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EDUCATION SYSTEM OF THE REPUBLIC OF BELARUS IN FEBRUARY 2025

Since September 2024, we have observed a constant strengthening of ideologization of Belarusian education, and one of the manifestations of this phenomenon was a constant increase in the share of ideologically oriented news in the information agenda of the official resources of the Ministry of Education. According to the results of January, the share of ideology on the Ministry's resources reached its peak indicators, exceeding the mark of 40% on the site of the Ministry and the mark of 50% on the official Telegram channel. More interesting is the sharp decrease in the share of ideology on the Ministry's resources in February: on the official website[1] of the Ministry 3 out of 17 news items (18%) had ideological coloring, while on the official Telegram channel[2] there were 43 out of 155 (28%) such news items. The February indicators not only contradict the trend of the previous months, but are also significantly lower than the figures for 2024 as a whole. The decrease in the ideologization of the information agenda of the official resources of the Ministry of Education reflects to some extent the state of Belarusian education, where in February we observed the following phenomena:

1. Course on digitalization of procedures. During the month the Ministry of Education announced a number of innovations aimed at digitalization of some procedures. Firstly, this year applicants will have the opportunity to sign up for documents submission to higher education institutions by means of electronic queue.[3] This procedure will be implemented through the website of the Republican Institute of Knowledge Control, where young people will have personal accounts to receive the results of centralized examinations and centralized testing. Secondly, the residents of Belarus will have the opportunity both to join the queue to enroll a child in kindergarten and to receive referrals to kindergartens remotely.[4] Thirdly, Director of the Department of Education Quality Control of the Ministry of Education Olga Rybakliucheva announced the digitalization of a number of control and supervisory procedures, which are carried out in educational institutions.[5] Fourth, the Ministry of Education announced the introduction of electronic pre-registration for apostille of educational documents starting from March.[6]

Although we generally assess the initiative on digitalization of procedures in Belarusian education positively, some points in it require special attention. For example, the electronic queue will give applicants the opportunity to sign up to apply to three universities at once, but they will still be able to apply to only one university. As a result, the new procedure will make the application process more convenient, but it does not eliminate the really important drawbacks inherent in the admission campaign. And in the case of an electronic queue for apostille of educational documents, we may even talk about additional obstacles created for the residents of Belarus, who want to study abroad. At least, the authorities will get information in advance about people who are going to study or live abroad and will potentially be able to exert additional pressure on them and their relatives. Besides, certain manipulations can be introduced into the very procedure of electronic registration (artificial stretching of the queue, errors of the electronic system), which will complicate the procedure of legalization of documents for Belarusians. The first conclusions about the work of the new system can be made already in March, after its official launch at the beginning of the month.

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1 https://edu.gov.by/news/index.php
2 https://t.me/MinobrofBelarus
3 https://edu.gov.by/news/v-priemnuyu-komissiyu--v-udobnoe-vremya-abiturienty2025-smogut-predvaritelno-zapisatsya-na-podachu-d/
4 https://officelife.media/news/60401-v-belarusi-mozhno-budet-zapisat-rebenka-v-detskiy-sad-cherez-elektronnuyu-ochered/
5 https://pravo.by/novosti/obshchestvenno-politicheskie-i-v-oblasti-prava/2025/february/87614/
6 https://t.me/MinobrofBelarus/36838

2. Continuation of the practice of planting the personality cult of Aliaksandr Lukashenka in Belarusian education. Despite the end of the election campaign, the implantation of the personality cult of the Belarusian dictator in education continued throughout February. The most indicative example of this phenomenon was the growing introduction of the book "Our President" about the life and activity of Aliaksandr Lukashenka into the educational process. If at the beginning of February the book was simply demonstrated to the pedagogical community, which can be seen on the example of BSMU,[7] then by the end of the month we recorded examples of the introduction of the book into the educational process. The practice of photographing students and teachers with the book has become widespread in education. In VSMU[8] such photos were accompanied by phrases that the book "Our President" is *"a real portrait of a leader who leads the country forward", "a source of inspiration for students and staff of VSMU", "inspires by the example of a strong and wise leader".* At HrSU,[9] students were forced to take pictures with the book and give it positive evaluations. Rector of Minsk Regional Institute of Education Development Fyodor Drobenya announced a flash mob #SHOULD_read and made employees take pictures with the book "Our President."[10] The photo session of teachers and students with the book was accompanied by the text that *"the way of personality development of the Head of our state is an example for imitation and a reference point not only in the Republic of Belarus, but also far beyond its borders."*[11] In HrSU students were forced to take pictures with the book, as well as to give it positive grades.[12] In BSU, rector Andrei Korol held a so-called heuristic lecture "Time has chosen us," which was actually devoted to the implantation of the theses of pro-government propaganda, while the book about Aliaksandr Lukashenka was given special attention. First, Andrei Korol read excerpts from the book to the students, and then he offered the young people to analyze the book for an hour *"in order to reflect the main characteristics and traits of a real leader and patriot."*[13] A similar class was held in National Children's Educational and Health Center "Zubrenok", where the students were forced not only to listen to the story about the life of Aliaksandr Lukashenka, but also to take pictures together with the book. [14]

Another example of Aliaksandr Lukashenka's personality cult in education was the situation with the writing of the republican test paper in Belarusian language by 10th grade pupils all over the country. According to the independent media,[15] the test paper included a text about Aliaksandr Lukashenka's visit to the renovated stadium "Tractor" in Minsk and his meeting with the fighters of student squads. The analysis of the demo version of the republican control work shows that the tasks are indeed related to the text of ideological character.[16]

