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**EARLY PREGNANCY: A COMPARATIVE VIEW (BELARUS VS. LATVIA)**

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**Relevance.** Early pregnancy, that is a case of pregnancy between the ages of 13 and 18, proves to be an acute problem both in Belarus and Latvia. Despite the fact that nowadays the gender awareness is high, the occurrence of early pregnancy is frequent (in 2018, 167 cases in Grodno region, 214 cases in Latvia). Adolescent pregnancy is caused by many factors, such as media influence, low welfare level, peer support, sexual abuse and poor parenting. Taking into consideration the above-mentioned, we decided to take a closer look at this relevant problem.

**Aim:** The main aim of our study is to compare the information on early pregnancy cases in Belarus and Latvia, and to analyze the reasons of this issue of genuine concern.

**Materials and methods.** We conducted a survey of school students of the 8<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> school year at Grodno City Gymnasium and analyzed Latvian forums for the period of 2018. Both Belarusian and Latvian official statistics on the issue was studied. The situation in Europe was analyzed based on the information available in the Internet.

**Results and discussions.** In 2011, the statistics for Grodno region was 341 cases of early pregnancy, in 2014 there were 250 cases, which shows a decrease by 26.7%. According to the routine check-up of adolescent girls in Grodno region in 2018, 3,103 (20%) of the inspected girls had had sexual relations. 167 were pregnant. 12 girls terminated the pregnancy. Furthermore, 85 gave birth to a child. In 2004 in Latvia, the youngest mother was a 14-year-old girl, 12 children were brought into life by 15-year-olds, mothers of 50 children were only 16 years old, and one of them had a second child. 17-year-old young mothers delivered 191 children. In 2017, 3 girls aged 14 also gave birth to a child, and the number of children born by the girls between the ages of 15 and 17 years old was 211. Besides, in 2017, there were 104 abortions in the group of 15-17 year-olds. Evidently, the Latvian trend can be described as rising. Our analysis has shown that many parents react in various ways to teenage pregnancy, from expulsion from home and stopping any contacts with the daughter to full support and sharing responsibility for the event. Besides, most of the interviewed high school students have pointed out their peers and mass media (60%) as main sources of information, thus proving that parents and school should play a bigger role in sexual education. However, the students wouldn't like the amount of sexual education at school be greater. On the other hand, the percentage of school students aware of the occurrence of unwanted pregnancy, genital tract infections, and abortion risks is high (80-90%). The analysis of the Internet data has proved that frequency of adolescent delivery in Western Europe is very low.

**Conclusion.** The study suggests that the main reason for early pregnancy is not connected with poor knowledge of the problem, but rather with curiosity and sexual freedom propagated in mass media. Yet, the most dreadful thing here is that whatever the reason, finally, the issue a pregnant teenage girl will have to solve is that of life and death.