

IISEPS NEWS

Analytical Bulletin of Independent Institute of
Socio-Economic and Political Studies

N 2 (68)

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June 2013

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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 second quarter of 2013.

Our research shows that unstable stabilization which IISEPS wrote about describing the "economic feeling" of Belarusians last year has revealed a positive trend in the second quarter of the current year again. Thus, the ratio of those whose financial standing has improved for the last three months to those whose financial standing has become worse changed in favor of improvement in comparison with March. The number of those who consider Belarusian economy to be in crisis decreased. The population's real income began to grow again. The number of those who think that "in general the state of things in our country is developing in the wrong direction" also decreased in comparison with those who gave a different answer. Belarusians began to look to the future somewhat more optimistically. At the same time, the number of negative answers considerably exceeds the number of positive ones as far as all the indices are concerned.

In spite of the trend, the image of the state as the main mouthpiece of the people's interests and their protector becomes on the whole more and more "pale". On the one hand, improvement in the "economic feeling" entailed some improvement in the attitude of Belarusians to the authorities: for example, the level of trust in the government rose. On the other hand, numerous facts speak about the instability and fragility of this connection. For instance, only a fourth of respondents agree with A. Lukashenko's recent statement that "in 2013 the growth in consumer prices will not exceed 12%", less than 40% – that "crisis phenomena have retreated in our country, and economy is consistently moving forward". The authorities already cannot go far astride their pet subject – fight against corruption: only 30.2% of Belarusians agree that the president can succeed in fighting against corruption, 27.8% think that "he will hardly be able to achieve much success as corruption in Belarus is ineradicable", and 37.5% – that "he himself depends on corrupt officials to a large extent", or "he will not seriously fight against corruption in any case as he is interested in it somehow or other". Assessing people who hold power at the moment, almost 45% of respondents think that "these are people preoccupied with their material well-being and career", and only 13.4% – "it is a good team of politicians leading the country in the right direction". An opinion that the authorities are not only ignorant and corrupt, but also unjust and "not ours" begins to dominate in society: over half of respondents do not agree that "the state's policy is formed based on the interests of millions of citizens, and not of the narrow strata of the elite", and only a third of respondents assessing the state built under president A. Lukashenko believe that "this is my state, it protects my interests", over 45% – "this is partly my state, it does not sufficiently protect the interests of such people as me", and 15.5% – "this is not my state, it does not protect my interests, I do not trust it".

However, as it has been mentioned before, this sentiment is not directly shifted on to head of state; the resource of public trust in him is far from being exhausted. Moreover, an increase in the "economic feeling" in the second quarter had a positive impact on the attitude to the president, too: in comparison with March the number of respondents trusting him and ready to vote for him in a new presidential election grew appreciably. However, "inflation" of the presidential rating with electoral expectations is changing: if before the majority of respondents pinned their hopes for Belarus economic development on the president, then today – on attraction of foreign capital.

Against a relative improvement in the "economic feeling" readiness of society for changes, including support of the opposition, remains low: only 15.4% trust opposition parties and opposition leaders' ratings remain within the bounds of several percent. Only 5.4% said that "my life depends on politics, I take active part in it", and over a third of respondents are not interested in politics at all. At the same time, as it has been already mentioned before, there are ways for changes supporters' possible work. Judging by the data of numerous opinion polls, the principle here is rather simple: "the more the opposition turns its face to the people", the more it can "count on reciprocity". For example, a recent initiative of four opposition parties to hold a "national referendum" was received in society quite positively.

Although the before registered trends in foreign policy orientation of Belarusians remain on the whole the same, some "warming up" in the attitude to Russia is being noted again. Thus, the majority of respondents expressed a positive attitude to the fact that guests from Russia had recently begun to visit Belarus more and more often: about a third – because "they are people kindred to us" and almost the same number of people – because "the more tourists, the richer the country". However, such an attitude to the people "kindred to us" does not mean that the majority of Belarusians support deepening of military integration, too: less than 20% treated the recent statement of Minister of Defense of the Russian Federation S. Shoygu about the possibility of deployment of a Russian air force base in Belarus positively, and 36% – negatively. Attempts of the authorities to play the "anti-West card" under such conditions again do not find considerable support in society either. For example, assessing a recent statement of A. Lukashenko that "Independent Belarus constantly finds itself at gunpoint of the cannonry of an undeclared cold war. We are being strangled with sanctions, bad-mouthed with aspersion. NATO war planes fly along our borders, new military bases are being created, provocations are being committed", only 27% agreed with it.

As usual, for those readers who are interested more 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 continue to introduce our readers to the most important results of social studies pursued in the contiguous countries and compared with the IISEPS data. And in our "Bookshelf" rubric we offer to the readers' attention a review of Prof. Ryszard Radzik's books devoted to the problem of Belarusian identity.

As usual your feedback and comments are welcome!

IISEPS Board

MONITORING OF PUBLIC OPINION IN BELARUS

In June of 2013 independent sociologists have conducted the nation opinion poll (those face-to-face interviewed are 1.513 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.

JUNE – 2013

Social feeling under the conditions of a historic high

We begin our analysis of social indices with citing the words by Minister of Economic Affairs N. Snopkov: "The record salary rate of \$ 565 is a historic high. By the end of 2013, as expected, we should reach \$ 600; that is why for the time left the approach to increasing salaries up to the anticipated level must be directly coordinated with labor productivity".

N. Snopkov's statement concerning the historic high was made at the meeting of the Council of Ministers on June 14, i.e. upon completing IISEPS June opinion poll. We suppose that 1513 respondents who answered the questionnaire were hardly worried about the prospects of coordinating salary growth with growth in labor productivity; however, they surely could not have missed the two-digit increase in salaries. The fact was registered by all three social indices (according to Belstat, the take-home pay between January and May, 2013 grew by 21.5% in comparison with the period between January and May, 2012).

To comply with principles, including the social justice principle, one needs resources. Under the conditions of resources shortage the state has to divide social and professional groups depending on their contribution to maintaining stability. Because of an excessive demand for constructors on the territory of contiguous states they are allotted additional "dietary". There is no demand, however, for Belarusian pensioners on the part of either Russia or Poland; hence one should not be surprised that for the last time pensions in Belarus were valorized in November, 2012. The 10% raise in July can hardly be called valorization. It simply compensates for the price surge loss.

Let us address the social indices directly (Tables 1-3). All of them have visibly grown, however they have not left the negative zone anyway. Compare the last values of the indices with the ones in the first column. The June pay caught up with and outstripped the pay of December, 2012. However, one can't step into the same river twice. The salaries equaled, but what about prices and the population's needs? It is not ruled out that the difference in the social indices value registered in the outermost columns

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	06'13
It has improved	24.9	1.6	15.3	12.8	14.7	17.4	13.3	13.7
It has not changed	57.7	23.2	43.4	54.7	58.8	54.0	56.4	63.1
It has become worse	16.0	73.4	40.6	31.9	25.0	26.7	28.7	21.6
FSI*	8.9	-71.8	-25.3	-19.1	-10.3	-9.3	-15.4	-7.9

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

In all fairness it has to be mentioned that increasing the average pay so considerably the state had to trespass against one of the base principles of the Belarusian model – the social justice principle. In particular, the take-home pay of public sector employees during the period between January and April grew up by 6.8% and the pay of constructors – by 43.3%. It is impossible not to remember here head of state's aphorism: "If we lose teachers that will be the end. We will walk drunk and naked".

of Tables 1-3 should be recognized as one of the main results of the three years of the fourth five-year plan.

In March, 2011 an average Belarusian made 1.537 thousand rubles or \$ 508 in dollar terms. The opinion poll was held in the first half of the month – that is before the termination of free exchange of rubles for dollars and euro. As it follows from Table 4, the way Belarusians estimate their well-being has changed slightly for the last three years, but at the

same time the share of people "of average means" has increased.

The data of Table 5 can be regarded as an illustration to the promise of Minister of Economic Affairs

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	06'13
It is going to improve	30.6	11.9	22.5	21.4	18.4	23.3	15.3	17.7
It is not going to change	40.7	20.3	34.4	38.5	43.6	34.6	44.7	49.1
It is going to become worse	17.2	55.5	32.7	30.4	27.8	29.7	27.3	23.7
EI*	13.4	-43.6	-10.2	-9.0	-9.4	-6.4	-12.0	-6.0

* *Expectations index*

Table 3

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

Variant of answer	12'10	09'11	03'12	06'12	09'12	12'12	03'13	06'13
In the right direction	54.2	17.0	35.3	32.4	34.1	33.5	34.5	39.6
In the wrong direction	32.5	68.5	52.5	54.3	47.4	46.1	51.4	45.5
DA/NA	13.3	14.5	12.2	13.3	18.4	20.4	14.1	14.9
PCI*	21.7	-51.5	-17.2	-21.9	-13.3	-12.6	-16.9	-5.9

* *Policy correctness index*

Table 4

Dynamics of answering the question: "To which of the following population groups could you rather attribute yourself?", %

Variant of answer	03'11	06'13
We can hardly make both ends meet; there is not enough money even for food	10.3	8.5
There is enough money for food, however purchasing clothes causes serious difficulties	33.7	37.2
There is enough money for food and clothes, however purchasing durables is a problem for us	44.1	45.3
We can buy durables without difficulty, however it is hard to buy really expensive things	10.9	8.3
We can afford rather expensive purchases – an apartment, a summer cottage, etc.	0.7	0.6
NA	0.3	0.1

Table 5

Distribution of answers to the question: "Is the state of things in our country developing in general in the right or in the wrong direction?" depending on respondents' purchasing power, %

Variant of answer	In the right direction	In the wrong direction
We can hardly make both ends meet; there is not enough money even for food	18.6	73.6
There is enough money for food, however purchasing clothes causes serious difficulties	35.5	50.8
There is enough money for food and clothes, however purchasing durables is a problem for us	44.4	39.3
We can buy durables without difficulty, however it is hard to buy really expensive things	54.8	29.4

Let us "intercross" answers to the questions of Tables 3 and 4 (Table 5). No surprise happened here: among those who are able to purchase durables without difficulty the share of respondents approving of the country's development line is almost three times larger than among those who do not have enough money even for food (the group "We can afford rather expensive purchases – an apartment, a summer cottage, etc." was not analyzed due to its paucity).

N. Snopkov to raise the average pay up to \$ 600 by the end of the year. The government and their mentors from the Presidential Administration simply have no other means to reckon on approval of their actions on the part of voters.

