



## DIGITAL FACTSHEET 2020

# DIGITAL SKILLS AND ONLINE LEARNING IN BELARUS<sup>1</sup>



## DIGITAL SKILLS FOR VET STUDENTS

### Policies, strategies, initiatives, practices

Neither the Code of Education of the Republic of Belarus (2011) nor the amendments to the code (2018) include the terms digital skills and/or competences. Article 18 of the code<sup>1</sup> and the Concept of Continuous Education of Children and Young Students (2015<sup>2</sup>) introduce the concept of an 'information culture'. This covers quite a few competence areas of the Digital Competence Framework for Citizens (DigComp 2.0)<sup>3</sup> – the ability to store and use information based on information and communication technology competence (ICT competence) and critical thinking. Other components of the concept include the ability 'to create an information product', information protection skills and the ability to minimise health risks while using ICTs<sup>4</sup>. The concept specifies various aspects of the information culture for VET students:

- professional information skills;
- participation in the creation and operation of the educational institution's media;
- ability to counteract negative socio-psychological effects when working with information<sup>5,6</sup>.

The importance of digital skills and competences (DSC), or the information culture, for all levels of education is highlighted in the State Programme for the Development of the Digital Economy and the Information Society for 2016–2020<sup>7</sup> and in the Strategy of Informatisation of the Republic of Belarus for 2016–2022. The latter stipulates the necessity of ensuring the modernisation of VET qualifications 'with the purpose of training workers and ICT specialists for jobs in various branches of the economy that do not require higher education'<sup>8</sup>.

### ICT Qualifications Council: A bridge between the labour market and the VET system

The Qualifications Council for ICT and the communications industries has been in operation in Belarus since 2018.

The Council performs a number of tasks including: monitoring the need for qualified personnel in the field of ICT; developing proposals for the improvement of the legal regulation of the national framework of qualifications mechanisms to advance the interaction between the education system and employers; organising cooperation between public authorities, employers (employer associations), trade unions, academics, research and educational organisations; and developing the mechanisms and tools for the assessment and certification of qualifications.

A draft professional standard for a tester was developed. This formed the basis for updating the content of IT training.

[www.mpt.gov.by/sites/default/files/polozhenie\\_o\\_sektoralnom\\_sovete\\_kvalifikacij.doc](http://www.mpt.gov.by/sites/default/files/polozhenie_o_sektoralnom_sovete_kvalifikacij.doc)

<sup>1</sup> <https://edu.gov.by/sistema-obrazovaniya/glavnoe-upravlenie-obshchego-srednego-doshkolnogo-i-spetsialnogo-obrazovaniya/doshkolnoe-obrazovanie/normativnye-pravovye-akty/kodeksy-respubliki-belarus/>

<sup>2</sup> [www.bsmu.by/downloads/otdeli/vospitanie/2016/koncepciya.pdf](http://www.bsmu.by/downloads/otdeli/vospitanie/2016/koncepciya.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/en/digcomp>

<sup>4</sup> [www.bsuir.by/m/12\\_100229\\_1\\_106130.pdf](http://www.bsuir.by/m/12_100229_1_106130.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> [www.bsmu.by/downloads/otdeli/vospitanie/2016/koncepciya.pdf](http://www.bsmu.by/downloads/otdeli/vospitanie/2016/koncepciya.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> Key definitions in the sphere of digitalisation in general are provided in the the Law on Information, Informatisation and Information Protection (2008), [www.pravo.by/document/?guid=3871&p0=H10800455](http://www.pravo.by/document/?guid=3871&p0=H10800455)

<sup>7</sup> [www.government.by/upload/docs/file4c1542d87d1083b5.PDF](http://www.government.by/upload/docs/file4c1542d87d1083b5.PDF)

<sup>8</sup> <http://nmo.basnet.by/concept/strategia2022.php>



One of the key tasks of the 'Conceptual Approaches to the Development of the Educational System of the Republic of Belarus up to 2020 and for the Prospect of 2030' is the digital transformation of the education sector. This will include the enhancement of the ICT structure of educational institutions and the deployment of a multimedia platform to ensure the availability of educational content for all participants in the education process<sup>9</sup>.

Improving the ICT and lifelong learning skills of all the participants in the education process is stated as one of the priorities in the E-school sub-programme of the State Programme for the Development of the Digital Economy and the Information Society for 2016–2020<sup>10</sup>.

VET students currently acquire general skills and competences related to DigComp 2.0 through a compulsory applied informatics course (from 33 to 55 teaching hours per academic year, depending on the level of education)<sup>11</sup>.

'As a result of studying the subject "applied informatics", the student must: understand the role and significance of information resources and modern computer and telecommunication systems in the development of society and production; be able to purposefully work with information and use information computer technologies to receive, process and transmit information; use effective methods of searching for information on the internet; evaluate the accuracy of information by comparing various sources; create and edit documents of a complex structure; use acquired knowledge and skills in professional activities. The standard programme includes three major topics: "information resources in professional activities", "e-documents and methods for processing them", "information technologies in professional activities"<sup>12</sup>.

Both the technical VET (TVET) and secondary VET (SVET)<sup>13</sup> curriculum for some specialised educational fields includes a compulsory information technology (IT) course (50–96 teaching hours per academic year, depending on specialisation)<sup>14</sup>. The standard programme includes three major topics: the subject area of activity and its information support, business information processing standards and software applications in professional activities<sup>15</sup>. As a result of studying the discipline, students should have a general understanding of information technologies development trends; foundations of construction, development prospects of local and global computer networks, network information processing technologies; presentation methods and processing technology, storage and transmission information; personal computer software classification;

### Civil society and business make their input into the DSC framework

Within the framework of the project 'Promoting the formation of an agenda and institutional prerequisites for strengthening digital competences in Belarus, Ukraine and Georgia', funded by the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum, the economic potential of the digital skills transformation was explored, the European digital skills framework for ICT professionals was popularised and key guiding documents were translated and presented to the stakeholders.

