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www.iiseps.org; iiseps@iiseps.org

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Dear readers!

In another issue of the analytic bulletin "IISEPS News" we offer to your attention materials reflecting the most important results of the Institute research in the first quarter of 2013.

Unsteady stabilization that we had written about describing the **"economic feeling" of Belarusians** at the turn of the previous year displayed a new negative trend in the first quarter of the current year. Thus the ratio of those whose financial standing has improved for the last three months to those whose financial standing has become worse is changing for the worse. Almost two thirds of respondents consider that Belarusian economy is in a grip of crisis. In spite of the fact that according to the official data the average pay exceeded \$ 500 in dollar terms at the end of the year, the population's real income dropped: if in December an average income (including salaries, pensions, allowances and other extra earnings) per family member made up \$ 275, today it is \$ 250. At that estimating the danger of a new devaluation of the Belarusian ruble within the next few months a third said it was "a real threat", about 43% – "it was possible but unlikely". That is why less than 20% placed confidence in the Belarusian ruble, and over half of respondents – in the American dollar. Furthermore, in spite of the official statistics according to which the unemployment level in the country is lower than 1%, in fact over 36% of respondents had to be unemployed (most of them were not registered with the employment service).

A drop in the "economic feeling" intensified the skeptical **attitude of Belarusians to the authorities** still more. Thus a third of respondents consider that the money directed at modernization of enterprises declared by the head of state in the New Year address "will be spent ineffectively", and over 28% – that it "will be embezzled" anyway. Only 35.4% believe that "a technological breakthrough, modernization of the economy and a breakthrough on the basis of the latest technology are possible in Belarus within the next 10 years" and over 40% do not agree with it. The majority of respondents pin their hopes for the country's economic development on attraction of foreign capital and on Belarusian businessmen, not on the president or the government. Almost 44% think that human rights are not upheld or more likely not upheld in Belarus. Today almost a quarter of respondents are concerned about the arbitrary rule most of all, and approximately 15% – about a civil war (for comparison – only 11.5% are concerned about foreign aggression). As it can be seen, the split of society with regard to the authorities is felt by the ordinary public more and more. The unstable economic situation and skeptical attitude towards the authorities inevitably increase readiness of Belarusians for changes: today three thirds consider that "Belarus needs changes" (in May 2011 – 61.1%).

However, one should not overestimate **Belarusians' readiness for changes**. If the trust and electoral ratings of the president (43.4% and 33.4%) have been growing slightly for three months then the ratings of opposition bodies and their leaders have on the whole decreased. At that a low level of political mobilization or even readiness for it is not yet the most important obstacle in the way to changes that millions of people declare for. An extremely high level of people's distrust in one another, and not only in many social institutions, is a much more serious problem. Thus 70% of respondents believe "it is necessary to be very careful in relations with people", and only 23.1% – that "the majority of people can be trusted". What political mobilization is possible without an obvious alternative and social consolidation?

Although so far no considerable changes are being observed in **foreign policy orientation of Belarusians**, the before registered tendencies continue to develop. Thus when facing the necessity of choosing between integration with Russia and entering the European Union at a hypothetical referendum fewer respondents declare for the first option than for the second one. Though Belarus still finds itself in isolation on the part of the West, its citizens go abroad more and more often, and not only as tourists, but also to work. Thus over a million of people have gone to work in the European Union countries for the last several years. These data coincide well with the recently published statistics according to which Belarus ranks first in the world as far as the number of Schengen visas issued per capita is concerned.

As usual, for those readers who are more interested in our figures than in assessments we afford ground for analyzing the research results on their own by means of counting up in terms of the main socio-demographic characteristics.

In our "Open Forum" rubric we offer our readers a selection of data of sociological surveys conducted by our colleagues mainly in the countries contiguous to Belarus furnished with our short comments. We suppose that a comparative analysis of social processes in the international context will allow our readers to understand the results of researching Belarusian society better.

In our "Bookshelf" rubric Belarusian political scientist Alexander Klaskovsky presents to the readers a new book by the writer of political essays Alexander Tomkovich "Life after Prison".

As usual your feedback and comments are welcome!

IISEPS Board

MONITORING OF PUBLIC OPINION IN BELARUS

In March of 2013 independent sociologists have conducted the nation opinion poll (those face-to-face interviewed are 1.508 persons aged 18 and over, margin of error doesn't exceed 0.03).

The questionnaires, as usual, covered a wide range of problems related to the most pressing and most topical aspects of life in Belarus.

Below you will find commentaries to the most important findings of these and previous sociological procedures. "No answer" and "Find it difficult to answer" alternatives are not available in most points of the questionnaire. As usual, the tables are read down unless otherwise specified. In some tables, the total amount may be different from 100% since the interviewees could choose more than one alternative.

MARCH – 2013

Exhaustion of the bureaucratic and subsidized paradigm

The March opinion poll registered a decrease in social indices (Tables 1-3). The expectation index proved to be the leader of the fall (Table 2): from –6.4 in December to –12 in March. The change of the 2012 tendency occurred against a sustainable growth in the population's income which official statistics constantly remind us about. The average monthly financial income per capita increased by 21% last year; and this despite the fact that the forecast contained much more modest figures – a 3-3.5% growth. The growth of the real income allowed the population to increase the saving ratio 1.4 times to 9.8%. Let us mention that high deposit rates also contributed to the growth of Belarusians' mass desire to save.

6.1% in comparison with January, 2012 found themselves among the "aggrieved". That is three times less than nationwide figures (22.9%).

Such attitude to state employees in the year of parliamentary elections testifies to the reality of the personnel-drift-to-Russia problem, which the leaders of the country are unable not to take into consideration any more. It turned out that pre-eminence of politics over economy within the framework of Belarusian socio-economic model had its limits.

Nevertheless, the correlation between the income of the most well-to-do 10% and the least well-to-do 10% of Belarus population (the decile coefficient) remains on the level decent by European standards – 5.9 times (in Russia – 16.4 times).

In search of the reasons for the reduction of social indicators in March one should not forget that re-

Table 1

Dynamics of answering the question: "How has your personal financial standing changed for the last three months?", %

Variant of answer	12'10	06'11	03'12	06'12	09'12	12'12	03'13
It has improved	24.9	1.6	15.3	12.8	14.7	17.4	13.3
It has not changed	57.7	23.2	43.4	54.7	58.8	54.0	56.4
It has become worse	16.0	73.4	40.6	31.9	25.0	26.7	28.7
FSI*	8.9	-71.8	-25.3	-19.1	-10.3	-9.3	-15.4

* Financial standing index (the difference of positive and negative answers)

Table 2

Dynamics of answering the question: "How is the socio-economic situation going to change in Belarus within the next few years?", %

Variant of answer	12'10	06'11	03'12	06'12	09'12	12'12	03'13
It is going to improve	30.6	11.9	22.5	21.4	18.4	23.3	15.3
It is not going to change	40.7	20.3	34.4	38.5	43.6	34.6	44.7
It is going to become worse	17.2	55.5	32.7	30.4	27.8	29.7	27.3
EI*	13.4	-43.6	-10.2	-9.0	-9.4	-6.4	-12.0

* Expectation index

There is no doubt that income grew up unevenly in all social groups last year. Public sector employees whose take-home pay in January, 2013 had grown by

spondents form their answers in the first place under the influence of the latest events, not long-term tendencies. The reality is as follows: in January, 2013

real wages decreased 10.6% in comparison with December.

However, notwithstanding the place of events on the time scale, mass consciousness is inclined to fall into subjectivism while interpreting them. Thus, last time pensions in Belarus were raised in November, and inflation has been "correcting" their real purchasing power towards a reduction for four months already. The fact, though, does not prevent Belarusian pensioners from remaining the most satisfied social group. At March value of the financial standing index equaling -15.4, in the age group of 60-year-olds and older it made up only -3.6, and for the expectation index: -12 and -8.1!

The data of Table 5 let us compare Belarusians' levels of satisfaction with the living conditions before the world financial crisis (the first column) and during the crisis (the second column) with the March value (the third column).

For five years the share of Belarusians completely satisfied with the living conditions has reduced two-fold (from 15.6% to 7.7%), and today it finds itself on the level of the crisis year of 2009. However, as far as more moderate variants of answer are concerned ("More likely satisfied than not" and "More likely dissatisfied than not"), a shift towards pessimistic assessments is noticeable.

Validity of mass pessimism is confirmed by the

Table 3

Dynamics of answering the question: "Do you think the state of things is developing in our country in the right or in the wrong direction in general?", %

Variant of answer	12'10	09'11	03'12	06'12	09'12	12'12	03'13
In the right direction	54.2	17.0	35.3	32.4	34.1	33.5	34.5
In the wrong direction	32.5	68.5	52.5	54.3	47.4	46.1	51.4
DA/NA	13.3	14.5	12.2	13.3	18.4	20.4	14.1
PCI*	21.7	-51.5	-17.2	-21.9	-13.3	-12.6	-16.9

* Policy correctness index

Table 4

Dynamics of answering the question: "Do you think that Belarusian economy is in crisis?", %

Variant of answer	09'11	12'11	03'12	06'12	09'12	03'13
Yes	87.6	81.5	77.2	71.7	64.1	64.8
No	8.0	8.0	15.1	21.5	23.8	24.6
DA/NA	4.4	10.5	7.7	6.8	12.1	10.6

Table 5

Dynamics of answering the question: "To what extent are you satisfied with the present living conditions in Belarus?", %

Variant of answer	09'08	06'09	03'13
Completely satisfied	15.6	8.8	7.7
More likely satisfied than not	40.1	40.9	33.3
More likely dissatisfied than not	31.1	35.1	43.4
Completely dissatisfied	10.3	12.7	13.9
DA/NA	2.9	2.5	1.7

On the other hand, no matter how the events which are taking place in the "here and now" mode might correlate with the long-term tendencies an overwhelming majority of respondents continue to believe that Belarusian economy finds itself in crisis (Table 4). March has not become an exception to this effect.

Belarusian authorities see their main merit in the second advent of the average wage equaling \$ 500. However, only 12.2% of respondents noted a growth in their wellbeing in comparison with December, 2010, whereas the share of those who noted worsening of their wellbeing turned out to be three times higher – 36.7% and another 48.4% did not notice any considerable difference.

high level of apprehension concerning the reality of another devaluation of the Belarusian ruble. In spite of its stable rate (relative to the dollar) since the autumn of 2011, almost every third Belarusian (32.1%) continues to believe in the reality of devaluation. The share of optimists is considerably smaller – 19.4%. And 42.7% consider a repetition of the devaluation scenario hardly probable.

As it is known, a burnt child dreads the fire. If the national currency is meant by the fire, then Belarusian state has more than once "burnt" its citizens for the last 18 years, including the most faithful ones (in the electoral sense). As a comment to the data of Table 6 let us quote an extract from A. Lukashenko's January press conference for Belarusian and foreign mass-

Table 6

Dynamics of answering the question: "What currency enjoys your greatest confidence?", %

Variant of answer	06'06	03'11	06'11	03'13
US dollars	46.2	56.4	53.0	53.6
Euro	17.5	17.6	19.9	15.3
Belarusian rubles	27.6	22.7	16.7	19.7
Russian rubles	1.4	1.3	4.0	7.9
DA/NA	7.3	2.0	6.4	3.5

Table 7

Dynamics of the financial standing index (FSI), expectation index (EI), policy correctness index (PCI) and real cash income of the population (RCIP), percentage-wise relative to the previous year

Index	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
FSI	10	-7	-10	-35	-4	-49	-16	-15
EI	32	-5	2	1	11	-37	-9	-12
PCI	27	18	18	14	18	-38	-16	-17
RCIP	118	113	113	103	115	99	121	122*

* January 2013 relative to January 2012

media: "I have always said: a real market rate of the Belarusian ruble is emerging in this country. That is why one does not need to run to currency exchange offices and stand in a queue. By the way, yesterday I asked chairman of the National Bank a question: a month before the task had been allotted to give me information about the people who came to currency exchange offices and bought hard currency, because ordinary people did not possess the bulk of money. Ordinary people's task is to feed their families, to do the shopping. But middle class and mainly rich people having money buy currency at the currency exchange offices. For instance, journalists. It seemed to me so. It turned out to be not the case when the situation had been monitored... Punctually, in a human way, they would come to stand in a queue (hundreds of people were brought into play) – mostly pensioners buying 10 or 5 dollars each".

The March opinion poll does not contradict the results of the monitoring conducted by the specialists of the National Bank. Faith in the reliability of the "buck" is peculiar to Belarusian men and women to the same extent: 54.4% vs. 53%. The same, however, cannot be said about the Belarusian ruble. There are almost two times more women trusting it than men: 13.2% vs. 25.1%! As for age, Belarusians at almost any age feel invariably high level of reliance upon it: from 18 to 29 years of age – 60.7%, from 50 to 59 years – 57.8%. Let us remind the readers that women retire on a pension at the age of 55. Only in the oldest age group (60 years old and older) the level of trust in the dollar decreases considerably, giving way to the Belarusian ruble: 34.8% vs. 46.1%.

However, if we take into consideration the fact that a sizeable part of pensioners live in the rural area and that is why are deprived of an opportunity to line up at the currency exchange offices, their urban colleagues of the same age had to exhibit hyperactivity while purchasing dollars, which is quite logical and does

not contradict the results of the monitoring.

Attention should be paid to a however slow but steady growth of the Russian ruble's popularity by Belarusians. These dynamics are backed by increasing noncompetitiveness of the Belarusian economic model even in comparison with the Russian one.

Let us refer to Table 7 whose first three lines present average annual values of social indices (2013 – March values). The data clearly illustrate the conclusion voiced by us many times already that since 2007 Belarusian socio-economic model created by A. Lukashenko and operating under his guidance has begun to stall. The financial standing index (FSI) was the first "to feel" it. For the last six years its annual average has never become positive. Even the presidential election campaign of 2010 did not manage to save it. The FSI collapsed twice for the mentioned time period: the first time was in 2009 during the world financial crisis, the second time – in 2011 during the man-made one.

The expectation index (EI) descended to the negative zone from a much higher level. Today it has become almost equal with FSI, but in 2006 it exceeded it threefold! If low values of FSI testify to the critical estimation by Belarusians of their financial standing at present, then negative values of EI are an indicator of their lack of faith in the future. In this sense the year of 2011 proved to be the "decisive" one.

Registering a decrease in the level of the living standards and gradually parting with the faith in "the bright future", the majority of Belarusians continued to consider that the country, nevertheless, was still moving in the right direction. Please pay attention to the following: in 2009 the absolute difference between FSI and PCI made up 49 units (it was a world crisis and Belarusians considered themselves innocent victims). However, the year of 2011 shattered the mass illusions, and the March value of PCI turned out to be lower than the FSI value. If we return to the data of

Tables 1 and 3 we will see that this is a continuation of the tendency started in June, 2012.

Thus dynamics of social indices reflect the system crisis of the socio-economic model whose bearing component is the vertical of power. A. Lukashenko's relying on the ruling class represented by bureaucracy and on Russian subsidies made it possible to overcome the negative tendencies at the beginning of the 90s and to turn them into positive ones. Today, however, we witness exhaustion of the subsidized and bureaucratic paradigm. Its historic cycle is close to an end. That is why what used to bring economic and political dividends only yesterday today leads to stagnation and a decrease in efficiency.

A "portrait" of a Belarusian guest worker

Fluctuations of politicians' ratings and social indices are a natural phenomenon. The former, as well as the latter, are formed under the influence of short- and long-term factors. However, there are a number of Weltanschauung questions in the IISEPS arsenal answers to which depend weakly on the current events. Dynamics of answers to two such questions are given in Tables 8 and 9.

The mentioned Weltanschauung stability is the result of the state's purposeful efforts. For the sake of maintaining it the state is ready for many things including direct violation of the Constitution. Let us remind the readers that according to Article 13, property in the Republic of Belarus can be either state or private. In addition, the state provides everybody with equal rights for conducting business and other activity, except the one forbidden by law, and guarantees equal protection and equal conditions for development of all forms of ownership.

To receive evidence how the de jure proclaimed equality of all forms of ownership is observed de facto, it is enough to familiarize oneself with the structure of interest rates subsidizing for business entities: every year state enterprises receive trillions of rubles worth support, whereas private enterprises do not get anything.

That is why advantages of working at private enterprises relative to working at state enterprises are not obvious. This is a real fact presentative for many Belarusians on pay-days. In this case the level of economic efficiency of various forms of ownership is secondary.

Slowly parting with adherence to market economy

Table 8

Dynamics of answering the question: "What would you prefer for Belarus?", %

Variant of answer	11'97	06'04	06'06	09'07	10'08	09'09	09'10	03'11	03'13
Market economy, including:	69.0	62.2	63.6	62.1	61.2	65.7	67.2	67.7	63.5
With slight government control	32.8	43.6	34.8	37.9	39.2	41.3	36.4	42.0	39.1
With considerable government control	36.2	18.6	28.8	24.2	22.0	24.4	30.8	25.7	24.4
State-planned economy	25.7	15.3	13.2	18.5	14.0	13.4	15.7	14.1	17.9

Table 9

Dynamics of answering the question: "What enterprise would you like to work at?", %

Variant of answer	11'97	06'06	09'07	10'08	09'09	09'10	03'11	03'13
State	53.5	52.0	47.9	44.9	44.1	42.6	43.0	40.5
Private	35.7	33.0	39.3	33.1	28.0	32.9	36.2	41.0

Table 10

Distribution of answers to the question: "If you, or your relatives and acquaintances have gone to work abroad for the last several years, then what countries have you gone to?", % (more than one answer is possible)

Variant of answer	%
To Russia	34.2
To the European Union countries (including the Baltic states)	14.1
To Ukraine	4.5
To other countries	5.3

They can be interpreted in different ways, including as a proof of firmness of the socio-economic model (a market socialism model) which the majority of Belarusians voted for in 1994.

Economic priorities of Belarusians have not changed for incomplete fifteen years, although one cannot deny a slight trend towards market economy and preference to work at private enterprises.

with considerable government control and state-planned economy, Belarusians nevertheless put Germany first (17.6%) when answering the open-end question: "What foreign country can be a model for Belarus' economic development, in your opinion?" Other countries inside the top five are Russia – 12%, the USA – 9.6%, Poland – 9.3%, and China – 5.5%.

The topic of labor migration is becoming more and more urgent in Belarus with every passing year. We will make just one example (it has been borrowed from the website of the Ministry of Economic Affairs): "The lowest percentage of realization of the estimated figures for placing domestic buildings in operation in the first quarter of 2013 is registered in Vitebsk, Gomel and Mogilev regions. The main reason for the established situation is the outflow of highly skilled specialists in the construction sphere abroad".

