



Almost 70 percent of Belarusian Internet users visit social network sites

# Enough room available for everyone on the Web

Almost every Belarusian teenager with Internet access is member of a social network

98.47 percent of young men and 99.49 percent of girls aged 15-18 visit social networks, as mentioned in a blog by the Head of Belarusian Gemius company, Mikhail Doroshevich. According to the November Ge-

niusAudience research, as Internet users grow in age, they tend to visit social networks less frequently: 87 and 78 percent among the 19-24 age group. Overall, almost 70 percent of Belarusian Internet users visit social

networks. The most popular are Вконтакте (Vkontakte), Одноклассники (Odnoklassniki), Facebook, Live Journal and Все.и (Vseti). The latter is Vkontakte's Belarusian 'clone' but is yet to become as popular among

Belarusians: in November, it was visited by 320,000 Belarusians — against 2.1m visiting Vkontakte (or 53.31 percent of local users). Moreover, 28.76 percent of Belarusians visited no other social networks.

The study shows that over 50 percent of Belarusians use the Internet — 4.063m are aged 15 and above. Moreover, 76 percent of these visit daily. Interestingly, 38 percent are from Minsk and the Minsk Region.

## Valuable satellite-cities for the capital

By Yevgenia Oleshina

**Programme of satellite-city construction underway while Minsk's Regional Technopark launches building of new blocks**

The Minsk Regional Executive Committee's Deputy Chairman, Alexander Yermak, explains that, so far, no exact plan exists as to which enterprises are to be moved beyond the capital and an investment town is yet to be chosen.

Minsk shall have nine satellite-cities, each included on the state programme to extend residential suburbs for Minsk residents, while shifting production beyond the capital. The state programme covers regions specialising in the industrial spheres (Dzerzhinsk, Zhodino and Fanipol), as well as agro-industrial (Smolevichi, Stolbtsy, Uzda and Rudensk) and tourist-recreational (Zaslavl and Logoisk).

According to Mr. Yermak, the announcement of these cities as Minsk's future satellites has inspired investors' interest, with several major projects being discussed. Minsk Free Economic Zone's expansion towards Dzerzhinsk could bring additional impetus to the area (which almost neighbours

Fanipol). New facilities are to be built in each satellite-city, while old factories will undergo modernisation. Moreover, jobs will be created and new accommodation is to be constructed. In line with the programme, experimental projects are to be realised regarding the construction of lower-level residential housing for Minsk residents in Smolevichi and in the Smolevichi District. Legislation is being drawn up relating to special mortgages for housing construction by Minsk while comfortable transportation between cities is also being given priority.

Among other 'construction novelties' in the Minsk Region is the Regional Technopark, being realised in the Smolevichi District's Stanok-Voditsa — with the State Committee for Science and Technology. This will provide innovative infrastructure in the region, specialising in machine building, metal processing and electro-technics. A Belarusian-Chinese industrial park is also being built in the Smolevichi District in coming years.

Twelve major investment projects are currently being realised in the Minsk Region, as part of the 2011-2015 State Innovative Development Programme.

## Lithuanian guests fond of Belarusian sanatoriums

Although Belarusian sanatoriums recently increased their prices, their services are still enjoying high demand among foreigners



Gym at Borovoe Sanatorium, in Dokshitsy District

Tourist companies note that those from abroad are often choosing Belarusian spas, as confirmed by statistics. According to the Republican Centre for Recuperation and Sanatorium-Resort Treatment, 193,000 foreigners stayed at Belarusian sanatoriums

last year (in 2010, the figure reached 178,000). Most arrive from the CIS — primarily Russia. About 10 percent of foreign clients come from Israel, Poland, Germany and the Baltic States.

Belarusian spas in Lithuania also enjoy de-

mand. Tourist agencies note that guests are attracted not only by their comfort but by the value for money offered: five meals a day and numerous medical procedures. "Prices for recuperating at Belarusian sanatoriums and Lithuanian Druskininkai

## Neighbours to listen to radio

By Yelena Stasyukevich

**Grodno Television and Radio Company launches FM-broadcast in Polish**

Residents of the region will be able to listen to new Regionalnej Sluzby Informacyjnej programmes each morning and evening, as will some from neighbouring Poland — including Bialystok. They'll receive the broadcast in Polish, for a radius of around 70km.

The broadcast aims to objectively inform residents of the border areas of Belarus and Poland about life in the region and the country. According to Nikolay Melyachenko, Director of the TV and Radio Company, the content should prove of interest to residents of both Grodno and Poland, as news will be supplemented by interviews on various topics, music and weather forecasts. Seven new employees have been taken on to organise the broadcast in Polish.

Mr. Melyachenko stresses that, in future, there are plans to expand Polish language radio broadcasting, including broadcasting at other frequencies. Bilateral co-operation in radio broadcasting needs to be established with Poland.

are almost the same but Belarus offers more for your money — regarding meals and procedures. Of course, many guests are more interested in improving their health than enjoying luxury," admits the Head of LT Travel Club tourist agency, Ugne Gudeliauskaite. She notes that spas along Lake Naroch enjoy the greatest popularity.

Pink Tour company also notes increased interest in recuperating in Belarus. "Belarus offers cheaper spa and medical treatment services than Druskininkai or Birštonas. Moreover, guests enjoy five meals and up to six procedures daily. With this in mind, demand in Lithuania is high and ever growing," the company's Director, Narine Mamedova, emphasises. "Belarus is mostly chosen by elderly people; however, guests are not limited to pensioners or Russian speaking Lithuanians. Lithuanians also come but they can be a little demanding regarding small details and comfort."