In spite of reaching the historic high of the average pay, the overwhelming majority of respondents continue to think that Belarusian economy finds itself in crisis (Table 6). However, it should be mentioned for fairness' sake that their number has been slowly

Table 6

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

Variant of answer	09'11	12'11	03'12	06'12	09'12	03'13	06'13
Yes	87.6	81.5	77.2	71.7	64.1	64.8	59.8
No	8.0	8.0	15.1	21.5	23.8	24.6	29.5
DA/NA	4.4	10.5	7.7	6.8	12.1	10.6	10.7

Table 7

Distribution of answers to the question: "Do you think Belarusian economy is in crisis?" depending on respondents' purchasing power, %

Variant of answer	Yes	No
We can hardly make both ends meet; there is not enough money even for food	78.3	10.9
There is enough money for food, however purchasing clothes causes serious difficulties	67.9	21.1
There is enough money for food and clothes, however purchasing durables is a problem for us	55.0	35.1
We can buy durables without difficulty, however it is hard to buy really expensive things	33.6	52.8

Table 8

Dynamics of the population's real income (as percentage of the previous year) and A. Lukashenko's electoral rating, %

Year	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Income	128	104	104	110	118	118	113	113	103	115	99	121	122
Rating*	41	30	29	39	47	55	46	41	41	45	29	32	35

* Yearly average value

decreasing: by 11.9 points during the year, and by 5 points for the last three months.

As the data of Table 7 show, among those who "can hardly make both ends meet" 78.3% consider Belarusian economy to be in crisis, and among those who "can buy durables without difficulty" there are only 33.6% of such people. Thus, it can be averred that each Belarusian has his/her own sense of crisis, and the sense is determined by his/her purchasing power to a considerable extent.

Although, contrary to the numerous pessimistic predictions, the crisis itself did not lead to social and political destabilization, it substantially shattered assuredness of a considerable part of Belarusians in the correctness of the policy chosen in 1994. An irreversible process of realizing that not everything is alright in the country, and that the policy pursued by the authorities needs if not drastic demolition then appreciable correcting, is under way in society.

Most orderly European politician's rating dynamics

Out of the whole set of questions A. Lukashenko's electoral rating traditionally draws attention of the general public, politicians and experts to the fullest extent. As a rule, only the very few are satisfied with its value. In society split into supporters and opponents of the authoritarian "father" it is obviously understated for the former ("what can be expected from the sociologists serving their western masters"). For the latter it is, on the contrary, overstated ("what can be expected from the KGB agents, and what rating

measurements can one talk about in an authoritarian country").

It is useless trying to budge such critics; that is why let us refer to the classic of sociological analysis, satirist M. Zhvanetsky: "If I have just one window in my room, then what is its rating?" A. Lukashenko's high rating is a direct consequence of the lack of options, amplified many times by all the might of state propaganda. Simultaneously it is an outcome of "the influence of the highest social position in a bureaucratic hierarchy. It can be regarded as manifestation of a "sacred" attitude to power, which still remains unchanged, even though it has undergone some erosion lately" (L. Gudkov, sociologist).

In March, 2013 A. Lukashenko's electoral rating made up 33.4%, in June – 37.3%, having thus grown by 3.9 points for three months. As it follows from Table 8, there is nothing surprising in such addition. The incomings of Belarusians between January and April of the current year have grown by 21% (there are no data for six months). At a faster pace they were growing only in 2001, hence after the termination of the crisis acute phase of 2011 accompanied by an absolute drop in the population's income head of state's electoral rating began to grow.

A. Lukashenko's trust rating is, as a rule, higher than his electoral rating. In June it grew by 5.5 points relative to March (Table 9). For the same period of time the share of Belarusians distrusting head of state (the distrust rating) decreased from 43.2% to 40.6%. A situation when the trust rating exceeded the distrust rating appreciably was observed in March, 2011 for the last time: 47.9% vs. 42%. It can be con-

sidered that in June the "only Belarusian politician" emerged from the distrust crisis.

society's life, such as economy, public administration, medicine, education and others should be treated in

Table 9

Dynamics of the trust rating of the president, the government, mass media and opposition parties, %

Institution	12'10	09'11	03'12	06'12	12'12	03'13	06'13
President	55.0	24.5	42.2	38.5	39.1	43.4	48.9
Government	51.6	17.1	35.7	34.0	35.0	35.6	39.9
State mass media	52.9	25.7	33.9	32.4	38.1	28.1	33.6
Independent mass media	46.3	32.2	34.3	35.5	48.1	28.8	31.1
Opposition parties	16.3	12.1	17.0	17.3	20.0	13.1	15.4

Table 10

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	06'13
On attraction of foreign capital	26.6	37.4	52.7	52.8	51.6
On the president of the country	48.7	44.4	35.7	31.6	33.8
On Belarusian businessmen	23.3	22.0	23.2	34.6	30.4
On the government of the country	17.4	20.4	34.2	27.0	26.9
On heads of state-owned enterprises and collective farms	20.5	16.1	16.5	22.9	22.3
On political parties and movements	8.0	6.4	7.2	10.7	10.7
On mass media	6.6	2.9	1.8	5.4	6.2
On the National Assembly	8.8	2.3	4.6	5.4	5.2
On the army, security bodies	8.0	2.0	2.1	3.6	4.1
On the legal system of the country	5.6	3.0	3.2	4.1	3.9

Table 11

Dynamics of answering the question: "Do you know that on April 19 president A. Lukashenko spoke with a yearly message to the Belarusian people and the National Assembly?", %

Variant of answer	06'06	06'08	06'10	06'12	06'13
Yes	69	50	55	63	58.7
No	31	46	41	34	38.8

As it usually happens, following head of state's rating the trust rating of the government (+5.5 points) and state mass media (+5.4 points) rose as well. As for independent mass media and opposition parties, the growth in their rating did not exceed the statistical error. It should be admitted, there were no reasons for any growth anyway.

No obvious change was registered when respondents were answering the question of Table 10 either. For respondents foreign capital still remains the leader of hopes for the economic development of Belarusians. A. Lukashenko has not been able to compete with it for four years already. One cannot help remembering a saying here: "No man is a prophet in his own land". His popularity level finds itself in the inverse relation with the acuteness of domestic problems.

Attention should be paid to the last two lines of Table 10. In his public speeches A. Lukashenko connects his hopes for imposing order in the country with the law courts and security agencies more and more often. Let us confine ourselves to just one quote: "Special attention should be paid to criminal cases concerning damage inflicted on state property by officials. Bribe-taking in the most important spheres of

the same way. At that an objective assessment should be given by investigating authorities regardless of the person's official capacity. There should be no pampering! There are no and cannot be any untouchables!" (the speech made on June 14 before the employees of the Investigating committee).

However, head of state's emotional statements did not tell on public opinion. Belarusians traditionally trust the army, but as a symbolic institution only. The population does not expect any practical influence on economy from the army or security bodies, not that they expect anything from the National Assembly, either.

In April A. Lukashenko spoke with his yearly message. The level of society's attention to it did not exceed the usual scope (Table 11): today 60% is the limit of public attention to the events not affecting the population directly.

The opinion of Belarusians with regard to the statements made by A. Lukashenko in the course of the message divided just as it should be in a split society (Table 12). The specific weight of those who agree and do not agree differs slightly according to the majority of statements, with the exception of the price growth. The share of pessimists not believing in

the *planned* 12% exceeded the share of optimists 2.2 times: 56.1% vs. 25.2%. One should not expect anything else from the Belarusians living under the conditions of galloping inflation for over 20 years already, as even in Europe where an increase in consumer prices does not, as a rule, exceed 2% a year, inflation regularly finds itself among the leaders in the list of the main problems.

It follows clearly from the data of Table 13 that a personal political alternative is quite obvious. In the poll only 15.3% of respondents stated that they trusted opposition parties. However, when the matter concerns individuals, there is more support in this case: answering the open-end question approximately every fourth respondent named a certain alternative to the incumbent president, and answering the

Table 12

Distribution of answers to the question: "What is your attitude to the following statements which president A. Lukashenko made in the course of the message?", %

Statement	Agree	Disagree	DA/NA
The results of the economy's work in the I quarter of 2013 should be estimated as positive	42.9	42.4	14.7
Crisis phenomena have retreated in our country, and economy is consistently moving forward	39.7	49.1	11.2
Belarusian economy needs modernization, not a cardinal change of the model	50.2	37.7	12.1
According to the results of 2013 financial stability of agricultural enterprises will be ensured	35.5	44.2	20.3
We (the leaders of Belarus) are the most orderly and reliable people living in the center of Europe	31.0	53.2	15.8
Information technologies are able to fundamentally solve the problem of de-bureaucratization owing to the massive introduction of state e-services	48.4	31.4	20.2
All declared strategic projects – modernization, informatization and promotion of young managers – are being done in the long run for the sake of each particular person's welfare growth	42.4	40.2	17.4
The state's policy is formed based on the interests of millions of citizens, and not of the narrow strata of the elite	36.7	50.5	12.8
The growth in consumer prices will not exceed 12% in 2013	25.2	56.1	18.7
By the end of 2013 the number of public sector employees will be reduced by 25%	40.3	37.6	22.1
Russia, the Russian people and Belarusians are a single whole, one tree	54.8	31.0	14.2

Almost every third respondent (31%) agreed that the leaders of Belarus are the most orderly and reliable people living in the center of Europe! How can anyone not to vote for the main leader, the most orderly and reliable one among the most orderly and reliable ones, after that?

The rating of a politician in the West and the rating of the "only politician" in an authoritarian country are, as they say it in Odessa, two big differences. In the first case the rating is the result of assessing the outcome of the practical activity's results. In the second case it is an expression of mass hopes and illusions. Besides, one should not forget about the lack of alternative supported by state mass media.

Power and alternative in the ratings mirror

In the opinion poll of June 2013 a set of questions about the popularity of politicians and social and political organizations was asked. In particular, respondents were asked two questions concerning their desired presidential contenders: an open-end one, when a respondent was supposed to write in the last name of the preferred candidate on his/her own, and a close-end one, in which the respondent was offered to choose a candidate from a fixed list of politicians (Table 13).

close-end one – almost every second.

It also follows from these data that an alternative does not have a single face, even V. Neklyayev who ranks second in the rating gathers only an insignificant part of the respondents ready to vote for an alternative to A. Lukashenko.

One of the quite interesting questions is why the ratings of the politicians differ so appreciably in the answers to the open-end and close-end questions about the desired contestants for the presidency. Generally speaking, the answer is as follows: people differ greatly in their interest in politics. A political activist understands all the twists and turns of various political trends, knows the names of all the party leaders by heart. A person who does not know anything about politics has only the roughest idea about it – there is power, there is "no-power", the latter is embodied just in one or two names. It is not difficult to remember them, however many respondents do not want to bother even to do that. Let us note that the number of respondents who did not answer the close-end question is three times less than the open-end question – approximately every fourth respondent did not put him/herself to the bother of remembering. Even A. Lukashenko known to every Belarusian gained slightly in the rating when respondents transferred from the open-end to the close-end question.