According to the official data of Belstat, the unemployment level in Belarus is invariably less than 1%. However, Belstat takes into account only the unemployed registered with the employment service. Opinion polls let us reveal another reality that contrasts sharply with the figures of Belstat (Table 11).

Over a third of Belarusians (36.4%) have been in an unemployed capacity, with women more often than men – 36.3% and 31.6% respectively. As for age, within the range between 18 and 50 it is not a

Table 11

Dynamics of answering the question: "Have you ever been unemployed?", %

Variant of answer	04'00	06'08	05'11	03'13
No	72.9	61.1	61.5	63.4
Yes, but I was not registered with the employment service	15.0	27.6	24.9	29.2
Yes, I was registered with the employment service	9.7	10.9	10.8	7.2
NA	2.4	0.4	2.8	0.2

Table 12

Dynamics of answering the question: "What opinion do you agree with?", %

Variant of answer	06'09	06'10	05'11	06'12	03'13
Belarus needs changes	48.0	62.0	61.1	77.3	74.8
Belarus needs stability	46.4	25.4	32.5	15.1	16.2
DA/NA	5.6	12.6	6.4	7.6	9.0

The March opinion poll confirmed the reality of the problem. Answering the question: "Have you, or your relatives and acquaintances, had to go abroad to work for the last several years?" 33.9% said: "Yes, several times", and 14.9% – "Yes, once". Let us emphasize that answers of respondents concerned not only them personally, but also their relatives and acquaintances. Such a high level of answers follows from here.

It is natural that men went to work outside Belarus more than once more often than women – 39.4% vs. 29.3%. However, 29.3% of women are a lot, too. On the other hand, if cross-border trade is also meant by "working abroad", then such high level of women's labor activity should not surprise.

Because of the reasons mentioned above, respondents' age did not act as a factor contributing to, or on the contrary preventing from receiving an income outside the homeland's territory. Within the broad age range from 18- to 49-year-olds 40% mentioned repeated trips, at the age of 50 to 59 – 30%, 60 years of age and older – 19%. Dependence on the level of education proved to be unconvincing either: possessors of secondary school diplomas, secondary technical school and university diplomas – 36%, possessors of incomplete secondary and primary education certificates – 20 and 16%.

Table 10 presents the structure of geographical preferences of Belarusian guest workers. It is natural that Russia proved to be the leader; it was mentioned by 34.2% of respondents. Another 14.1% for the European Union countries confirm our supposition that cross-border trade is also meant by going to work abroad.

factor determining the probability for a Belarusian to become unemployed. When the level of education advances (from secondary to higher) the share of respondents who say they have been unemployed, grows, too – from 21.4% to 41%. Respondents with primary and incomplete secondary education are mostly elderly women living in the rural area. Due to the reasons requiring no comments it is quite difficult to talk about unemployment among representatives of the given social group. As for respondents with a high level of education, their demands concerning payment and job description are naturally overstated relative to respondents with a low level of education. That is why one should not be surprised that they found themselves in an unemployed capacity more often.

Among the answers to the question: "What are you concerned about most of all today?", the option "Job loss" ranked third having yielded to the concern to lose health and find oneself in poverty (59.1%, 30.2% and 27.2% respectively), which once again convinces us of the reality of the unemployment problem for Belarusians. And the matter does not concern the absence of workplaces as such. Having kept Soviet economic structure in large part, architects of the Belarusian economic model thereby preserved unskilled (and therefore low-paid) workplaces. However, modern Belarusians' requirements level is not comparable with the requirements level of "the Soviet man" of Brezhnev's stagnation epoch. And the problems follow from here.

In search of Belarusian society's modernization potential

Belarus needs changes. Three fourths of the republic's adult population agrees with this opinion (Table 12). It is 26.8 points higher than in June, 2009 at the height of the world crisis. Thus one can ascertain that the population's assessment of the Belarusian socio-economic model differs fundamentally from the assessment of its main architect. And this happens in the nineteenth year of the construction.

The share of changes supporters made up 94.5% among the Belarusians considering themselves in opposition to the authorities (16.9%). However, among the adult residents of the Republic-the-partisan who do not attribute themselves to opposition (72%) the share of changes supporters is rather high too – 70.5%. Opinions, of course, differ. That is why public consensus regarding the necessity of changes should be considered, in the first place, as an indicator of the discomfort feeling that has seized Belarusian society. And one should not believe that the feeling is growing solely on the economic substratum.

Table 13

Distribution of answers to the question: "In his New Year address to the people president A. Lukashenko said that "fundamental renewal and speeded up modernization of enterprises" will become a guarantee of Belarusian nationhood strengthening and of people's prosperity growth in 2013. Do you agree with the statement of president A. Lukashenko?", %

Variant of answer	%
Yes	50.3
No	34.2
DA/NA	15.5

An analysis of the main trends of the recent years shows that the model of a "strong state" whose basis is formed by the top-down command structure and a ruling class represented by the state bureaucracy is not able to provide a new impetus to the development of the economic and political systems of the country. On the contrary, it turns into a source of problems lowering the operating efficiency of the government machinery.

The policy correctness index (PCI) has been signaling of the "model's" problems for four polls in succession. Traditionally, its values were higher than the values of the financial standing index (FSI). However, in spite of the fact that the acute phase of the economic crisis was over the PCI values have proved to be lower than the FSI values since June, 2012.

Mass demand for changes returns us a quarter of a century back to Gorbachev's Perestroika that began with the recognition of the necessity of changes and was completed by the movie of S. Govorukhin "It's impossible to live like this anymore". Shooting a remake of Govorukhin's film in Belarus is non-topical at the moment. Society and most important the ruling class have not ventured in their awareness of hopelessness of the way chosen in 1994 far enough yet.

Analyzing the current opinion polls results one should bear in mind the factor of generations' natural succession. New social reality is being formed gradually, that is why it is not so easy to discern changes taking place in the forest (in society and the state) behind separate trees (separate facts). The world crisis is also making its contribution to the forming of a new social reality. The rich "zero" years remained in the past, as well as the high rates of economic growth.

In reply to the growth of mass awareness of the changes necessity the ruling class (state bureaucracy) did not manage to suggest a scenario (scenarios) of the future. Everything boiled down to the trite suggestion to modernize enterprises to an accomplished standard and at a rapid pace (Table 13).

Half of Belarusians agreed with such interpretation of modernization. The greatest contribution to the "half" was made by the respondents with primary education– 73.5%, and the respondents of the oldest age group (60 years of age and older) – 63.2%. Due to understandable reasons, neither the former, nor the latter are planning to take active part in modernization of enterprises.

Taking into account the disposition of elderly people with a low level of education to support A. Lukashenko, we can draw a conclusion that answers to the question of Table 13 more likely reflect an attitude of Belarusians to the head of state than an attitude to his suggestion to modernize enterprises. The given conclusion is confirmed by the dependence of answers on respondents' political preferences: supporters of the authorities – 55.5%, opponents of the authorities – 36.5%.

"If we dismiss rhetoric, then as it stands the essence of the "modernization" concept boils down to the following: it is possible to give a new momentum to the development of society in general and economy in particular only by straining political will and by correct goal-setting without making any fundamental changes at the heart of the political and economic systems". Everything said by political scientist V. Pastukhov regarding modernization suggestions of D. Medvedev can be carried to the Belarusian soil without editing and correcting.

When talking about modernization specialists single out three components: techno-economic, social and political. *Techno-economic modernization of enterprises*, agencies and the population's mode of life means adoption of new technologies, scientific-and-

technological advancements, etc. *Social modernization* requires considerable changes in the sphere of public relations, in labor-management relations, first of all; it requires a reform of the educational system, development of the private sector, restriction of the state's role in economy and so forth. *Political moder-*

as are. Let us remind the readers that at the Soviet time the slogan about "speeding up the scientific-technological progress" was constantly present in newspaper columns, which reflected the authorities' aspiration to catch up and outdo America with the help of simple technological approaches and without

Table 14

Distribution of answers to the question: "What measures, do you think, can ensure conducting of successful modernization in the country?", % (more than one answer is possible)

Variant of answer	%
Active implementation of new progressive technologies	46.6
Training of personnel able to accomplish modernization of the country	41.4
Eradication of corruption	40.1
Improvement of state officials' working efficiency	31.4
Taking into account public opinion regarding what should be changed in the country and how it should be done by the leaders of the state	22.0
Development of democracy, increase in social and political activity of citizens	18.1
DA	6.1

Table 15

Distribution of answers to the question: "Do you think the money directed to modernization of enterprises will be spent...", %

Variant of answer	%
Efficiently	26.5
Inefficiently	33.4
Will be embezzled	28.1
DA/NA	12.0

nization presupposes changes in the country's political system, its democratization and liberalization.

In Belarus public opinion in general shares the division of modernization by specialists into three components, although not without a trend towards the techno-economic side (Table 14). The last places of the measures employed by the leaders of the state for the purpose of taking into consideration public opinion (22%) and democracy developing (18.1%) are the evidence of the aforesaid. Naturally, respondents not trusting A. Lukashenko pointed at the necessity of conducting political modernization more often than their political opponents (28.3% vs. 15.5% and 23.4% vs. 13.4%), but they, too, showed preference to the techno-economic component of modernization over the political one.

If the main contribution to the affirmative answer to the question of Table 13 was made by representatives of the peripheral social groups (elderly people, people with a low level of education and those living in towns and villages), then educated people at the economically active age believe more (though by a slender margin) in the success of modernization through active adoption of new progressive technology when answering the question of Table 14. Thus the concept of modernization as such does not provoke rejection in any of the social groups. The situation changes when A. Lukashenko acts as the prime mover of modernization.

It is a separate topic what the real possibilities of modernization carried out with a techno-economic bi-

solving system problems. How it all wound up is well known.

The main problem of any modernization, regardless of the fact which component is made its cornerstone, is the problem of a subject. In Belarus state officials find themselves in this capacity head and shoulders above the rest. The head of state's regular reminders that "modernization of the economy is not the task of public sector alone" do not change the monopoly position of the officials-the-modernizers. The ability of the state to mobilize society to labor deeds was next to nothing already by the end of the "dear Leonid Ilyich" epoch. In order to bring into play the personal interest potential change of the "model" is required; today, however, the state cannot venture to it.

Society, which is not surprising, assesses the prospects of modernization financial cost rather skeptically (Table 15). Less than half of respondents (47.6%) believe in the efficiency of modernization cost even among those who trust A. Lukashenko (7.3% – among those who do not trust him).

Although only 26.5% believe in the possibility of spending the money effectively, 35.4% believe in the possibility of modernizing the economy by means of a technological breakthrough, which is 8.9 points more! Another 10.5% of optimists who think that Belarus is a leader of up-to-date technologies even now should be added to the 35.4%. We are not going to try and comment on such a mixture of optimistic hopes and economic ignorance. However, this is exactly the so-

Table 16

Distribution of answers to the question: "Which of the listed below items do you own?", %
(more than one answer is possible)

Variant of answer	Belarus (03'13)	Russia (03'10)*
An apartment, a house	68.8	85
A summer cottage, a plot of land with a house	22.0	27
A garage, a place at a community parking lot	15.5	20
A plot of land without a house	5.0	14
Savings enough to live on for a year	7.4	4
A second dwelling	4.1	3

* Data of the Sociology Institute of the Russian Academy of Science

cial reality of a split society in which the "majority" wants to work *in the Soviet way*, and earn as people do *in the West*.

As K. Marx correctly noticed at his time, the mole of history keeps "digging" even if not so fast as supporters of liberal reforms in Belarus would like it to be. That is why not everything is so hopeless. Let us refer to Table 16. It should be explained here that a successful society begins with *bürgerliche Gesellschaft* (petty bourgeois society), not with mass political protests. Everything begins with a normal life for oneself and one's nearest and dearest. Involvement in solving the problems of large society, including modernization ones, is already another step. Although the hopes of Belarusians for getting *their share* of the state property after the collapse of the USSR were not destined to come true, a majority of them became proprietors nevertheless, if not of "factories, newspapers and steamships" then of their apartments. However trite the fact might look today, it should be recognized as a revolutionary one.

Relative to Russians Belarusians have accumulated less property. That is the result of the difference (even if not fundamental, but tangible) in socio-economic models inside the Union State. Nevertheless, the majority of Belarusians are very well aware of their economic interests as proprietors. The ever growing value of the social component in the policy of the Belarusian socially-oriented police-ridden state follows from here.

Pluralism of interests and opinions without which modern society is unthinkable cannot be supported by relying on traditions. Agreement is possible only within the bounds of the law. Unfortunately, it should be admitted that forming of a demand for strengthening of lawfulness in Belarus finds itself at the initial stage. Today the law as a development factor cannot rival a *good supervisor*. In March the advantage of the latter over the former was expressed by the ratio 59.7% to 33.3%.

Public demand for state paternalism keeps remaining high, too. Only 4.1 % agree that the state should not at all interfere with the life of citizens and that everyone should count only on him/herself, whereas 35.6% charge the state with the duty of a general equalizer ("the state should ensure complete equality of all citizens, including proprietary").

The absence of demand for the law supremacy is typical of class and caste societies, i.e. of traditional societies. It is no mere chance that the slogan of formal equality of all society members is one of the key slogans of bourgeois revolutions.

The world experience proves that it is impossible to achieve success in reforms directed at securing the modern quality of life for the citizens without understanding and groundswell grass-roots support, without consolidation of all the forces called to participate in modernization processes. However, only society which has attained the stage of a political subject in its development is able to provide grass-roots support. Although it is possible to create an industrialized country from an agrarian one with the help of authoritarian methods (we are not discussing the matter of price now), such methods are found powerless to turn an industrialized country into a post-industrial one.

Even if Belarus' own Lee Kuan Yew (the first Prime Minister of Singapore) finds himself at the head of the state, the problem of modernization (of any of its components) will be hampered by the society's modernization potential. That is why success of modernization is not obvious even under such wise supervision.

It does not follow from here, however, that without the appearance of one's own Lee Kuan Yew the process of modernization will not move from a leisurely phase into an active one. Let us remember *Perestroika*. It began with the recognition of technological backwardness and the economic life's stagnation by the leaders of the country (in Belarus this stage has already been passed). Then there was an attempt to find a way to solve the problem by means of mobilizing the available resources (this stage is unfolding in Belarus right before our very eyes). When the attempt to improve the state of affairs without changing anything failed (this stage will become pressing for Belarus in medium-term prospect), the necessity to embark on "correcting" reforms was acknowledged. Finally, when the "correcting" reforms reached a stalemate, came the recognition of the "system changes" necessity.

The gap between expectations and reality as an irritation factor

Making a forecast for March we assumed the existence of a connection between A. Lukashenko's rating and the level of cognac consumption in the country. In February average daily consumption of cognac in Belarus increased by 13.5% relative to January and made up 1.01 thousand dl. This is 69% higher than a similar rate of February 2012. Paraphrasing O. Bender we dare to surmise that cognac consumption is not luxury, but a means to satisfy reasonable needs of modern Belarusians, at least of their statistically significant part.

mally (+0.2 points), in March the head of state's trust rating exceeded his distrust rating, i.e. "the new majority" ceased to exist without having proved itself in any way.

It should be mentioned that against the background of a slight growth in A. Lukashenko's trust rating, the government's trust rating did not change: in March 2013 – 35.6%, in December 2012 – 35%. On the other hand, the trust rating of state mass media "has lost" 10 points for three months (Table 19). In December 2010 the level of trust in mass media in Belarusian society became equal with A. Lukashenko's electoral rating; then their almost synchronous decrease began and continued up to

Table 17

Dynamics of A. Lukashenko's electoral rating*, %

Date	12'10	03'11	06'11	09'11	12'11	03'12	06'12	09'12	12'12	03'13
Rating	53.0	42.9	29.3	20.5	24.9	34.5	29.7	31.6	31.5	33.4

* Electoral rating is the specific weight of answers to the open-end question: "If tomorrow presidential elections were held again in Belarus, who would you vote for?"

Table 18

Dynamics of A. Lukashenko's trust rating*, %

Variant of answer	03'11	06'11	09'11	12'11	03'12	06'12	12'12	03'13
Trust	47.9	33.6	24.5	31.2	42.2	38.5	39.1	43.4
Do not trust	42.0	53.8	62	54.5	48.5	51.9	49.1	43.2
DA	10.1	12.6	13.5	14.3	9.3	9.6	11.8	13.4

* The trust rating is defined by the specific weight of affirmative answers to the question: "Do you trust...?"

Table 19

Dynamics of state mass media trust rating, %

Variant of answer	12'10	03'11	06'11	09'11	12'11	03'12	06'12	12'12	03'13
Trust	52.9	43.4	39.2	25.7	28.6	33.9	32.4	38.1	28.1
Do not trust	38.4	48.5	52.6	62.2	58.7	53.1	58.4	50.8	53.6
DA	8.7	8.1	8.2	12.1	12.7	9.2	9.2	11.1	18.3

Growth of A. Lukashenko's electoral rating for the first quarter of the current year has not exceeded statistical error (Table 17). This "stability" has been observed in the course of five opinion polls already. However, the state had to pay for it with a two-digit income growth of the population, a considerable part of which moved to the producers of import consumer goods, including cognac. Thus, the tentative process of Belarusians moving from domestic vodka (consumption of vodka in January and February of 2013 decreased by 7% relative to January and February of 2012) to imported cognac might be considered as a factor that not only stabilized the head of state's electoral rating, but also contributed to its growth.

In March A. Lukashenko's trust rating increased by 4.3 points in comparison with December, which is higher than statistical error (Table 18). However, no considerable changes occurred relative to the value of the year before. Let us mention for the supporters of the "new majority" theory that, though entirely for-

the August historic minimum, after which a synchronous increase began again.

The March fall of the state mass media trust rating took place against an increase up to a record level in the number of respondents who found it difficult to answer (see the last column of Table 19). That is an unmistakable sign of the growth of the state of frustration in society, i.e. the state which is perceived by the subject as a threat to satisfaction of this or that need of his/hers. It becomes apparent in a number of emotional processes such as disappointment, anxiety, irritation and even despair.

The data of Table 20 ranged until the year of 2013 let us assess the dynamics of hopes pinned by public opinion on the institutions which should be called "economic development institutions" in the given context. Analyzing the presented results one should keep in mind that 1994 was the year of mass euphoria caused by the outcome of the first presidential elec-

tion, 2008 was the last pre-crisis year, and 2009 was the year of the world financial crisis.