Finally, a curious but indicative manifestation of Aliaksandr Lukashenka's personality cult in education was the situation at the Vitsiebsk State University, where it became known about the renaming of the Faculty of Humanities and Language Communications. Recall that Aliaksandr Lukashenka could not pronounce the name of this faculty during his visit to the university at the

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7 https://t.me/BSMU_official/44846

8 https://t.me/mediacenter_vgmu/15572

9 https://tinyurl.com/3csmsxmt

10 https://t.me/uomoik/114296

11 https://vsu.by/sobytiya/novosti-universiteta/11205-masherovtsy-oznakomilis-s-biograficheskim-izdaniem-nash-prezident.html

12 https://tinyurl.com/3csmsxmt

13 https://bsu.by/news/evristicheskie-zanyatiya-vystupayut-sovremennym-putevoditelem-k-vospitaniyu-liderov-i-nastoyashchikh-d/

14 https://t.me/NCC_ZUBRONOK/4394

15 https://nashaniva.com/ru/362052

16 https://monitoring.adu.by/attachments/article/68/Belyz%202025_Demo.pdf

beginning of the academic year.[17] As it turned out, at the end of September the faculty was renamed and now it is called “Faculty of Humanitarian Knowledge and Communications.”[18]

Thus, the events of February show that the imposition of the personality cult of Aliaksandr Lukashenka in education was not connected with the election campaign, but is a separate ideological direction of the authorities' work. In our opinion, the personality cult of the Belarusian dictator in education will only grow stronger, as evidenced by the situation with the introduction of the book “Our President” into the educational process.

3. Conducting a course on information isolation of students and teachers. In the conditions of the election campaign we noted that the authorities are actively working to force students and teachers to receive information only from the pro-government media. The events of February showed that this work has not only not stopped, but also intensified.

The first direction of this work is the constant intimidation of students and teachers with the responsibility for interaction with the opposition media, the vast majority of which have an “extremist” status. The usual mechanism of such intimidation is “preventive” meetings of representatives of law enforcement agencies with students and teachers, which during the month we recorded in colleges of Minsk,[19] Brest,[20] Homiel,[21] Zhytkavichy,[22] Khoiniki,[23] as well as in MSLU,[24] BSUCA,[25] PSU,[26] Belarusian-Russian University.[27] In addition, in a number of cases similar activities were carried out by teachers themselves, without involvement of law enforcers.

The second direction of the authorities' activity was related to the recognition of independent initiatives related to the sphere of education as “extremist”. The most famous example of this phenomenon in February was the inclusion in the “extremist” list of resources of the project “Nastaunik.info”, which had been operating in Belarus for about 20 years and was engaged in methodological education of teachers.[28] At the moment, the “extremist” list already includes almost all major independent initiatives related to the sphere of education, and this will force students and teachers in Belarus to get information only from state resources.

Finally, the third area of activity of the authorities is the forced promotion of state information resources among students and teachers. In February, schools in Belarus held regular ideological sessions of the project “Me. My Family. My Homeland”, in the framework of which students were encouraged to get information from the pro-governmental mass media, which can be seen in the examples of schools in Minsk city,[29] Minsk[30] and Homiel regions.[31] But the most obvious example of this direction of work in February was the situation with forced subscription of students and teachers to the resources of the Republican Youth Center. The official resources of institutions and educational authorities massively posted calls to subscribe during the month, and

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17 https://news.zerkalo.io/life/77358.html?c

18 https://news.zerkalo.io/life/90599.html

19 http://bsac.by/events/profilakticeskaa-vstreca-0

20 https://brestbgklp.by/novosti/ekstremizm-v-mediaprostranstve/

21 https://t.me/ggkdikg/3796

22 https://t.me/lizei/3596

23 https://hgpl.by/novosti/15172502

24 https://www.mslu.by/news/molodezh-protiv-ekstremizma-25-02-2025/

25 https://t.me/bguki/26839

26 https://t.me/psu_by/10715

27 https://t.me/Bru_Live/13120

28 https://reform.news/proekt-nastaunik-info-i-pesnja-rossijskoj-gruppy-priznany-jekstremistskimi

29 https://t.me/sovedu/103196

30 https://t.me/uomoik/114105

31 https://t.me/dobrushLapitskajaVP/7064

in some cases these calls openly reported about coercion by the Ministry of Education. For example, the Telegram channel of the Main Department of Education of the Minsk Regional Executive Committee[32] reported that the Ministry of Education asked students and teachers of educational institutions to provide maximum information and subscription to the resources of the Republican Youth Center, while the Telegram channel of Baranavichy College of Technology and Design reported the number and date of the official letter of the Ministry of Education demanding to provide *"maximum awareness and subscription to youth social media (Telegram, Instagram, Tik-Tok and YouTube) among students and educators"* and *"ensure daily reposts of the most relevant and popular publications to their official Telegram channels."*[33]

Thus, we believe that all the above-mentioned examples testify to the implementation of the authorities' policy of isolating students and teachers from the information of independent mass media and forcibly imposing a pro-government ideological agenda among them.

4. Institutionalization of political repression in the sphere of education. In the December monitoring study we reported on the authorities' plans to toughen legislation through the draft law "On Amendments to the Laws on Ensuring Children's Rights."[34] It should be recalled that the draft law bans people who have committed *"extremist crimes"* from working with children and teaching. The events of February showed that the authorities have not abandoned the bill, as evidenced by the adoption of the bill by the House of Representatives in the first reading.[35] The bill retained the clause banning people who have ever had a criminal record for so-called "extremist" crimes from teaching, which, in fact, institutionalizes the practice of banning people from the profession for their oppositional views. An analysis of the list of "extremist crimes"[36] suggests that people who have financed opposition media and initiatives, forwarded news or somehow evaluated the messages of opposition structures will be banned from the profession. It is important to note that the practice of banning people convicted for "crimes of extremist orientation" from the profession exists in Belarusian education even today, but the final adoption of the bill will allow the authorities to fire people for opposition views "on legal grounds".