Table 13

Belarusian politicians' ratings, %

Variant of answer	Close-end rating*	Open-end rating
A. Lukashenko	40.9	37.3
V. Neklyayev	9.5	5.4
A. Sannikov	6.0	3.4
A. Milinkevich	6.0	2.3
S. Shushkevich	4.0	1.4
Z. Poznyak	3.2	0.8
S. Gaidukevich	3.0	1.1
N. Statkevich	2.4	1.4
A. Kozulin	2.2	0.6
V. Rymashevsky	1.9	0.2
S. Kalyakin	1.8	0.4
Y. Romanchuk	1.8	0.2
O. Karach	1.7	0.6
A. Lebedko	1.5	0.5
A. Mikhalevich	1.3	0.5
G. Kostusev	0.6	0.2
Other 11 politicians with an open-end rating less than 0.5%	–	2.5
NA	12.2	36.2

* The close-end question about a desired presidential contender, as well as the questions of Tables 15-16, was included into the poll at the request of the Civil Campaign "Our House"

Table 14

The close-end rating in the groups of supporters and opponents of the president and the opposition, %

Variant of answer	All respondents	Trust in the president		Trust in the opposition	
		Trust	Do not trust	Trust	Do not trust
A. Lukashenko	40.9	74.2	4.6	21.6	50.5
V. Neklyayev	9.5	3.2	17.1	15.9	6.6
A. Sannikov	6.0	1.5	11.7	15.5	3.1
A. Milinkevich	6.0	2.4	10.6	10.8	4.8
S. Shushkevich	4.0	1.6	6.5	4.3	4.2
Z. Poznyak	3.2	1.2	6.2	3.0	2.8
S. Gaidukevich	3.0	2.7	2.3	2.6	3.3
N. Statkevich	2.4	0.8	4.7	3.0	1.9
A. Kozulin	2.2	0.3	4.9	2.6	1.8
Y. Romanchuk	1.8	1.9	1.5	2.6	1.5
V. Rymashevsky	1.8	0.7	2.6	2.2	1.1
S. Kalyakin	1.8	1.6	2.0	1.7	1.6
O. Karach	1.7	1.2	2.4	3.0	1.4
A. Lebedko	1.5	0.7	2.4	2.6	0.7
A. Mikhalevich	1.3	0.1	2.9	1.7	1.1
G. Kostusev	0.6	0.4	0.8	0.4	0.8

There is also another mechanism for the rating growth in going from one question to another – the recognition mechanism. Having seen the name of a politician in the close-end question, the respondent may remember something positive about him/her and mark him/her as a desired candidate. On average, the lower is a candidate's open-end rating the larger is the gap between his/her open-end and close-end ratings. Recognition plays an almost crucial role here.

Finally, the list of the candidates presented in the questionnaire legitimizes its participants as possible contestants in the eyes of respondents: a person can lean to a politician, but not consider him/her as a presidential contender before seeing him/her in the

suggested list.

The data of Table 14 testify to the difference in the political opinions of the alternative: opponents of the president and supporters of the opposition are not necessarily supporters of certain opposition candidates.

As it can be seen, A. Lukashenko absolutely (although not 100%) dominates in the group of respondents trusting him; every second respondent among the ones not trusting the opposition is ready to vote for him. What is interesting, in the group of respondents trusting the opposition the incumbent president is also the most popular politician. A question emerg-

es here: what exactly is the declared trust in the opposition expressed in, and in what opposition exactly?

It should be noted that A. Lukashenko's popularity is not projected on the ruling organizations: he is an

Table 15

Dynamics of answering the question: "If tomorrow parliamentary elections took place, candidates of which political party or movement would you vote for?", % (an open-end question, more than one answer is possible)

Variant of answer	03'13	06'13
"Tell the Truth"	1.8	9.2
BPF Party (The Belarusian People's Front Party)	6.5	4.9
Agrarian Party	3.3	4.3
"For Freedom"	4.0	4.1
"Belaya Rus"	4.4	4.0
LDP (The Liberal Democratic Party)	3.6	4.0
JCP (The Joint Civic Party)	3.0	2.8
Belarusian Social Democratic Party "Gramada"	2.1	2.7
Belarusian Social Democratic "Gramada"	2.0	2.3
"The Green" Party	4.2	2.3
CPB (The Communist Party of Belarus)	2.0	2.3
CCP BPF (The Conservative Christian Party Belarusian People's Front)	2.0	1.9
"The Just World" Party	2.1	1.9
"The Young Front"	1.9	1.7
"Our House"	1.4	1.5
Belarusian Patriotic Party	0.4	1.3
"European Belarus"	1.4	1.3
Republican Party	0.4	0.6
Republican Party of Labor and Justice	1.1	0.6
Social Sports Party	0.5	0.4
BRUY (The Belarusian Republican Union of the Youth)	0.2	0.2
Party of People's Concord	0.2	0.1
Another answer (for a non-party, for an opponent of A. Lukashenko, I will not vote, etc.)	4.6	6.5

It is natural that opposition politicians enjoy more popularity in "their" groups (the respondents not trusting A. Lukashenko and trusting the opposition). However, this is not dominating: the maximum rating of the most popular opposition candidate among "his" respondents is 17%.

As it has been mentioned before, egress from the opposition electoral "ghetto" is a noble and important task for politicians; but, perhaps, one should win at least the votes of the "ghetto" to start with.

Nevertheless, the ratings among "one's own" respondents demonstrate even more clearly than the ratings for the whole of the sample the presence of "the second league" – a group of three: V. Neklyayev-A. Sannikov-A. Milivkevich that appreciably outstrips the rest of the opposition colleagues.

Dependence between a politician's popularity and popularity of the organization headed by him/her possesses a rather complicated nature (Table 15).

The campaign "Tell the Truth" demonstrated a considerable, more than fivefold growth in the open-end rating during the space of the quarter. It is so great that more likely it represents a certain fluctuation, and is not a sign of a blistering growth in the organization's popularity. At the same time, the leap may mean the beginning of a steady increase in the organization's rating. The rest of the organizations have maintained approximately the same positions from March to June.

indisputable leader as far as popularity is concerned, they are not. Several thousand strong "Belaya Rus" rounds up the top five, the CPB finds itself in the middle of the list, and the BRUY is at the end. As it has been repeatedly noted by political scientists, under the conditions of the Belarusian personalistic regime such organizations are not the buttress of the supreme authority bearer – he is their buttress.

In this respect the situation with the opposition leaders and organizations is more logical. V. Neklyayev is the most popular alternative politician, as well as his organization. A. Milinkevich's high position in the rating is in line with the high rating of the movement "For Freedom" led by him. Only A. Sannikov falls out of this consistent pattern: if he himself is part of the group of the country's most popular politicians, the same cannot be said about the campaign headed by him.

A comparison of the dynamics of the organizations' open-end and close-end ratings lets us assume that the March open-end rating of "Tell the Truth" was more likely an incidental deviation than its rather high value in the June opinion poll (Table 16). Changes in the close-end ratings of the organizations proved to be slight within the space of the quarter. An increase in the popularity of "Tell the Truth" and a decrease in the popular appeal of the CCP BPF should be mentioned among the most appreciable ones.

Table 16

Dynamics of answering the question: "If tomorrow parliamentary elections took place, candidates of which political party or movement would you vote for?", % (more than one answer is possible)

Variant of answer	03'13	06'13	The leader's close-end rating*
Civic Campaign "Tell the Truth/Civic Treaty" (leader V. Neklyaeu)	10.0	13.7	9.5
Movement "For Freedom" (leader A. Milinkevich)	10.9	11.0	6.0
Belarusian Agrarian Party (leader M. Shimansky)	6.5	7.2	–
Liberal Democratic Party (leader S. Gaidukevich)	6.0	7.1	3.0
Belarusian Party "The Green" (leader O. Novikov)	8.9	6.8	–
Belarusian Party of the Left "The Just World" (leader S. Kalyakin)	5.8	6.6	1.8
BPF Party (leader A. Yanukevich)	5.9	6.2	–
Conservative Christian Party – BPF (leader Z. Poznyak)	8.9	5.7	3.2
Non-governmental association "Belaya Rus" (leader A. Radkov)	6.3	5.5	–
Joint Civic Party (leader A. Lebedko)	6.8	5.3	1.5
"Belarusian Social Democratic "Gramada" Party (leader S. Shushkevich)	4.9	5.3	4.0
Belarusian Social Democratic Party (Gramada) (leader I. Veshtard)	4.8	4.1	–
Civic Campaign "Our House" (leader O. Karach)	3.3	4.1	1.7
Non-governmental association "The Young Front" (leader D. Dashkevich)	4.2	4.0	–
Communist Party of Belarus (leader T. Golubeva)	4.8	2.5	–
Republican Party of Labor and Justice (leader V. Zadnepryany)	3.1	2.4	–
Belarusian Patriotic Party (leader N. Ulakhovich)	1.3	2.2	–
Republican Party (leader V. Belozor)	1.0	1.7	–
Belarusian Social Sports Party (leader V. Aleksandrovich)	1.4	1.5	–
Social Democratic Party of People's Concord (leader S. Ermak)	1.0	0.8	–
DA	37.4	38.9	–

* The close-end rating from Table 13

Table 17

Distribution of answers to the question: "Which of the following statements about the Belarusian state constructed under president A. Lukashenko would you agree with?" depending on the attitude to president A. Lukashenko, %

Variant of answer	All respondents	Attitude to A. Lukashenko	
		Trust	Distrust
This is my state, it protects my interests	33.2	60.9	5.2
This is partly my state, it does not sufficiently protect the interests of such people as me	45.2	32.7	55.7
This is not my state, it does not protect my interests, I do not trust it	15.5	1.9	32.7
DA/NA	6.1	4.5	6.4

A comparison of the leaders' close-end ratings and the ratings of the organizations headed by them refutes the wide-spread belief that political life in the country is built according to the formula from V. Mayakovsky's poem "We say – party, imply – X (its leader)". However, as we see, the popularity of the organizations is actually higher than the popularity of their leaders. Perhaps, a society's demand is manifested in this correlation. It is waiting not so much for "hardcore leaders", but for meaningful reform programs and for teams able to realize them.

Whose state is it?

In the states with split societies an additional problem connected with the necessity to reconcile the interests of the two parts of split society turns up for the ruling elites besides the standard set of problems. If

the split line divides society into parts unequal in size ("a majority" and "a minority"), then the ruling elites get a natural desire to give up the role of a mediator and lean upon just one part of society (as a rule, upon the "majority"). Interests of the "minority" are, of course, ignored while domestic policy is being formed.

