

Almost a hundred years old is a good age

The country's leading university — the Belarusian State University — is 90 years old. Rector Sergei Ablameiko tells us of the BSU's plans as it approaches its centenary

By Irina Dergach

The BSU will reach its 100th anniversary as a powerful educational, scientific and spiritual centre in Belarus. We're dynamically developing and our well-coordinated teamwork has allowed us to strengthen the university's ranking worldwide. The British QS Agency annual ranking sees the BSU entering the top 700 universities globally this year; we're placed in the 501-550 segment, which is not a bad result, considering that 25-30 thousand universities are assessed. However, we aim to raise our ranking to within the top 100. We're always among the top ten educational establishments in the CIS university ratings, as well as those for Central and Eastern Europe.

The number of applicants to the BSU rises every year, always exceeding the number of places. Despite the demographic crisis, the BSU still boasts high results.

In April 2012, our country will join the Bologna Process. Will anything change for BSU students?

Nothing will change drasti-

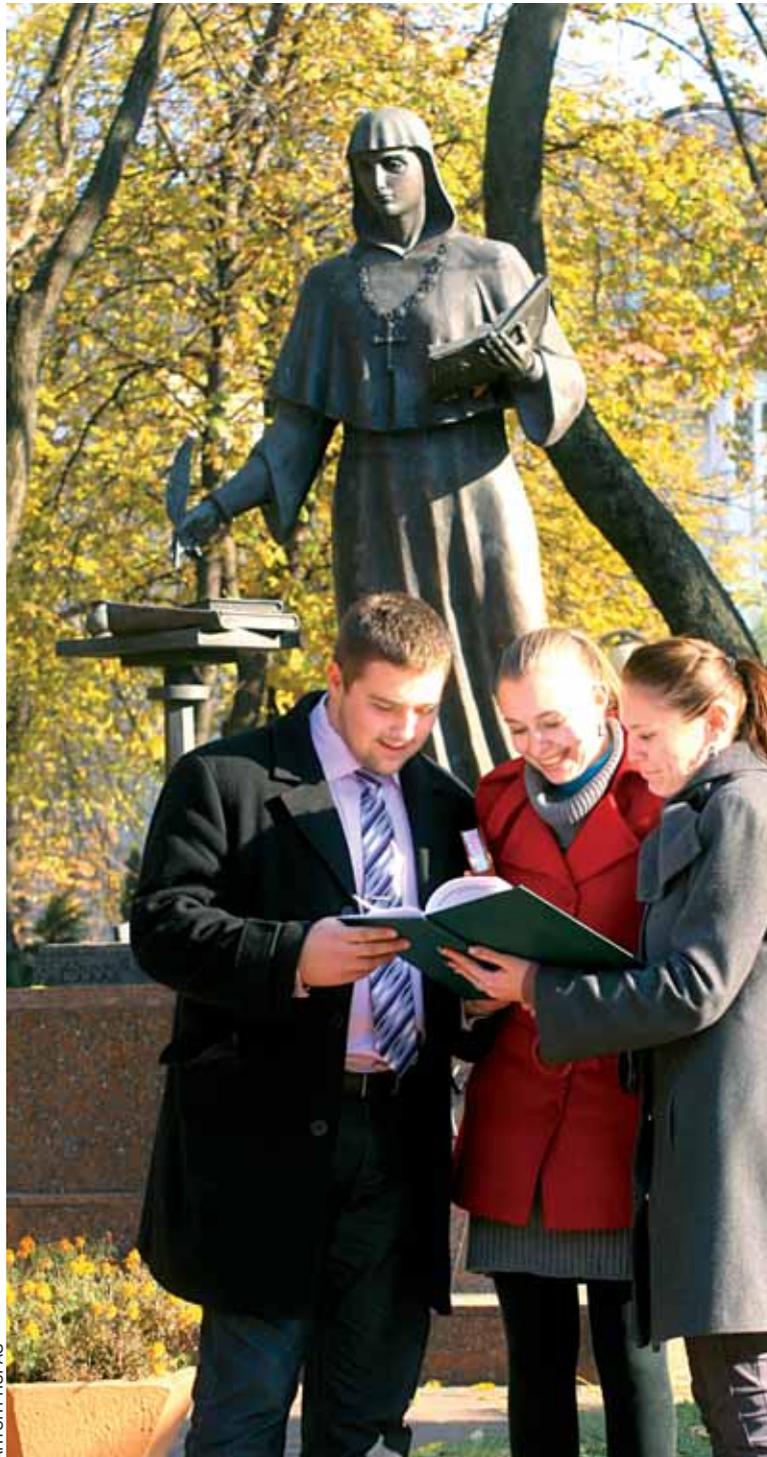
cally. We've already had a two stage preparation system and the Code on Education has introduced a practical Master's programme. The diploma supplement is on the European model, so employers from European countries will be able to understand what a student has covered.

Does the University plan to offer new courses next year?