Another example of "normalization" of political repression in Belarusian education is another field trial of people with opposition views, which took place on the basis of the Law College of BSU.[37] As it can be seen, the attraction of students to watching this trial had the purpose not only to frighten young people with the responsibility for protest activity, but also was seriously considered as a vocational guidance event. Thus, in the last two months, we have already recorded the second case of students' involvement in the viewing of political courts as part of the education of potential participants in the repressive system. Besides, this case demonstrates the degree of toughening of the political regime in Belarus and the authorities' desire to turn political persecution of citizens into an element of "new normalcy" in the minds of young people.

5. Weakening of ideologization of Belarusian education at all levels. As it was already mentioned above, the sharp decrease in the ideologization of the information agenda on the official resources of the Ministry of Education fully reflects the situation that was observed during February with the ideologization of Belarusian education as a whole. Throughout the whole month, we observed a noticeable decrease in the number of ideological events at all

[32] https://t.me/uomoik/113286
[33] https://t.me/bgktd/146
[34] https://pravo.by/document/?guid=3941&p0=2024069001
[35] https://belta.by/society/view/ivanets-rasskazal-o-novatsijah-zakonoproekta-po-voprosam-obespechenija-prav-detej-694319-2025/
[36] https://tinyurl.com/muye7hur
[37] http://lawcollege.bsu.by/novosti/1776-tyt6u.html

levels: from kindergartens to universities. At the same time, we consider the weakening of ideologization of Belarusian education in February to be a temporary phenomenon and connect it with some of the rest of the system of state administration from the constant planting of pro-governmental propaganda in the conditions of the election campaign. Besides, in a number of educational institutions the pro-government propaganda continued to be planted by inertia even after the election campaign was over. The most vivid example of this phenomenon is the mass involvement of young people in watching propaganda films from the cycle “Time has chosen us”. The films are devoted to praising the 30-year rule of Aliaksandr Lukashenka, and examples of their showing can be seen in schools of Homiel;[38] colleges of Minsk,[39] Brest,[40] Homiel,[41] Malaryta,[42] Kletsk,[43] Vileika,[44] Mazyr,[45] Pinsk,[46] Maladzechna;[47] in BSMU[48] and BSU.[49]

The temporary nature of the decrease in the rate of ideologization of Belarusian education is evidenced by the statements of Deputy Minister of Education Katerina Petrutskaya within the framework of the next issue of BelTA's project “Country Talks”. In her speech, the official stated that despite the end of the election campaign, the Ministry of Education had already agreed upon the schedule of propaganda exhibitions in the universities of Belarus. In addition, Katerina Petrutskaya stated her intention to continue holding ideological “ NOT boring NOT lectures” in educational institutions, while their topics will touch upon various aspects of society.[50] The official's words are confirmed by the events of the last week of February, where we noted the fact of the presentation of BelTA propaganda exhibition “Parallel Worlds” and the book of propagandist Sergei Musienka “Superposition. Parallel Worlds” in BSUCA.[51] As it can be seen from the propagandists' speeches, the idea about the exceptional role of Aliaksandr Lukashenka in the development of Belarus during 30 years of his rule was again conveyed to the students, and the activity of the Belarusian opposition was called “harmful” and “degrading.”[52] Special attention should also be paid to the fact that the authors of the exhibition call “degradation” the participation of Belarusian volunteers in the war against Russia on the side of Ukraine, which also speaks about the promotion of the pro-Russian position at the event. Thus, the methods of propaganda work with young people, which were used by the authorities during the election campaign, will be preserved and will become part of the ideological routine in educational institutions.

Also at the very end of February young children all over the country started to be attracted to watch a new animated film of ideological orientation “State Symbols of the Republic of Belarus. Calendar of Holidays”. The film praises the official Belarusian symbols and tells about the main ideological holidays in the country. Among others, the film talks about the “Day of People's

[38] https://t.me/Novobelica_Obrazovanie/43933
[39] https://t.me/glebovka_by/3041
[40] https://bgks.by/vremya-vybralo-nas/
[41] https://t.me/ggpkgomel/12278
[42] https://tinyurl.com/49r4zpv9
[43] https://tinyurl.com/2jnnabr6
[44] https://tinyurl.com/2hue6vxv
[45] https://muzcolleg.by/vremya-vybralo-nas-2/
[46] https://pgatkk.by/8-novosti/2145-prosmotr-proekta-vremya-vybralo-nas-s-uchashchimisya-pgatkkleshcheva
[47] https://molgc.by/college/news/p-153103.html
[48] https://t.me/BSMU_official/45181
[49] https://sb.bsu.by/novosty/dokumentalno-analiticheskii-cikl-vremia-vybralo-nas
[50] https://belta.by/society/view/neskuchnye-nelektsii-budut-prodolzhatsja-petrutskaja-o-proektah-marafona-edinstva-697842-2025/
[51] https://t.me/bguki/26826
[52] https://belta.by/society/view/vzgljad-v-buduschee-vystavka-belta-parallelnye-miry-predstavlena-v-bguki-698469-2025/

Unity", which positively evaluates the events of September 1939, as well as about the "Day of Unity of the Peoples of Belarus and Russia", which is intended to form a positive attitude towards Russia in the viewers. We recorded examples of involving children in watching the new movie in kindergartens in Zhlobin,[53] Hantsavichy,[54] Pruzhany,[55] Petrykau;[56] in schools in Minsk,[57] Homiel,[58] Maladzechna,[59] Berazino,[60] Hantsavichy,[61] and Drahichyn.[62] We are convinced that the involvement of students in watching the ideological animated film will continue until the end of the academic year, as evidenced by the example of another ideological film "Cultural Code", which is shown to students of schools and colleges throughout the academic year.