Rating problems that have not let A. Lukashenko alone since the second half of 2011 manifest them-

Table 20

Dynamics of answering the question: "Who (what) would you pin your hopes for Belarus economic development on?", % (more than one answer is possible)

Variant of answer	11'94	03'08	06'09	03'13
Attraction of foreign capital	26.6	37.4	52.7	52.8
Belarusian businessmen	23.3	22.0	23.2	34.6
President of the country	48.7	44.4	35.7	31.6
Government of the country	17.4	20.4	34.2	27.0
Directors of state enterprises, collective farms	20.5	16.1	16.5	22.9
Political parties and movements	8.0	6.4	7.2	10.7
National Assembly	8.8	2.3	4.6	5.4
Mass media	6.6	2.9	1.8	5.4
The country's legal system	5.6	3.0	3.2	4.1
The army, security bodies	8.0	2.0	2.1	3.6

Table 21

Distribution of answers to the question: "President A. Lukashenko has a personal aircraft, goes by expensive cars and wears an expensive watch and suits. What is your attitude to it?", %

Variant of answer	All respondents	Trust A. Lukashenko	Do not trust A. Lukashenko
This is proper, the president should look impressive, he is the face of the state	31.0	53.4	9.8
This is proper but for a rich country	36.0	27.4	44.0
This is improper, the president should live modestly	28.2	13.7	43.6
DA/NA	4.8	5.5	2.6

In 1994 A. Lukashenko as a factor of hope for economic development was a hands-down winner. During the next 14 years he and "the Belarusian economic model of development" created under his guidance did not disappoint the electoral "majority". As for other institutions, apart from foreign capital (+10.8 points) they, as the saying goes, "broke even".

Changes began already the following year under the influence of the world financial crisis (it is a separate question whether the crisis should be considered as a reason or just a cause). Ignoring the fact of the crisis western "official residential registration", public opinion reconsidered the "foreign investment" status having added another 15.3 points to it! The government found itself in the role of the crisis important beneficiary (+13.8 points), and this is quite natural: who else should settle the economic problems which came like a bolt from the blue from God knows where?

Analyzing the last column it is necessary to bear in mind the year of 2011 with its man-made crisis. We think its contribution to the reappraisal of hope factors proved to be decisive. Contrary to the official policy with regard to private business supported by the appropriate rhetoric, today Belarusians pin more hopes on businessmen than on the head of state. What does it signal of: of fundamental changes in society or we are witnessing a random fluctuation? One wants to believe in the former, however some time is required in order not to give way to wishful thinking.

selves vividly in the attitude of Belarusians to certain decisions of the head of state. In particular, only 12.4% estimated nomination of P. Prokopovich vice chairman of the government positively, 28.8% – negatively, and 43.2% remained indifferent. There is no doubt that P. Prokopovich's "success" demonstrated by the aged top-manager especially cogently in 2011 made its contribution to more than a twofold prevalence of negative assessments over positive ones. Naturally, the assessment proved to be politically loaded: the head of state's personnel decision was assessed positively by 24% of respondents who trust him, and by 1.8% of those who do not.

The split of public opinion concerning A. Lukashenko's suggestion to raise state officials' salaries by 25% at the expense of reducing their numbers was predictable. Only 30% believed in the efficiency of such a decision (45.3% among those who trust him, and 14.5% among those who do not), and 56.2% did not believe in it (39.5% and 76.8% respectively).

Thus, A. Lukashenko's most important decisions made at the beginning of the current year did not receive a majority's support even among Belarusians trusting him.

In the course of the press-conference for Belarusian and foreign mass media which took place on January, 15 journalist of Radio Free Europe A. Dashchinsky asked A. Lukashenko why he did not set a personal example in "The Year of Thrift" (he was hinting at the aircraft, "Maybach", and the expen-

sive watch). The verbose answer of the head of state goes into two short sentences: "There is a certain standard. I represent the country today".

Let us refer to the data of Table 21. The share of respondents who had agreed with A. Lukashenko's explanation did not exceed a third, and among supporters of the president there were a little bit more than half of such people.

Concluding the rating topic let us once again draw your attention to the disparity between the material resources spent on maintenance of the head of

able to mobilize somebody for something under the established conditions.

Even the crisis of 2011 did not manage to lead Belarusian society out of the political apathy condition. It should be admitted, though, that at its peak certain progress was made. In September the share of citizens considering themselves in opposition to the authorities reached a historic minimum (Table 23), having grown by 9.4 points relative to December 2012 (that was the month of electoral mobilization). However, after the completion of the crisis

Table 22

Dynamics of opposition parties' trust rating, %

Variant of answer	12'10	06'11	09'11	12'11	03'12	12'12	03'13
Rating	16.3	20.1	12.3	13.4	17.0	20.0	13.1

Table 23

Dynamics of answering the question: "Do you consider yourself to be in opposition to the present authorities?", %

Variant of answer	12'10	06'11	09'11	12'11	03'12	06'12	12'12	03'13
Yes	18.9	25.8	28.3	22.6	23.4	19.2	21.3	16.9
No	72.4	60.3	56.0	63.8	66.0	71.6	65.8	72.0
DA/NA	8.7	13.9	15.7	13.6	10.6	9.2	12.9	11.1

state's rating and the obtained result. However, the authorities have nothing else in their arsenal that is why one should not be surprised at the promises made at the end of March to increase the average pay up to \$ 1000 in the coming years.

We have a lot of trouble believing that such promises can be kept; on the other hand, what we have no doubts about is the growth of relative expectation deprivation, i.e. an increase in divergence between expectations and reality. The number of A. Lukashenko's supporters directly depends on the extent to which deprivation phenomena have spread. The most deprived citizens are inclined to deny support to the head of state. Moreover, he acts as an irritation factor for them.

Opposition avitaminosis

The first opinion poll of 2013 registered a considerable decrease in the trust rating of opposition political parties (Table 22). The fact of the rating decrease to 13.1% per se should not be regarded as an anomalous phenomenon. Even lower values were registered in the crisis year of 2011. Talking about an anomaly, one should rather ascribe it to the previous (December) rating value when it unexpectedly "jumped up" to 20%.

It should be admitted that it is not an easy task to explain the dynamics of opposition parties' trust rating either by internal party events, the largest part of which boils down to "showdowns", or by changes in the context external for opposition parties. When society finds itself in the political apathy condition, opposition parties live their own life. This is objective reality. Only naïve people can believe that opposition is

acute phase the level of opposition sentiment in society began to decrease. The March opinion poll only registered a continuation of the given tendency.

Mass media became the principle victim of the political apathy growth in society. The trust rating of state mass media had decreased by 10 points for three months – from 38.1% to 28.1%; of non-state mass media – by 19.3 (!) points, from 48.1% to 28.8% (Tables 24-25).

Attention should be paid to the single change algorithm of the trust ratings of state and non-state mass media. At the electoral mobilization moment (December, 2011) the ratings were the highest possible, and that was quite natural. At the peak of the crisis both ratings reached their minimum; at that the non-state mass media rating exceeded the state mass media rating which should not surprise, as most Belarusians held the state responsible for the crisis.

Why then did the non-state mass media rating decrease, and later while the economic situation was improving it began to grow simultaneously with the state mass media rating? Our supposition is as follows: mass media ratings (state and non-state) are not only the function of the authorities' popularity level (the mentioned factor influences state and non-state mass media in a reverse manner), they are the function of society's political agitation.

In December trust ratings of state and non-state mass media "jumped up" similar to the opposition parties trust rating and the level of opposition sentiment in order to sink to the minimum in March.

What transferred society from the deep hibernation condition to the drowse condition in the last month of the previous year? Besides

A. Lukashenko's media activity (at the end of November and at the beginning of December he carried out a number of public floggings of the officials responsible for modernization of woodworking enterprises) we do not find any other sources of agitation. However, if our guess is safe, then the effect of such media activity could be only temporary. And that is exactly what happened.

Table 24

Dynamics of state mass media trust rating, %									
Variant of answer	12'10	03'11	06'11	09'11	12'11	03'12	06'12	12'12	03'13
Trust	52.9	43.4	39.2	25.7	28.6	33.9	32.4	38.1	28.1
Do not trust	38.4	48.5	52.6	62.2	58.7	53.1	58.4	50.8	53.6
DA	8.7	8.1	8.2	12.1	12.7	9.2	9.2	11.1	18.3

Table 25

Dynamics of non-state mass media trust rating, %									
Variant of answer	12'10	03'11	06'11	09'11	12'11	03'12	06'12	12'12	03'13
Trust	46.3	45.5	46.2	32.2	32.3	34.3	35.5	48.1	28.8
Do not trust	41.1	42.2	39.5	52.2	52.7	46.1	48.1	38.2	50.2
DA	12.6	12.3	14.3	15.0	15.0	19.6	16.4	13.7	21.0

Table 26

Dynamics of answering the question: "What do you think about the readiness of people in Belarus to express their political views?", %					
Variant of answer	02'01	06'06	10'10	06'11	03'13
Nobody is afraid/Only some people are afraid	55.8	47.1	32.6	27.5	32.7
Many people are afraid/Everybody is afraid	35.8	48.1	59.3	68.4	60.7

Attention should also be paid to the abnormally high value in the column "Found it difficult to answer" in March (18.3% in Table 24 and 21% in Table 25). This is a typical situation when an attitude changes dramatically, as those who have supported somebody/something today cannot desert to the camp of the opponents of somebody/something at once. That is why they join the ranks of those who find it difficult to answer.

Answers to the question: "Are you personally ready to participate in politics more actively?" also testify to the March apathy level of Belarusian society: "Definitely/More likely yes" – 21.2% and "More likely/Definitely no" – 75.9%. A year before in March, 2012 the level of readiness to actively participate in politics (this refers, of course, to declarative not real readiness) was higher – 24.6% and 73.1% respectively.

There is another example of declarative political activity: in March 10.8% of respondents announced their readiness to stand in local elections in 2014 as candidates, 9.8% refused because of the necessity to boycott the elections (supporters of boycotting the parliamentary elections of 2012 may enter it as an achievement) and 69.4% refused due to other reasons.

The political apathy condition is also confirmed by the low level of interpersonal trust. In March only 23.1% agreed that the majority of people could be trusted, whereas the opposite point of view ("it is necessary to

be very careful in relations with people") was supported by 70%. Similar results are registered by Russian sociologists on a regular basis. However, the first national opinion polls held by the All-Russian Public Opinion Research Center in 1989 showed a totally different level of trust – 52%, which decreased, however, to 34% already in 1991, and then reached a "plateau" (22-26%).

There are a number of scientific explanations of the growth in interpersonal trust in the period of society's political mobilization. At the moment, however, we are going to confine ourselves to stating the fact: a low level of interpersonal trust is one of the base characteristics of society that finds itself in the political apathy condition.

Here is a short conclusion from the aforesaid: an abnormal decrease in the indicators reflecting the level of opposition sentiment in March should be regarded as a consequence of their abnormal growth in December. The reasons for the December anomaly are not completely clear.

A growth in the population's income is an important, but not the only component used by the authorities in order to maintain social stability. The second, not less important component is fear. A "reasonable" combination of the first and the second components (of stick and carrot) allows us to describe the state built under the guidance of A. Lukashenko, first of all, as socially oriented, and secondly, as police-ridden.

For the last 12 years the share of Belarusians who agree that in the "State for the people" everybody (i.e. people) is afraid to express one's political views has grown three times – from 6.3% to 19.3%.

Comparing the last two columns of Table 26, though, we can ascertain that contribution of the political component to the maintenance of social stability reached the saturation stage and even grew shorter

having returned to the level of 2010 (the year of liberalization policy). There is certain logic in the given dynamics. There is no doubt that economic problems rank first today. It is for a reason that at the meeting on the questions of improving the composition, numbers and functions of state bodies A. Lukashenko said literally the following: "I vote that a government employee were the number one employee in the country. It is perhaps even more important than a military man, because we are charged at different levels with governing these military men. That is why the government employee's status should be raised considerably".

Table 27

Dynamics of answering the question: "Have you been offended by representatives of government agencies for the last three years?", %

Variant of answer	03'05	03'08	06'11	03'13
No, I haven't	73.8	57.4	61.1	68.1
Yes, many times	7.2	6.8	4.8	3.3
Yes, several times	13.6	18.1	17.8	11.4
Yes, once	5.2	13.1	11.1	12.1
Total number of the offended	26.0	38.0	33.7	26.8
DA/NA	0.2	4.1	5.2	5.1

Table 28

Dynamics of answering the question: "Are human rights upheld in Belarus?", %

Variant of answer	04'01	03'03	03'04	06'06	09'07	03'13
Yes/More likely yes	25.1	32.2	42.9	61.0	55.7	51.1
More likely no/No	74.4	62.4	50.6	34.3	38.9	33.9

Answers to the question of Table 27 also confirm the process of stabilization of the "State for the people" police component in its Belarusian version. In comparison with March, 2008 the share of Belarusians offended by the authorities shrank by 11.2 points. Activists of opposition parties may not agree with such statistics. We do not assert that the authorities have decreased pointed repressions against their political adversaries. Judging by A. Lukashenko's numerous statements they still find themselves in the capacity of "people's enemies" and "the fifth column". Public opinion, however, unambiguously signals of a change in priorities when the state uses its two main stabilization components.

At first sight dynamics of assessments of human rights observance in Belarus (Table 28) contradict offences dynamics (Table 27). Since April, 2001 to June, 2006 the sum of positive assessments increased 2.4 times! What other state can boast such progress in the sphere of human rights observance! However, after 2006 a reverse process began.

Both tendencies have been stimulated by one and the same reason – the condition of economy. It is customary to divide human rights into political and economic ones. However, a typical representative of the Belarusian "majority" has no need for political rights. He/she votes for the authoritarian "father" with admirable regularity in order to be freed by him from

the necessity to be interested in and to be engaged in politics.

The economic component of human rights is a different matter. That is why the year of the greatest progress (2006) of the Belarusian socio-economic model coincided with the year of maximum observance of human rights. It is not difficult to foretell that with the growth of economic problems a larger number of Belarusians will feel discomfort from violation of their rights, and the state will be perceived by Belarusians as the main "violateur".

Through the request of the civil campaign "Our House" the question: "If you knew a person who

could successfully compete with A. Lukashenko in the next presidential election, would you vote for him or for A. Lukashenko?" was included into the March questionnaire. Respondents' answers proved to be foreseeable. An unknown (virtual) candidate would gain a victory over A. Lukashenko in the virtual presidential election with more than a twofold advantage: 69.1% vs. 30%. However, we would not recommend drawing far-reaching conclusions from the given ratio. The advantage of the virtual candidate is in his virtuality. Every respondent creates him on his own in accordance with his personal conception about an ideal candidate. It is clear that such a candidate is devoid of negative characteristics. So why not vote for him?

What power Belarusians need

Answers to the question given in Table 29 let us compare electoral ratings of the country's political parties and movements. The data are ranged according to the answers to a close-end question (the second column). As it can be seen, when respondents answer an open-end question the values of the ratings prove to be lower.

The only exception is the BNF Party (leader A. Yanukevich). What called it forth? In our opinion, it is caused by the respondents' response not only to the name of the party, but also to the leaders' last names. When respondents were answering the

close-end question they were offered a list of parties together with the leaders' last names, as it is given in Table 29. That is why they had a chance to form their answers under the influence of not just one, but two "hints".

parties and movements (135.6 thousand – the official web-site of the movement), nor the official status of a "real patriot of Belarus" that A. Lukashenko awarded to the leader of "Belaya Rus" A. Radkov at some point, nor the access to the state mass media man

Table 29

Distribution of answers to the open-end (the first column) and the close-end (the second column) question: "If tomorrow parliamentary elections took place, candidates of which of the listed below political parties and movements would you vote for?"*, %

Variant of answer	1	2
Movement "For Freedom" (leader A. Milinkevich)	4.0	10.9
Civil Campaign "Tell the Truth/Civil Agreement" (leader V. NeklyaeV)	1.8	10.0
Belarusian "The Green Party" (leader O. Novikov)	4.2	8.9
Conservative Christian Party – BNF (leader Z. Poznyak)	2.0	8.9
Joint Civil Party (leader A. Lebedko)	3.0	6.8
Belarusian Agrarian Party (leader M. Shimansky)	3.3	6.5
Non-Governmental Association "Belaya Rus" (leader A. Radkov)	4.4	6.3
Liberal Democratic Party (leader S. Gaidukevich)	3.6	6.0
BNF Party (leader A. Yanukevich)	6.5	5.9
Belarusian Left-Wing Party "The Just World" (leader S. Kalyakin)	2.1	5.8
"Belarusian Social Democratic Society" Party (leader S. Shushkevich)	2.0	4.9
Belarusian Social Democratic Party (Gramada) (leader I. Veshtard)	2.1	4.8
Communist Party of Belarus (leader T. Golubeva)	2.0	4.8
Non-Governmental Association "The Young Front" (leader D. Dashkevich)	1.9	4.2
Civil Campaign "Our House" (leader O. Karach)	1.4	3.3
Republican Party of Labor and Justice (leader V. Zadnepryany)	1.1	3.1
Belarusian Social Sports Party (leader V. Aleksandrovich)	0.5	1.4
"European Belarus"	1.4	–
Belarusian Patriotic Party (leader N. Ulakhovich)	0.4	1.3
Republican Party (leader V. Belozor)	0.4	1.0
Social Democratic Party of People's Accord	0.2	1.0
Belarusian Republican Youth's Union (BRYU)	0.2	–
DA		37.4

* Tables 29-32 are made up from the answers to the questions included into the poll through the request of the Civil Campaign "Our House"

When respondents were answering the close-end question, the rating of the Conservative Christian Party – BNF, headed by Z. Poznyak, proved to be 2.6 points higher than by the BNF Party headed by A. Yanukevich, which is indicative of a still high level of the personal popularity of the Belarusian Front founder. Giving answers to the open-end question (i.e. when the "hints" are absent) many respondents are not able to differentiate between the two "fronts"; they merge into one – the BNF Party which led to the redistribution of voices from the CCP-BNF to the BNF Party.

The same reason accounts for the incommensurably low rating of the civil campaign "Tell the Truth/Civil Agreement" when respondents answer the open-end question (it is 5.6 times lower relative to the rating at answers to the close-end question). In this case the main electoral resource of the campaign is its leader, the poet and politician V. NeklyaeV.

The 7th place that the Non-Governmental Association "Belaya Rus" receives when respondents answer the close-end question should be paid attention to. Neither the numbers incommensurable with other

aged to increase the electoral popularity of the movement which had tried more than once to be transformed into "the party of power".

One of the explanations of the paradox should be looked for in the nature of the political regime in Belarus. The extent of its personification is not comparable with the Russian counterpart. This is the very case when size matters (the population and territory). That is why in Russia a national leader has to rely on the party of power accumulating the local elites' interests, and the Belarusian "father" does not need such support. He almost officially bears the title of the "only politician", which by the way he is very much proud of.

Here a historical analogy inevitably comes to mind. According to the legend, Caliph Umar ibn Al-Khattāb ordered to the military leader Amr ibn al-As to burn down the Alexandrian Library saying that: "If there is something in these books which is already in the Koran, they are useless. If there is something else in them, they are harmful. That is why they should be burnt in both cases".