We're currently studying this issue. The BSU introduces new specialities every year: last year, these were biochemistry, microbiology and information resource management. These are already becoming popular. We plan to offer 2012 alumni several more interesting specialities, including social communications, geo-demography and crisis psychology. There are also proposals connected with IT security.

BSU scientists helped create software for the Large Hadron Collider and have developed components for space satellites. Does the BSU hope to launch its own satellite?

Yes, our university has always been involved in Belarus' space projects and aims to continue this tradition.



BSU students value traditions of their alma mater

We boast everything needed to make our own satellite and have negotiated many times with the Moscow State University on a joint launch. We're working in this direction while simultaneously developing our education. Last year, we introduced the study of aerospace information technologies

and systems, which proved immediately popular.

In 2009, BSU joined the European University Association and, in 2010, had its quality management system certified in compliance with ISO 9001 international requirements.

Lithuanians enchanted by our culture

Days of Belarusian Cinema take place in Vilnius

Vilnius has hosted the Days of Belarusian Cinema as part of celebrations dedicated to the Days of Belarusian Culture in Lithuania. *Brest Fortress* feature film was screened, as was *The Sniper*. *The Punishment Weapon*, *Wolves*, *Massacre* and *Ryzhik in Wonderland*, all created by Belarusfilm Cinema Studio. Animations by Belarusian cartoon designers preceded each screening.

The State Academic Symphony Orchestra of Belarus, conducted by People's Artist Alexander Anisimov, has performed for the Lithuanians while the *Genius of Belarusian Land* exhibition, dedicated to the 120th anniversary of the birth of Maxim Bogdanovich, has been organised. The *Belarus Today* event included 100 new editions relating to Belarusian culture and history being donated to the National Library of Lithuania. The Maxim Gorky Theatre has toured Lithuania, performing *Pane Kokhanku*, directed by S. Kovalchik, and *Truth is Good but Happiness is Better*, based on A. Ostrovsky's play.

Klaipeda hosted the 16th Belarusian Song Festival, featuring professional bands from Belarus, as well as amateur Belarusian groups based in Lithuania. Finally, the ballet *Spartacus* was performed by the National Academic Bolshoi Opera and Ballet Theatre to conclude the Days of Belarusian Culture.

The Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Belarus to Lithuania, H.E. Mr. Vladimir Drazhin, noted during the closing ceremony that major cultural events promote intercultural dialogue between neighbouring states.

Women are still ahead of men

By Yelena Prus

560 Belarusian residents are over 100 years old

The Grodno Region is a traditional leader in Belarus for its number of long-livers. As of Oc-

tober 1st, 2011, 134 people over a hundred years old were living there. In second place was the Minsk Region, with 87, followed by the Brest Region's 82. An impressive 76 centenarians live in the Gomel Region while 66 reside

in the Vitebsk Region, followed by the Mogilev Region, with 60. Despite the population of Minsk being the greatest, the capital has the fewest residents aged over 100 — just 55. As ever, women prevail in this age group.

Knowledge applied in practice

By Svetlana Savicheva

The Belarusian Medical Academy of Post-Graduate Education (BelMAPO) is facilitating the integration and exchange of advanced experience between Belarusian and foreign specialists. Education Minister Sergey Maskevich reported on the project during an extended session of BelMAPO's Scientific Board, dedicated to the Academy's 80th anniversary.

BelMAPO has a special role in allowing teachers to conduct scien-



BelMAPO achievements discussed at Minsk congress

tific investigations; the results are then used for training and re-training medical staff. This enables practicing doctors from Belarus, as well as those from the CIS and beyond, to share knowledge, while learning of new achievements in healthcare.

Belarus' Healthcare Minister, Vasily Zharko, believes that close ties between science and education allow us to react promptly towards changes in contemporary medicine while facilitating the mastery of new knowledge and technologies.

BelKa-2 destined for stars in 2012

Belarusian Earth remote sensing satellite ready for launch

By Alexander Fiodorov

BelKa (the Belarusian space satellite) was a major topic of the space congress in Minsk, being originally planned for launch last spring. Speaking after the space congress, Piotr Vityaz, First Deputy Chairman of the Presidium of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus, asked journalists at a special press conference 'not to ask questions about the exact date of the satellite launch', noting that it's likely to take place next year.

"Space matters are complex," explains Mr. Vityaz. "Everything needs to be checked multiple times. As far as our satellite is concerned, the terrestrial part is ready. All the various control systems now need to be tested, alongside the software — which is being overseen by the British."

The chief engineer of Geoinformation Systems enterprise (of the Belarusian Academy of Sciences), the Deputy Chief Constructor of the Belarusian space Earth remote sensing system, Oleg Semenov, adds, "This is a completely new development, which requires numerous tests and checks. However, tests will be complete by next year."

The Belarusian satellite is to be sent into orbit simultaneously with a Russian satellite, allowing Belarus to enjoy independent Earth remote sensing and saving money on the expensive services of other states. The new Belarusian satellite will be more manoeuvrable than its predecessor, weighing around 400kg and boasting definition to two metres. It will ensure full coverage of Belarusian territory from space.