Summing up the above-mentioned, we expect to see the strengthening of the rates of ideologization of Belarusian education already in March, which will be connected both with the further implementation of the initiatives of the Ministry of Education and with the celebration of important ideological holidays in Belarus, which will certainly be reflected in the life of educational institutions.

6. Strengthening of militarization of Belarusian education. In recent months, we have noted that, unlike ideologization, the process of militarization of Belarusian education slowed down and touched only separate aspects connected with the introduction of the paramilitary component into the educational process. In this connection, the sharp increase in the rates of militarization at all levels of education in February at first sight looks like a special phenomenon that changes the previously recorded tendencies. However, the sharp strengthening of militarization in February was typical for Belarusian education in 2024 as well, and this phenomenon is explained by two important dates, which are connected with the Armed Forces.

First, in mid-February, we recorded the holding of events on the theme of the Soviet-Afghan war at all levels of Belarusian education. Kindergartens, schools, colleges, and universities across the country held meetings with participants of the war in Afghanistan, concerts, and local events on the theme of the Soviet-Afghan war. In addition, students and teachers throughout the country were involved in commemorative rallies in honor of the Soviet-Afghan war and actions to clean the graves of participants in the war. The events at Maladzechna Polytechnic College,[63] BSU and the Academy of Management[64] are examples of how young people were openly shown weapons and military equipment, which is clearly not in line with the anti-war theme, while at the Minsk Medical College[65] and the Law College of BSU,[66] students were not only given weapons in their hands, but were also forced to change into the uniforms of soldiers participating in the war.

Secondly, a huge number of paramilitary events were held at all levels of Belarusian education in connection with the celebration of February 23, "The Day of Defenders of the Fatherland and the Armed Forces of the Republic of Belarus". The open planting of the paramilitary component was

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53 https://t.me/doshmir1/16717
54 https://t.me/Gantsevihi/42714
55 https://t.me/doshkolnik_Pruzhany/19242
56 https://t.me/petrikovoo/71247
57 https://t.me/uchitelstolicy/52134
58 https://t.me/Novobelica_Obrazovanie/44418
59 https://t.me/uomoik/115088
60 https://t.me/educationberezino/54315
61 https://t.me/Gantsevihi/42714
62 https://t.me/eduDrog/24523
63 https://mgpk.by/index.php/news/3269-poka-my-pomnim-proshloe-u-nas-est-budushchee
64 https://t.me/academy_by/559
65 https://tinyurl.com/mppu3xnc
66 http://lawcollege.bsu.by/novosti/1778-zhshchrshz245688900.html

observed even at the preschool level of education, where usually extremely low rates of militarization are observed. For example, students of the Minsk Regional Cadet School visited a kindergarten in Slutsk and demonstrated weapons to the children.[67] A similar demonstration of weapons for children was organized by members of the military-patriotic club "Patriot" in a kindergarten in Lyuban district.[68] In Vitsiebsk,[69] members of the military-patriotic club "Vityaz" demonstrated weapons to children with their faces covered. In kindergartens in Homiel,[70] Slutsk,[71] Maladzechna,[72] Hantsavichy[73] and Voranava district,[74] children were dressed in military uniforms, while in kindergartens in Kastrychnitski[75] and Rechytsa[76] districts, children were given toy automatic rifles and forced to perform with them as part of creative performances. In Minsk, pupils of a kindergarten were taken to the 56th communications regiment, where they were shown weapons and military equipment.[77] The introduction of a paramilitary component was even more active at other levels of education. Tournaments were held in schools and colleges throughout the country, which included various competitions involving the use of weapons. In schools in Hantsavichy,[78] Vetka districts,[79] Lyceum of BSU,[80] and colleges in Minsk,[81] Baranavichy,[82] Babruisk,[83] and Kopyl,[84] students competed in shooting, while in schools in Minsk,[85] Babruisk,[86] Baranavichy,[87] Dokshytsy district,[88] and colleges in Vitsiebsk,[89] Vidzy,[90] and Mahiliou,[91] students competed in assembling and disassembling an automatic rifle. Regional paramilitary competitions between educational institutions were held in Minsk,[92] Brest,[93] Zhlobin,[94] Zhytkavichy,[95] Smilavichy,[96] Smarhon,[97] Krupki,[98] and Ashmiany district.[99] Pupils of