Table 30

Distribution of answers to the question: "Imagine that 8 presidential contenders are registered for another presidential election. Each of them has his own campaign slogan. Which of the candidates (slogans) would you prefer?"

Variant of answer	%
The country needs clever and competent power	22.7
Justice and order	18.6
Give people self-confidence and confidence in the future	18.0
To help people – to help the country!	12.6
A strong hand means order!	11.4
Fewer taxes – more money for the people!	6.2
Bold decisions for my country	6.1
Let the people govern themselves	3.7
NA	0.7

Table 31

Distribution of answers to the question: "Imagine you live in an ideal country. What should it look like? What characteristics should this country possess?" (more than one answer is possible)

Variant of answer	%
People can succeed and make good money	42.0
Justice for everybody	35.9
State officials are professionals, not friends or relatives of other officials	33.0
People work a lot and earn a lot	26.5
President serves people, not rules over them	24.1
People feel free	22.7
People can choose their own destiny	20.1
People make decisions, not the president	14.0

The same is happening to the parties in Belarus. If they support the "father" they are useless both for the "father" and for his supporters. If they do not support him they are harmful. That is why they should not be let out from the political "ghetto" to the electoral site.

However, this is from the "father" and his supporters' point of view. One should not forget about the opposition-leaning part of Belarusian society that needs an alternative to the "father". That is why opposition parties and movements grouped mainly in the upper part of Table 29, whereas their political opponents – in the lower one.

Distribution of answers to the question of Table 30 can be interpreted as "a soft rating voting" regarding currency of political slogans. First of all, let us mention the virtual absence of respondents who found it difficult to answer. Consequently the suggested list of slogans has quite fully reflected the range of political problems which Belarusians are concerned about today.

The first place of the slogan "The country needs clever and competent power" which has outstripped the slogan "A strong hand means order!" (the fifth place) by 11.3 points is a peculiar "sign of misfortune" for the architect of the Belarusian socio-economic model. For the last several years a feeling of discomfort has begun to form in society. Belarusians see the Power as the source of the feeling more and more often. However, they do not reject power as it is, that is why the slogan "Let the people govern themselves" occupied the last line of Table 30; though today a

demand for another type of power is taking shape.

It is unlikely that answering the interviewers' questions respondents could at the moment remember F. Bacon, a philosopher of the XVI-XVII centuries, but it did not prevent them from being guided by the famous aphorism of the founder of English empiricism: "Knowledge is power". Thus, power as a source of order still remains at the heart of political concepts of Belarusians. Changes concerned its characteristics. Today a demand for clever and competent power is growing (clever and competent force). To what extent the present authorities are able to meet the altered demand is a separate topic.

The data of Table 31 introduce us to the rating of the main characteristics of an ideal country. Search for such a country is a permanent occupation of dozens of generations. Its main outline has not fundamentally changed for the last centuries. A land flowing with milk and honey is a mandatory attribute of an ideal country (see the first line). "Justice for everybody" perched itself a small step away from material abundance. The Biblical paradise, Oponskoye kingdom, Communism – all these are the outcome of the feeling of unsatisfied justice interpreted not as equality of everyone before the law, but as the right of each person for the equal share of the social pie. However, not the people should ensure "justice for everybody", i.e. for themselves (see the last line of Table 31). The state represented by its officials exists exactly for the purpose!

Table 32

Distribution of answers to the question: "Imagine that you are president of the country where the things are going bad, and people are unhappy. What would you do in the first place?" (more than one answer is possible)

Variant of answer	%
I would offer the people an opportunity to earn and succeed	41.6
I would create a peace-loving and prospering country	29.0
I would establish clear and understandable rules of life for everyone	26.6
I would select capable collaborators and rely on them	24.7
I would help people tooth and nail	23.2
I would make unpopular but bold decisions for my country	20.9
I would give people freedom to govern their own life	15.8
I would establish the power of a strong hand	13.4

Table 33

Distribution of answers to the question: "Which of the below listed opinions do you agree with?"

Variant of answer	%
The state should provide all the citizens with a certain minimum; those who want to get more should try to obtain it themselves	43.6
The state should ensure complete equality of all the citizens (proprietary, legal, political)	35.6
The state should help only the weak and helpless	14.2
The state should not interfere with the life of the citizens at all, everyone should rely only on oneself	4.1
DA/NA	2.5

In accordance with the saying "one cannot help harping on a sore point" the data of Table 31 reflect what sore point Belarusian society cannot help harping on. It is a peculiar result of the triumph of the Belarusian social and political model and Belarusian political culture. However, if the ways of changing the former are clear in principle, then how to change the latter is a problem with many unknown quantities.

The first acquaintance with the answers to the question of Table 32 buoys optimism, as leadership of the option "I would offer the people an opportunity to earn and succeed" takes us out from the world of a traditional person completely dependent on the bounties of the state. One should not be too hopeful, though. Another interpretation is possible here, too: "My personal wellbeing must be ensured by the officials (see Table 31); as for me, I am personally ready to turn people loose". These are, of course, extreme interpretations which do not take into account various nuances, but nevertheless.

Is the tsar's heart the best constitution?

As the data of Table 33 show, Belarusian society is quite far from the liberal view at the state as at a "night watchman". This view is shared by approximately 4% of respondents (with reserve – another 14.2%). There are almost twice as many supporters of complete equality, legal as well as proprietary. A relative majority sticks to moderately liberal (they are also moderately non-liberal) principles: freedom, however with certain state guarantees of wellbeing.

Belarusians treat the laws in a rather dialectic manner; less than a third believe that the law should

be unconditionally complied with (Table 34). It is clear that such an approach is caused by the current situation in which, on the one hand, many laws are disputable and even unjust, and on the other hand, those at the helm of state quite often do not bother to abide by the laws inconvenient for them.

However, it is difficult to assume that if the political and legal situation changes people who do not consider it necessary to follow the law will become law-abiding at once. However, the law-abiding reserve is present – those who are ready to follow the laws if the higher-ups do it.

The data of Table 35 are the most important. It is instructive to compare them with the rating of the incumbent president (it made up 33%). As it follows from the table, almost twice as many respondents considered that good leaders were more important than good laws having agreed in this case with the head of state.

It is interesting to note that answers to these worldview questions proved to be not very closely connected with one another (Table 36).

Ultra liberals, as well as inveterate adherents of etatism, pin their hopes on people and not on laws approximately to the same extent. Different people may imply different things defining "good leaders", but in any case they rely exactly on the higher-ups, not on an impersonal law.

There is a somewhat closer connection with the answers to the question about the attitude to the law (Table 37).

To all appearances, many supporters of the "justice above the law" view would approve of Madame de Staël formula addressed to the Russian emperor

Alexander I: "Your heart is the best constitution for your people". However, even the adherents of precise abiding by the law gave preference to people, not laws, by an absolute majority vote.

porters of a slight government control, those who do not trust A. Lukashenko and "Euro-Belarusians" are inclined to prefer good laws somewhat more often than respondents on average. However, in these

Table 34

Distribution of answers to the question: "Which of the below listed opinions do you agree with?"

Variant of answer	%
The laws should, of course, be observed even if they have become obsolete, but only if representatives of government agencies do it as well	37.8
The letter of the law should always be followed, even if the laws have become obsolete	31.7
It is not so much important whether something conforms to the law or does not – most important it should be just	26.4
DA/NA	4.1

Table 35

Distribution of answers to the question: "What, do you think, is more important for Belarus?"

Variant of answer	%
Good laws are more important for Belarus	33.3
Good leaders are more important for Belarus	59.7
DA/NA	7.0

Table 36

Connection of answers to the questions about the functions of the state and the dilemma between the laws and leaders*, %

Variant of answer	Good laws are more important for Belarus	Good leaders are more important for Belarus
The state should provide all the citizens with a certain minimum; those who want to get more should try to obtain it themselves	34.8	61.0
The state should ensure complete equality of all the citizens (proprietary, legal, political)	30.9	60.8
The state should help only the weak and helpless	41.1	54.2
The state should not interfere with the life of citizens at all, everyone should rely only on oneself	28.6	65.1

* The table is read across

Table 37

Connection of answers to the questions about the role of the law and the dilemma between the laws and leaders *, %

Variant of answer	Good laws are more important for Belarus	Good leaders are more important for Belarus
The laws should, of course, be observed even if they have become obsolete, but only if representatives of government agencies do it as well	35.3	59.1
The letter of the law should always be followed, even if the laws have become obsolete	38.2	56.6
It is not so much important whether something conforms to the law or does not – most important it should be just	26.4	67.3

* The table is read across

The data of Table 38 show a connection between the answers to the question of Table 35 and socio-demographic characteristics and political preferences.

The absence of difference in assessments in various groups of Table 38 is rather impressive. Sup-

groups too an absolute majority puts good leaders first.

There is a consensus value of the national political culture. An almost complete identity in the assessments of supporters and opponents of changes draws attention to itself, although there is some

Table 38

Socio-demographic characteristics, political preferences and the dilemma between the laws and leaders*, %

Variant of answer	Good laws are more important for Belarus	Good leaders are more important for Belarus
<i>Age:</i>		
18-29	32.4	59.7
30-59	35.6	57.8
60 +	28.8	64.2
<i>Education:</i>		
Primary	16.2	72.7
Incomplete secondary	30.0	63.6
Secondary	35.4	57.6
Vocational	35.8	57.1
Higher (including incomplete higher)	32.5	61.4
<i>What would you prefer for Belarus?</i>		
Market economy with slight government control	34.6	59.7
Market economy with considerable government control	30.2	65.2
State-planned economy	36.9	57.2
<i>What opinion do you agree with?</i>		
Belarus needs changes	33.8	60.2
Belarus does not need changes	33.5	61.6
<i>Do you trust the president?</i>		
I do	25.3	66.5
I do not	42.8	52.1
<i>If you had to choose between integration with Russia and joining the European Union, what choice would you make?</i>		
Integration with Russia	32.7	61.9
Joining the European Union	37.3	58.5

* The table is read across

difference in the assessments of supporters and opponents of the incumbent president. A desire for changes is not necessarily connected with an alternative to the present authorities, to say nothing about a paradigm alternative with a different principle of social structure.

This consensus testifies to the fact that the current authorities personally do not suit many people, but they share their political philosophy in principle. And an alternative which Belarusians may prefer should somehow resemble the authorities in power.

Geopolitical lull

As the opinion poll results prove, no fundamental changes have occurred in the geopolitical preferences of Belarusians during the first quarter of the current year; slight preponderance of the pro-European sentiment has also continued this year (Tables 39-41).

Respondents' cooling down toward Euro-integration is within the marginal error in comparison with December of the previous year. In comparison with June of the last year the decrease is more obvious, however, so far it is difficult to say whether there is a new decreasing trend or just a fluctuation.

The share of integration with Russia supporters did not practically change either (in the wording of the

question of Table 40). Although a growth in the number of opponents of this geopolitical choice draws attention to itself – for the first time their quantity exceeded the 50% mark.

The question of Table 41 suggested that respondents should make a choice between the two alternative geopolitical "magnets" of Belarus.

Thus the diverse support which Russia lent and keeps lending to Belarus is not converted into a growth of integration sentiment – a growth was being observed in the second half of the crisis year of 2011 and at the beginning of 2012, then a decline followed, and for the last 9 months the indicators have not virtually changed.

Answers to the question which looks rather hypothetical now – the question about desirability of restoration of the Soviet Union – do not change much either (Table 42).

Numerous opinion polls show a rather strong connection between a geopolitical choice and internal political preference: A. Lukashenko's supporters are much more inclined to make a choice in favor of the RF than his opponents. However, the simplified version according to which all supporters of pro-European integration are the president's opponents finds itself only in political declarations. At first sight, exactly this should follow from the political context –

Table 39

Dynamics of answering the question: "If a referendum on the question whether Belarus should join the European Union were being held now in Belarus, what choice would you make?", %

Variant of answer	12'02	03'03	03'05	04'06	05'07	09'08	03'09	03'10	03'11	06'11	12'11	06'12	12'12	03'13
For	60.9	56.4	52.8	32.4	33.5	26.7	34.9	36.2	48.6	45.1	35.9	39.3	38.9	37.9
Against	10.9	11.9	44.4	33.8	49.3	51.9	36.3	37.2	30.5	32.4	36.9	38.2	37.6	39.2

Table 40

Dynamics of answering the question: "If a referendum on the question of Belarus integrating with Russia were being held in Belarus today, how would you vote?", %

Variant of answer	11'99	08'01	12'02	03'03	06'04	06'06	12'07	12'08	03'09	03'10	06'11	12'11	06'12	12'12	03'13
For integration	47.0	57.4	53.8	57.5	42.9	44.9	43.6	35.7	33.1	32.1	31.4	29.0	34.0	28.7	28.1
Against integration	34.1	20.9	26.3	23.8	25.0	28.9	31.6	38.8	43.2	44.5	47.8	42.9	44.3	47.5	51.4

Table 41

Dynamics of answering the question: "If you had to choose between integration with Russia and joining the European Union, what would you choose?", %

Variant of answer	06'06	12'07	12'08	12'09	12'10	03'11	06'11	09'11	12'11	03'12	06'12	09'12	12'12	03'13
Integration with RF	56.5	47.5	46.0	42.3	38.1	31.5	35.3	41.5	41.4	47.0	43.6	36.2	37.7	37.2
Joining EU	29.3	33.3	30.1	42.1	38.0	50.5	44.5	42.0	39.1	37.3	39.8	44.1	43.4	42.1

Table 42

Dynamics of answering the question: "Would you like restoration of the Soviet Union?", %

Variant of answer	11'93	11'97	11'99	04'02	06'04	04'06	12'08	12'09	03'11	03'12	03'13
Yes	55.1	49.9	38.0	38.8	39.5	26.7	21.5	26.7	24.4	24.6	22.2
No	22.3	25.5	30.1	42.6	50.8	63.4	63.3	60.5	60.8	65.4	58.5
DA/NA	22.6	24.6	31.9	18.6	9.7	9.9	15.2	12.8	14.8	10.0	19.3

Table 43

Dynamics of the geopolitical choice of A. Lukashenko's electorate*, %

Variant of answer	03'08	09'08	03'09	09'09	03'10	09'10	03'11	09'11	03'12	09'12	03'13
Integration with RF	63.9	73.0	63.6	59.3	66.0	49.5	49.2	56.8	67.8	53.7	54.9
Joining EU	15.1	10.8	14.3	16.7	17.1	23.2	27.4	18.5	14.8	27.2	20.4
DA/NA	21.0	16.2	22.1	24.0	16.9	27.3	23.4	24.7	17.4	19.1	24.7

* Here the geopolitical preference of those who answering the open-end question "If tomorrow presidential elections were held in Belarus again, who would you vote for?" named A. Lukashenko is given

A. Lukashenko initiates integration processes with Russia, A. Lukashenko clashes with the EU as perhaps none other leader of the CIS countries (and the EU – with him right up to imposition of sanctions). Official ideology of the Belarusian state declares a special non-western way of the country; state mass media and the head of state himself are constantly talking about the threat coming from the West and about the insidious plans with regard to Belarus which are being nurtured not only in Washington, but also in

Brussels, Berlin, Warsaw, and Stockholm. How can the sympathy for the mouthpiece and initiator of such policy combine with the desire for Belarus to become a member of the EU?

It is true that politically they can hardly combine. However, on the mass consciousness level it does take place, and the matter does not concern a single issue; a considerable part of the president's electorate is made up of supporters of Belarus' Euro-integration (Table 43).

Table 44

Dynamics of distribution of various alternatives of a geopolitical choice, %

Group	09'08	09'09	12'10	06'11	06'12	12'12	03'13
Those who are for integration with both RF and EU (of the total number of respondents)	10.4	17.3	12.8	13.6	14.2	13.7	11.8
Those who are for integration with both RF and EU (of those who are for integration with RF)	22.6	44.1	43	43.4	41.8	47.8	41.8
Those who are for integration with both RF and EU (of those who are for joining EU)	39.2	39.2	36.3	30.3	36.2	35.3	31.1
Those who are for integration with RF and against EU (of the total number of respondents)	28.3	14.8	12.9	12.7	15.7	11.6	12.6
Those who are for integration with RF and against EU (of those who are for integration with RF)	61.2	37.9	43.2	40.5	46.2	40.4	44.6
Those who are for integration with RF and against EU (of those who are against joining EU)	54.5	45.3	31.8	39.3	40.9	30.9	32.0
Those who are against integration with RF and for EU (of the total number of respondents)	12.4	20.9	19.3	26.6	20.9	20.8	23.5
Those who are against integration with RF and for EU (of those who are against integration with RF)	34.8	51.4	41.0	55.6	47.1	43.8	45.7
Those who are against integration with RF and for EU (of those who are for joining EU)	46.6	47.3	54.5	59.0	53.1	53.4	62.0
Those who are against integration with either RF or EU (of the total number of respondents)	19.6	15.0	23.4	17.2	19.5	20.5	22.9
Those who are against integration with either RF or EU (of those who are against integration with RF)	54.9	37.0	49.8	35.9	44.0	43.2	44.5
Those who are against integration with either RF or EU (of those who are against joining EU)	37.8	45.9	57.5	53.1	50.9	54.7	58.3

Table 45

Political preference and geopolitical choice, %

Variant of answer	Supporters of integration with RF, opponents of integration with EU	Opponents of integration with either EU or RF	Supporters of integration with both RF and EU	Supporters of integration with EU, opponents of integration with RF
<i>Do you think the state of things is developing in general in the right or in the wrong direction in our country?</i>				
In the right direction	51.6	36.7	41.0	16.9
In the wrong direction	35.3	46.5	51.1	73.8
<i>What enterprise would you like to work at?</i>				
At a state one	57.9	41.2	44.9	25.9
At a private one	24.7	38.3	50.6	56.3
<i>Who (what) would you pin your hopes for Belarus economic development on?</i>				
On the president	44.7	37.0	22.0	17.2
On businessmen	21.6	34.4	31.5	44.8
<i>Do you consider yourself to be in opposition to the present authorities?</i>				
Yes	11.6	8.4	22.5	38.0
No	81.1	83.2	69.7	51.0
<i>Do you trust the following state and public institutions?</i>				
Non-government mass media	17.4	23.2	39.0	38.4
President	58.9	51.2	46.1	21.4
Opposition political parties	5.3	7.2	16.9	25.3

It seems that for the "Euro-Belarusians" supporting A. Lukashenko Europe is a land of financial well being, order, and justice; it is an example of economic success and exactly for this reason to join it would be good for Belarus. The fact that local political and civil behaviors differ greatly from the domestic ones does not bother these respondents, they perceive them as secondary and unimportant. It should be

mentioned, however, that it is a sizeable part of the president's electoral basis – it varies from 10% to 27%, making up on average approximately 15%. Moreover, throughout the last five years it is possible to discover even a slight growing trend – now this share is a third larger than it used to be five years ago.