<https://eap-csf.eu/digital-competencies/>

<sup>9</sup> [http://world\\_of\\_law.pravo.by/text.asp?RN=U617E2847](http://world_of_law.pravo.by/text.asp?RN=U617E2847)

<sup>10</sup> [www.government.by/upload/docs/file4c1542d87d1083b5.PDF](http://www.government.by/upload/docs/file4c1542d87d1083b5.PDF)

<sup>11</sup> [http://ripo.unibel.by/assets/site/pto/protect/pr\\_inform.rar](http://ripo.unibel.by/assets/site/pto/protect/pr_inform.rar)

<sup>12</sup> For the sake of accuracy, a word-for-word translation is suggested. See the original text at: [http://ripo.unibel.by/assets/site/pto/protect/pr\\_inform.rar](http://ripo.unibel.by/assets/site/pto/protect/pr_inform.rar)

<sup>13</sup> TVET includes vocational technical school (PTU) training, which provides a certificate of professional qualification (one–two years) and a vocational training and general secondary education diploma (three years). Lyceums provide three-year training programmes for in-depth technical and vocational education and a diploma in vocational and general secondary education, by assigning the appropriate qualifications. Vocational and technical colleges provide four types of programmes: a vocational education programme with a certificate of professional qualification; a vocational education programme with a diploma in vocational training and general secondary education; a training programme focused on secondary special education; and a secondary special education programme integrated with the vocational education programme, with a diploma awarding the qualification of technician. SVET includes technical colleges which provide secondary vocational education, issuing a diploma or qualification (technician level), and complete secondary general education. For details, see the Code of Education, chapters 28 and 29.

<sup>14</sup> <https://tinyurl.com/y9cbtzwH>

<sup>15</sup> For the sake of accuracy, a word-for-word translation is suggested. See the original text at: <https://tinyurl.com/yay7thhf>



numerical methods for solving applied problems and mathematical modelling principles for applied problems; rules for using the hardware and software of a personal computer, systems and networks; the purpose and capabilities of graphic and text editors, spreadsheets and database management systems for creating technological documentation used in professional activities; information protection methods. They should be able to use standard and application software for personal computers; apply modern methods of computer-aided design; create electronic documents; search for information on the internet; and use e-mail and modern information technology'.

Recently, in cooperation with the Belarus High-Tech Park, the Republican Institute for Vocational Education (RIVE) updated programmes for eight ICT-related specialties and introduced a new one (computer graphics) for the professional specialty 'software development'<sup>16</sup>.

A strategy to improve the national qualifications system was adopted by the Council of Ministers in 2018<sup>17</sup>. Prior to that, the 'Employment and vocational education and training in Belarus' project (which was scheduled to run from 30 March 2017 to 29 March 2021 and was funded by the EU in the amount of EUR 5 400 000) had been launched. The project is aimed at adapting the VET system to labour market needs. VET colleges in Minsk and the Minsk region, as well as 12 colleges throughout Belarus, participate in the project. Within the framework of the project, 45 occupational standards are to be developed as a basis for new educational programmes and curricula. It is planned that the programmes will initially be tested in 12 pilot colleges. The teachers will undergo specialised training in EU countries.

The BSUIR Institute of Information Technologies provides ECDL/ICDL – Key computer skills and ECDL/ICDL Advanced – Computers for advanced users as extracurricular courses.

## Facts and trends

- Belarus is at the middle stage of digital readiness, and the accelerating trend of its digital readiness is indicated in the Cisco Global Digital Readiness Index 2019<sup>18</sup>.
- The country ranks in 72<sup>nd</sup> position in the Global Innovation Index with a score of 32.07 out of 100<sup>19</sup>.
- In the third quarter of 2018, the IT industry ranked third in terms of the number of job openings in the sector, which accounted for 11% of all vacancies<sup>20</sup>.
- After completing general secondary education, about 25% of graduates go to specialised (professional) secondary schools (SVET), and about 17% proceed to technical vocational schools (TVET)<sup>21</sup>.
- Some 35 SVET (17%) and 63 (36%) TVET institutions provide training for IT-related occupations<sup>22</sup>.

<sup>16</sup> See the programme at: [http://ripo.unibel.by/assets/site/pto/protect/komp\\_grafika.rar](http://ripo.unibel.by/assets/site/pto/protect/komp_grafika.rar)

<sup>17</sup> [www.government.by/upload/docs/filec51922002717043d.PDF](http://www.government.by/upload/docs/filec51922002717043d.PDF)

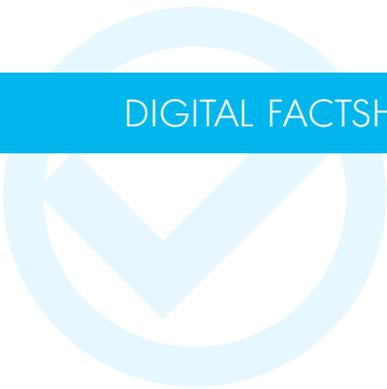
<sup>18</sup> [www.cisco.com/c/dam/en\\_us/about/csr/reports/global-digital-readiness-index.pdf](http://www.cisco.com/c/dam/en_us/about/csr/reports/global-digital-readiness-index.pdf)