The latest events in Turkey demonstrate what such tendency can lead to. "For prime-minister Erdogan – writes the Turkish analyst Z. Ozdil – an ideal Turkey is a country where all the residents piously pray in ubiquitous mosques, and then go shopping to one of as ubiquitous shopping centers, which emerge in cities at a great rate". The problem, however, resides in the following: apart from the piously praying "majority" in modern Turkey there is a secularized "minority", whose interests R. Erdogan's government ignores on a regular basis.

The Turkish example helps us understand the nature of the conflict between the Belarusian "state for the people" and part of the Belarusian people, by the way their most active part. The conflict was jumpstarted already in the course of the presidential campaign of 1994. Its ideological constituent is secured in the mythologema "We are a single people". However, this is not the unity of the two parts of society bound by state-the-mediator – one should know the difference between chalk and cheese. The Belarusian state declares national unity at the expense of denying the "minority" the right of existence.

us quote an extract from the speech delivered at the IV All-Belarusian National Assembly: "The future of our country is determined by the spiritual health of the nation, which together with high moral principles, patriotism and an active civic stance makes up the pillar of our society, guarantees its stability and is the main source of its development".

An active civic stance presupposes establishing of special relations between the individual and the state, when estrangement is removed and citizens participate in managing public affairs regarding them as their own. In other words, the matter concerns con-

Table 18

Distribution of answers to the question: "Which statement describes your attitude to politics?"

Variant of answer	%
My life depends on politics, I take active part in it	5.4
My life depends on politics, but I do not participate in it because it is useless	23.7
My life depends on politics, but I do not participate in it because it is dangerous	11.1
My life does not depend on politics much	22.5
I am not interested in politics	34.2
DA/NA	3.1

Table 19

Distribution of answers to the question: "How would you assess people who hold power at the moment?", %

Variant of answer	03'09	06'13
These are people preoccupied with their material well-being and career	43.5	44.4
These are honest, but weak people, not able to manage power and keep the peace and a consistent line of policy	12.7	15.3
These are honest but ignorant people who do not know how to lead the country out of the crisis	11.9	13.8
It is a good team of politicians leading the country in the right direction	17.3	13.4
DA/NA	14.6	13.1

Under the influence of the events of December 19, 2010 A. Lukashenko had to publicly admit the existence of the "minority" two times. The mythologema "We are a single people" withstood nevertheless, and the hardly roughcast policy of recognizing the "minority" was scaled back.

It would be strange if the "minority" were not returning the state like for like. It follows from Table 17 that only every third Belarusian recognizes the Belarusian state as his/her own without any reservations. Among those who do not trust head of state there are only 5.2% of such people!

It follows from the socio-demographic structure of supporters and opponents of A. Lukashenko that women (39.5% vs. 25.5% of men), pensioners (60 years of age and older – 57.2%, 18-30 years of age – 22.7%), and people with primary education (68.8% vs. 26.7% for the individuals with higher education) consider the Belarusian state *theirs* in the first place.

Modern states are called "national" for a reason. The competitive ability of national economies, as well as the competitive ability of the states themselves, depends largely on the nations' maturity extent. That is why there is nothing unexpected in the fact that A. Lukashenko discusses the topic of constructing the Belarusian nation a lot and with enthusiasm. Let

scious readiness of the citizens to assume responsibility for the fortunes of the country, concern about its future, readiness if necessary to subordinate own interests to the public good.

However, can one hope for the citizens perceiving their state as hostile to express a desire to assume responsibility for the country's fortunes? It should be remembered that assuming such responsibility means going on the political field. Such self-activity, to put it mildly, is not encouraged by the Belarusian state.

Let us remind the readers that ancient Greeks called their fellow-countrymen not interested in public affairs (politics) and not participating in the meetings of the polis citizens "idiots". Judging by the answers to the question of Table 18, the ancient Greeks would include into this category an absolute majority of Belarusians.

Refusing to participate in politics the majority of Belarusians transfer the rights for making state decisions to the "only politician", i.e. A. Lukashenko. It is clear that he is not able to make all the managerial decisions single-handedly. That is why absence in Belarusian society of the critical mass of people with an active civic stance entails inevitable strengthening of officials (bureaucracy).

Against relatively high trust ratings of head of state and the government only 13.4% of respondents assessed the team of executives-the-politicians positively. Four years before there were more of such assessments – 17.3% (Table 19). The main contribution to the positive assessment was made by respondents trusting A. Lukashenko (which is quite natural) – 26.5%; the contribution of head of state’s political opponents proved to be tokenistic – 0.3%!

state, cultural and ethnic. Modern European countries are the countries where civic national projects have won. However, none of the national projects is finished. One should remember about it.

Modern authoritarian regimes, just as democratic ones, need nations for their survival, though not civic ones, but state nations. In other words, they need nations in which individuals subordinate their own interests to the tasks of strengthening potency of the state.

Table 20

Distribution of answers to the question: "Which of the following statements about corruption in Belarus do you agree with?", %

Variant of answer	Belarus (06'13)	Russia (04'13)*
A. Lukashenko will be able to achieve success in fighting against corruption having carried out an all-out purge among the top rank officials and toughening punishment for such crimes	30.2	20
A. Lukashenko will try to fight corruption, but he will hardly be able to achieve much success as corruption in Belarus is ineradicable	27.8	35
It is difficult for A. Lukashenko to fight against corruption as he himself depends on corrupt officials to a large extent	19.3	21
A. Lukashenko will never seriously fight against corruption as he is interested in it someway or other	18.2	17
DA/NA	4.5	7

** The data of "Levada-Center" (V. Putin's last name is given in the variants of answer, of course)*

Table 21

Distribution of answers to the question: "In 1995 and 1996 national referendums were held. Today on the grounds of their results important state decisions are taken. Do you think it is necessary to hold a new referendum on Belarus future development?" depending on respondents' attitude to A. Lukashenko, %

Variant of answer	All respondents	Attitude to A. Lukashenko	
		Trust	Distrust
Yes	52.3	45.9	61.8
No	32.0	38.0	25.7
DA/NA	15.7	16.1	12.5

It should be mentioned that A. Lukashenko himself does not often assess high officials positively. He has lately launched a campaign on fighting against corruption into which, according to him, sank the whole branches of Belarusian economy. It should be reminded here that in 1994 the topic of fighting against corruption was one of the hobbyhorses that pulled the road cart of the "candidate of the people" to the top of power.

Judging by the data of Table 20, Belarusians estimate A. Lukashenko's prospects to defeat the "corruption hydra" rather skeptically. At that 18.2% of respondents (virtually as many as in Russia) consider that head of state will not seriously fight against corruption as he is interested in it this way or another. In addition the difference in the answers of those who trust and do not trust A. Lukashenko turned out to be tenfold: 3.2% vs. 37.3%.

According to the formula of the Frenchman E. Renan, "life of the nation is a daily plebiscite", and various national projects simultaneously participate in the plebiscite. Let us enumerate the main ones: civic,

The June opinion poll lets us summarize the almost twenty-year-period of constructing a state nation in Belarus. The "minority", especially their young part, actively distance themselves from the state. The "majority" support the authoritarian state; however, their main resource is electoral. If required under the conditions of crisis, the "majority" will not be able to support *their* state by any other actions.

"People's referendum": the question has come to a head

At a press conference in Minsk on May 20 three Belarusian opposition structures – the movement "For Freedom", the campaign "Tell the Truth!" and BPF Party (soon they were joined by BSDP "Gramada") – stated they intended to hold a "people's referendum".

According to the Belarusian Constitution (Article 37), "Citizens of the Republic of Belarus have the right to participate in solving state affairs directly, as well as through independently elected representa-

tives. Direct participation of the citizens in governing society's and state's affairs is secured through holding referendums, discussing draft laws and issues of republican and local significance".

Under the conditions of the continuing economic crisis, issues connected with conducting an economic reform naturally ranked first according to their importance degree (Table 22). Then followed medical,

Table 22

Distribution of answers to the question: "Which most important questions should be put to a national referendum, in your opinion?" (more than one answer is possible)

Variant of answer	%
Economic reforms	51.6
Medical reform	45.7
Educational reform	36.0
Pension reform	32.5
Mandatory coordination of projects seriously influencing the conditions of life – for example, construction of the Chinese industrial estate in Smolevichi district, construction of an atomic power plant in Ostrovets region, privatization of Belarus largest enterprises – with the citizens through holding a referendum	29.6
Improvement in relations with the European Union	24.6
Resignation of the president and the government	20.4
Protection of the labor collectives' rights and the rights of proprietaries' collectives	17.0
Public control over the activity of law-enforcement agencies and courts	16.5
Integration with the Russian Federation	13.8
Direct election of towns' heads (mayors) and regions' heads (governors)	11.6
Independence of the courts	11.3
The status of the state languages	4.8
Another question	1.5
DA	8.4

Republican referendums are set by the president (Article 74) on his own initiative, and at suggestion of the House of Representatives and the Council of the Republic, or on suggestion of no fewer than 450 thousand citizens having the right to vote. Attempts to organize referendums "from below" were made in Belarus more than once; however, all of them were harshly suppressed by "the state for the people".

The majority of the country's citizens (Table 21) support the idea of holding a referendum on correcting the development course of Belarus, including almost half of head of state's supporters. It is most popular in the age-group of 40-50 year-olds – 62.3%, and least popular among those who are 60 and older – 40.5%. The level of education greatly influences the attitude to the referendum: the difference among Belarusians with primary and higher education is almost twofold – 34.4% vs. 63.6%.

Readiness to affix one's signature in support of holding a referendum was declared by 57.5% of respondents (49.6% supporters and 67/3% opponents of A. Lukashenko), 32.7% declared against it and 9.8% found it difficult to answer.

Another 22% agreed to form part of the initiative group and help collect signatures in favor of the referendum (which is equivalent to a million and a half of Belarusian voters). At that political preferences of respondents did not virtually influence their readiness to collect signatures (20.8% among supporters and 23.3% among opponents of A. Lukashenko), which must be recognized as unexpected; 68.3% did not agree to do it, and 9.7% found it difficult to answer.

educational and pension reforms testifying to the failures in the state's social policy.

According to the official returns of the referendum held in November, 1996, 28.14% of the electors' nominal roll voted in favor of the question "Do you support the idea that heads of the local administration should be elected directly by the residents of the corresponding administrative-territorial entity?", and 69.92% – against. Mass refusal of Belarusians to elect local government authorities can be explained only by the specific character of the work of the Election Committee under the guidance of L. Ermoshina, appointed contrary to the Constitution working at that time. Today, however, the matter of direct election of towns' heads (mayors) and regions' heads (governors) ranks last in the priority list. Certainly, it does not mean that if the question concerning direct election of local administration heads were posed separately, an overwhelming majority of Belarusians would not declare "for" it (according to our opinion poll of December 2011, 72.8% of respondents agree with it, and only 17.1% do not).