Table 46

Dynamics of answering the question: "Which of the below listed politicians wins your greatest sympathy, corresponds to your ideal of a politician?", % (more than one answer is possible)

Variant of answer	06'96	06'04	06'08	06'12	03'13
Alexander Lukashenko	–*	21.3	25.2	20.6	20.9
Peter Masherov	45.2	32.7	23.5	23.2	19.8
Vladimir Putin	–	39.3	31.2	19.2	19.8
Peter I	34.2	30.9	18.5	16.1	12.1
Margaret Thatcher	19.5	–	10.1	11.1	11.8
Kastus Kalinovsky	4.2	11.0	13.6	15.1	11.7
Catherine II	–	15.4	12.5	12.9	10.6
Franklin Roosevelt	–	–	4.9	5.2	8.5
Václav Havel	–	–	3.6	6.5	7.3
Prince VytaVt	2.2	6.6	8.8	9.3	7.1
Charles de Gaulle	3.9	–	6.5	5.4	7.0
Joseph Stalin	10.8	9.0	6.3	3.9	6.4
Winston Churchill	2.1	–	4.6	4.3	6.2
Michail Gorbachev	4.2	8.7	7.6	7.2	6.1
Lew Sapieha	–	6.5	4.9	5.2	6.1
Vladimir Lenin	18.7	8.6	8.2	5.2	5.9
Lech Wałęsa	–	–	1.9	5.7	5.3
Ronald Reagan	–	–	2.3	2.7	3.8

* The mentioned politician did not appear on the list of the correspondent opinion poll

This group of voters has a certain impact on their idol. The group, though, is not large, that is why the impact is modest. Declarations about desirability of mending fences with Europe and holding up Europe as a model (which is embodied in comparing Belarusian achievements exactly with Europe, and not with Russia, Iran, China, and Venezuela) may be everything, at least in the ideological sphere, which the authorities offer to this group of their supporters. The fact, however, should not be disregarded. It can be surmised that among the reasons for the attempts to normalize relations with the EU there is not only a desire to receive financial resources and balance the influence of Russia. Improvement of relations of the RB with the EU may become an additional electoral resource of the authorities – at least part of "Euro-Belarusians" who are now in opposition to the authorities may become their supporters.

Another aspect of a geopolitical choice hidden under the general figures of the dynamics in Tables 39-41 is its ambivalence. Politically this choice seems dichotomous as it is formulated in the question of Table 41 – either integration with Russia or integration with the EU (as well as abstention from both types of integration). This dichotomy, however, is incomplete in mass consciousness, as a considerable part of respondents answering the questions of Tables 39-40 declare for integration with the East, as well as with the West. The data of Table 44 describe various combinations of answers to these questions.

As we can see, "Euro-Belarusians" and "Belo-Russians" are quite often the same people. Intersection makes up about 40% of the former and approximately 30% of the latter. At that "Euro-Belarusians" are appreciably more "exacting": among them there is

a large share of those for whom one choice rules out the other. If one talks about dynamics then it is possible to perceive a growth exactly in the group of firm "Euro-Belarusians", i.e. those who are for integration with the EU and against integration with the RF, and a decrease in the numbers of their mirror opponents – firm "Belo-Russians".

The data of Table 45 show that these groups prove to be extreme in the sense of internal political preference, too.

As it can be seen, according to the opposition degree, the groups of various geopolitical choice are ranged in the following sequence: firm "Euro-Belarusians" – supporters of integration with both the RF and the EU – "isolationists" – firm "Belo-Russians". The hierarchy of relations is exactly like this as far as virtually all the questions are concerned.

Belarusian heroes: Kalinovsky and others

In the IISEPS opinion poll of March, 2013 the question about politicians of the past and present who win respondents' greatest sympathy was asked once again. The previous opinion polls were separated from one another by several years, the last one from the earlier one – by 9 months only. Hence it is natural that in general no considerable changes in preferences have occurred (Table 46).

Nevertheless, some changes did take place and they are quite significant. A decrease in the popularity of the Russian tsars Peter and Catherine, as well as of the leader of Soviet Belarus P. Masherov, continued. The "ideal" ratings of A. Lukashenko and V. Putin remained virtually immutable. Sympathy for such different historical characters as M. Thatcher,

F. Roosevelt, V. Havel, Ch. de Gaulle, J. Stalin, W. Churchill, L. Sapieha, V. Lenin, and R. Reagan grew somewhat; and the "ideal" ratings of L. Walensa, M. Gorbachev and Prince Vytavt decreased slightly.

However, though a little but appreciable decrease in the popularity of the leader of the uprising of 1863 K. Kalinovsky became, perhaps, the most important result.

It is not ruled out that it is just a fluctuation, a random deviation. On the other hand, a more marrowy explanation is also possible. K. Kalinovsky's personality has really been brought into focus for the last several months; however, it was done in a rather ambivalent manner.

A series of articles appeared at the moment whose authors espouse the view according to which K. Kalinovsky is at best a Polish, not a Belarusian he-

Table 47

The "ideal" rating of heroes for the groups with various socio-demographic characteristics and political preferences*, %

Variant of answer	All respondents	Age			Geopolitical choice		Do you trust the president?	
		18-29	30-59	60 +	With RF	With EU	Yes	No
Alexander Lukashenko	20.9	12.5	15.8	41.6	31.6	7.5	44.3	1.1
Peter Masherov	19.8	11.3	21.4	24.7	23.4	16.3	18.9	20.8
Vladimir Putin	19.8	19.9	21.4	15.7	29.1	12.9	20.2	16.2
Peter I	12.1	11.1	12.0	13.3	11.3	11.6	8.5	15.8
Margaret Thatcher	11.8	18.8	11.8	4.7	8.2	15.0	7.0	15.3
Kastus Kalinovsky	11.7	17.3	11.6	6.4	7.8	17.3	8.1	17.5
Catherine II	10.6	14.5	9.9	7.8	9.4	11.6	9.6	10.6
Franklin Roosevelt	8.5	10.2	9.7	4.1	7.1	10.7	6.4	10.1
Vaclav Havel	7.3	5.1	8.9	5.5	3.6	10.8	4.1	10.3
Prince Vytautas	7.1	11.6	5.9	5.2	5.9	8.3	5.0	9.5
Charles de Gaulle	7.0	8.5	7.7	3.8	6.0	7.8	5.8	8.0
Joseph Stalin	6.4	4.5	5.4	10.7	8.2	4.9	10.0	2.3
Winston Churchill	6.2	8.8	6.4	3.2	4.8	8.5	4.9	7.6
Michail Gorbachev	6.1	4.8	6.1	7.5	7.4	5.5	7.0	4.7
Lew Sapieha	6.1	8.5	5.5	5.2	3.4	9.9	4.0	9.5
Vladimir Lenin	5.9	2.5	6.1	8.7	8.7	4.1	9.0	2.9
Lech Walensa	5.3	4.0	6.9	2.9	2.0	9.2	3.5	7.7
Ronald Reagan	3.8	3.1	5.0	1.7	2.0	6.6	2.7	4.9

* Five most popular politicians were singled out in a corresponding group

He exactly has been (and remains) the most popular in the Belarusian heroes' midst ranking among the characters who enjoy the greatest sympathy. Besides, in all the previous polls dynamics of sympathy for him used to be monotonously positive – from poll to poll the share of those who named him as the one winning sympathy and as an ideal of a politician kept growing.

Finally, it should be mentioned that the current year is a round anniversary of K. Kalinovsky's execution, the year when his "Letters from under the Gibbet" were written. In theory bringing to focus the memory of him should have given rise to a growth of sympathy; the response, however, proved to be reverse.

ro, and that he had no Belarusian ethnic self-awareness whatsoever. Authors of some of these articles wrote about a rather inimical attitude of the leader of the uprising towards Russian Orthodoxy.

The Orthodox Church in Belarus did not express their official attitude to K. Kalinovsky, but judging by some indirect evidence, the off-the-record attitude was strictly negative and it was brought to the notice of the congregation, at least to part of it. It is not ruled out that reluctance of the Belarusian authorities to somehow officially observe K. Kalinovsky's death anniversary is explained by this unofficial but a quite distinctly expressed position of the BOC.

There were, however, other opinions and other initiatives. In particular we can mention the "national dictation" during which exactly the letter written by K. Kalinovsky the night before the execution was be-

ing read. Initiators of the dictation especially emphasized the topicality of K. Kalinovsky's words that "you, people, will only then live happily when there are no Russians over you".

The balance of these oppositely directed cultural and political impulses is illustrated in Table 46 – K. Kalinovsky lost more than three percentage points in popularity. His "ideal" rating has decreased for the first time during 17 years of research.

In conclusion let us present the data illustrating connection of the age and political preferences with the attitude to the politicians of the past and present (Table 47).

"Pantheons" of various groups differ quite appreciably, although they do have an intersection. President of Belarus provokes the most contrasting assessments – for some people he is a hero, for others he is an antihero. At the same time his Russian colleague V. Putin is among the top five heroes in all the groups without exception, and Tsar Peter – in all the

groups except the young. As opposed to the poll of June, 2012 when a similar question was asked J. Stalin found himself among the top five heroes in the group of elderly people. M. Thatcher's popularity phenomenon is rather interesting – she is popular even among young people most of whom were born after the "Iron Lady" had stepped down from the office of the British prime minister. In comparison with the previous opinion poll (see "*Belarusian Pantheon*", <http://www.iiseps.org/06-12-07.html>) K. Kalinovsky's rating has not only decreased, it has proved to be among the top five only in the youth group, in the group of "Euro-Belarusians" and those who do not trust the incumbent president. At that he ranked first only in the group of adherents of integration with the EU. Nine months ago he made the top five in all the groups except the oldest one.

Some results of the opinion poll conducted in March, 2013 (%)

1. "According to the official data, at the end of 2012 the average pay exceeded 500 dollars per month in dollar terms. Compare your standard of well-being with the one you had at the end of 2010:"

Table 1.1. Depending on age

Variant of answer	All respondents	Age, years old						
		18-19	20-24	25-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 +
I began to live better than at that time	12.2	8.3	11.7	9.4	10.5	13.0	8.6	17.7
I live the same way I used to at that time	48.4	64.6	41.6	45.0	44.7	47.2	50.6	52.3
I began to live worse than at that time	36.7	25.0	42.9	43.0	42.1	37.3	39.3	26.2
DA	2.7	2.1	3.8	2.6	2.7	2.5	1.5	3.8

Table 1.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (incomplete higher)
I began to live better than at that time	31.3	15.6	11.8	9.0	10.4
I live the same way I used to at that time	48.5	50.5	51.7	47.5	42.5
I began to live worse than at that time	18.2	29.4	33.2	41.0	45.2
DA	2.0	4.5	3.3	2.5	1.9

Table 1.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	The unemployed, housewives
I began to live better than at that time	11.4	10.9	9.3	16.3	10.3
I live the same way I used to at that time	44.2	48.9	50.5	53.5	40.2
I began to live worse than at that time	41.6	38.4	36.1	26.1	48.3
DA	2.8	1.8	4.1	4.1	1.2

Table 1.4. Depending on residence

Variant of answer	Region						
	Minsk	Minsk region	Brest and its region	Grodno and its region	Vitebsk and its region	Mogilev and its region	Gomel and its region
I began to live better than at that time	7.8	11.4	6.0	15.3	9.0	17.7	21.5
I live the same way I used to at that time	42.2	50.9	59.6	52.9	39.0	37.1	56.6
I began to live worse than at that time	49.0	35.1	33.0	31.8	45.5	36.6	21.5
DA	1.0	2.6	1.4	0	6.5	8.6	0.4

Table 1.5. Depending on the type of settlement

Variant of answer	Type of settlement				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
I began to live better than at that time	7.8	8.1	5.7	22.3	15.2
I live the same way I used to at that time	42.2	56.1	52.8	43.6	48.3
I began to live worse than at that time	49.0	33.2	37.4	30.1	34.1
DA	1.0	2.6	4.1	4.0	2.4

2. "Are you concerned about new devaluation of the Belarusian ruble within the next few months?"

Table 2.1. Depending on age

Variant of answer	All respondents	Age, years old						
		18-19	20-24	25-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 +
This threat is real	32.1	28.6	38.3	30.7	38.0	32.4	34.8	23.3
It is possible but unlikely	42.7	40.8	40.9	45.3	41.7	47.2	41.9	40.1
It is not going to happen	19.4	18.4	14.3	17.3	15.4	15.8	18.0	29.4
DA/NA	5.8	12.2	6.5	6.7	4.9	4.6	5.3	7.2

Table 2.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (incomplete higher)
This threat is real	14.1	26.4	30.0	34.9	39.6
It is possible but unlikely	30.3	40.0	43.3	44.2	44.2
It is not going to happen	46.5	23.6	19.7	15.2	14.3
DA/NA	9.1	10.0	7.0	5.7	1.9

Table 2.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	The unemployed, housewives
This threat is real	37.9	32.8	37.5	22.8	34.5
It is possible but unlikely	42.5	44.6	36.5	40.8	46.0
It is not going to happen	13.7	17.4	16.7	29.6	16.1
DA/NA	5.9	5.3	9.4	6.8	3.4

Table 2.4. Depending on residence

Variant of answer	Region						
	Minsk	Minsk region	Brest and its region	Grodno and its region	Vitebsk and its region	Mogilev and its region	Gomel and its region
This threat is real	38.6	25.4	20.6	39.4	32.0	33.7	34.9
It is possible but unlikely	38.6	43.0	53.2	35.9	43.5	38.3	45.0
It is not going to happen	17.4	26.8	19.7	22.4	18.5	13.1	17.5
DA/NA	5.4	4.8	6.5	2.3	6.0	14.9	2.6

Table 2.5. Depending on the type of settlement

Variant of answer	Type of settlement				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
This threat is real	38.6	26.5	24.5	29.1	38.7
It is possible but unlikely	38.6	46.3	47.5	43.9	38.9
It is not going to happen	17.4	18.0	22.3	20.9	18.6
DA/NA	5.4	9.2	5.7	6.1	3.8

3. "To what extent are you satisfied with the present living conditions in Belarus?"

Table 3.1. Depending on age

Variant of answer	All respondents	Age, years old						
		18-19	20-24	25-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 +
Completely satisfied	7.7	6.0	3.9	3.3	4.2	5.6	6.7	16.8
More likely satisfied than not	33.3	36.0	36.5	24.7	27.9	30.2	31.1	46.1
More likely dissatisfied than not	43.4	12.0	16.2	21.3	20.8	11.2	13.9	6.7
Completely dissatisfied	13.9	12.0	16.2	21.3	20.8	11.2	13.9	6.7
DA/NA	1.7	2.0	1.3	1.3	3.4	1.8	0.7	1.7

Table 3.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (incomplete higher)
Completely satisfied	29.6	12.8	7.3	2.7	6.5
More likely satisfied than not	56.1	40.4	34.9	31.7	22.8
More likely dissatisfied than not	10.2	33.9	43.4	47.8	51.1
Completely dissatisfied	4.1	9.2	12.7	15.2	18.6

DA/NA	0	3.7	1.7	2.6	1.0
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Table 3.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	The unemployed, housewives
Completely satisfied	2.5	5.8	5.2	16.6	9.1
More likely satisfied than not	23.9	32.6	34.4	46.5	23.9
More likely dissatisfied than not	53.7	44.9	45.8	29.3	43.2
Completely dissatisfied	18.3	14.4	13.5	6.0	23.9
DA/NA	110.6	2.3	1.0	1.6	0

Table 3.4. Depending on residence

Variant of answer	Region						
	Minsk	Minsk region	Brest and its region	Grodno and its region	Vitebsk and its region	Mogilev and its region	Gomel and its region
Completely satisfied	7.5	9.6	2.7	10.0	2.0	8.0	13.5
More likely satisfied than not	23.5	28.4	21.5	46.5	34.2	42.0	45.0
More likely dissatisfied than not	49.1	43.7	55.3	34.1	48.2	33.3	34.9
Completely dissatisfied	19.1	17.5	19.2	9.4	12.1	10.3	5.7
DA/NA	0.8	0.8	1.3	0	3.5	6.4	0.9

Table 3.5. Depending on the type of settlement

Variant of answer	Type of settlement				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
Completely satisfied	7.5	3.3	4.9	10.1	10.9
More likely satisfied than not	23.5	39.7	29.8	34.5	37.7
More likely dissatisfied than not	49.1	44.5	46.4	40.5	38.5
Completely dissatisfied	19.1	8.5	18.5	12.2	11.9
DA/NA	0.8	4.0	0.4	2.7	1.0

4. "Have you or your relatives or acquaintances had to go to abroad to work for the last several years?"**Table 4.1. Depending on age**

Variant of answer	All respondents	Age, years old						
		18-19	20-24	25-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 +
Yes, several times	33.9	42.0	37.7	43.6	40.4	40.1	30.3	19.2
Yes, once	14.9	18.0	14.9	12.1	15.5	16.5	15.0	14.0
No	51.2	40.0	47.4	44.3	44.1	43.4	54.7	66.8

Table 4.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (incomplete higher)
Yes, several times	16.3	20.2	36.8	35.8	36.0
Yes, once	14.3	11.0	14.7	15.4	15.9
No	69.4	68.8	48.5	48.8	48.1

Table 4.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	The unemployed, housewives
Yes, several times	46.3	33.9	38.9	38.5	37.9
Yes, once	15.5	15.3	12.1	14.7	13.8
No	38.2	50.8	49.0	66.8	48.3

Table 4.4. Depending on residence

Variant of answer	Region						
	Minsk	Minsk region	Brest and its region	Grodno and its region	Vitebsk and its region	Mogilev and its region	Gomel and its region
Yes, several times	38.8	32.1	25.2	47.1	35.2	36.2	34.1
Yes, once	12.9	15.3	12.4	6.5	21.1	8.0	25.3
No	48.3	61.6	62.4	46.4	43.7	55.8	40.6

Table 4.5. Depending on the type of settlement

Variant of answer	Type of settlement				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
Yes, several times	38.8	36.4	46.8	29.1	23.3
Yes, once	12.9	15.1	10.2	17.9	17.1
No	48.3	48.5	43.0	55.0	59.6

5. "Do you think the money directed to modernization of enterprises will be spent ...?"**Table 5.1. Depending on age**