<sup>19</sup> [www.globalinnovationindex.org/](http://www.globalinnovationindex.org/)

<sup>20</sup> Report on software development in Ukraine, Poland, Belarus and Romania, see <https://software-development-cee-report.com/>

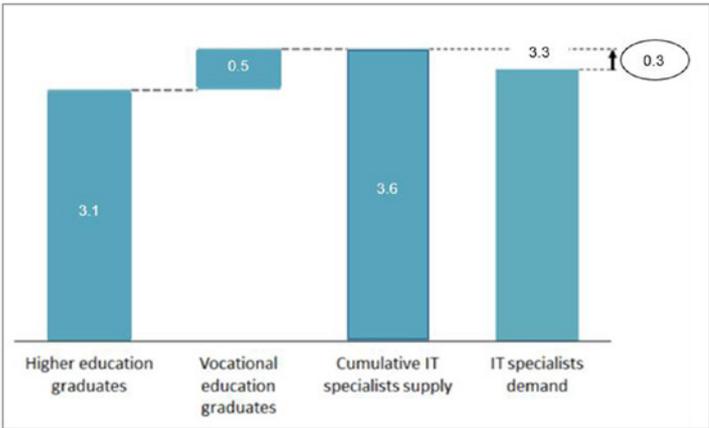
<sup>21</sup> <https://openspace.etf.europa.eu/trp/torino-process-2018-2020-belarus-national-report>

<sup>22</sup> [www.pressreader.com/belarus/belaruskaya-dumka/20190627/281483572922577](http://www.pressreader.com/belarus/belaruskaya-dumka/20190627/281483572922577); <https://tinyurl.com/y8f3hhr>; <https://tinyurl.com/y9557qcx>



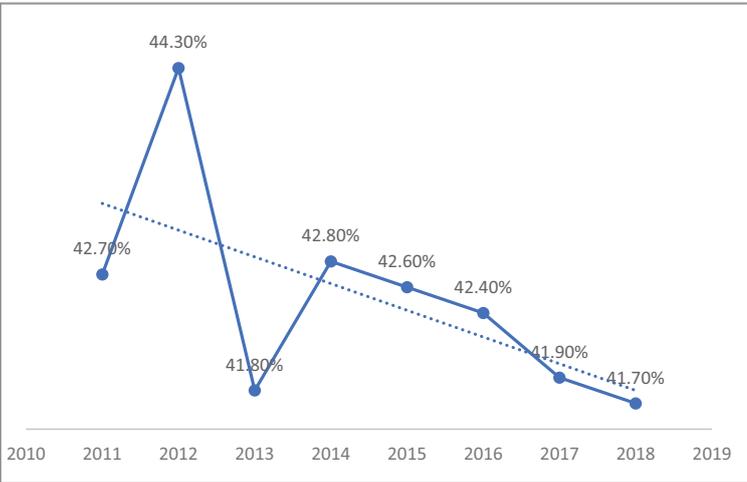
- The ICT-related specialties provided by VET institutions include software, programming the hardware of mobile devices and software development for embedded mobile systems, software testing, computing machines, systems and networks), electronic computing, microelectronic and nanoelectronic technologies and systems, microelectronics, design and manufacture of radio-electronic equipment) and maintenance of radio-electronic equipment<sup>23</sup>.

**Figure 1. Estimation of IT sector specialists’ supply and demand gap (in thousands of people)**



Source: World Bank data published in 2018, <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/313561545138144128/pdf/FINAL-IT-Skill-Gap-Analysis-ENG.pdf>

**Figure 2. Students in vocational programmes as a percentage of total upper secondary students (ISCED level 3)**



Source: [www.etf.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2019-12/kiese\\_2019.pdf](http://www.etf.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2019-12/kiese_2019.pdf)

<sup>23</sup> <https://tinyurl.com/y9cbtzwH>



## DIGITAL SKILLS FOR VET TEACHERS AND TRAINERS

### Policies, strategies, initiatives, practices

The Concept of the Development of Pedagogical Education for 2015–2020 emphasises that DSC (information and communication competency: searching for and analysing information; adapting knowledge to professional needs; transforming information into specialised knowledge; using methods to improve the information culture of students) are an important component of teacher training, including VET teacher training<sup>24</sup>. The document also states that the potential of distance (online) learning in teacher training should be used more effectively<sup>25</sup>.

Formal DSC frameworks include an educational standard for teachers of applied informatics (including VET teachers<sup>26</sup>); DSC certification of education system specialists ('qualified ICT users'<sup>27</sup>); and teacher training and continuing professional development educational programmes for teachers and vocational training instructors<sup>28</sup>. It is planned that a professional standard for VET teachers, which will include DSC, will be developed by the end of 2021<sup>29</sup>.

The Concept of the Digital Transformation of the Education System (2019–2025) envisages the formation of professional online communities for sharing experiences and for continuing teachers' education through distance learning services based on a unified digital platform<sup>30</sup>.

RIVE has launched a distance learning platform for VET teachers<sup>31</sup>. Questionnaires for self-assessment developed by the Academy of Postgraduate Education and RIVE are used to design DSC training for the continuing professional development of VET teachers<sup>32</sup>.

Regional centres for vocational education conduct workshops on the digital learning environment and digital and online learning (DOL) tools<sup>33</sup>.

The National Institute of Education, in cooperation with the Belarus High-Tech Park, has initiated several distance learning projects for teachers. The courses are intended for secondary school teachers, but they are also relevant for VET teachers of applied informatics and of secondary education subjects as these subjects are compulsory for TVET students<sup>34</sup>.