Respondents did not attribute the question about the status of the Belarusian language to the top-priority ones, either. At that supporters of A. Lukashenko mentioned the importance of the given problem more often than his opponents (5.3% vs. 3.9%), which does not contradict the conclusion drawn by us while analyzing national identity.

Answering the question "Do you think, if political forces suggest holding a referendum on the country's future and collect the necessary signatures, the authorities should agree to hold it?" two thirds of Bela-

rusians said "yes" (62.5% – supporters and 83.6% – opponents of A. Lukashenko), 15.2% said "no" and 12.5% found it difficult to answer.

About half of Belarusians believe in the ability of the referendum to improve the situation in the country (Table 23). No principle differences in the opinions of supporters and opponents of A. Lukashenko have been revealed, which is quite unexpected. The respondents' age does not influence the level of their optimism/pessimism, either. As for education, the optimism level of respondents with University diplomas proved to be appreciably higher than by respondents with primary education – 57.2% vs. 28%.

Table 23

Distribution of answers to the question: "Do you think a referendum on Belarus future will be able to influence improvement of the situation in our country?" depending on respondents' attitude to A. Lukashenko, %

Variant of answer	All respondents	Attitude to A. Lukashenko	
		Trust	Distrust
Yes	46.1	45.5	48.7
No	34.8	34.5	36.0
DA/NA	19.1	20.0	15.3

Table 24

Dynamics of answering the question: "In your opinion, how well is national identity developed by Belarusians?" depending on age and attitude to A. Lukashenko, %

Variant of answer	06'93	06'13	Age		Attitude to A. Lukashenko	
			18-30	60+	Trust	Distrust
It is very strongly developed	0.7	2.9	4.6	4.8	4.2	2.3
Strongly	4.5	18.3	16.3	26.1	25.7	11.9
Moderately	48.0	37.5	38.6	37.7	40.3	32.9
Faintly	31.6	26.2	22.6	20.1	18.9	34.9
Rather faintly	10.0	11.7	14.6	8.2	7.4	16.4
DA/NA	5.2	3.4	3.4	2.8	3.5	2.3

There is no doubt that authorities will act "in a usual way" at any attempt of the opposition parties and movements to initiate holding a Republican referendum. However, the data of the opinion poll show that the idea of a referendum on Belarus future development is popular in society. Such popularity can be regarded as an indicator of mass dissatisfaction of Belarusians with the socio-economic policy pursued by the authorities within the framework of the so-called "Belarusian development model"; as well as of penetration of this idea in the focus of public expectations.

Between chaos and dictatorship

Modern states "create" rather than "find" their nations. Belarusian state is not an exception in this case. It is working indefatigably on forming a state nation, as reproduction of the authoritarian political regime is possible only under such type of a nation.

The outcome of the almost vicennial effort in the cause of forming a state nation was analyzed in the material "Whose state is it?" It should be admitted that the state has undoubtedly achieved certain suc-

cess in realizing its project. The question is at what costs. They are considerable. Deepening of the split in society is far from being their only constituent. Let us cite a statement by A. Lukashenko borrowed from his speech at the festive meeting devoted to Independence Day on July 1, 2013: "First of all, we have secured unity of the nation, inner peace and quiet. All outside attempts to kindle the fire of a revolt or a destructive revolution in Belarus break up exactly on our unity. And national unity, in particular, makes up the basis of our economic development".

Whether national unity or Russian subsidies make up the basis of Belarus economic development is a

debating point; that is why let us quote another statement by A. Lukashenko dated July 1: "The crisis of national, human identity which just yesterday was talked about only by scientists-the-futurologists, is becoming a sad reality before our very eyes. Who said that mankind was insured against regress, and would move only up and forward?"

It is true that none of the mortals is empowered to provide such guarantees; however, IISEPS opinion polls held for the third decade already let us assess the movement direction of Belarusians ("forward or backward") according to the "national and human identity" forming scale.

Within the course of twenty years a new generation has entered active life. It was not virtually touched by the Soviet system, but it experienced the influence of the Belarusian model in which state ideology ranks last by no means to the fullest extent. In Table 24 and in the following tables answers of respondents to the same questions asked with a twenty-year lag are given. In the latest opinion poll answers of the two outermost age groups, as well as of supporters and opponents of A. Lukashenko, are emphasized.

So far no consensus has been formed among specialists on the question of what should be considered a nation; everybody agrees, though, that a person's self-definition is a governing factor. Progress in this issue is evident (Table 24). Let us sum up the answers in the first two lines and compare them: June, 1993 – 5.2%; June, 2013 – 21.2%. There is a fourfold growth! To a greater degree the growth was secured by senior citizens and supporters of A. Lukashenko, which is natural taking into account the effort expended by the state in order to form state identity.

Table 25

Dynamics of answering the question: "Do you think the Belarusian people, according to their national character, culture, and traditions, are closer to:", %

Variant of answer	06'93	06'13
Russians	50.8	46.9
Poles	14.4	10.3
Ukrainians	8.9	5.3
Western Europeans	1.1	3.4
Lithuanians	0.9	1.5
Belarusians do not resemble anybody	14.6	28.6
DA/NA	9.3	4.0

Table 26

Dynamics of answering the question: "Do you think the fact that a considerable part of Belarusians speak the Russian language poses a hazard to the existence of the Belarusian nation?" depending on age and attitude to A. Lukashenko, %

Variant of answer	06'93	06'13	Age		Attitude to A. Lukashenko	
			18-30	60+	Trust	Distrust
Yes, it will lead to a gradual disappearance of the Belarusian nation	14.0	19.3	16.3	25.8	19.2	20.8
It will aggravate development of the Belarusian nation, but no more than that	21.6	28.5	24.9	26.1	27.8	31.8
A new Belarusian nation, having little in common with the previous one, is being formed now; however it does not resemble any other nations	19.7	22.3	28.4	20.1	22.3	22.7
No, it will not in any way influence development of the Belarusian nation	35.2	25.2	27.2	20.4	27.0	20.3
DA/NA	9.5	4.7	2.9	7.1	3.7	4.4

A growth in national identity is also confirmed by the data of Table 25. Attention should be paid, in the first place, to the line "Belarusians do not resemble anybody" with its twofold growth. It became possible owing to a however slight, but statistically important decrease in the feeling of cultural nearness to the Poles, Russians, and Ukrainians. The share of those who found it difficult to answer decreased more than two times, which also testifies to a growth in national identity.

For supporters of the cultural national project a nation is built on the basis of commonness between a culture and a language. Here one cannot help remembering Z. Poznyak: "If we lose the language, we will lose Belarus". At the beginning of the 90s in Belarus, just as in other former union republics, adherents of cultural and civic national projects came out in a

united front (division took place later). That is why fight for a revival of the Belarusian language meant fight for democracy. It is clear that the leading part in connecting the two national projects belonged to intelligentsia.

However, as it follows from Table 26, after the collapse of the Soviet Union the cultural national project did not have any prospects of success in Belarus. Only 14% of respondents completely shared the reservations of the founder of the People's Front. No principle changes have happened for 20 years. The number of respondents realizing the threat of

Russification grew, but only slightly (+5 points). Interestingly, the problem of the Belarusian nation's disappearance worries pensioners more than the generation that has grown up in an independent Belarusian state. The language issue has also lost its former political nature. Please, pay attention to the fact that there is no fundamental difference in the answers of supporters and opponents of head of state!

At first sight, answers to the question of Table 27 contradict answers to the question of Table 26: reservations concerning disappearance of the Belarusian nation have grown, however slightly; at the same time the meaning of the language as a mandatory condition of belonging to a nation has decreased, judging by the outermost variants of answer (yes-no). To understand the mentioned paradox it is necessary to remember that interpreting the opinion polls re-

turns one should distinguish between declarative and operational behavior codes of respondents. The problem of "the Belarusian nation disappearance" is a pure abstraction for the majority of respondents. The question of the language knowledge as a factor of belonging to a nation is "nearer to one's skin", as the saying goes. For the majority of respondents the problem of their personal national identity does not cause any difficulties. They are Belarusians, who else could they be?! However, they are Russified Belarusians.

(compare them with the answers to the questions of Tables 26-27). This time respondents could not do without their disposition to declarations, either. For the politically active Belarusians the question about a state language is a question about their attitude to the authorities. In practice, as it was frequently registered in the course of the IISEPS opinion polls, mainly supporters of A. Lukashenko use the Belarusian language in their everyday life. We relegate the doubtful to the article by Y. Drakokhrust "Belarusian nationalism speaks Russian" ("BDG", 1998).

Table 27

Distribution of answers to the question: "Do you think knowledge of a language is a mandatory condition of one's belonging to this or that nation?", depending on age and attitude to A. Lukashenko, %

Variant of answer	06'93	06'13	Age		Attitude to A. Lukashenko	
			18-30	60+	Trust	Distrust
Yes	34.0	26.0	21.5	32.4	26.5	27.4
More likely yes	21.4	39.1	39.0	37.8	35.9	42.5
More likely no	15.2	20.0	19.8	17.9	22.2	16.9
No	22.1	12.7	19.8	17.8	12.7	12.1
DA/NA	7.3	2.2	1.7	3.7	2.7	1.1

Table 28

Distribution of answering the question: "What is your attitude to the fact that the Belarusian language is a state language in our country?", depending on age and attitude to A. Lukashenko, %

Variant of answer	06'93	06'13	Age		Attitude to A. Lukashenko	
			18-30	60+	Trust	Distrust
I think, this is the way it should be	48.2	43.2	44.4	41.4	39.3	50.6
Russian should be a state language	2.9	7.2	9.2	6.2	8.0	6.4
Russian and Belarusian should be state languages	43.1	47.7	45.0	49.6	51.2	40.8
DA/NA	5.7	1.9	1.4	2.8	1.5	2.3

Table 29

Dynamics of answering the question: "Do you think it is necessary to take into account the population's opinion at introducing the Belarusian language into the system of education and paperwork management?", depending on age and attitude to A. Lukashenko, %

Variant of answer	06'93	06'13	Age		Attitude to A. Lukashenko	
			18-30	60+	Trust	Distrust
Yes, I do	75.2	74.4	73.4	74.7	76.1	72.5
No, I do not	11.8	18.7	19.1	15.9	18.9	20.2
DA/NA	13.0	6.9	7.4	9.4	5.0	7.3

The role of national identity in the general set of personal identities increased during the years of independence, but the sphere of the Belarusian language employment narrowed thanks to the purposeful attempts of the state. That is why the changes registered in Table 27 can be estimated as mass actions of surmounting cognitive dissonance. The young generation is most active in taking such actions, as their socialization took place under the conditions of Russification, secured by the Constitutional referendum of 1995.