Variant of answer	All respondents	Age, years old						
		18-19	20-24	25-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 +
Efficiently	26.5	18.0	22.1	15.4	16.9	22.6	24.8	46.7
Inefficiently	33.4	32.0	30.5	38.9	38.3	33.9	35.0	26.7
Will be embezzled	28.1	32.0	31.2	32.9	33.5	31.1	32.0	14.8
DA/NA	12.0	18.0	16.2	12.8	11.3	12.4	8.2	11.8

Table 5.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (incomplete higher)
Efficiently	63.3	35.5	27.5	20.9	17.9
Inefficiently	14.3	29.1	34.6	34.0	37.7
Will be embezzled	7.1	19.1	26.0	32.0	35.7
DA/NA	15.3	16.3	11.9	13.1	8.7

Table 5.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	The unemployed, housewives
Efficiently	15.3	24.3	21.9	45.1	17.0
Inefficiently	38.0	33.4	32.3	28.0	36.4
Will be embezzled	38.0	29.7	28.1	15.2	29.5
DA/NA	8.7	12.6	17.7	11.7	17.1

Table 5.4. Depending on residence

Variant of answer	Region						
	Minsk	Minsk region	Brest and its region	Grodno and its region	Vitebsk and its region	Mogilev and its region	Gomel and its region
Efficiently	28.0	34.9	17.0	38.5	18.5	20.8	27.5
Inefficiently	28.0	21.4	44.0	30.2	32.5	29.5	47.6
Will be embezzled	30.0	37.6	27.1	22.5	32.0	25.4	20.5
DA/NA	14.0	6.1	11.9	9.1	17.0	24.3	4.4

Table 5.5. Depending on the type of settlement

Variant of answer	Type of settlement				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
Efficiently	28.0	23.2	20.0	28.8	30.2
Inefficiently	28.0	33.8	39.6	30.8	34.5
Will be embezzled	30.0	25.7	28.7	32.2	25.3
DA/NA	14.0	17.3	11.7	8.2	10.0

6. "Which of the opinions do you agree with?"**Table 6.1. Depending on age**

Variant of answer	All respondents	Age, years old						
		18-19	20-24	25-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 +
Belarus needs changes	74.8	82.0	79.2	83.9	84.5	76.3	78.7	55.8
Belarus does not need changes	16.2	12.0	11.0	7.4	8.7	12.8	13.1	34.0
DA/NA	9.0	6.0	9.8	8.7	6.8	10.9	8.2	10.2

Table 6.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (incomplete higher)
Belarus needs changes	37.8	63.3	76.3	78.0	83.4
Belarus does not need changes	58.2	26.6	15.3	9.8	9.7
DA/NA	4.0	10.1	8.4	12.2	6.9

Table 6.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	The unemployed, housewives
Belarus needs changes	83.0	78.2	80.2	56.6	86.2
Belarus does not need changes	8.9	12.3	10.4	33.6	6.8
DA/NA	8.1	9.5	9.4	9.8	7.0

Table 6.4. Depending on residence

Variant of answer	Region						
	Minsk	Minsk region	Brest and its region	Grodno and its region	Vitebsk and its region	Mogilev and its region	Gomel and its region
Belarus needs changes	78.2	65.5	78.9	87.6	70.4	67.8	75.9
Belarus does not need changes	16.0	29.7	8.7	6.5	6.0	20.7	2.8
DA/NA	5.8	4.8	12.4	5.9	23.6	11.5	1.3

Table 6.5. Depending on the type of settlement

Variant of answer	Type of settlement				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
Belarus needs changes	78.2	80.4	68.2	71.3	75.5
Belarus does not need changes	16.0	8.9	22.0	16.6	17.1
DA/NA	5.8	10.7	9.8	12.1	7.4

7. "What is more important: improvement of Belarus economic situation or independence of the country?"

Table 7.1. Depending on age

Variant of answer	All respondents	Age, years old						
		18-19	20-24	25-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 +
Improvement of Belarus economic situation	65.2	75.5	71.4	64.4	65.5	68.3	67.0	56.2
Independence of the country	29.3	20.4	24.7	30.2	26.6	26.1	28.8	37.4
DA/NA	5.5	4.1	3.9	5.4	7.9	5.6	4.2	6.4

Table 7.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (incomplete higher)
Improvement of Belarus economic situation	56.1	57.3	64.1	67.6	69.4
Independence of the country	39.8	34.5	30.2	26.9	25.7
DA/NA	4.1	8.2	5.7	5.5	4.9

Table 7.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	The unemployed, housewives
Improvement of Belarus economic situation	66.7	68.0	78.1	54.5	70.1
Independence of the country	27.2	27.2	17.7	38.8	26.4
DA/NA	6.1	4.7	4.2	6.8	3.4

Table 7.4. Depending on residence

Variant of answer	Region						
	Minsk	Minsk region	Brest and its region	Grodno and its region	Vitebsk and its region	Mogilev and its region	Gomel and its region
Improvement of Belarus economic situation	61.4	65.9	68.5	73.1	66.3	51.1	69.4
Independence of the country	34.5	29.7	28.3	25.7	23.6	31.6	29.3
DA/NA	4.1	4.4	3.2	1.2	10.1	17.3	1.3

Table 7.5. Depending on the type of settlement

Variant of answer	Type of settlement				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
Improvement of Belarus economic situation	61.4	71.3	64.4	65.9	63.8
Independence of the country	34.5	18.8	33.0	26.7	32.3
DA/NA	4.1	9.9	2.6	7.4	3.9

8. "Do you think human rights are upheld in Belarus?"

Table 8.1. Depending on age

Variant of answer	All respondents	Age, years old						
		18-19	20-24	25-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 +
Yes	16.2	10.2	10.3	7.3	8.3	12.4	12.0	36.5
More likely yes	34.9	26.5	34.2	30.0	31.7	37.7	40.4	34.8
More likely no	29.1	40.8	38.1	35.3	38.5	27.6	27.3	16.2
No	14.7	18.4	12.3	22.0	17.0	17.3	14.6	8.1
DA/NA	5.1	4.1	5.1	5.4	4.5	6.0	5.7	4.4

Table 8.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (incomplete higher)
Yes	61.2	24.1	15.6	9.8	9.1
More likely yes	27.6	38.0	35.4	35.8	34.2
More likely no	6.1	21.3	29.6	34.7	30.6
No	2.0	12.0	12.9	15.0	22.2
DA/NA	3.1	4.6	6.5	4.7	3.9

Table 8.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	The unemployed, housewives
Yes	7.1	11.2	11.6	36.3	9.2
More likely yes	31.6	37.0	37.9	35.0	32.2
More likely no	34.7	33.5	33.7	15.4	28.7
No	22.4	11.8	12.6	8.7	26.4
DA/NA	4.2	6.5	4.2	4.6	3.5

Table 8.4. Depending on residence

Variant of answer	Region						
	Minsk	Minsk region	Brest and its region	Grodno and its region	Vitebsk and its region	Mogilev and its region	Gomel and its region
Yes	18.1	24.0	9.6	20.7	7.5	17.1	16.2
More likely yes	23.2	25.8	40.6	40.8	35.7	32.6	50.2
More likely no	31.7	32.8	26.0	22.5	31.2	28.0	29.3
No	22.5	13.5	18.7	14.2	14.6	12.0	4.4
DA/NA	4.5	3.9	5.1	1.8	11.0	10.3	0

Table 8.5. Depending on the type of settlement

Variant of answer	Type of settlement				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
Yes	18.1	10.7	17.4	15.9	18.3

More likely yes	23.2	44.5	32.8	39.5	34.8
More likely no	31.7	29.4	29.8	26.7	28.4
No	22.5	8.8	16.6	13.2	12.6
DA/NA	4.5	6.6	3.4	4.7	5.9

9. "How should president A. Lukashenko act in your opinion?"

Table 9.1. Depending on age

Variant of answer	All respondents	Age, years old						
		18-19	20-24	25-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 +
He should leave as soon as possible and nominate a successor	6.1	4.0	7.1	9.4	8.3	7.4	6.0	2.3
He should leave as soon as possible and do not impede electing a new president	21.4	24.0	23.4	30.9	27.2	21.8	19.9	12.2
He should not participate in the elections of 2015	26.1	42.0	34.4	24.8	30.9	30.2	24.3	14.8
He should participate in the elections of 2015	36.5	18.0	26.0	22.1	22.3	30.5	40.4	63.1
DA/NA	9.9	12.0	9.1	12.8	11.3	10.1	9.4	7.6

Table 9.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (incomplete higher)
He should leave as soon as possible and nominate a successor	0	5.5	6.3	7.2	6.8
He should leave as soon as possible and do not impede electing a new president	7.1	11.0	21.7	24.0	25.3
He should not participate in the elections of 2015	8.2	12.7	26.8	29.6	30.2
He should participate in the elections of 2015	81.6	58.9	34.5	28.5	29.5
DA/NA	3.1	11.9	10.4	10.7	8.2

Table 9.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	The unemployed, housewives
He should leave as soon as possible and nominate a successor	8.4	6.9	4.1	2.4	8.0
He should leave as soon as possible and do not impede electing a new president	29.3	20.2	24.7	12.5	27.6
He should not participate in the elections of 2015	24.2	31.6	24.7	63.1	24.2
He should participate in the elections of 2015	29.8	29.3	32.0	13.8	33.3
DA/NA	8.3	12.0	14.5	8.2	6.9

Table 9.4. Depending on residence

Variant of answer	Region						
	Minsk	Minsk region	Brest and its region	Grodno and its region	Vitebsk and its region	Mogilev and its region	Gomel and its region
He should leave as soon as possible and nominate a successor	7.8	2.2	9.6	17.1	1.0	2.9	4.0
He should leave as soon as possible and do not impede electing a new president	27.5	34.6	17.4	7.1	26.5	15.4	15.0
He should not participate in the elections of 2015	31.5	21.5	28.4	20.6	32.5	17.7	26.0
He should participate in the elections of 2015	26.1	33.3	37.2	46.5	26.5	44.0	48.0
DA/NA	7.1	8.4	7.4	8.7	13.5	20.0	7.0

Table 9.5. Depending on the type of settlement

Variant of answer	Type of settlement				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
He should leave as soon as possible and nominate a successor	7.8	7.4	1.9	4.7	8.0
He should leave as soon as possible and do not impede electing a new president	27.5	14.7	21.9	15.9	25.6
He should not participate in the elections of 2015	31.5	28.3	28.3	27.5	17.8
He should participate in the elections of 2015	26.1	34.2	40.0	38.6	41.9
DA/NA	7.1	15.4	7.9	13.2	6.8

10. "If in 2014 you are offered to stand in local elections as a candidate will you agree to it?"**Table 10.1. Depending on age**

Variant of answer	All respondents	Age, years old						
		18-19	20-24	25-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 +
Yes	10.8	8.0	9.7	8.0	12.5	16.9	9.7	7.5
No, I think the elections should be boycotted	9.8	12.0	11.0	16.0	11.3	12.7	7.5	4.3
No, due to other reasons	69.4	74.0	66.2	66.0	67.5	58.8	71.9	79.4
DA/NA	10.0	6.0	13.1	10.0	8.7	11.8	10.9	8.8

Table 10.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (incomplete higher)
Yes	3.1	8.3	8.4	12.7	15.5
No, I think the elections should be boycotted	5.1	2.8	10.6	11.1	10.7
No, due to other reasons	76.5	77.1	72.7	66.7	61.9
DA/NA	15.3	11.8	8.3	9.5	11.9

Table 10.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	The unemployed, housewives
Yes	10.9	12.9	14.6	6.3	12.6
No, I think the elections should be boycotted	13.5	10.5	9.4	4.6	67.8
No, due to other reasons	66.7	64.5	66.7	80.7	11.5
DA/NA	8.9	12.1	9.3	8.4	8.1

Table 10.4. Depending on residence

Variant of answer	Region						
	Minsk	Minsk region	Brest and its region	Grodno and its region	Vitebsk and its region	Mogilev and its region	Gomel and its region
Yes	8.8	11.8	9.2	15.9	10.9	7.4	12.7
No, I think the elections should be boycotted	11.6	8.3	9.2	4.7	10.9	4.0	16.7
No, due to other reasons	74.5	73.7	59.6	72.4	57.7	80.0	67.5
DA/NA	5.1	6.2	22.0	7.0	20.5	8.6	3.1

Table 10.5. Depending on the type of settlement

Variant of answer	Type of settlement				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
Yes	8.8	12.5	12.8	7.8	11.9
No, I think the elections should be boycotted	11.6	12.5	12.8	7.8	11.9
No, due to other reasons	74.5	72.0	65.3	70.8	65.6
DA/NA	5.1	9.0	4.1	16.3	13.6

11. "If you knew a person who could successfully compete with A. Lukashenko in the next presidential election, would you vote for him or for A. Lukashenko?"

Table 11.1. Depending on age

Variant of answer	All respondents	Age, years old						
		18-19	20-24	25-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 +
I would vote for such a candidate	69.1	75.5	77.3	83.2	85.3	72.9	68.9	42.6
I would vote for A. Lukashenko	30.0	22.4	20.8	16.1	13.9	25.7	30.7	56.8
NA	0.9	2.1	1.9	0.7	0.8	1.4	0.4	0.6

Table 11.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (incomplete higher)
I would vote for such a candidate	20.2	46.8	68.4	78.0	81.2
I would vote for A. Lukashenko	77.8	53.2	31.2	20.6	17.5
NA	2.0	0	0.4	1.4	1.3

Table 11.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	The unemployed, housewives
I would vote for such a candidate	83.7	74.5	70.1	42.1	80.5
I would vote for A. Lukashenko	14.5	25.3	27.8	57.1	18.4
NA	1.8	0.2	2.1	0.8	1.1

Table 11.4. Depending on residence

Variant of answer	Region						
	Minsk	Minsk region	Brest and its region	Grodno and its region	Vitebsk and its region	Mogilev and its region	Gomel and its region
I would vote for such a candidate	73.4	67.1	77.0	54.1	80.0	66.3	62.3
I would vote for A. Lukashenko	25.9	32.5	21.2	45.9	19.5	33.7	35.5
NA	0.7	0.4	1.8	0	0.5	0	2.2

Table 11.5. Depending on the type of settlement

Variant of answer	Type of settlement				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
I would vote for such a candidate	73.4	72.4	64.5	71.5	64.9
I would vote for A. Lukashenko	25.9	25.7	34.7	28.5	33.8
NA	0.7	1.9	0.8	0	1.3

12. "What, do you think, is more important for Belarus?"**Table 12.1. Depending on age**

Variant of answer	All respondents	Age, years old						
		18-19	20-24	25-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 +
Good laws are more important for Belarus	33.3	30.6	36.4	29.5	39.7	35.6	31.5	28.8
Good leaders are more important for Belarus	59.7	59.2	55.8	63.1	53.6	57.7	61.8	64.2
DA/NA	7.0	10.2	7.8	7.4	6.7	6.7	6.7	7.0

Table 12.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (incomplete higher)
Good laws are more important for Belarus	16.2	30.0	35.4	35.8	32.5
Good leaders are more important for Belarus	72.7	63.6	57.6	57.1	61.4
DA/NA	11.1	6.4	7.0	7.1	6.1

Table 12.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	The unemployed, housewives
Good laws are more important for Belarus	33.8	37.6	29.5	29.1	26.2
Good leaders are more important for Belarus	58.1	56.1	62.1	64.7	65.9
DA/NA	8.1	6.3	8.4	6.2	7.9

Table 12.4. Depending on residence

Variant of answer	Region						
	Minsk	Minsk region	Brest and its region	Grodno and its region	Vitebsk and its region	Mogilev and its region	Gomel and its region
Good laws are more important for Belarus	22.5	48.9	39.0	27.5	42.0	24.6	29.3
Good leaders are more important for Belarus	71.7	49.3	50.5	70.8	39.5	62.3	70.3
DA/NA	5.8	1.7	10.6	1.8	18.5	13.1	0.4

Table 12.5. Depending on the type of settlement

Variant of answer	Type of settlement				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
Good laws are more important for Belarus	22.5	29.0	43.4	36.1	35.4
Good leaders are more important for Belarus	71.7	63.6	53.2	58.8	52.7
DA/NA	5.8	7.4	3.4	5.1	11.9

13. "President Lukashenko has a personal aircraft, goes by expensive cars and wears an expensive watch and suits. What is your attitude to it?"