However, there are no comprehensive frameworks in place for the development and self-assessment of DSC for VET teachers and trainers, such as the EU digital competence framework for educators (DigCompEdu) and SELFIE.

### Online learning in continuing professional development

'E-space for distance education' is a functional component of CVET at the Academy of Postgraduate Education, which has more than 30 online continuing professional development courses based on the learning management system Moodle LMS.

<http://do.academy.edu.by/>

### Continuing professional development answer to Covid-19 pandemic

In April 2020, in order to empower teachers who were moving to an online format in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, RIPO organised a series of webinars for VET teachers. The topics included:

- screencasting in the education process;
- setting up Moodle;
- organising distance learning;
- delivering video lectures;
- teaching online and offline.

Overall, 9 out of 15 in-service training courses for VET teachers were conducted online.

[www.ripo.unibel.by/index.php?id=4598](http://www.ripo.unibel.by/index.php?id=4598)

In response to Covid-19, RIVE posted the algorithm on conducting DOL in vocational technical and secondary specialised institutions online.

<http://ripo.unibel.by/index.php?id=4586>

<sup>24</sup> [https://pedklassy.bspu.by/bspu\\_klaster/inform\\_support/concept\\_teacher-education.pdf](https://pedklassy.bspu.by/bspu_klaster/inform_support/concept_teacher-education.pdf)

<sup>25</sup> [www.adu.by/wp-content/uploads/2015/pedklass/koncepciya.pdf](http://www.adu.by/wp-content/uploads/2015/pedklass/koncepciya.pdf); <http://old.gsu.by/pages/klaster/d2.pdf>

<sup>26</sup> <http://elib.bspu.by/handle/doc/15722>

<sup>27</sup> <https://content.schools.by/rovkovichi/library/reshenie.pdf>

<sup>28</sup> <http://nihe.bsu.by/index.php/ru/obr-stand>

<sup>29</sup> <https://euprojects.by/projects/Culture-Science-Educationand-Young-People/employment-and-vocational-education-and-training-in-belarus-/>; <http://ripo.unibel.by/index.php?id=1536>

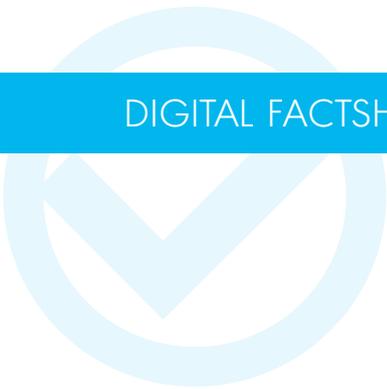
<sup>30</sup> <http://iso.minsk.edu.by/main.aspx?guid=34963>

<sup>31</sup> <http://86.57.153.145:81>

<sup>32</sup> <http://spk.academy.edu.by/>

<sup>33</sup> See, for instance, [www.academy.edu.by/meropriyatiya/webinar.html](http://www.academy.edu.by/meropriyatiya/webinar.html); <http://gumcpo.minsk.edu.by/ru/main.aspx?guid=13241>

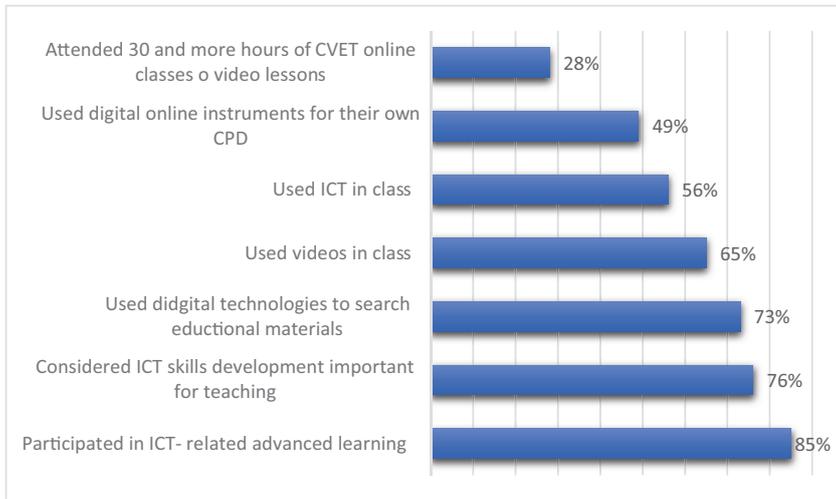
<sup>34</sup> <http://e-asveta.adu.by/index.php/o-proekte/o-proekte>; <http://scratch.by/>



**Facts and trends**

- In 2018, 15 047 people worked in the vocational education system, 12 173 of them were teachers and 2 874 were instructors<sup>35</sup>.
- Further training and retraining of teaching staff is carried out by 17 educational institutions<sup>36</sup>.
- Each year, more than 350 VET teachers undergo advanced training in digital technologies (36 to 72 hours) at public educational institutions<sup>37</sup>.
- Each year, more than 3 000 teachers study digital educational technologies as a part of continuing professional development programmes (8 to 12 hours)<sup>38</sup>.