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67 https://t.me/moky2020/6115
68 https://t.me/obrazovanie_lyuban/18614
69 https://t.me/vpkvvrb/3720
70 https://t.me/doshmir1/16553
71 https://t.me/uomoik/114092
72 https://t.me/uomoik/114359
73 https://t.me/Gantsevihi/42340
74 https://t.me/doshkolnikvartal_grodno/12649
75 https://t.me/Oktobraz/61090
76 https://t.me/rechica_dosh/2255
77 https://t.me/obrazovaniepervomayskiy/133430
78 https://t.me/Gantsevihi/42457
79 https://t.me/educatnews/21482
80 https://t.me/LyceumBSU/2939
81 https://tinyurl.com/3fntbzae
82 https://bartc.by/index.php/o-kolledzhe/novosti/3090-pervenstvo-btk-po-strelbe-iz-pnevmaticheskoj-vintovki
83 http://bgk.mogilev-region.edu.by/ru/main.aspx?guid=75543
84 https://tinyurl.com/sm7z48wr
85 https://t.me/frunzedu/95147
86 https://t.me/obrazovanie_bobruiska/17061
87 https://t.me/mamindnevnik_nk/54288
88 https://t.me/DoVOki/57857
89 https://t.me/vitgmk/3886
90 https://tinyurl.com/y6zcjvc8
91 https://t.me/ASK_MOGILEV/2927
92 https://t.me/obrazovaniepervomayskiy/133649
93 https://t.me/brest_moskovskij/43948
94 https://t.me/jqpl2021/5856
95 https://t.me/lizei/3680
96 https://t.me/uomoik/114036
97 https://t.me/klasterGrodno/172772
98 https://t.me/krupki_uost/8132
99 https://t.me/klasterGrodno/172994

schools in Lida,[100] Vaukavysk,[101] Slonim,[102] Ashmiany,[103] Berazino,[104] Krupki,[105] Dokshytsy[106] and colleges in Hrodna,[107] Dziarzhynsk,[108] Zhodzina[109] and Barysau[110] were taken to the locations of law enforcement agencies, where they were shown weapons, military equipment and machinery. Pupils of school No. 4 in Brest were shown weapons from the times of the Great Patriotic War at the local "Russian House".[111] At the Minsk College of Entrepreneurship,[112] students handed out leaflets to their peers about the advantages of contract service in the army. Belarusian universities were not left out of the paramilitary events. Representatives of the 188th Engineer Brigade demonstrated weapons and military equipment to students at Belarusian-Russian University, while the 103rd Separate Guards Airborne Brigade held an exhibition of weapons at the VSU.[113] Students of BSAA competed in shooting and physical exercises;[114] BSATU students competed in air rifle shooting, as well as in assembling and disassembling a Kalashnikov assault rifle.[115] HSAU students were taken to the location of the border outpost "Sonichy". [116]

The general strengthening of militarization of Belarusian education in February was also expressed in other notable militarized events. For example, pupils of one kindergarten in Minsk were taken to the location of military unit 3214, where they were openly demonstrated weapons[117]. In another kindergarten in the capital, servicemen of the special operations forces came and demonstrated samples of military equipment to the children.[118] Kindergarten children in Slutsk were taken to the action "There is such a profession – to defend the Motherland", as well as to the location of military unit 18662, where they were shown weapons and military equipment.[119] During the month we recorded the opening of at least 6 new military-patriotic clubs: in Hrodna schools No. 41[120] and No. 42,[121] Zhlobin school No. 12,[122] Vileika school No. 3,[123] Mir College,[124] BSAC.[125] An interactive shooting gallery was opened in Oshmiany school No.3,[126] and another military department was opened in Belarusian-Russian University.[127] The

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102 https://t.me/klasterGrodno/172515
103 https://t.me/klasterGrodno/172410
104 https://t.me/educationberezino/53594
105 https://t.me/krupki_uost/8132
106 https://t.me/DoVOki/58092
107 https://gkeu.bks.by/muzej-boevoj-slavy/
108 https://t.me/dgk_dzr/186
109 https://t.me/zgpkbntu/2341
110 https://www.borisov-med.by/index.php/novosti/1090-ekskursiya-v-740-j-zenitnyj-raketnyj-polk.html
111 https://t.me/rcnkbrest/25869
112 https://t.me/mcbbyy/2462
113 https://t.me/vsumasherov/14610
114 https://t.me/bsaa_by/11564
115 https://t.me/bsatu_orvm/15108
116 https://www.ggau.by/nowosti/7434-v-preddverii-dnya-zashchitnikov-otechestva-i-vooruzhennykh-sil-respubliki-belarus
117 https://t.me/frunzedu/94221
118 https://t.me/obrazovaniepervomayskiy/133901
119 https://t.me/uomoik/114828
120 https://t.me/obrazovanievgrodno_vipkanal/2105
121 https://edu-grodno.gov.by/%D0%BD%D0%BE%D0%B2%D0%BE%D1%81%D1%82%D0%B8/document-149873.html
122 https://t.me/zhlobinedu/23621
123 https://t.me/vileyka_uosit/14522
124 https://mgk.by/news/v-kolledzhe-sostoyalos-torzhestvennoe-otkrytie-voenno-patrioticheskogo-kluba-voin.html
125 http://bsac.by/events/otkrytie-voenno-patrioticeskogo-kluba
126 https://t.me/klasterGrodno/172705
127 https://t.me/Bru_Live/13042

signing of a memorandum of cooperation between the Academy of Management and the Military Academy also indicates the increased militarization of higher education.[128]

Summing up the above-mentioned, we should note that we consider the sharp strengthening of militarization of all levels of Belarusian education to be a temporary phenomenon. We are convinced that, unlike the process of ideologization, the imposition of the paramilitary component in the educational process will go down and in March we expect the level of militarization of Belarusian education to return to the level that we observed during the last months of 2024.