Table 13.1. Depending on age

Variant of answer	All respondents	Age, years old						
		18-19	20-24	25-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 +
This is proper, the president should look impressive, he is the face of the state	31.0	26.0	28.1	28.2	24.0	31.4	26.6	42.4
This is proper but for a rich country	36.0	42.0	37.3	36.2	40.4	33.9	37.8	31.4
This is improper, the president should live modestly	28.2	30.0	27.5	32.2	30.3	28.6	30.7	22.7
DA/NA	4.8	2.0	7.1	3.4	5.2	6.1	4.9	3.5

Table 13.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (incomplete higher)
This is proper, the president should look impressive, he is the face of the state	59.2	37.6	30.7	26.1	27.3
This is proper but for a rich country	32.7	30.3	33.4	40.1	38.0
This is improper, the president should live modestly	8.1	27.5	30.2	28.8	30.5
DA/NA	0	4.6	5.7	5.0	4.2

Table 13.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	The unemployed, housewives
This is proper, the president should look impressive, he is the face of the state	22.9	29.0	38.5	41.8	25.3
This is proper but for a rich country	38.9	37.6	37.5	30.7	33.3
This is improper, the president should live modestly	34.1	28.1	19.8	22.8	35.6
DA/NA	4.1	5.3	4.2	4.6	5.7

Table 13.4. Depending on residence

Variant of answer	Region						
	Minsk	Minsk region	Brest and its region	Grodno and its region	Vitebsk and its region	Mogilev and its region	Gomel and its region
This is proper, the president should look impressive, he is the face of the state	21.1	28.8	22.9	48.5	17.1	43.1	42.8
This is proper but for a rich country	34.7	38.4	26.6	31.4	42.7	38.5	40.2
This is improper, the president should live modestly	40.5	31.9	37.2	13.6	35.7	13.2	16.6
DA/NA	3.7	0.9	13.3	6.5	4.5	5.2	0.4

Table 13.5. Depending on the type of settlement

Variant of answer	Type of settlement				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
This is proper, the president should look impressive, he is the face of the state	21.1	31.6	26.8	39.3	34.4
This is proper but for a rich country	34.7	43.0	41.5	29.5	33.3
This is improper, the president should live modestly	40.5	18.4	28.7	27.1	26.6
DA/NA	3.7	7.0	3.0	4.1	5.7

14. "How do you assess president A. Lukashenko?"**Table 14.1. Depending on age**

Variant of answer	All respondents	Age, years old						
		18-19	20-24	25-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 +
Positively	16.0	10.0	7.8	6.7	7.1	10.9	14.2	36.6
More likely positively than negatively	22.2	14.0	20.9	21.5	17.3	25.0	18.7	28.5
Neutrally	25.0	32.0	30.1	24.2	32.3	21.5	28.5	16.9
More likely negatively than positively	23.0	28.0	25.5	22.1	27.8	29.6	24.0	12.2
Negatively	13.1	14.0	15.0	24.2	15.4	12.0	14.2	5.5
NA	0.7	2.0	0.7	1.3	0.1	1.0	0.4	0.3

Table 14.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (incomplete higher)
Positively	45.4	36.4	14.5	9.3	11.7
More likely positively than negatively	41.2	25.5	22.4	20.3	17.6
Neutrally	3.1	20.9	28.2	27.8	23.8
More likely negatively than positively	6.2	12.7	22.1	27.3	27.4
Negatively	4.1	3.6	12.2	14.2	19.2
NA	0	0.9	0.6	1.1	0.3

Table 14.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	The unemployed, housewives
Positively	4.1	12.7	13.7	37.0	5.7
More likely positively than negatively	17.8	22.7	21.1	27.4	19.5
Neutrally	27.2	27.6	26.3	18.2	25.3
More likely negatively than positively	26.2	26.0	26.3	13.0	26.4
Negatively	23.7	10.7	10.5	4.1	21.8
NA	1.0	0.3	2.1	0.3	1.3

Table 14.4. Depending on residence

Variant of answer	Region						
	Minsk	Minsk region	Brest and its region	Grodno and its region	Vitebsk and its region	Mogilev and its region	Gomel and its region
Positively	13.0	12.7	17.9	29.4	7.0	17.8	17.5
More likely positively than negatively	10.9	20.6	17.4	27.1	23.0	26.4	35.8
Neutrally	23.2	16.2	37.6	23.5	17.5	27.6	29.7
More likely negatively than positively	23.9	31.1	17.9	15.9	34.0	22.4	15.3
Negatively	27.6	18.9	8.7	3.5	18.0	5.2	1.7
NA	1.4	0.4	0.5	0.6	0.5	0.6	0

Table 14.5. Depending on the type of settlement

Variant of answer	Type of settlement				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
Positively	13.0	15.5	21.2	11.8	18.1
More likely positively than negatively	10.9	24.7	17.0	29.4	27.1
Neutrally	23.2	30.3	28.8	28.7	17.3
More likely negatively than positively	23.9	23.2	19.3	21.3	26.1
Negatively	27.6	5.9	13.3	8.1	11.1
NA	1.4	0.4	0.4	0.7	0.3

15. "In January 2013 P. Prokopovich who had been chairman of the National Bank in 2011 during a sharp fall in the value of the Belarusian ruble was appointed Vice Chairman of the Government. How do you assess this appointment?"

Table 15.1. Depending on age

Variant of answer	All respondents	Age, years old						
		18-19	20-24	25-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 +
Negatively	28.8	20.0	27.3	36.2	34.0	32.4	33.3	16.9
It's all the same to me	43.2	62.0	46.8	43.0	44.2	37.0	40.8	45.3
Positively	12.4	4.0	10.4	8.7	9.1	12.3	8.6	21.8
DA/NA	15.6	14.0	15.5	12.1	12.7	18.3	17.3	16.0

Table 15.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (incomplete higher)
Negatively	16.3	19.3	26.9	29.9	37.7
It's all the same to me	50.0	42.2	45.6	43.7	36.4
Positively	22.4	17.4	11.3	8.1	15.9
DA/NA	11.3	21.1	16.2	18.3	10.0

Table 15.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	The unemployed, housewives
Negatively	38.9	30.1	19.6	17.4	33.3
It's all the same to me	42.2	40.1	53.6	45.8	46.0
Positively	4.8	12.7	13.4	20.4	9.2
DA/NA	14.1	17.1	13.4	16.4	11.5

Table 15.4. Depending on residence

Variant of answer	Region						
	Minsk	Minsk region	Brest and its region	Grodno and its region	Vitebsk and its region	Mogilev and its region	Gomel and its region
Negatively	35.0	45.4	9.6	19.9	34.0	32.8	21.4
It's all the same to me	47.3	36.2	46.3	31.0	32.5	37.4	65.1
Positively	5.4	14.5	17.0	36.4	7.0	6.9	6.1
DA/NA	12.3	3.9	27.1	12.9	26.5	22.9	7.4

Table 15.5. Depending on the type of settlement

Variant of answer	Type of settlement				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
Negatively	35.0	21.3	20.8	29.1	34.6
It's all the same to me	47.3	40.8	51.1	42.9	36.7
Positively	5.4	16.5	12.5	15.5	12.7
DA/NA	12.3	21.4	15.6	12.5	16.0

16. "Which of the below listed opinions do you agree with?"**Table 16.1. Depending on age**

Variant of answer	All respondents	Age, years old						
		18-19	20-24	25-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 +
It is not so much important whether something conforms to the law or does not – most important it should be just	26.4	30.0	27.9	34.5	27.0	29.2	25.5	19.5
The laws should, of course, be observed even if they have become obsolete, but only if representatives of government agencies do it as well	37.8	40.0	46.1	46.6	41.9	33.5	34.1	33.4
The letter of the law should always be followed, even if the laws have become obsolete	31.7	22.0	22.1	16.2	27.0	32.4	34.8	44.8
DA/NA	4.1	8.0	3.9	2.4	4.1	4.9	5.6	2.3

Table 16.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (incomplete higher)
It is not so much important whether something conforms to the law or does not – most important it should be just	12.2	29.1	26.6	26.9	28.9
The laws should, of course, be observed even if they have become obsolete, but only if representatives of government agencies do it as well	21.4	37.3	39.5	37.3	40.9
The letter of the law should always be followed, even if the laws have become obsolete	64.3	30.0	30.5	30.8	25.3
DA/NA	2.1	3.6	3.4	5.0	4.9

Table 16.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	The unemployed, housewives
It is not so much important whether something conforms to the law or does not – most important it should be just	30.0	26.4	30.9	19.6	34.1
The laws should, of course, be observed even if they have become obsolete, but only if representatives of government agencies do it as well	41.5	37.3	44.3	31.8	43.2
The letter of the law should always be followed, even if the laws have become obsolete	24.2	31.5	20.6	45.9	19.3
DA/NA	4.3	4.8	4.2	2.7	3.4

Table 16.4. Depending on residence

Variant of answer	Region						
	Minsk	Minsk region	Brest and its region	Grodno and its region	Vitebsk and its region	Mogilev and its region	Gomel and its region
It is not so much important whether something conforms to the law or does not – most important it should be just	23.5	25.8	33.0	22.4	22.5	41.1	18.9
The laws should, of course,	36.5	27.5	33.9	40.0	39.0	27.4	59.6

be observed even if they have become obsolete, but only if representatives of government agencies do it as well							
The letter of the law should always be followed, even if the laws have become obsolete	37.9	45.0	21.2	35.3	31.0	29.1	20.6
DA/NA	2.1	1.7	11.9	2.3	7.5	2.4	0.9

Table 16.5. Depending on the type of settlement

Variant of answer	Type of settlement				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
It is not so much important whether something conforms to the law or does not – most important it should be just	23.5	26.1	37.0	23.1	24.0
The laws should, of course, be observed even if they have become obsolete, but only if representatives of government agencies do it as well	36.5	41.9	37.4	36.3	37.5
The letter of the law should always be followed, even if the laws have become obsolete	37.9	26.8	21.5	39.0	31.8
DA/NA	2.1	5.2	4.1	1.6	6.7

17. "What do you think about readiness of the people in Belarus to express their political views?"**Table 17.1. Depending on age**

Variant of answer	All respondents	Age, years old						
		18-19	20-24	25-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 +
Nobody is afraid to express his/her political views	14.0	18.0	11.0	12.0	8.3	12.0	13.9	21.6
Only some people are afraid	18.7	18.0	14.3	14.0	18.1	17.7	18.0	24.5
Many people are afraid	41.4	32.0	46.8	48.0	48.3	45.2	39.7	30.3
Everybody is afraid	19.3	26.0	17.5	21.3	19.6	18.0	23.2	15.7
DA/NA	6.6	6.0	10.4	4.7	5.7	18.1	5.2	7.9

Table 17.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (incomplete higher)
Nobody is afraid to express his/her political views	41.2	19.1	14.7	9.7	8.8
Only some people are afraid	28.9	21.8	18.5	18.1	15.3
Many people are afraid	20.6	26.4	40.6	45.7	48.5
Everybody is afraid	6.2	20.9	20.6	19.0	20.5
DA/NA	3.1	11.8	5.6	7.5	6.9

Table 17.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	The unemployed, housewives
Nobody is afraid to express his/her political views	13.8	9.6	11.3	22.0	13.6
Only some people are afraid	13.3	19.5	18.6	23.3	17.0
Many people are afraid	51.8	43.0	36.1	30.9	35.2
Everybody is afraid	15.6	22.1	23.7	15.2	28.4
DA/NA	5.5	5.8	10.3	8.6	5.8

Table 17.4. Depending on residence

Variant of answer	Region						
	Minsk	Minsk region	Brest and its region	Grodno and its region	Vitebsk and its region	Mogilev and its region	Gomel and its region
Nobody is afraid to express his/her political views	24.1	25.2	7.4	7.6	4.0	14.9	9.1
Only some people are afraid	16.7	17.8	13.8	34.5	11.4	21.7	19.1

Many people are afraid	42.2	41.3	35.9	33.3	40.8	38.9	53.5
Everybody is afraid	11.2	10.9	30.0	24.0	31.3	14.3	17.4
DA/NA	4.8	4.8	12.9	0.6	12.5	10.2	0.9

Table 17.5. Depending on the type of settlement

Variant of answer	Type of settlement				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
Nobody is afraid to express his/her political views	24.1	5.5	15.2	11.9	13.4
Only some people are afraid	16.7	19.0	22.0	17.6	18.6
Many people are afraid	42.2	46.9	41.3	38.0	39.4
Everybody is afraid	11.2	16.8	19.3	23.7	23.5
DA/NA	5.8	11.8	2.2	23.8	5.1

18. "Are you personally ready to participate in politics more actively?"

Table 18.1. Depending on age

Variant of answer	All respondents	Age, years old						
		18-19	20-24	25-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 +
Definitely yes	5.1	4.1	2.0	6.1	3.4	6.7	8.6	3.5
More likely yes	16.1	18.4	27.5	25.0	14.3	16.2	13.5	9.6
More likely no	37.8	40.8	35.3	38.5	45.3	43.3	34.1	30.8
Definitely no	38.1	34.7	29.4	25.0	34.3	30.6	41.6	54.7
DA/NA	2.9	2.0	5.8	5.4	2.7	3.2	3.2	1.4

Table 18.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (incomplete higher)
Definitely yes	0	2.8	5.2	3.4	9.7
More likely yes	7.1	9.2	14.2	18.1	21.8
More likely no	37.8	30.3	37.6	38.1	40.3
Definitely no	53.1	57.7	40.3	35.4	26.3
DA/NA	2.0	0	2.7	5.0	1.9

Table 18.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	The unemployed, housewives
Definitely yes	4.3	7.0	4.1	3.5	3.5
More likely yes	18.8	15.6	25.8	10.9	16.3
More likely no	37.9	42.4	40.2	31.3	33.7
Definitely no	35.9	30.9	26.8	52.7	45.3
DA/NA	3.1	4.1	3.1	1.6	1.2

Table 18.4. Depending on residence

Variant of answer	Region						
	Minsk	Minsk region	Brest and its region	Grodno and its region	Vitebsk and its region	Mogilev and its region	Gomel and its region
Definitely yes	3.8	5.7	0.9	7.0	11.5	5.2	3.5
More likely yes	14.3	12.6	12.8	24.6	20.5	13.8	16.2
More likely no	23.5	37.4	50.0	32.7	37.5	40.2	46.5
Definitely no	54.6	43.0	33.0	32.8	24.5	39.1	32.0
DA/NA	3.8	1.3	3.3	2.9	6.0	1.7	1.8

Table 18.5. Depending on the type of settlement

Variant of answer	Type of settlement				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
Definitely yes	3.8	0.7	8.7	5.8	6.2
More likely yes	14.3	19.9	13.6	17.6	15.0
More likely no	23.5	48.9	34.5	36.3	44.2
Definitely no	54.6	27.2	41.3	37.2	31.8
DA/NA	3.8	3.3	1.9	3.0	2.8

19. "In February the businessman who had been driving a Porsche Cayenne and by accident had struck and killed a third grader on the doorstep of a Minsk school was sentenced to 4 years of a convict colony. The topic was hotly discussed in society. Some people consider the sentence just, others do not. And what do you think?"

Table 19.1. Depending on age

Variant of answer	All respondents	Age, years old						
		18-19	20-24	25-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 +
I consider the sentence too mild	31.5	24.5	31.4	28.4	27.2	35.0	25.5	38.8
I consider the sentence just	30.1	24.5	22.2	29.7	33.2	20.3	30.0	33.0
I consider the sentence too heavy	7.6	2.0	6.5	11.5	8.7	11.0	8.6	2.6
I have not heard anything about it	22.6	40.8	34.6	23.0	22.6	14.1	23.6	20.9
DA/NA	8.2	8.2	5.3	7.4	8.3	10.6	12.3	4.7

Table 19.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (incomplete higher)
I consider the sentence too mild	39.4	40.4	29.0	30.5	31.7
I consider the sentence just	37.4	20.2	32.1	28.3	30.1
I consider the sentence too heavy	0	1.8	7.2	9.0	10.7
I have not heard anything about it	21.2	28.4	24.7	22.4	17.2
DA/NA	2.0	9.2	7.0	9.8	10.3

Table 19.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	The unemployed, housewives
I consider the sentence too mild	26.3	32.3	29.9	37.0	27.9
I consider the sentence just	30.1	28.9	29.9	32.9	26.7
I consider the sentence too heavy	11.5	9.8	2.1	2.7	2.3
I have not heard anything about it	25.5	17.4	34.0	21.7	32.6
DA/NA	6.6	11.6	4.1	5.7	10.5

Table 19.4. Depending on residence

Variant of answer	Region						
	Minsk	Minsk region	Brest and its region	Grodno and its region	Vitebsk and its region	Mogilev and its region	Gomel and its region
I consider the sentence too mild	25.5	36.8	45.4	24.9	15.6	27.0	42.5
I consider the sentence just	26.5	37.3	32.6	34.9	31.2	27.0	23.2
I consider the sentence too heavy	9.9	3.5	4.6	6.5	7.0	11.5	9.6
I have not heard anything about it	30.6	18.4	12.8	25.4	26.1	21.3	21.9
DA/NA	7.5	3.7	4.6	8.3	20.1	13.2	2.8

Table 19.5. Depending on the type of settlement

Variant of answer	Type of settlement				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
I consider the sentence too mild	25.5	36.5	25.0	32.3	36.2
I consider the sentence just	26.5	32.5	28.0	34.0	29.5
I consider the sentence too heavy	9.9	3.0	19.3	4.0	3.9
I have not heard anything about it	30.6	21.8	23.9	22.2	16.5
DA/NA	7.5	6.2	3.8	7.4	13.9

20. "Have you been offended by representatives of government agencies for the last three years?"

Table 20.1. Depending on age

Variant of answer	All respondents	Age, years old						
		18-19	20-24	25-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 +
Yes, many times	3.3	2.0	1.9	4.7	2.3	5.3	3.8	2.3

Yes, several times	11.4	8.2	13.0	14.1	16.2	11.6	12.8	9.3
Yes, once	12.1	10.2	6.5	18.1	16.2	9.8	13.2	5.8
No, I haven't	68.1	75.5	70.8	57.7	58.1	67.3	67.2	79.4
DA/NA	5.1	4.1	7.8	5.4	7.2	6.0	3.0	3.2

Table 20.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (incomplete higher)
Yes, many times	0	4.6	3.4	2.7	4.9
Yes, several times	3.0	3.7	10.9	14.3	13.6
Yes, once	4.0	11.0	13.4	11.3	14.2
No, I haven't	90.9	76.1	67.9	64.3	63.1
DA/NA	2.1	4.6	4.4	7.4	4.2

Table 20.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	The unemployed, housewives
Yes, many times	3.3	3.0	2.1	2.4	9.2
Yes, several times	14.5	13.9	10.4	5.4	8.0
Yes, once	12.7	13.5	10.4	9.8	12.6
No, I haven't	63.6	64.6	72.9	79.1	58.6
DA/NA	5.9	5.0	4.2	3.3	11.6

Table 20.4. Depending on residence

Variant of answer	Region						
	Minsk	Minsk region	Brest and its region	Grodno and its region	Vitebsk and its region	Mogilev and its region	Gomel and its region
Yes, many times	2.7	3.9	1.4	9.4	3.0	3.4	1.3
Yes, several times	9.9	7.0	18.4	17.0	10.1	11.5	7.9
Yes, once	8.2	11.4	11.4	12.9	7.0	13.2	21.4
No, I haven't	77.5	71.1	61.8	60.2	68.8	67.2	65.1
DA/NA	1.7	6.6	7.0	0.5	11.1	4.7	4.3

Table 20.5. Depending on the type of settlement

Variant of answer	Type of settlement				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
Yes, many times	2.7	0.7	3.8	4.1	4.7
Yes, several times	9.9	9.2	13.6	13.9	10.6
Yes, once	8.2	10.7	18.2	11.1	12.7
No, I haven't	77.5	73.9	56.8	68.2	64.8
DA/NA	1.7	5.5	7.6	2.7	7.2

OPEN FORUM

In the "Open Forum" rubric of the given issue of the IISEPS analytical bulletin we offer to our readers' attention a selection of data of sociological surveys conducted by our colleagues mainly in the countries contiguous to Belarus furnished with our short comments.

In spite of the purposeful effort of the Belarusian authorities to construct their own model of development, its uniqueness remains relative. The mentioned conclusion is true of the economic, political, social and other constituents of the Belarusian model. We suppose that a comparative analysis of social processes in contiguous countries will allow our readers to understand the results of studying Belarusian society better.

The phenomenon of the blogger A. Navalny: between the myth and reality

For many years already Belarusian opposition has been wrestling with an issue of a single presidential

contender. There is a belief spread among not only opposition politicians but among independent analysts, too, that an incessant sequence of electoral defeats of A. Lukashenko's opponents is connected with the absence of consolidation in the opposition ranks. Electors are presumably worried with the

question: "If not him, then who?" Electing a *single* candidate should become an answer to it.

Solving the problem of transforming the Belarusian authoritarian regime into a democratic one is thus transferred into an organizational plane. Electing a *single* candidate is the first and most important step, which then should be followed by a set of formal actions to hype him up (we, of course, simplify the matter but not in essence).