**Figure 3. DSC and DOL for VET teachers: share of VET teachers who did the following in 2018**



Source: [https://openspace.etf.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2020-01/Belarus%20CPD%20survey%202018\\_RU\\_rev.pdf](https://openspace.etf.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2020-01/Belarus%20CPD%20survey%202018_RU_rev.pdf)

<sup>35</sup> See, for instance, <https://openspace.etf.europa.eu/trp/torino-process-2018-2020-belarus-national-report>  
<sup>36</sup> [https://pedklassy.bspu.by/bspu\\_klaster/inform\\_support/concept\\_teacher-education.pdf](https://pedklassy.bspu.by/bspu_klaster/inform_support/concept_teacher-education.pdf)  
<sup>37</sup> RIVE data  
<sup>38</sup> Ibid.



## DIGITAL AND ONLINE LEARNING IN INITIAL VET

### Policies, strategies, initiatives, practices

Article 17 of the current Code of Education introduces the concept of distance education as a form of education carried out mainly with the use of modern ICTs<sup>39</sup>. According to the planned amendments to the code, distance learning is defined as a form of education and learning based on the use of educational technologies, 'implemented mainly with the use of information and communication technologies for indirect (at a distance) interaction between students and teachers'<sup>40</sup>.

'Electronic education' is one of the priorities of the State Programme for the Development of the Digital Economy and the Information Society for 2016–2020<sup>41</sup> and of the National Strategy for Sustainable Socioeconomic Development up to 2030<sup>42</sup>. The share of educational institutions covered by the E-school sub-programme will increase from 16% in 2017 to 80% in 2020<sup>43</sup>.

The State Programme on Education and Youth Policy for 2016–2020 prioritises equipping classrooms with computers, including licensed software, and purchasing other equipment for higher education institutions<sup>44</sup>. In line with the programme, the Concept of the Digital Transformation of the Education System (2019) envisages 'a widespread development of distance learning by 2025'<sup>45</sup>. However, neither document includes specific provisions for distance learning in VET.

The conceptual approaches to the development of the education system in the Republic Belarus (2017) include a rather vague statement on the VET system: 'transition to the development of educational books and teaching aids based on information and communication technologies, taking into account the development of distance learning'<sup>46</sup>.

The introduction of innovative methods of teaching based on ICTs are the priorities of the development of the national education system<sup>47</sup>. The creation of an 'open educational space based on ICTs' is listed among the results of the development of the pedagogical system between 2015 and 2020<sup>48</sup>. At a practical level:

- Dedicated ICT departments or coordinators are functioning in all VET institutions.
- Information technology resource centres based in regional secondary schools are established in every region.

### DOL innovations in IVET

In 2019, five pilot digital learning projects were launched in five VET institutions and three innovative projects were launched in fifteen VET institutions.

Twenty IVET institutions (8% of the total number) have implemented innovative projects on the introduction of distance learning and the use of mobile, augmented reality, multimedia and other digital technologies in the learning process.

<http://ripo.unibel.by/index.php?id=2199>

### Industry 4.0 training centre

In 2019, the first Festo-certified training centre (FACT) was opened for Industry 4.0 technologies and mechatronics. (affiliated to the College of Modern Technologies in Mechanical Engineering and Car Service).

The FACT training centre is aimed at both training and retraining. The multifunctional system allows the simulation of various production processes, depending on the tasks in the training cycle.

<https://tinyurl.com/yd67ogn7>

<sup>39</sup> [www.pravo.by/document/?guid=3871&xp0=hk1100243](http://www.pravo.by/document/?guid=3871&xp0=hk1100243)

<sup>40</sup> [https://kudapostupat.by/docs/proekt\\_kodeksa\\_ob\\_obrazovanii.docx](https://kudapostupat.by/docs/proekt_kodeksa_ob_obrazovanii.docx)

<sup>41</sup> [www.government.by/upload/docs/file4c1542d87d1083b5.PDF](http://www.government.by/upload/docs/file4c1542d87d1083b5.PDF)

<sup>42</sup> [www.economy.gov.by/uploads/files/NSUR2030/Natsionalnaja-strategija-ustojchivogo-sotsialno-ekonomicheskogo-razvitija-Respubliki-Belarus-na-period-do-2030-goda.pdf](http://www.economy.gov.by/uploads/files/NSUR2030/Natsionalnaja-strategija-ustojchivogo-sotsialno-ekonomicheskogo-razvitija-Respubliki-Belarus-na-period-do-2030-goda.pdf)

<sup>43</sup> [www.osce.org/chairmanship/410117?download=true](http://www.osce.org/chairmanship/410117?download=true)

<sup>44</sup> [http://nasb.gov.by/rus/activities/research/2016/obraz\\_2016-2020.pdf](http://nasb.gov.by/rus/activities/research/2016/obraz_2016-2020.pdf);

[www.government.by/upload/docs/fileac304245cbfc4671.PDF](http://www.government.by/upload/docs/fileac304245cbfc4671.PDF)

<sup>45</sup> <http://iso.minsk.edu.by/main.aspx?guid=34963>

<sup>46</sup> [http://world\\_of\\_law.pravo.by/text.asp?RN=U617E2847](http://world_of_law.pravo.by/text.asp?RN=U617E2847)

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> <http://old.gsu.by/pages/klaster/d1.pdf>



- Each year, the Ministry of Education issues an instruction letter on the use of ICTs in educational institutions in Belarus<sup>49</sup>.
- Guidelines for the introduction of distance learning courses<sup>50</sup> and recommendations on the organisation of distance learning, which include a questionnaire for self-assessment of the digital readiness of VET schools, are being developed<sup>51</sup>.
- The E-college project will be implemented by the end of 2020.
- A virtual college and virtual library will be incorporated into the national VET system by 2021.
- A total of 150 digital education resources (elektronnye obrazovatel'nye resursy), available for VET institutions, are provided on the RIVE website: [http://RIPO.unibel.by/assets/eso/bank\\_eso.html](http://RIPO.unibel.by/assets/eso/bank_eso.html).