7. Preservation of record low indicators of international educational cooperation. For the second month in a row, we recorded a significant decline in educational contacts between Belarus and other countries. In the course of the month, only Russia can be named as a significant partner of Belarus in the field of international educational cooperation. China has traditionally become the second most important educational partner of Belarus, but at the same time, for the second month in a row we note a significant decline in educational contacts with this state compared to the last months of 2024. We recorded target educational contacts between Belarus and India, Indonesia, Iraq, Kazakhstan, Kazakhstan, Morocco, Oman, Pakistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. The catastrophic state of international educational cooperation in Belarus is evidenced by the exhibition "Education and Career - 2025" in Minsk, which was positioned as the largest exhibition of educational institutions, educational technologies and vacancies in the Republic of Belarus.[129] While in 2020, the exhibition was attended by educational institutions from Belarus, Russia, Lithuania, Latvia, Poland, Germany, France, Switzerland, and Israel,[130] among more than 170 participants of this year's exhibition, we found only about 20 foreign institutions, and all of them were from Russia.[131] Thus, the result of the policy of the Belarusian authorities in the field of international educational cooperation was the transformation of a full-fledged international event, where international contacts between educational structures were established and developed, into a nationwide Open Day of Belarusian educational institutions with the only alternative in the form of Russian universities.

8. Intensification of activity of Aliaksei Talai's structures (Charity Fund of Aliaksei Talai, Charity Fund "United Fatherland") in Belarusian education. The intensification of activity of Aliaksei Talai's structures (Aliaksei Talai Charitable Fund, "United Fatherland" Charitable Fund) became an interesting phenomenon of the month, and the pro-governmental and pro-Russian activist himself headed the rating of the most active figures of the Belarusian regime in the education system by the results of February.

First, the activist himself continued to hold meetings with young people, in the framework of which the activist promotes the theses of pro-governmental and pro-Russian propaganda. During the month such meetings were held with pupils of Minsk city camp "Leader",[132] students of schools and colleges from Minsk,[133] Salihorsk,[134] Minsk district,[135] pupils of police

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128 https://www.pac.by/press-center/news/memorandum-o-sotrudnichestve-s-voennoi-akademiei/

129 https://eduexpo.by/

130 https://eduexpo.by/novosti/itogi-18-j-mezhdunarodnoj-spetsializirovannoj-vystavki-obrazovanie-i-karera

131 https://eduexpo.by/razdely/list

132 https://t.me/uchitelstolicy/51434

133 https://t.me/ObrazovanieOkt/69871

134 https://t.me/uomoik/115050

135 https://t.me/uomoik/112625

military-patriotic clubs,[136] students of the BSPU[137] and Academy of Management.[138] Also, the film “Phoenix Bird” about the life and activities of Aliaksei Talai was shown to students of various educational institutions all over the country, which can be seen in the examples of schools in Minsk,[139] Shklou,[140] Pukhavichy,[141] Petrykau,[142] and Ashmiany districts;[143] colleges in Minsk,[144] Homiel,[145] Orsha,[146] Pastavy;[147] HrSMU.[148]

Secondly, throughout February, we observed how a collection of Soviet coins for the Aliaksei Talai Foundation was organized in educational institutions across the country, which will then be used to create a WWII-themed monument in Moscow. Examples of this campaign can be seen in schools in Minsk;[149] colleges in Minsk,[150] Mahiliou,[151] Loyeu;[152] BSAM,[153] BSPU,[154] BSUCA,[155] VSU,[156] HSU,[157] BSAA,[158] BSEU,[159] BSAA,[160] BrSU,[161] PalesSU,[162] VSMU,[163] Institute of Border Guard Service.[164] The start of the action was accompanied by a thematic event in the Belarusian State Agricultural Academy, and students began to hand in Belarusian rubles instead of Soviet coins, including paper bills.[165] During a meeting in Minsk City Cadet School, an activist was given a box with valid Belarusian coins,[166] and during a similar meeting in Minsk district he was given paper Belarusian rubles.[167]

Thirdly, the most remarkable example of the activity of Aliaksei Talai's structures in Belarusian education was the forced collection of humanitarian aid for the needs of the Russian occupation authorities in BSU. The official reports of the university say that the project was conducted jointly with the charity fund “United Fatherland” and was aimed at the collection of humanitarian aid for lonely elderly citizens, people with disabilities, and orphans. During two

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136 https://t.me/orlyataklub/2887
137 https://t.me/bspu_official/21294
138 https://t.me/academy_by/596
139 https://t.me/cenue_minsk/41599
140 https://t.me/shklovobrazovanie/34332
141 https://t.me/puhovichi_uosit/20575
142 https://t.me/petrikovoo/69285
143 https://t.me/oshobr/14813
144 https://t.me/glebovka_by/2947
145 https://t.me/ggpatl/1079
146 https://tinyurl.com/2uvhhwxr
147 https://tinyurl.com/sdmp3vhf
148 https://t.me/grsmu_by/12160
149 https://t.me/mosue_minsk/55632
150 https://t.me/uchitelstolicy/51830
151 https://t.me/mgtk_Live/6422
152 http://lgpk.by/home/news/2543-aktsiya-po-sozdaniyu-pamyatnika-zhivaya-pamyat-blagodarnykh-pokolenij
153 https://t.me/bgam2021/10650
154 https://t.me/bspu_official/21167
155 https://www.buk.by/university/news/novosti/priglashaem_k_uchastiyu_v_aktsii_zhivaya_pamyat_blagodarnykh_pokoleniy/
156 https://t.me/vsumasherov/14366
157 https://t.me/francisk_skorina_gsu/10285
158 https://t.me/akadbgai/10184
159 https://t.me/bseu_official/25488
160 https://t.me/bgaa_minsk/5194
161 https://t.me/brsu_pushkina/13005
162 https://t.me/polessu_official/4802
163 https://t.me/mediacenter_vgmu/15569
164 https://t.me/ips_rb/12749
165 https://t.me/bsaa_by/11379
166 https://t.me/uchitelstolicy/51505
167 https://t.me/stolitsa_education/35468