Answers to the question of Table 28 also confirm success of the Russification policy. However, the degree to which the answers are politically charged in the given case proved to be considerably higher

It should be borne in mind that before the referendum of 1995 there was only one state language in Belarus – Belarusian. The Russian language was considered "the language of international communication" for which reason comparison of the data in the second and the third column is not particularly correct.

The low status of the Belarusian language under the conditions of official bilingualism manifests itself in mass denial of the right of the state for introducing the Belarusian language into the system of education and paperwork management without regard to the opinion of the population (Table 29). Little has changed in this problem during 20 years. The problem is not from the class of abstract ones. If the state

exhibits independence here, it will prejudice the interests of an absolute majority; that is why respondents' answers do not depend on age and political preferences.

growth in Belarusians' self-consciousness is registered.

Destruction of symbols is a sign of rejecting former hierarchies. For this reason one of the purposes

Table 30

Dynamics of answering the question: "Do you think revival of the Belarusian language requires state support?", depending on age and attitude to A. Lukashenko, %

Variant of answer	06'93	06'13	Age		Attitude to A. Lukashenko	
			18-30	60+	Trust	Distrust
Yes	69.7	65.9	61.7	71.1	65.1	70.0
No	12.1	24.7	29.4	17.8	12.6	9.2
DA/NA	18.2	9.4	8.8	11.0	9.1	7.4

Table 31

Dynamics of answering the question: "If not, then why is it so?", depending on age and attitude to A. Lukashenko, %

Variant of answer	06'93	06'13	Age		Attitude to A. Lukashenko	
			18-30	60+	Trust	Distrust
Development of the language is the task of cultural and public organizations	3.7	11.3	12.0	9.6	12.4	9.8
The Belarusian language is not widely spread, that is why the use of the Russian language is preferable	11.6	10.7	13.8	6.3	11.2	8.8
Mandatory introduction of the Belarusian language into education and paperwork management leads to its discrediting	9.5	8.1	9.2	5.4	8.1	6.5
The Belarusian language does not exist, it is a dialect of the Russian language	10.4	2.3	2.9	2.5	2.0	2.6
Other	2.0	3.2	3.3	3.1	3.2	2.9

Table 32

Dynamics of answering the question: "Which state symbols (the national emblem, the flag), in your opinion, correspond more to the historical and cultural heritage of the Belarusian nation – the ones which existed from 1991 to 1995 (with the national symbol "Pogonya") or the present ones (resembling the symbols of the BSSR)?", depending on age and attitude to A. Lukashenko, %

Variant of answer	12'09	06'13	Age		Attitude to A. Lukashenko	
			18-30	60+	Trust	Distrust
The symbols as before 1995 (with the "Pogonya" emblem)	27.7	33.9	39.3	23.9	21.8	50.3
The present symbols (resembling the ones of the BSSR)	54.7	51.5	46.1	63.6	66.5	34.5
DA/NA	17.6	14.6	14.6	12.2	11.7	15.2

The share of opponents of the Belarusian language revival at public expense has doubled for two decades, first of all owing to the respondents who found it difficult to answer (Table 30). The difference in answers of the outermost age groups turned out to be considerable in the given case, which once again testifies to the efficiency of the state policy of Russification.

There are various reasons why respondents declare against the revival of the Belarusian language at public expense (Table 31). In this case, too, the young generation outstrips the generation of pensioners. Denying the Belarusian language state support, respondents refuse to recognize it as non-existent. The fact returns us to Table 24, in which a

of the Constitutional referendum of 1995 was abolishment of the "nationalistic" symbols, under which the rights of the president were imposed substantial limitations on. The new (old) symbols meant a comeback of the mono-subject power, which "Soviet Belarusians" had yearned for during the years of the post-Perestroika chaos.

Attention should be paid to the last line of Table 32. Is there any other country in Europe whose citizens find it difficult to answer such a question? The official symbols are accepted by the majority, however the acceptance is ensured mainly thanks to the oldest age group. The opinions of the young divided almost equally (this is towards the question of national unity).

As it was to be expected, the question about attitude to the state symbols turned out to be politically loaded to the fullest extent. Hence follows the twofold difference in answers of A. Lukashenko's supporters and opponents.

question from the last year's poll concerning assessment of the events of the XX century (Table. 33).

As it can be seen, priorities of respondents in the given question have not changed at all within a little more than a year: the victory in the Great Patriotic

Table 33

Dynamics of answering the question: "Which events of the XX century, in your opinion, can Belarusians be proud of to the fullest extent?", % (more than one answer is possible)

Variant of answer	03'12	06'13
Victory in the Great Patriotic War	79.8	78.1
Attainment of state independence in 1991	35.9	39.6
Postwar reconstruction and subsequent modernization	35.8	34.6
Electing A. Lukashenko president of Belarus in 1994	11.5	10.6
Forming of the Belarusian People's Republic in 1918	11.5	10.4
Forming of the Belarusian Soviet Socialist Republic	9.0	6.2
October Revolution of 1917	7.2	5.0

Belarusian society is society of incomplete modernization, but modernization is not a condition, it is a process and Belarusians participate in the process. Modernization, at whatever pace it might be moving, entails social transformations which contribute to *weakening* of some and *strengthening* of other *identities*. Belonging to a nation refers to the latter ones.

In spite of the powerful resource support the state project on forming a Belarusian nation is obviously stalled today. However, it does not follow from here that its civic and cultural rivals have begun to actively replenish their supporters' camp. That is why the process of constructing in Belarus a modern national state and a civic (political) nation uniting citizens around universally acknowledged values is far from being completed. Society remains largely automatized and disjoint. Absence of a civic nation is the main reason for preservation of the personified authoritarian regime. Because if there is no nation, the alternative is simple: either chaos, or a dictator. With all drawbacks, the latter is more preferable.

Victory – one for everybody

Another celebration of Victory Day caused the traditional controversy about its meaning and value. An impression was created that in the current year it was so violent as never before in both Belarus and Russia. In Russia "an interchange of views" between the politician L. Gozman and journalist U. Skobeida became an event; in Belarus a well-known blogger A. Kabanov deleted all his friends on Facebook who had congratulated him on the high day having called them "asinine mutants of propaganda".

However, more academic and conceptual discussions about World War II, including its meaning for the nation building in Belarus, have been in progress for a long time, and they are not connected with a certain date.

Nevertheless, exactly the acuteness of the controversy associated with May 9 became one of the reasons which induced IISEPS to repeat in June the

War used to rank first and is still number one as a source of national pride, "one victory for everybody" – in the truest sense of the word. Almost for everybody.

The data of Table 34 give us an idea how the hierarchy of historical events – reasons for being proud – is connected with socio-demographic characteristics and political preferences.

The general impression Table 34 produces is as follows: besides electing Belarus first president, assessments of other events of Belarusian contemporary history depend slightly on the factors they should have depended on, at first sight. The numbers of those who consider that electing A. Lukashenko in 1994 was an event to be proud of differ manifold among various socio-demographic groups and groups with different political beliefs. At the same time, other political events, which academic and political swords are being crossed over, are assessed approximately equally by all the groups analyzed in Table 34. The difference among the assessments does not, as a rule, exceed 10 percentage points, and more often is considerably smaller.

As it is, the hierarchy of the events (again with the exception of electing A. Lukashenko) remains the same in all the groups. And victory in the Great Patriotic War is an absolute leader of assessments in all of them. The young and the old, respondents with University diplomas and primary education, those for and against A. Lukashenko, "Belo-Russians" and "Euro-Belarusians" – assessments of the Victory in all these groups exceed assessments of the rest of the events many times, and the difference at that is rather insignificant.

We would like to call in question the common explanation, which is often employed in order to level the value of the unanimous opinion of society concerning the Victory. It is often said that such unanimity is an outcome of mass propaganda: current Lukashenko's, and former Soviet of the time of Brezhnev's epoch. In a down-to-earth form the thought was formulated by the above mentioned

Table 34

Distribution of answers to the question: "Which events of the XX century, in your opinion, can Belarusians be proud of to the fullest extent?" depending on socio-demographic characteristics and political preferences*, %

Characteristics	Which events of the XX century, in your opinion, can Belarusians be proud of to the fullest extent?						
	Victory in the Great Patriotic War	Attainment of state independence in 1991	Postwar reconstruction and subsequent modernization	Electing A. Lukashenko president of Belarus in 1994	Forming of the Belarusian People's Republic in 1918	Forming of the Belarusian Soviet Socialist Republic	October Revolution of 1917
<i>Age</i>							
18-29	76.8	47.3	27.5	3.7	10.9	5.4	4.0
30-59	78.2	38.7	37.2	7.8	11.9	4.8	5.5
60 +	79.3	34.3	35.7	23.9	6.5	9.9	4.5
<i>Education</i>							
Primary	71.0	25.8	17.2	39.8	2.2	7.6	0
Incomplete secondary	81.4	40.4	37.2	19.7	9.6	9.6	5.8
Secondary	78.4	39.8	33.8	8.4	10.4	4.5	4.9
Vocational	78.8	42.0	35.5	7.8	11.1	5.4	5.7
Higher	77.3	39.9	39.2	4.8	13.1	8.2	5.2
<i>Use of the Internet</i>							
Daily	63.6	18.2	27.3	18.2	18.2	8.3	3.2
Several times a week	76.7	42.3	25.6	2.8	13.4	3.7	3.9
Several times a month	79.3	45.1	37.8	6.6	10.8	6.2	3.1
Several times a year	74.8	39.1	33.6	4.7	7.9	5.5	21.4
Do not use	57.1	21.4	21.4	14.3	21.4	14.3	6.7
I do not know, what it is	80.7	36.7	42.7	17.7	8.9	8.0	4.3
<i>Do you trust the president?</i>							
Yes	82.7	40.1	36.2	19.9	7.8	7.2	6.5
No	71.7	40.4	31.9	1.1	14.5	5.2	3.6
<i>Do you trust state mass media?</i>							
Yes	82.5	40.9	36.4	20.1	8.5	9.1	7.3
No	74.2	39.4	31.8	4.4	12.2	4.1	4.0
<i>Do you trust independent mass media?</i>							
Yes	79.2	46.3	36.0	5.5	15.7	6.6	3.4
No	76.2	36.4	31.5	13.7	7.6	5.4	6.7
<i>Which state symbols (the national emblem, the flag), in your opinion, correspond more to the historical and cultural heritage of the Belarusian nation – the ones which existed from 1991 to 1995 (with the national symbol "Pogonya") or the present ones (resembling the symbols of the BSSR)?</i>							
The symbols as before 1995	77.0	43.5	28.1	2.3	16.4	4.7	5.5
The present symbols	80.0	39.5	38.1	17.2	6.5	7.2	4.2
<i>If you had to choose between integration with Russia and joining the European Union, what choice would you make?</i>							
Integration with the RF	82.3	36.3	35.7	18.2	5.8	6.8	5.7
Joining the EU	72.6	46.2	32.0	4.2	15.8	5.2	4.0

* The table is read across

A. Kabanov. In the opinion of such view supporters, propaganda is almighty; it is able to elevate an insignificant event up to a nationwide value.