VET schools autonomously adapt software applications and services to blend digital learning. However, an instruction letter on the use of digital technologies in educational institutions in 2019–20 requires that: (1) the specifications and usage of these tools should comply with the State Law on Information, Informatisation and Information Protection and other relevant legislative acts listed in the instruction letter; and (2) service providers should be licensed by the State Information and Analysis Centre of the Ministry of Education<sup>52</sup>. The most popular free applications and services include Skype, Zoom, meet.naveksoft.com, Google Classroom, LearningApps, Quizlet, Kahoot, Plickers, H5P, MyTest and LMS Moodle.

## Facts and trends

- 100% of VET institutions have broadband internet access<sup>53</sup>.
- In a survey conducted by the European Training Foundation (2018), 51% of VET school directors stated that there was a lack of computer-based educational programmes; 47% of respondents stated that students never use a digital educational environment and 20% of them stated that students use it only occasionally; 44% of respondents stated that students use digital technologies in class only occasionally and only two-thirds stated that there is access to the required computer equipment and software<sup>54</sup>.
- Some 16% of VET institutions have one computer class; 42% have two and another 42% have three or more such classes<sup>55</sup>.

<sup>49</sup> See, for instance, <https://adu.by/ru/homepage/obrazovatelnyj-protsess-2020-2021-uchebnyj-god/obshchee-srednee-obrazovanie-2020-2021/3780-instruktivno-metodicheskie-pis-ma.html>

<sup>50</sup> <http://ripo.unibel.by/index.php?id=4586>

<sup>51</sup> [http://ripo.unibel.by/assets/ripo\\_new/docs/cdo\\_informatiza.doc](http://ripo.unibel.by/assets/ripo_new/docs/cdo_informatiza.doc)

<sup>52</sup> <https://edu.gov.by/sistema-obrazovaniya/glavnoe-upravlenie-obshchego-srednego-doshkolnogo-i-spetsialnogo-obrazovaniya/srenee-obr/normativnye-pravovye-dokumenty/imp/%D0%98%D0%9C%D0%9F%202019-2020%20!.pdf>

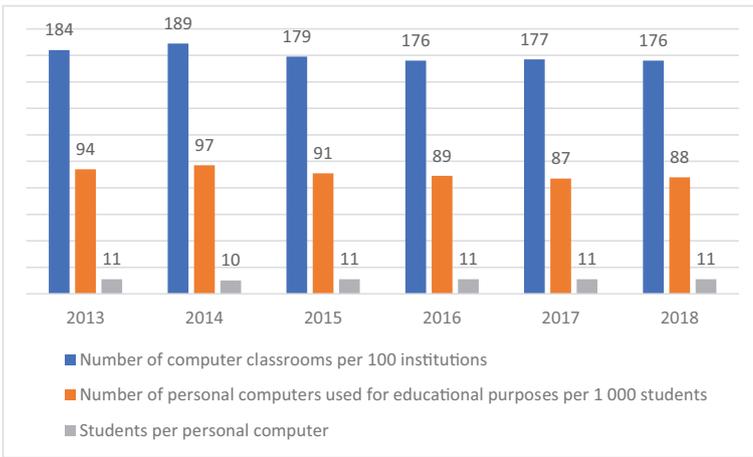
<sup>53</sup> RIVE data

<sup>54</sup> [www.etf.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/publications/continuing-professional-development-vocational-teachers-12](http://www.etf.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/publications/continuing-professional-development-vocational-teachers-12)

<sup>55</sup> RIVE data

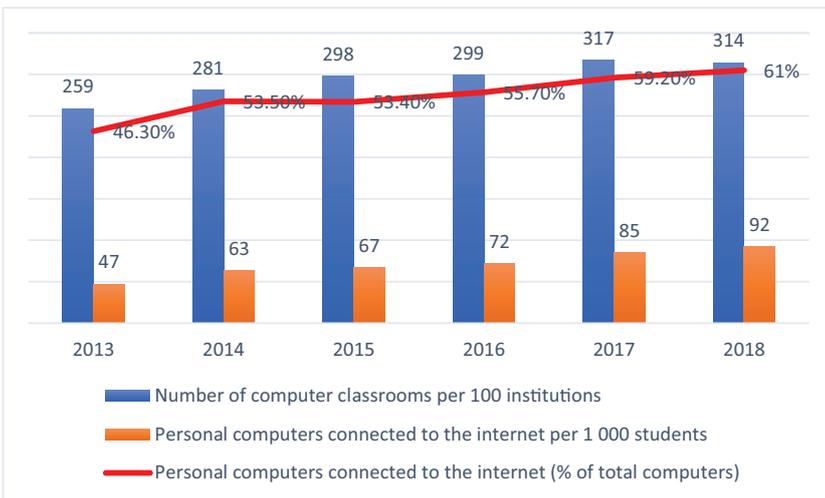


**Figure 4. ICT use in TVET**



Source: [www.belstat.gov.by/en/ofitsialnaya-statistika/publications/catalogues-of-statistical-publications/information-society-of-the-republic-of-belarus/](http://www.belstat.gov.by/en/ofitsialnaya-statistika/publications/catalogues-of-statistical-publications/information-society-of-the-republic-of-belarus/)

**Figure 5. ICT use in SVET**



Source: [www.belstat.gov.by/en/ofitsialnaya-statistika/publications/catalogues-of-statistical-publications/information-society-of-the-republic-of-belarus/](http://www.belstat.gov.by/en/ofitsialnaya-statistika/publications/catalogues-of-statistical-publications/information-society-of-the-republic-of-belarus/)



## DIGITAL AND ONLINE LEARNING IN CONTINUING VET

There is no sector-specific state policy or strategy that covers DOL in adult learning, formal and non-formal learning. CVET and adult learning institutions develop their own guidelines for online and blended courses based on the key regulations of the educational process and informatisation programmes<sup>56</sup>.

