

THE ROLE OF FOREIGN STUDENTS IN BELARUS

Я.Ю. Рьжко, студент

С.А. Наскова, кандидат филологических наук, доцент

Белорусская государственная сельскохозяйственная академия, naskova@mail.ru

Economic globalisation had dramatic consequences for education. One of it is increased students' mobility. Universities faced global competition both for financial resources and for talented students. According to some estimates, the number of students who will study abroad will be around 4.9 mln people by 2025, i.e. education export market will increase fourfold and finances they pay for the education can amount to 90 bn dollars. Tendencies of commercialisation of education increased competition among countries for foreign students, and became one of the main export priorities in many countries of the world.

Reasons for students' mobility are political, economic, cultural, ideological and academic. Their presence of foreign students at university campuses is aimed at cultural diversity, internationalisation of education and desire to have talented young people who will become in some time economic partners of Belarus. According to foreign experts the optimal number of them should be around 10%. It is considered that foreign students contribute to the international prestige of a university, the quality of its education and efficiency.

In Belarus the programme of export of education till 2010 envisages the presence of nearly 16 000 foreign students in Belarussian educational establishments. The Belarussian Agricultural Academy also contributes to the fulfillment of this programme.

There were 4000 foreign students at the beginning of 1990-s in the Republic of Belarus though first foreign students were in Russian universities (including the academy, then the first agricultural school in Russia) since 1865. At the same time many Russian students went to study abroad, especially those studying engineering.

In the Belarussian Agricultural Academy the first foreign students appeared in 1965 and the academy was one of the centres of training foreign students from all over the world. Now they are about 380 foreign students in the academy from China, Turkmenistan, India, Pakistan, Ukrain and some others at its various faculties, though priority is given to economic and law qualifications. The prestige of agricultural education is becoming lower not only in Belarus. In NIS countries 6-8 % of all students study agriculture and only one per cent in western universities. So this tendency is a world tendency.

Most Belarussian students will live and work in their own country, region. But when they study, they are to face another culture every day. Students became involved in an international environment studying in the same group with foreign students, living in the same hostel, taking part in social activities. An intercultural dialogue is necessary to understand each other better. In this respect social activities become very important. One of the forms is collaboration in conferences devoted to national cultures, home countries, economic relations between nations. They enrich students of all nationalities with new knowledge and contribute to mutual understanding and respect.