional skills are boosted to grow in early childhood, mainly in the private kindergartens. We found that Zorachki kids, a private kindergarten, that follows the Montessori method of education, develops such practises, and teaches social skills to children from 2 to 6 years of age.

Another focus for the country is to put extra efforts for growing competent and educated children. So, besides improving accessibility, the quality of preschool education and the basic conditions, the next step should focus on the development of children's social and emotional skills.

Assessment

No information was found regarding assessment of preschool children's SES. Regarding the private kindergartens, we found information about "Zorachki kids". As stated above, they follow the Montessori approach. They follow a general approach for assessing children's development and growth. Their specialists track children's learning process, the level of language development, cognitive abilities, motor and social skills. Social skills are part of the main developmental domains but not a focus in itself. They use these observations of every child for planning the individual work with every child according to the child's level of development and his/her needs. For young children of 1 to 2 years of age they initiate activities with both children and parents, so parents on one hand can accompany the child, but on the other hand, to be able to track their child's development. The assessment is based on Montessori's criteria.

Intervention

No detailed information regarding this topic was found.

References

- Combined Project Information Documents, Integrated Safeguards Datasheet (PID/ISDS) (2019, August 23). The World Bank. Belarus Higher Education Modernization Project.
- Palchyk, H. (2007). Inclusive Education: The way of the future Third Workshop of the IBE Community of Practice, Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). UNESCO, International Bureau of Education.
- Preschool education, Ministry of Education of the Republic of Belarus.
<https://edu.gov.by/en-uk/sistema-obrazovaniya/preschool-education/>
- Siarova, H. (2021) Information gathering template prepared for the Global Education Monitoring Report 2021 - Central and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia - Inclusion and education: All means all. UNESCO
- THE CODE OF THE REPUBLIC OF BELARUS ABOUT EDUCATION, (January, 2013). CIF Legislaion, <https://cis-legislation.com/document.fwx?rgn=32756>
- Vargas-Barón, E., Janson, U., Mufel, N. (2009). Early Childhood Intervention, Special Education and Inclusion: A Focus on Belarus. UNICEF. Minsk. Altiora – Live Colours.
<https://www.unicef.by/uploads/models/2017/02/belarus.eci.english.pdf>
- Zorachki kids kindergarden, Zorachki kids club. The first Belarusian network of Montessori kindergartens (tilda.ws), <http://zorachki.tilda.ws/montessori-kindergarden>

Citation

This document was generated from the database used to create the Country Overviews Compendium:

Koltcheva, N., V. Coelho, (2022). Social and Emotional Development for Children aged 0 to 7 years old: European Countries Overviews Compendium. EU-SELF Project. ISBN 978-619-233-213-6 (can be downloaded from <https://euself.nbu.bg>)