The Code of Education uses the term 'additional (dopolnitelnoye) adult education', which includes 12 types of educational programmes<sup>57</sup>. Lifelong learning as a concept is not defined in the code.

However, a draft Lifelong Learning Strategy for Belarus has been developed recently<sup>58</sup>. The draft strategy includes provisions on the public-private dialogue and on flexible approaches to continuing adult training<sup>59</sup>. There are also plans for outfitting resource hubs for inclusive education, which will become centres of excellence.

Opportunities for lifelong distance learning are provided by CVET institutions. For instance, the University of Civil Protection of the Ministry of Emergency Situations provides online learning facilities for those who have graduated from VET institutions<sup>60</sup>. The Republican Institute of In-Service Training, which is affiliated to the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, provides 25 online courses, including a course on the use of information technologies for the social protection sphere<sup>61</sup>.

According to the Strategy of Informatisation of the Republic of Belarus for 2016–2022, the multilevel system for the advancement of IT competences in continuing learning is a necessary component of digital transformation<sup>62</sup>.

The Concept of Informatisation of the Education System of the Republic of Belarus for the Period up to 2020 envisages wider use of 'digital education, development of digital content and online communication in the learning process and the introduction of mobile flexible learning tools'. It is expected that, by the end of 2020, 'electronic learning services' will be available for 70% of the Belarusian population<sup>63</sup>. In line with that purpose, all state CVET institutions are introducing distance learning options. For instance, the Academy of Postgraduate Education provides 20 CVET distance (online) courses, including a course on information technologies in education<sup>64</sup>. RIVE developed and conducted more than 50 courses over six months in 2020. The BSUIR Institute of Information Technologies

### Distance learning for adults in penitentiary institutions

The Penitentiary Department of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, in cooperation with Minsk Innovation University, equipped computer classes and successfully organised pilot distance (online) learning in several penal colonies. Based on this experience, the amendment to the Criminal Code of the Republic of Belarus was introduced in December 2019. The amendment to Article 109 states that 'in penitentiary institutions, opportunities for obtaining secondary, vocational and higher education online as a form of non-formal education should be provided.'

<https://etalonline.by/document/?regnum=HK0000365>

### Blended courses on quality in adult education

In 2020, the Association of Lifelong Learning and Enlightenment (ALLE), within the framework of the project 'Promotion of quality in adult education in Belarus' and with the aim of strengthening the capacity of ALLE, launched a pilot blended training programme for experts on ensuring the quality of educational services for adults (Bellaqua). The programme includes eight webinars followed by a two-day face-to-face session and a one-day concluding session.

<http://mgiro.minsk.edu.by/main.aspx?guid=153353>

<sup>56</sup> See, for instance, <https://tinyurl.com/y7l5jmq5>

<sup>57</sup> [https://connections.etf.europa.eu/wikis/home?lang=en#!wiki/Wf591e43b607e\\_4ccf\\_8d94\\_a3256a255147/page/Belarus%20-%20NQF%20inventory](https://connections.etf.europa.eu/wikis/home?lang=en#!wiki/Wf591e43b607e_4ccf_8d94_a3256a255147/page/Belarus%20-%20NQF%20inventory)

<sup>58</sup> [www.dropbox.com/s/6ykevvc85upatzx/LLL%20draft\\_extract\\_ENG.pdf?dl=0](https://www.dropbox.com/s/6ykevvc85upatzx/LLL%20draft_extract_ENG.pdf?dl=0)

<sup>59</sup> <https://euprojects.by/projects/Culture-Science-Educationand-Young-People/employment-and-vocational-education-and-training-in-belarus/>

<sup>60</sup> [www.ucp.by/honors/distantcionoe-obuchenie/](http://www.ucp.by/honors/distantcionoe-obuchenie/)

<sup>61</sup> <https://ripk.by/ln/>

<sup>62</sup> <http://edu-grodno.by/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/STRATEGIYA-razvitiya-informatizatsii-v-Respublike-Belarus-na-2016.pdf>

<sup>63</sup> <https://tinyurl.com/rdcusgx>

<sup>64</sup> <http://do.academy.edu.by/>



provides Equal Skills – Computer for Beginners. E-Citizen Internet and E-Mail courses. The Belarusian National Technical University, the Institute for Advanced Training and Retraining, Homel State University and other institutions provide similar courses.

However, most measures undertaken address the development of ‘formal’ CVET. For example, the State Programme on Education and Youth Policy is focused mostly on formal education (namely, advanced training and retraining at public institutions). The term ‘non-formal education’ is not used in the text of the Code of Education but is widespread in the everyday work of public and private institutions<sup>65</sup> and is gaining importance outside the provision of formal education<sup>66</sup>.

Two non-governmental associations provide non-formal education: the Association of Lifelong Learning and Enlightenment (ALLE)<sup>67</sup> and the Association for Management Development (AMD). The ALLE concept of non-formal education in Belarus stresses the importance of digital skills for adult learners<sup>68</sup>. Members of both associations provide distance learning courses<sup>69</sup>. Free distance courses on ICT skills for people with disabilities have been functioning since 2013<sup>70</sup>.