A more realistic view is that propaganda is powerful but not in the least almighty. It can strengthen, "twist", fuel sentiment and conceptions that exist be-

sides it and used to exist before it; it may speculate on values, interpret them, but it cannot create them.

In addition, already the data of Table 33 cogently demonstrate this selective "omnipotence" of propaganda.

mighty as far as the memory about the war is concerned, prove to be powerless with regard to the memory about the revolution?

Talking about modern propaganda, it should be noted that the main subject of its laudation is by no

Table 35

Connection of assessments of the victory in the Great Patriotic War with socio-demographic characteristics and political beliefs, %

Characteristics	Those not proud of the victory in the Great patriotic War	Those proud of the victory in the Great patriotic War
<i>Age</i>		
18-29 years old	24.5	22.7
30-59 years old	53.5	53.7
60 years old and older	22.1	23.6
<i>Education</i>		
Primary	8.2	5.6
Incomplete secondary	8.8	10.7
Secondary	36.0	36.4
Vocational	27.2	28.2
Higher	19.9	19.0
<i>Use of the Internet</i>		
Daily	30.4	28.1
Several times a week	19.0	20.5
Several times a month	9.6	8.1
Several times a year	1.8	0.7
Do not use	32.2	37.8
I do not know, what it is	5.7	4.2
<i>Do you trust the president?</i>		
Yes	38.7	51.8
No	52.6	37.3
<i>If you had to choose between integration with Russia and joining the European Union, what choice would you make?</i>		
Integration with the RF	32.9	42.9
Joining the EU	51.4	38.2
<i>Which state symbols (the national emblem, the flag), in your opinion, correspond more to the historical and cultural heritage of the Belarusian nation – the ones which existed from 1991 to 1995 (with the national symbol "Pogonyia") or the present ones (resembling the symbols of the BSSR)?</i>		
The symbols as before 1995	33.5	33.4
The present symbols	47.0	52.7
<i>Which events of the XX century, in your opinion, can Belarusians be proud of to the fullest extent?</i>		
Attainment of state independence in 1991	44.7	38.2
Postwar reconstruction and subsequent modernization	28.7	36.2
Electing A. Lukashenko president of Belarus in 1994	12.1	10.2
Forming of the Belarusian People's Republic in 1918	14.2	9.4
Forming of the Belarusian Soviet Socialist Republic	8.8	5.4
October Revolution of 1917	6.0	4.7

If the echo of Soviet propaganda is so loud, then where has its much louder and more significant topic – "The Great October" – disappeared? By the way, the information policy of the present Belarusian state also assigns the revolution of 1917 a place of honor: Belarus is probably the only state in the world where November 7 is a state holiday devoted exactly to that revolution. So where is it in the conceptions of Belarusians? It ranks last. Why does the propaganda, al-

means the Victory, but A. Lukashenko, his accession in 1994 and his beneficent fatherly governing. So where is the significance of this new era in the consciousness of the population? It occupies the modest 4-5 place level with the forming of the BPR, which until quite recently used to be interpreted by the official propaganda as "a puppet quasi-state of bourgeois nationalists", and even today is not praised to high heaven. If the propaganda is almighty, what would it

cost it to move its boss and main hero to the top position? However, it did not manage to do so.

The data of Table 34 give us additional arguments against the theory of the propaganda omnipotence. Let us assume that for those who trust the president, declare for integration with Russia, finally, for those who trust state mass media their piety to the Victory is a derivative of their political beliefs and information preferences. They value the Victory because the propaganda they trust has convinced them to do it. What should be said then about their political antagonists, those who are for European integration, who are against A. Lukashenko, who do not trust the state propaganda, but for whom the Victory is a value as well? Did the propaganda manage to convince them of nothing but one thing? Such a version sounds too artificial to be correct.

In theory the hypothesis that the minority, for whom the Victory is not a victory at all, are the true bearers of the national and democratic discourse has the right to exist. However, the data of Table 35 more likely refute the hypothesis.

As we can see, there is a difference: among those not proud of the Victory there are more respondents who do not trust A. Lukashenko and advocate Belarus' European choice, and also more respondents who take pride in attaining independence in 1991. However, even as far as this question is concerned, the difference is not cardinal – those who consider the Victory a source of pride are by no means 100% "Euro-Belarusians" and Lukashenko's opponents. As for the rest of the questions of Table 34, including the ones about the state symbols and attitude to the BPR, the difference among the groups is in general rather insignificant. Thus, those for whom the Victory is not a source of pride are not one and all adherents of the national and democratic discourse, these are by no means people of "a new ideological heaven and new earth" (or a new hell, in somebody's opinion).

Attempts to deconstruct the Victory as a value, and ideally to extirpate it from people's memory completely have come into fashion in certain political and intellectual circles. Factoring out historical and scientific, as well as moral aspects of the problem, let us hold true to the sociological spirit of our analysis. It follows from the data of Tables 33-35 that the victory in the Great Patriotic War is the most wholesale historical value of Belarusians, and it is the value which unites the population regardless of political watersheds. And from the political point of view it looks simply like madness to erect additional barriers between oneself and society throwing challenge down to it, disputing its most precious and most universally recognized value.

And from the point of view of national construction, one should remember how many tears have been shed over the absence of unity and common values among Belarusians. However, one (and probably the only one) is present. It is clearly defined sociologically, it is all-out. Let us imagine someone managed to destroy it (although it does not follow

from here that it will happen in reality). What can replace it? The question is not whether alternative values exist as such, the question is in their integration might, in their ability to embrace a greater part of society.

One, of course, can hope for "the magic wand" of the Belarusian Television, possessing which it is possible, in the opinion of some people, to convert Belarusians to any faith. However, it seems that it is a consequence of the intellectuals' naïve belief in the efficiency of brutal force, including the force of state propaganda. On the other hand, if one does not sympathize with in this belief, then an obvious danger becomes evident: if the substitutes of the value mechanism that ensures unity at the moment are able to embrace only a small part of society won't the nation devoid of common values go to pieces?

Russian guests and a Russian air base

The fact that Belarus becomes more and more attractive for tourists from Russia was noted long ago. The Russian "descent" on May holidays, especially in the capital, was also noticed by many people. Almost all newspapers wrote about it; A. Lukashenko himself responded to this public and media stir among the people: "Recently information has appeared that we were pestered by Russians during the May holidays and there was not a vacancy in hotels. Inwardly I am happy about it. I have always dreamt about Belarus becoming a wished for spot where people would aspire to come to. And these are not the poorest people, they have money".

On the other hand, some mass media presented the increase in the Russian tourists' flow almost as an invasion of aggressive and vulgar aliens. However, A. Lukashenko also mentioned the "negative moments": the fact that Russians purchase housing in Belarus is not liked by everybody in the country.

What is the attitude of Belarusian society in general to this phenomenon, what is the balance of positive and negative assessments? The data of Table 36 give an answer to the question.

A considerable share of positive answers motivated directly by the cultural nearness, corresponds to the data of IISEPS previous opinion polls, according to which Russians are the closest people for Belarusians in a purely human sense. This is also confirmed by the answers to other questions of the June poll: 54.8% agreed with the point from the president's yearly message that "Russia, the Russian people and Belarusians are a single whole, they are one tree" (31% did not agree), and answering the question about the peoples closest to Belarusians according to their national character, culture and traditions, 46.9% named Russians.

It can be assumed that in the positive "market" answers to the question of Table 36 an attitude to Russians is also present in a latent form – it is not obvious that the same large number of respondents would express a positive attitude to the tourists enriching the country if the matter concerned, for in-

stance, the Arabs, Chinese or Caucasus residents, the social distance with whom is huge.

As it follows from Table 37, the hypothesis turned out to be partly correct, political preferences do not

Table 36

Distribution of answers to the question: "Recently guests from Russia have begun to visit Belarus more and more often. What is your attitude to it?" (more than one answer is possible)

Variant of answer	%
It is positive, because they are people kindred to us	31.2
It is positive, because the more tourists, the richer the country	31.0
It is indifferent	29.5
It is negative, I don't like the way they behave	8.4
It is negative, they buy up our goods and housing	7.8

Table 37

Connection of the attitude to Russian tourists with age and political preferences, %*

Characteristics	Attitude to Russian tourists				
	It is positive, because they are people kindred to us	It is positive, because the more tourists, the richer the country	It is indifferent	It is negative, I don't like the way they behave	It is negative, they buy up our goods and housing
<i>Age</i>					
18-29	26.4	32.1	33.0	9.5	6.6
30-59	28.9	34.6	29.7	7.0	7.6
60 +	41.5	21.5	25.6	10.2	9.3
<i>Region</i>					
Minsk	23.8	24.6	52.0	6.1	4.8
Minsk region	32.0	35.4	23.2	10.5	6.1
Brest and its region	28.5	44.1	29.0	5.6	1.9
Grodno and its region	41.7	32.2	18.9	11.4	5.1
Vitebsk and its region	29.4	34.3	26.8	11.1	12.2
Mogilev and its region	18.2	40.9	29.0	2.8	13.1
Gomel and its region	45.9	11.4	18.3	11.4	13.1
<i>Who are the Belarusian people closer to?</i>					
To Russians	43.4	29.2	25.2	2.8	5.9
To Poles	17.9	28.8	30.1	18.6	10.3
To Ukrainians	35.4	25.0	30.0	13.9	6.3
To western Europeans	15.4	61.5	23.1	7.7	7.7
To Lithuanians	20.8	41.7	8.7	41.7	13.0
They do not resemble anybody	17.6	33.3	37.3	9.5	9.4
<i>If you had to choose between integration with Russia and joining the European Union, what choice would you make?</i>					
Integration with the RF	50.8	28.7	25.6	3.4	3.2
Joining the EU	16.3	33.5	32.4	12.2	10.3
<i>Do you trust the president?</i>					
I do	39.6	30.0	26.8	5.5	7.8
I do not	19.7	32.2	33.4	11.7	8.0

* Table is read across

The data of Table 36 let us estimate the potential of resentment against tourists from Russia, too. It equals approximately 15%.

