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## BASIC PRINCIPLES OF IMPROVING THE FUNCTIONAL ORGANIZATION OF STUDENT HOUSING

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*Nowadays higher education programs quality in Belarus allows the republic to prepare well-competent specialists in various fields. The curriculum and whole atmosphere in community and at the university campus are making great influence on efficiency of studying. Furthermore, living environment, where non-resident students hold most of their time, is important, because it is where basic human needs for food, rest and communication are being fulfilled.*

The notion "dormitory" has been known since the first educational establishments appeared. Belarus was a part of the Soviet state, and higher education institutions accepted students from cities and republics all over the union. Therefore, an important issue was the provision of nonresident students with living space [1].

Since then much has changed. New knowledge and technologies appeared, and this can be applied to improving the existing housing stock as well as to avoiding mistakes in the design of new facilities. It is important to provide the living environment to correspond to all the modern requirements and even to be ahead of the demands of residents for a few years ahead to achieve the most long-term and economically viable effect. There is no doubt that accommodation facilities should be accessible for all categories of citizens, to promote the formation of a human-friendly environment, to ensure the possibility of communication between members of the student community, to promote the active interaction with the administration and allow residents to satisfy their needs, interests and professional activities as entirely as possible.

During the analysis of the design standards and tendencies in the formation of the residential and public environment, the following general principles, the observance of which will allow creating comfortable living spaces, were formulated:

- barrier-free and accessible environment for everyone. Discrimination of people is unacceptable, so consequently any object should be designed with taking into account needs and opportunities of any person, including physically weakened persons, because in some periods of life everyone belongs to this category of citizens. It is necessary to consider not only equipment for unobstructed movement without assistance, but also information filling [2];

- the space, divided into private and public, with the allocation of quiet and active areas. The interaction within the student community should not be limited by the classrooms of the educational institution; places for informal communication or specific interaction, for example, performing group tasks, are needed. In addition, occasionally most people need a quiet and secluded space for rest or concentrated work;

- attention to the issues of physical activity, sports and health in general. For a person to perceive and assimilate a huge flow of information, he or she needs physical and mental health. Sports grounds, gyms, medical facilities should be equipped in close proximity to the places of residence with taking into account the number of visitors, without neglecting the rules of accessibility;

- favourable conditions for communication and formation of a healthy community, involvement and responsibility. In such situation students will be interested in maintaining cleanliness and order on the territory of residence, they will actively participate in solving issues related to the places of life, and manifest civil initiatives. In addition, students should not be separated from the life of the city. Cooperation and mutual assistance between citizens, authorities and students should be established, to involve the latter in the preparation and implementation of socially important projects;

- ecological compatibility and energy efficiency. The future depends on how we manage the present, so students should also become responsible inhabitants of the world. Sorting of garbage, insulation of enclosing structures, attention to window fillings, the use of the latest technologies of heating and ventilation, control of water consumption, reduction of resource consumption and recycling of waste would give the further generations an opportunity to live on the Earth;

- temperature-humidity and air conditions should be taken into account as one of the most important factors in the formation of human well-being [3];

- diversity of the environment and freedom of choice. Each student can choose his or her own option for a comfortable stay from several options, differing in terms of convenience, price, community specifics (for ex-

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ample, one building is given to the architects, another for the linguists; or in one building there are blocks with rooms for two and a bathroom for a bundle of four rooms, a common living room and a gym, and in another building every room is equipped with a bathroom, an open terrace for two floors and a cafe/bar on the first floor).

Unfortunately, nowadays in the student dormitories of the republic these principles are partially and sometimes completely not executed. Some of them are not achievable in the nearest future due to lack of funding. The hostels are often located in comparatively old buildings, built according to the norms that have already lost their relevance. This entails a number of problems:

- inaccessibility of the environment for physically weakened persons;
- lack of functional division of space in the dormitory, lack of places for active recreation and communication, special places for classes;
- often there are no equipped sports grounds in the immediate proximity, the gym is not in the dormitory buildings. Medical care for students living in dormitories is not always available;
- dormitories of the corridor type that have a shower located only on the first floor. This cannot be considered as sufficient for comfortable maintenance of hygiene;
- no places to store bicycles, a low level of improvement of the territories adjacent to the dormitories;
- the detachment of students from participating in solving issues related to the place of residence;
- insufficient attention to energy saving, reduction of consumption and waste sorting.

To solve these problems, the following options are developed:

- to provide the accessibility of the environment by eliminating irregularities, arranging normative ramp slope, equip building with an elevator (or arranging rooms for people with limited mobility on the first floor), expanding doorways, where necessary, moving switches, sockets, handrails, door handles, fire protection equipment at an accessible height, working out the information equipment [2];
- to equip places for studies or creativity;
- to create the opportunity to do sports in the dormitory;
- to pay attention to the design and ergonomics of the elements of the environment; to attract professionals to the equipment purchase;
- to reconstruct the system of sanitary and hygienic service (by uniting rooms into blocks and equipping every block with a sanitary unit);
- to allocate an area on the ground floor or arrange a place on the street for bicycles storing, to organise sports grounds and recreation areas for students;
- to actively involve students in solving various issues, to promote the organization of workshops, and summer schools, to establish open competitions, to conduct practice with the application of knowledge and skills to improvement of the environment;
- to pay attention to environmental issues;
- to carry out events, markets, lectures, educational programmes, to promote waste sorting and reasonable consumption, to strive to reduce resource consumption.

Thus, as a result of the work done, the basic principles of creating a comfortable environment in a student dormitory were derived, current shortcomings were identified and ways to solve problems were proposed. In existing conditions, it is also important to note that the situation should be reformed in a complex, including the arrangement of training places, the adjacent territory, places of employment, sports fields, shops, cafes, cinemas, parks, pedestrian crossings, sidewalks, courtyards – total urban space. This is important because in such an environment people will be able to direct their power to something really important and contribute it for the development of society.

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