weeks representatives of the Faculty of Biology and the Sakharov Ecological Institute,[168] the Faculty of Chemistry and the Faculty of Radiophysics and Computer Technologies,[169] the Faculty of Mechanics and Mathematics, the Faculty of Economics and the Faculty of Applied Mathematics and Informatics,[170] the Faculty of Military, the Faculty of Philology and the Faculty of Sociocultural Communications,[171] the Faculty of Journalism, the Faculty of Philosophy and Social Sciences, the Faculty of History,[172] the Faculty of Law, the Institute of Theology and Social Sciences, the Faculty of History, the Faculty of Law[173] and the Faculty of Social Sciences were involved in the campaign. It is interesting that none of the messages indicates where exactly the collected aid will go and after analyzing the activities of the charitable foundation "United Fatherland" we had suspicions that the collected aid will be transferred for the needs of the Russian occupation authorities in the occupied Ukrainian territories.[174] Our suspicions were finally confirmed after careful viewing of one of the videos of BSU, where a student holds a box with the inscription "Belarus to Donbass. We can help them."[175] As it turned out, the collection of humanitarian aid for the structures of Aliaksei Talai took place not only at BSU: kindergarten No. 257 in Minsk reported about the collection of aid for the residents of Kursk region, and children were forced to draw pictures and write letters with words of support.[176] But the most revealing case occurred in Hrodna, where the staff of Hrodna State University and the local gymnasium No. 6 openly handed over "humanitarian aid" for Russian soldiers who are taking part in the aggressive war against Ukraine. Moreover, the ceremony of handing over the "humanitarian aid" was accompanied by the participation of representatives of the education system in the Russian propaganda exhibition, which was held on the basis of the "Russian House" in Hrodna, as well as the handing over of a letter from the pro-governmental city organization "Hrodna Resident" of the Belarusian Women's Union expressing full support for the actions of Russian soldiers on the territory of Ukraine and wishing them *"sure and speedy victory."* [177]

Thus, the favorable attitude to Aliaksei Talai on the part of the Belarusian authorities allows the activist to conduct openly pro-Russian actions in Belarusian educational institutions with the help of administrative measures and coercion from higher structures. In our opinion, this will directly contribute to the strengthening of Russian influence on Belarusian youth and the spread of pro-Russian views among them.

9. Imposition of pro-Russian propaganda in Belarusian education. An alarming phenomenon of February in Belarusian education was the activation of the activity of pro-Russian structures on the implantation of the theses of Russian propaganda, which could be already noticed in the previous paragraph. But the spreading of the Russian influence was not limited only to the activity of Aliaksei Talai's structures and collection of aid for the needs of the Russian occupation power.

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[168] https://t.me/official_bsu/18886
[169] https://t.me/official_bsu/18914
[170] https://t.me/official_bsu/18932
[171] https://t.me/official_bsu/18964
[172] https://t.me/official_bsu/19008
[173] https://t.me/official_bsu/19026
[174] https://edinofond.ru/
[175] https://t.me/official_bsu/18873
[176] https://t.me/partizan_obr/75500
[177] https://t.me/russkiydomvgrodno/3273

For example, the Russian view of the nature of the war in Ukraine was promoted during a meeting of Orthodox priest Sergei Shevchuk with the staff of kindergarten No. 257 in Minsk. As can be seen, the official announcement of the event is accompanied by photos of Sergei Shevchuk posing openly with people wearing military outfits and patches with the letter "Z" – a symbol of Russian aggression against Ukraine. [178]

During the month "Russian Houses" were actively engaged in planting theses of Russian propaganda among Belarusian youth. In Homiel, students of local schools and colleges were brought to watch a teleconference, which was officially devoted to the events of the Soviet-Afghan war.[179] But in reality, the young people were addressed by Russian soldiers who took part in the aggression against Ukraine, as well as representatives of the Orthodox Church.[180] Obviously, under the signboard of a neutral topic, the students of Belarusian educational institutions were told about the Russian view on the nature of the war in Ukraine and praised the actions of Russian soldiers. In addition, "Russian House" in Homiel organized an event for students of the local college of builders, during which young people were shown a propaganda film about how sisters of mercy help Russian refugees and soldiers, as well as a photo exhibition "Chronicle of Donbass", dedicated to the glorification of the inhabitants of the occupied territories of Ukraine, who are fighting on the side of Russia. Finally, college students were also openly advertised the book "Donbass-Novorossiya. Belarusian view", which is written by Belarusian pro-governmental figures from openly pro-Russian positions.[181] "Russian House" in Minsk on the anniversary of the beginning of the Russian aggression against Ukraine held an event where the audience was told the Russian view of the nature of the war, as well as showed an exhibition and a film that glorifies the Russian military. It is noteworthy that one of the speakers of the event was MITSO professor Tatyana Zhukova, who made a presentation on the rehabilitation of Russian servicemen.[182] But except for the speech of the employee of the Belarusian university, we recorded the facts of presence of pupils of the capital's schools at the meeting. The expected spectators of the event were members of the military-patriotic club "Eaglets! Heirs of Victory!", who constantly participate in pro-Russian events.[183] Other schoolchildren from Minsk were also spectators of the event, and if the message of the military-patriotic club openly talks about the essence of the event, the participation of schoolchildren from school No. 44 in a blatantly propagandistic event is masked by phrases about the meeting of the "Historical Club" on the topic "Humanitarian mission and volunteers".[184] Another propaganda event on the theme of the war in Ukraine was held on the basis of the "Russian House" in Hrodna with the participation of students of Hrodna Music College headed by the director Anna Sarosek. As can be seen, the event was devoted to the glorification of the Russian military and their female relatives.[185]