Table 1

Dynamics of answering the question: "If Aleksey Navalny nominated himself for the presidential election in Russia, would you vote for him?" (% of the number of those who know Aleksey Navalny)

Variant of answer	04'11	03'12	03'13
Definitely yes	5	6	1
Perhaps yes	28	13	13
More likely no	37	25	28
Definitely no	19	38	38
Difficult to answer	11	18	21

Let us refer to the Russian experience of solving a similar problem with similar methods. In March *Levada-Center* published another recognizability rating (the percentage of affirmative answers to the question: "Do you know, who N is?") of the blogger A. Navalny. From April 2011 to March 2013 it has grown from 6% to 37%. If we take into account that 79% of Russians form their opinion about what is going on with the help of TV, and only 15% with the help of the Internet, then the sixfold increase in the recognizability rating is undoubtedly the young politician's success.

However, a growth in a politician's recognizability does not automatically lead to a growth in the number of his supporters. The dynamics given in Table 1 made some independent mass media declare that "Navalny's electoral rating was falling". However, such interpretation of the results of the opinion poll should be recognized as incorrect. Only the answers of those respondents who have heard about him are given in Table 1, not of all of them. In March 2011 6% of the population knew about A. Navalny – mostly his supporters. Among them 33% were ready to vote for him (2% of all respondents). In March 2012 19% of a quarter of the country's population were ready to support the politician in the presidential election (i.e. 5% of Russians), in March 2013 – 14% of 37% (the same 5%).

Thus already at the initial stage of his political career A. Navalny gathered virtually all the votes of his potential supporters. That is why his further promotion does not lead to an increase in his electoral rating.

A. Navalny is undoubtedly a charismatic person. As an opposition politician he has chosen one of the most ratings-boosting topics at the moment – corruption, which he has made a business of and has achieved a great deal in this field. However, his rating ran slap into the ceiling. In Belarus V. Neklyayev has the same 5%.

In our opinion, such concurrence in the ratings of the most popular opposition politicians is not fortuitous. Any attempts of the opposition to suggest a personal alternative to society prove to be inefficient in Belarus as well as in Russia. Neither personal qualities of the candidate, nor the topics they are trying to promote change anything fundamentally. The problem is not in the candidates, but in societies in which there is no demand for a political alternative. Today there is no demand.

The peak of V. Putin's support remained in the past

In March the policy correctness index in Belarus made up minus 16.9 (34.5% of respondents agreed that the state of things in the country was developing in the right direction, and 51.4% – in the wrong one). A similar index for Russia proved to be considerably higher, according to the data of *Levada-Center* – minus 2 (41% and 43% respectively). How can the given value of the PCI be interpreted?

First of all, let us refer to its dynamics of the last two years. In January 2011 the PCI equaled 8, after that it began to decrease and reached a minimum (–8) in August. It seemed that it was not difficult to predict its further change as the election campaigns – parliamentary in December and presidential in March 2012 – had begun in Russia. Taking into account the monopolistic condition of the state TV channels, transition of the PCI values to the positive zone did not spawn doubts and that was exactly what happened.

However, mass protest actions at the end of 2011 managed to "beat" mass media and in December the PCI became negative again (–3). Opposition was not able to develop its success, though. The Kremlin political technologists, just like experienced football coaches, led public opinion to the peak of the electoral form in March, which the PCI registered "having jumped" up to 16!

Considering that as opposed to Belarus there was no manmade economic crisis in Russia in 2011 we rate the negative March value of the PCI as a display of the general negative tendency that has been picking up momentum in Russian society for the last three years. This tendency has underlying reasons; it is engendered by the achieving of the power model based on a tough "top-down command structure" its limit. There is nothing fundamentally new here. The historical pendulum having swung to the maximum

side in the liberalism-authoritarianism coordinates during Perestroika, reached the authoritarian peak in the "zero" years. Now it has begun the counter-motion.

USA – in more than 100 years. Experts of the pro-Kremlin Center for Strategic Developments also pointed to the change in priorities of the population in their report published in October 2012. In the quanti-

Table 2

Dynamics of V. Putin's electoral rating, %

Period	2011				2012				2013											
	2008	2009	2010	I quarter	II quarter	III quarter	IV quarter	I quarter	II quarter	III quarter	October	November	December	January	February	March 3	March 10	March 17	March 24	March 31
Rating	60	60	57	52	49	47	44	50	52	47	46	45	46	47	46	43	46	46	44	45

Let us refer to the data of Table 2 made up on the basis of the opinion polls of the Public Opinion Foundation. The average annual values of V. Putin's electoral rating (the polls are held weekly) are given in the first three columns. In 2008-2009 they were record high. So much was registered by A. Lukashenko only once in the "zero" years – in April 2006.

After 2009, i.e. after a renewal in the economic growth (its fall by 7.8% was provoked by the world financial crisis) a decrease in V. Putin's electoral rating began. A minimum was reached in the IV quarter of 2011, and then it grew again due to the mobilization effect. At that, however, it did not reach the mean values of 2008 and 2009, and the recovery was short-lived.

Analyzing the dynamics of V. Putin's electoral rating it is necessary to note that a direct dependence of the rating dynamics on the population's income was lost over the last years. In the crisis year of 2009 the income declined by 4.5%, whereas in 2012 it grew by 4.2%. Here a direct parallel with the dynamics of A. Lukashenko's rating suggests itself.

Over a period of almost 20 years till 2009 approval indices of Russian presidents adhered strictly to the dynamics of the population's standard of living. At the beginning of V. Putin's first term improvement in the financial standing was the main need of the Russians. In 2002, according to the data of the Public Opinion Foundation, over a third of respondents wanted to charge V. Putin with this problem. The problem of housing was most important only for 2%, and of education – for 3%. In proportion to the growth in incomes, the structure of the population's needs began to change, but the Kremlin continued to act according to the habitual algorithm being sure that any problem could be solved by means of allocating additional budget funds.

In the 1980s the housing stock of Russia grew by almost a third, in the crisis 1990s it accrued two times slower. In fertile "zero" years it increased only by 14%. Crediting the population does not solve the problem, as mortgage does not exceed 30% of the credit portfolio (in France – 80%). With the housing growth rate characteristic of the "zero" years, Russia could catch up with Germany in 50 years, with the

tative survey of the Center held in Moscow and in Samara and Vladimir regions, income and welfare payments turned out to be at the end of the priorities list. Problems of public utilities and housing ranked first (they were mentioned by 94% and 81% of respondents respectively). In the October opinion poll more claims than usual were laid about education.

According to the data of the Public Opinion Foundation, 70% of Russians trusted V. Putin in 2008, another 18% partly trusted him, partly did not. The share of those who did not trust the "national leader" made up only 8%! A. Lukashenko's trust rating was not a patch on such exorbitant values even in the years of his greatest popularity. However, all this is in the past for V. Putin. Let us cite the values of March 31: 42% of respondents trust him, 30% – partly trust him, partly do not, and 24% – do not.

The fact that V. Putin's "electoral history" has reached a turning point is also confirmed by his leadership in the list of "the people responsible for the problems in the country" (*Levada-Center*). In 2012 he headed the list having received over 50% (51%) for the first time. As a comment let us quote the words of the head of the social and cultural research department of *Levada-Center* A. Levinson: "What will it turn into under overcentralization of power in the hands of the president created over these years, and under complete irresponsibility of all other officials before society? It will turn into the following: now for the citizens who have suffered from the actions or inaction of the higher-ups at any level the president will become not only the main hope, but also the main person held responsible for everything. It is well-known that local authorities and bosses are perfectly able to redirect mass protests against their arbitrary rule to the very top of the power vertical".

European parallels and perpendiculars

European society's condition is best reflected in *Eurobarometer* – an international project on conducting regular opinion polls carried out under the auspices of the European Commission. Averaged rates with respect to all European countries, as well as to each country separately, are presented in the results

published by *Eurobarometer*. A shortcoming of the project is the absence of immediacy. Opinion polls are held twice a year, and it takes them from 2 to 3 months to be processed. We are giving the most interesting results of the latest poll (November 2012) here.

Let us begin with the general evaluation of the economic situation in the national economies. Prevalence of negative assessments over positive ones is incontrovertible: bad/more likely bad – 71%, good/more likely good – 27%. Such pessimism is a direct consequence of the crisis that started in the autumn of 2008. A year before a "drawn game" was registered between pessimists and optimists: 49% vs. 48%. However, by the spring of 2009 the advantage of pessimists reached its maximum value: 78% vs. 20%.

What looks so gloomy at the national level looks quite different at the level of households, though. The financial standing of households was assessed as good/ more likely good by 62% of respondents, and by 36% – as bad/more likely bad. Thus, life goes on and the crisis is not so terrible if one looks at it out of the window of one's own house. Let us proceed from the average European rates to separate countries. Sweden (23% vs. 75%) and Greece (99% vs. 1%) are located on the periphery of the national economies' assessments spectrum. Among Belarus neighbors there proved to be no countries with a positive balance of assessments: Poland – 65% vs. 31%, Latvia – 80% vs. 19% and Lithuania – 80% vs. 17%. Let us remind the readers that in March 64.8% of Belarusians agreed that the national economy was in a grip of crisis. It is horrible by European measures, but far from being really horrible.

Among the problems which Europeans are concerned about the price advance traditionally finds itself beyond competition – 44%, unemployment ranks second (21%), the economic situation (the national level) – third, and taxes – fourth (16%). The problem of immigration which Belarusian mass media give so much attention to turned out to occupy the last position – 2%.

Considering that headline inflation in most European countries does not exceed 2% a year, it is difficult for an average Belarusian to understand the concern of the Europeans about the rise in prices. However, any assessments are relative; everybody measures the accepted level of inflation against one's own yardstick. For Belarusians it is not easy to understand the currency of the taxation problem for Europeans either. Behind this lack of understanding are fundamental (civilization) differences. For the time being, let us confine ourselves to the remark: western civilization is a civilization of taxpayers.

IISEPS calculates the expectation index (the difference of positive and negative answers to the question "How is the socio-economic situation going to change in Belarus within the next few years?") quarterly. In March it made up minus 12: 15.3% of respondents expressed their hopes for an improvement, and 27.3% – for a worsening. When answering

a similar question in November 2012 40% of Europeans said that the situation would become worse, and 17% – it would improve. Accordingly the expectation index made up minus 23. It is almost two times less than by Belarusians.

Such low appraisals of the national economies' condition could not but impact on trust in political institutions. In November 2012 33% of Europeans trusted the European Union, 28% – national parliaments, and 27% – national governments. On the eve of the crisis (spring 2007) the trust ratings of the enumerated institutions were considerably higher – 57%, 43%, and 41% respectively. Higher trust rating of the parliament in comparison with the rating of the government is another fundamental difference of the western socio-economic model from the Belarusian one in which legislative power (the parliament) is assigned a solely decorative part to. Let us remind the readers that in accordance with Article 85 of the Constitution of the Republic of Belarus the president "issues decrees which have the force of the law".

However, in spite of the low level of trust in the European Union as the main political institution, the majority of Europeans continue to support economic integration, whose central element is common currency: for – 53%, against – 40%. The maximum support level was registered, of course, in the autumn of 2007 – for 63%, against – 31%. Thus, pessimism is rising, although not so precipitately as the negative assessments of the national economies' condition.

Ukrainian politicians' rating polyphony

Let us consider the southern neighbor of Belarus now. In February the Institute of Sociology of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine published the results of another research according to which Ukrainians' level of trust in state bodies and parties was the lowest in Europe: it did not exceed 1-3%. Distrust in the authorities is becoming a tradition in Ukraine. It is not connected with certain decisions or situations. Ukrainians have got accustomed to trusting in astrologers more than in politicians. The situation has been partly clarified by the answers of the citizens to another set of questions – about their attitude to the rich. It turned out that 87% of Ukrainians did not believe in honest accumulation of capital by oligarchs. And 14% are sure that the rich "should serve time in prison" irrespective of their names. However, a majority – 70% – considers it enough if the state makes the rich pay taxes, invest in the economy and create new working positions. Only 2% support the idea of delegating the oligarchs to the system of power.

In December 2012 half of the country's citizens complained about the situation they found themselves in. Absence of confidence in the future was mentioned by 72%, an increasing anxiety – by 29%, the feelings of confusion and fear – by 33%. At the same time, an opinion poll held by Razumkov's Center confirmed the highest level of distrust in the authorities and indentified those whom Ukrainians trust-

ed. The church (irrespective of confession) proved to possess the highest trust rating – 67%, mass media had almost the same, and non-governmental organizations – 40%. Belarusian NGOs can only envy such a trust rating.

According to Gorshenin's Institute, protest moods in Ukraine are being gradually transformed into the condition of suppressed anger: people trust neither the authorities, nor the opposition; they do not see new political leaders, do not believe in honesty of courts, they are afraid of the corrupt system of defense and law enforcement agencies. A majority declares for changes and at the same time is aware of its own impotence. According to the March observation of Kiev International Institute of Sociology president V. Yanukovich's electoral rating made up 21.2%. This is only 0.7 point higher than the historical low of A. Lukashenko (September, 2011). However, unlike his Belarusian colleague, the Ukrainian president cannot say about himself that he is "the only politician" in the country. The electoral rating of his main rival V. Klichko turned out to be 6.8 points (14.4%) lower in March. Y. Timoshenko has overcome the symbolic boundary of 10% – 11.4%.

Gallup vs. IISEPS

Over a period of three years (2010-2012) Gallup asked the citizens of the former Soviet republics a question: "If you had a chance, would you move to another country forever?" With respect to the number of those desiring to leave their motherland for good Armenia found itself ahead of everybody – 40%, then came Moldova – 32%, Ukraine – 21%, Belarus – 17%, Kyrgyzstan – 16%, Russia, Azerbaijan and Georgia – 14%, Kazakhstan – 13%, Turkmenistan – 11%, Tadjikistan – 6% and Uzbekistan – 5%.

The main reason (52%) due to which respondents would like to move is economic, 13% are ready to pack their suitcases for the sake of their children's future, 10% hope to find a good job, and 12% are not

able to name a reason. It seems that leadership of the economic factor should have placed the Central Asian countries first. However, it turned out that Armenia ranked first. With the population of about 3 million people (the share of Armenians makes up 98%), the number of Armenians in the world is between 6.5 and 14 million people, according to different sources. The largest Armenian diaspora is in Russia (about 1.5 million people).

In our opinion, absence of a direct dependence of the "permanent residence rating" value on the condition of national economies should be explained by the socio-cultural factor. In the Central Asian countries the share of the population leading a traditional way of life is still large which presupposes isolation from the outside world and absence of social mobility.

The Gallup data concerning Belarus differ greatly from the IISEPS data of many years, according to which the share of citizens of the republic-the-partisan willing to leave for good did not fall lower than 34%. As the wording of the question was virtually the same, such a considerable difference in results requires an explanation.

The fact of the matter is that the IISEPS question contains a list of the countries where respondents might move to. It is one thing when respondents are offered to move to an abstract country, and it is another thing altogether when they are actually offered to move to Germany and the USA ("if you had such an opportunity"). Indeed, why not move to Germany if possible? In March 2011 16% of Belarusians expressed a desire to move to Germany!

We have emphasized time and again that respondents' answers should not be understood literally, especially when it comes to readiness to take some actions. Declarations are one thing, and actual readiness is a completely different one. This is one of the reasons when shades in question wordings are able to appreciably influence respondents' answers.

BOOKSHELF

Alexander Tomkovich. "Life after Prison". – Smolensk, "Rodina", 2013, 294 pp.

Freedom must ripen in the course of time, as well as we must ripen on time for freedom

They say that history is written by victors. The heroes of Alexander Tomkovich's new book "Life after Prison" have not supposedly gained a victory yet. What is important, they are not in prison any more. Although several people from among those whom the authorities accused of "mass disturbances" on December 19, 2010 still remain there.

Psychologically the most difficult thing is that the regime they have thrown out a challenge to, still feels quite strong; the opposition has become still more dispersed, to say nothing about the drive toward mass political struggle. That is why some people show certain bitterness. "Almost 10 million people have been and still remain in prison, – says Vladimir Neklyayev, one of the characters of the book. – The regime has become still more rigorous".

At the same time, these people are victors in terms of morality and history, because all dictatorships collapse. Among other things it happens due to the fact, that in the dark hour when it seems to many people that might goes before right, and it is better to hide in the kitchen, to let the steam off in the Internet instead of knocking one's head against a brick wall there is a handful of those who save the pride of the nation. Those who take to the Square, although it is clear that the trained special mission units are able to mop it up in seven and a half minutes, and the obedient courts will rubber-stamp the sentences required by the big brass.

And then ideological service staff will present these people as "destructive elements", and "renegades". Propaganda has poured tanks of lies on each of them. However, time will pass and the next generations will study today's Belarus, its active individuals who had the courage to struggle against the stream, with the help of honest documentary books. Such books are being written by Alexander Tomkovich, a person whose destiny is an overcoming, too; and "Life after Prison" is already his seventeenth book.



To narrate about his characters the author uses various genres: he wrote feature stories about some of them, interviewed others (and relatives of some of them, in particular those who are still behind the bars – Nikolai Statkevich, Dmitri Dashkevich, Eduard Lobov – told the author about them), some wrote texts about themselves on their own. The stories, however, do not produce an eclectic impression. They are united not only by the topic of life after prison, but also by a note of sincerity and confession.

It is valuable that the author does not aspire to "correct" the images of his characters, does not take the edge off their statements,

and does not embellish the pessimism and disappointment motifs by some of them (as well as stereotyped slogans). This adds truthfulness: the portraits are not ceremonial, they are adequate.

In his new book Alexander Tomkovich sticks to his brand-name style – minimum of theatrics, a pointedly lapidary manner of recounting, emphasis on certain details. This is not ardent and fighting social and political journalism (which, frankly speaking, many people are already fed up with), but reserved documentation which works at the expense of the facts power. Photographs – mainly black-and-white and amateur – also do for this style, those which are usually referred to as the ones "from a family album".

When one reads all the 27 stories one feels how the pieces of a puzzle form a picture, how philosophy of destinies and the epoch appears from the supposedly down-to-earth documentary. How the words of one of the characters – Pavel Severinets – fill with a special meaning: "Morality, honesty, truthfulness in words and deeds should become the basis for victory in Belarus. Opposition of conscience is the only way of the democratic movement".

Finally, the lines written by the poet and politician Vladimir Neklyayev in prison suggest themselves as an epigraph to the book:

*"Freedom must ripen in the course of time,
as well as we must ripen on time for freedom".*

Alexander Klaskowsky

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IISEPS Executive Director:

Dr. Algirdas Degutis

IISEPS News
Jogailos g. 4, LT-01116 Vilnius
Editor Algirdas Degutis (+370-6) 887-50-00
E-mail: iiseps@iiseps.org; iiseps.iiseps@gmail.com
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