

COMMENTS ON THE UNFPA DRAFT COUNTRY PROGRAMME DOCUMENT FOR BELARUS

Second regular session 2025

Comments by Germany	UNFPA country/regional office response to comments
Germany welcomes the CPD for Belarus, particularly its focus on strengthening the country's demographic resilience. In light of demographic challenges and shifting population dynamics, we believe this approach is timely and highly relevant.	UNFPA appreciates Germany's recognition of the CPD's focus on strengthening demographic resilience in Belarus.
We support the programme's effort to address social norms and stereotypes by enhancing the skills, knowledge, attitudes, and practices of individuals and communities to lead active, safe, and healthy lives, in particular for marginalized groups. Promoting agency and informed decision-making is key to sustainable development.	UNFPA expresses gratitude to Germany for supporting the work to address stereotypes and working with population groups and communities on improving their capacities and skills to recognise and respond to risk, promoting healthy and safe behaviours, focusing on the most vulnerable.
In this context, we see potential to further strengthen the programme's focus on comprehensive education around sexual and reproductive rights, particularly for young people. Supporting their understanding of their rights and reproductive agency would usefully complement existing efforts and contribute to building long-term demographic resilience.	UNFPA appreciates the comment and refers in particular to paras. 31, 32(d) and 34(c) of the CPD targeted at expanding existing educational programmes for youth on inclusion and reproductive health through national digital and local-level offline campaigns on reproductive health, targeting especially youth with and without disabilities.
We see the evidence base for the design and implementation of the programme as potentially problematic. It seems that data is either gathered inconsistently or deliberately falsified by the responsible state institutions. That bears the risk that the programme does not correspond to the actual needs and demographic structure of the society. The interventions could potentially be targeted wrong.	<p>UNFPA uses data available at the official national sources – the National Statistical Committee, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, Ministry of Interior – as well as international data from the WHO, UNFPA, and the UNDP <i>Human Development Report</i>.</p> <p>The country programme implementation involves close collaboration with the communities, civil society and target populations; this will allow for adjustments of the initiatives</p>

	and activities during the programme to address changing demands and new insights, should the need arise.
The programme does not address economic hardship. Low pay and the necessity to often work multiple jobs pose a significant hardship on households and families, and are particularly challenging for women.	While economic empowerment is not the key focus of the UNFPA mandate, within the country programme, as indicated in para 36(a), UNFPA will be working with companies and enterprises in all regions of Belarus for them to develop and apply corporate policies enabling female and male employees to combine career development and family duties.