A notable event to promote the Russian agenda was the educational session of the school of the Russian propaganda media "Russia Today", where more than 150 Belarusian journalists were taught "journalism standards". It is interesting that among the participants of the school there

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178 https://t.me/partizan_obr/74592
179 https://t.me/russiangomel/6268
180 https://t.me/russiangomel/6273
181 https://t.me/russiangomel/6331
182 https://t.me/naukaiculturaRossiivBelarusi/16474
183 https://t.me/orlyataklub/2936
184 https://t.me/cenue_minsk/42145
185 https://t.me/evgs3gEn7aA4MDZi/6615

were representatives of Belarusian educational institutions: BSPU[186] and BrSU.[187] In our opinion, such schools promote the dissemination of the Russian propaganda agenda in the Belarusian information space, and the presence of representatives of media services of educational institutions among the project participants suggests that the Russian propaganda will also be promoted on educational resources.

The imposition of the Russian view of the nature of the war in Ukraine among young people was also carried out through local events of Belarusian educational institutions. For example, students of the Minsk Linguo-Humanitarian College were taken to the National Art Museum to view the exhibition "Banner of Victory",[188] where once again the topic of World War II was used as a cover for spreading Russian propaganda. Among the works on the theme of World War II, the exhibition also includes paintings that heroize Russia's aggression against Ukraine, and the actions of Russian soldiers are essentially equated with the war against Nazism.[189] The Homiel College of Culinary Arts hosted a meeting with a participant of the USSR's war against Afghanistan, which was accompanied by creative performances by students. One of such numbers was accompanied by a picture of a Russian soldier with the letter "Z" on his clothes holding a child in his arms.[190] Thus, it can be concluded that the event was not only about the war in Afghanistan, but also promoted a pro-Russian agenda. In Minsk[191] and Brest,[192] school students were involved in teleconferences with Russian educational institutions in honor of the February 23 holiday. It is noteworthy that in both cases the schoolchildren were addressed by Russian participants in the war against Ukraine, which indicates the open promotion of Russian propaganda among young people.

Finally, the promotion of the theses of Russian propaganda in Belarusian education was also carried out through a large number of joint activities with educational institutions located in the occupied territories of Ukraine. The students of the BSAA were attracted to participate in the forum "Ribbon of Memory", the declared theme of which was connected with the events of World War II. But in fact, the event was held together with a number of institutions located in the occupied territories of Ukraine: Luhansk University named and Donetsk National University of Economics and Trade. In addition, representatives of the occupying Russian authorities and participants of the war against Ukraine addressed the forum participants, and the rector of Luhansk University proudly told how more than 1 thousand young people from the occupied part of Lugansk region took part in the war against Ukraine.[193] Based on the results of the BSAA students' participation in the propaganda event, they were presented with commendations with Russian occupation symbols.[194] Another example of cooperation with the occupied territories of Ukraine was the participation of Vitsiebsk Medical College in a conference held on the basis of Kerch Medical College. Interestingly, the conference was called "Life of Remarkable People in Wartime Conditions" and its separate part was dedicated to Russia's war against Ukraine: students of Kerch Medical College demonstrated a master class on the use of blood-stopping tourniquets, which they made on 3D printers for Russian soldiers participating in the military

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186 https://t.me/bspu_official/21362
187 https://t.me/brsu_pushkina/13071
188 https://t.me/lingvocollege/5022
189 https://nashaniva.com/ru/360592
190 https://t.me/qgptkk/7859
191 https://t.me/ZavObrazovanie/99276
192 https://t.me/brest_moskovskij/44061
193 https://baa.by/news/?ELEMENT_ID=8817
194 https://t.me/bsaa_by/11472

aggression against Ukraine.[195] Students of Vitsiebsk College of Electrical Engineering participated in the international marathon "Learning Together" together with educational institutions from Rostov, Voronezh, Bryansk, Moscow, Vladimir regions, Krasnodar Krai, as well as from occupied Crimea and Donetsk region of Ukraine.[196] As it has already happened many times in Belarusian education, the status of the international forum was given exclusively because of the participation of the college from Vitsiebsk. Besides, the official resource of HrSMU reported about the victory of Belarusian students in the Second All-Russian Olympiad "MEDPROFI". The participants of the Olympiad were 16 teams, including those from the Russian-occupied Luhansk region of Ukraine.[197] As in the case with the college from Vitsiebsk, the team from HrSMU was the only one that competed at the Olympiad not under the Russian flag. We should also note another fact of formalization of cooperation between educational institutions from Belarus and the occupied territories of Ukraine: the rector of VSAVM concluded cooperation agreements with Bashkir State Agrarian University, Vyatka State Agrarian-Technological University and Kerch Marine Technological University, and all these educational institutions are called "Russian" in the VSAVM report.[198] The cooperation agreement between VSAVM and Kerch Marine Technological University officially recognizes the Russian occupation of Crimea and the Russian affiliation of the Kerch-based university.

Thus, the monitoring research of February demonstrates another surge of the spread of the Russian influence in Belarusian education and the aspiration of Russian structures to impose their information agenda among Belarusian youth. During the last two years, we have been observing a tendency to constant growth of activity of Russian structures in Belarusian education, and on the basis of these observations, we believe that the noticeable activity of these structures in February is not temporary, but contributes to further strengthening of the Russian influence on Belarusian youth.

[195] https://mir-info.com/careers/student-conference

[196] https://vgke.by/2025/02/27/mezhdunarodnyj-marafon-uchimsja-vmeste/

[197] https://tinyurl.com/4fm4p4rt

[198] https://t.me/vsavm_official/28744