Several DOL and DSC projects are implemented within the Erasmus+ programmes Innovative ICT Education for Social-Economic Development and Enhancement of Lifelong Learning in Belarus (which includes a free online course on information security)<sup>71</sup>. Within the framework of the Erasmus+ BELL project, distance learning for adults, including digital skills, are provided at Viciebsk State University and online platforms for distance learning are being developed at Viciebsk Technological University and Mogilev State Pedagogical University.

The Enhancement of Lifelong Learning in Belarus programme<sup>72</sup> aims to expand the interaction between universities and regional communities, providing a wide range of educational programmes using a variety of learning technologies, including distance learning. Six Belarusian universities are participating in the project. Five online courses (one of them on information security) were developed within the framework of the project<sup>73</sup>.

## Facts and trends

- About 400 educational institutions provide continuing education (doplnitelnoye obrazovanie) in Belarus<sup>74</sup>.
- In 2017/18, almost 11 000 people were trained in 43 resource centres run by VET institutions, and about 4 000 were trained in adult education programmes<sup>75</sup>.

<sup>65</sup> <https://library.oapen.org/bitstream/id/9282fce0-40b9-4f2f-9da8-439171ddc2e1/640930.pdf>

<sup>66</sup> [https://connections.etf.europa.eu/wikis/home?lang=en#!wiki/Wf591e43b607e\\_4ccf\\_8d94\\_a3256a255147/page/Belarus%20-%20NQF%20inventory](https://connections.etf.europa.eu/wikis/home?lang=en#!wiki/Wf591e43b607e_4ccf_8d94_a3256a255147/page/Belarus%20-%20NQF%20inventory)

<sup>67</sup> ALLE is a full member of the European Association for the Education of Adults.

<sup>68</sup> [www.dropbox.com/s/6ykevvc85upatz/LLL%20draft\\_extract\\_ENG.pdf?dl=0](http://www.dropbox.com/s/6ykevvc85upatz/LLL%20draft_extract_ENG.pdf?dl=0)

<sup>69</sup> [http://ta-aspect.by/programm\\_online](http://ta-aspect.by/programm_online)

<sup>70</sup> <http://adukatar.net/4-internet-ba-erov-net/>

<sup>71</sup> [http://erasmusplus.by/sm\\_full.aspx?guid=15963](http://erasmusplus.by/sm_full.aspx?guid=15963); <http://edulaweu.eu/ru/%d1%83%d0%b2%d0%b0%d0%b6%d0%b0%d0%b5%d0%bc%d1%8b%d0%b9-%d0%bf%d0%be%d1%81%d0%b5%d1%82%d0%b8%d1%82%d0%b5%d0%bb%d1%8c/>

<sup>72</sup> 586278-EPP-1-2017-1-LV-EPPKA2-CBHE-JP

<sup>73</sup> <https://bell-iln.by/en/about-project>; <https://bell-iln.by/images/programmy-BELL.pdf>

<sup>74</sup> <https://edu.gov.by/sistema-obrazovaniya/glavnoe-upravlenie-professionalnogo-obrazovaniya/dop-obr/>

<sup>75</sup> <https://niei.by/uploads/files/Analitica/Analiticheskiy-otchet-o-realizacii-NSUR-2030..pdf>



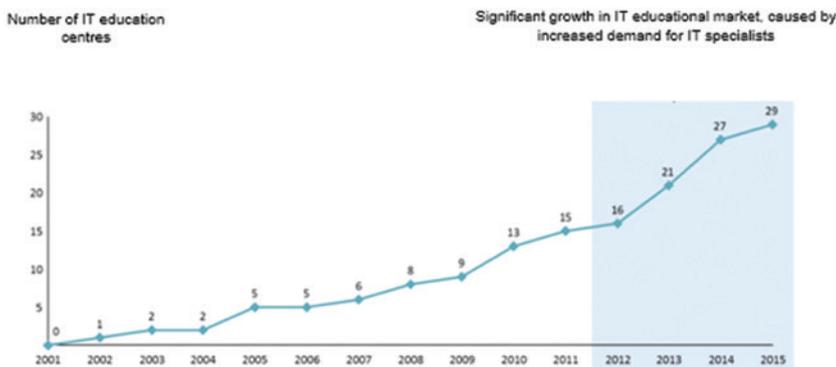
- The State Programme on Education and Youth Policy envisages that 15% of the adult population will go through adult education programmes by the end of 2020<sup>76</sup>.
- In 2019, an educational standard for the specialty 'adult education' with the qualification 'andragog' was introduced<sup>77</sup>.

**Figure 6. Number of employees involved in advanced training and retraining programmes**



Source: [www.belstat.gov.by/upload/iblock/02f/02f0dcce5ea8e20041bca7728366684c.pdf](http://www.belstat.gov.by/upload/iblock/02f/02f0dcce5ea8e20041bca7728366684c.pdf)

**Figure 7. Expansion of IT education centres for adult learning (number of centres)**



Source: <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/313561545138144128/pdf/FINAL-IT-Skill-Gap-Analysis-ENG.pdf>

<sup>76</sup> [http://nasb.gov.by/rus/activities/research/2016/obraz\\_2016-2020.pdf](http://nasb.gov.by/rus/activities/research/2016/obraz_2016-2020.pdf); [www.government.by/upload/docs/file/ac304245cbfc4671.PDF](http://www.government.by/upload/docs/file/ac304245cbfc4671.PDF)

<sup>77</sup> <https://openspace.etf.europa.eu/trp/torino-process-2018-2020-belarus-national-report>