A hypothesis can be suggested that an attitude is closely connected with political preferences: adherents of European integration, opponents of A. Lukashenko estimate the growth in the numbers of Russian guests negatively, and people sticking to the opposite opinions – positively.

change the hierarchy of assessments: an overwhelming majority among supporters of the president and integration with the RF takes a favorable view of the "influx" of the Russian tourists; among the president's opponents the same estimation is also given by a majority. The geopolitical choice proves to be a more contrasting factor. A virtually equal share of those who are scared by the Russians' buying-up the goods and real estate among supporters, as well as among opponents of the president, draws attention to itself.

Table 38

Distribution of answers to the question: "Recently during a meeting with A. Lukashenko Minister of Defense of the Russian Federation S. Shoygu stated there was a possibility of deployment of a Russian air force base in Belarus. According to him, an Air Corps Regiment will be deployed on the base. Some people treated the statement positively, others – negatively, still others – with indifference. And what is your attitude to the statement?"

Variant of answer	%
It is positive	19.8
It is indifferent	35.6
It is negative	36.0
DA/NA	8.6

Table 39

Connection of the attitude to the prospects of deployment of a Russian air force base in Belarus with age and political preferences*, %

Characteristics	Attitude to the deployment of a Russian air force base in the RB		
	Positive	Indifferent	Negative
<i>Age</i>			
18-29	19.2	39.3	33.0
30-59	18.8	35.7	36.8
60 +	22.7	31.4	37.4
<i>Who are Belarusian people closer to?</i>			
Russians	24.6	40.1	26.0
Poles	16.0	29.5	49.4
Ukrainians	15.0	30.0	45.0
Western Europeans	23.1	36.5	36.5
Lithuanians	16.7	12.5	62.5
Belarusians do not resemble anybody	15.2	34.9	43.2
<i>If you had to choose between integration with Russia and joining the European Union, what choice would you make?</i>			
Integration with the RF	31.1	39.7	23.3
Joining the EU	12.7	34.7	47.1
<i>Do you trust the president?</i>			
I do	26.0	34.5	31.2
I do not	14.5	35.8	43.2

* Table is read across

Attitude to the Russian tourists proved to be not much dependent on age, although among respondents of the older generation there are more of those who preferred positive cultural motivation; among the youth there are more of those who mentioned "market", but also positive motivation.

As for the regions, the lowest positive assessments of the guests from Russia are given by the capital; nevertheless it is almost every second polled resident of Minsk. In the eastern regions of the country a relative prevalence of negative assessments of the visiting Russians should be mentioned.

Connection of the question with the assessments of nearness of Belarusians with different peoples springs a small surprise. It is natural that those who think that Belarusians are close to Russians are inclined to positively assess tourists from Russia to the fullest extent. They are followed by those who identify Belarusians with the peoples of Western Europe, according to the degree of the assessments positiveness. Surprisingly, but respondents supposing that

Belarusians are close to the neighboring peoples of Eastern Europe – Poles, Ukrainians and Lithuanians – are inclined to assess the guests from the East positively least of all. One's attitude to the visiting Russians turns out to be a peculiar projection of the attitude to them of the peoples that respondents consider close to Belarusians.

If the attitude to the civil guests from Russia is in general positive, then the attitude to the prospects of appearance of allies in military uniform on the Belarusian land is more likely negative (Table 38).

At the same time, the negative attitude is peculiar to a relative majority of respondents only; the news about the appearance of a Russian air base left almost the same number of respondents indifferent.

Young people are indifferent to the given question to a greater extent than other age groups; more often negative assessments are given by the older generation (Table 39). Perhaps, the traditional Belarusian maxim – as long as there is no war – common exactly to the older generation, works here. Appearance on

Table 40

Distribution of answers to the question: "Some time ago A. Lukashenko said that "Independent Belarus constantly finds itself at gunpoint of the cannonry of an undeclared cold war. We are being strangled with sanctions, bad-mouthed with aspersion. NATO war planes fly along our borders, new military bases are being created, provocations are being committed". Some people agree with this statement, others do not; still others treat it with indifference. And what is your attitude to it?"

Variant of answer	%
I agree with it	27.0
It makes no difference for me	35.7
I do not agree with it	28.2
DA/NA	9.1

Table 41

Dynamics of answering the question: "If a referendum on the question whether Belarus should join the European Union were being held now, 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	06'13
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	37.7
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	38.1

Table 42

Dynamics of answering the question: "If today a referendum on Belarus integrating with Russia were being held, 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	06'13
For	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	31.2
Against	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	46.5

Table 43

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

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	06'13
With the 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	40.8
To the 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	41.0

one's land of allied but nevertheless foreign soldiers can be connected in these people's imagination namely with the prospects of a war.

The cultural nearness parameter demonstrates the same outcome as with regard to the Russian tourists: those who consider that Russians are closer to Belarusians than anybody else, are disposed to assess appearance of an air force base positively to the fullest extent (although even among them the ratio is approximately the same); they are followed by respondents who think that Belarusians are close to western Europeans.

A geopolitical choice and attitude to the president are connected with the question under consideration closely and plainly: those who declare for Europe and do not trust A. Lukashenko are against the base to the utmost. The correlation, however, is irregular: even among adherents of the president there are also more opponents of the base appearance than supporters. Only the geopolitical choice in favor of Russia gives slight preponderance to the supporters

of the base.

Thus, Belarusian society on the whole demonstrates a rather cool attitude to the appearance of a Russian air force base in Belarus, which in theory should protect Belarus from the NATO military threat. Hence it is easy to conclude that not all Belarusians share the concept that such a threat actually exists. This is also confirmed by their attitude to the apocalyptic scene of the world described by head of state not long ago (Table 40).

There are somewhat more of those who agree with the scene described by A. Lukashenko, than supporters of deployment of a Russian air force base in the RB; there are somewhat fewer of those who do not agree with the president than of air force base opponents. The indifferent ones make up a relative majority. As a consequence, just a minority supports the philosophy of the country's openness to the West, as well as the philosophy of a "besieged fortress".

The balance manifests itself in the dynamics of geopolitical priorities, too. They are notable for high

stability in spite of sometimes sharp fluctuations. Later the changes are, as a rule, made up for, maintaining essentially a zero trend – a rough parity among supporters of the choice in favor of Russia or Europe. The data of the June opinion poll confirm the regularity to the full (Tables 41-43).

Thus, the data of the June opinion poll show that Belarusians treat Russians with affection, including

those who come to Belarus. However, the citizens of Belarus have appreciably much less liking to the military projects of the RF and the RB. The opinions divide approximately fifty-fifty with regard to the threat on the part of the West. There is also a balance between the geopolitical choice of "Belo-Russians" and "Euro-Belarusians".

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

1. "Do you think Belarusian economy is in crisis?"

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 +
Yes	59.8	54.9	64.9	64.9	70.1	66.5	59.5	43.2
No	29.5	35.3	23.8	21.6	22.4	23.1	31.3	43.2
DA/NA	10.7	9.8	11.3	13.5	7.5	10.4	9.2	13.6

Table 1.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (incomplete higher)
Yes	34.4	45.5	62.2	64.3	64.5
No	57.0	39.7	27.6	24.1	26.2
DA/NA	8.6	14.8	10.2	11.6	9.3

Table 1.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	The unemployed, housewives
Yes	69.3	62.8	59.8	45.0	63.3
No	23.5	25.7	29.4	41.9	24.4
DA/NA	7.2	11.5	10.8	13.1	12.3

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
Yes	70.3	60.1	72.9	60.0	47.0	51.4	51.5
No	24.2	28.9	15.0	37.1	33.3	32.2	38.9
DA/NA	5.5	11.0	12.1	2.9	19.7	16.4	9.6

Table 1.5. Depending on the type of settlement

Variant of answer	Type of settlement				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
Yes	70.3	61.7	57.3	59.1	53.0
No	24.2	19.7	34.5	32.8	34.6
DA/NA	5.5	18.6	8.2	8.1	12.4

2. "Is the state of things in our country developing in general in the right or in the wrong direction?"

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 +
In the right direction	39.6	33.3	26.5	26.2	26.1	34.2	43.9	63.4
In the wrong direction	45.5	39.2	54.3	60.4	57.8	51.2	40.5	26.4
DA/NA	14.9	27.5	19.2	13.4	16.1	14.6	15.6	10.2

Table 2.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (incomplete higher)
In the right direction	66.7	58.6	36.8	34.0	34.0
In the wrong direction	31.2	28.0	46.4	49.8	51.9
DA/NA	2.1	13.4	16.8	16.2	14.1

Table 2.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	The unemployed, housewives
In the right direction	23.8	38.3	30.4	63.2	23.3
In the wrong direction	62.5	45.5	44.1	25.6	58.9
DA/NA	13.1	16.2	25.5	11.1	17.8

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
In the right direction	29.9	32.5	49.1	54.6	30.5	44.1	43.4
In the wrong direction	66.0	61.0	37.4	31.6	43.7	27.7	37.7
DA/NA	4.1	6.5	13.5	13.8	25.8	28.2	18.9

Table 2.5. Depending on the type of settlement

Variant of answer	Type of settlement				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
In the right direction	29.9	45.4	40.6	39.0	42.1
In the wrong direction	66.0	28.9	48.8	40.5	43.4
DA/NA	4.1	25.7	10.6	20.5	14.4

3. "What type of health care in Belarus do you trust more – public or private?"

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 +
Public	51.7	30.0	32.7	33.6	43.7	53.9	57.1	71.1
Private	37.4	56.0	53.3	53.0	44.8	35.1	31.8	21.8
DA/NA	10.9	14.0	14.0	13.4	11.5	11.0	11.1	7.1

Table 3.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (incomplete higher)
Public	80.9	68.6	49.5	46.1	45.4
Private	14.9	23.1	41.8	41.1	38.8
DA/NA	4.2	8.3	8.7	12.8	15.8

Table 3.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	The unemployed, housewives
Public	35.4	54.2	29.4	71.8	45.6
Private	50.9	35.9	61.8	19.6	36.7
DA/NA	13.7	9.9	8.8	8.6	17.7

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
Public	60.5	60.5	55.9	66.3	31.8	41.2	41.7
Private	33.3	33.8	37.6	29.1	48.0	33.9	46.1
DA/NA	6.2	5.7	6.5	4.6	20.2	24.9	12.2

Table 3.5. Depending on the type of settlement

Variant of answer	Type of settlement				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
Public	60.5	53.8	37.8	51.4	53.6
Private	33.3	29.5	52.7	39.0	34.4
DA/NA	6.2	16.7	9.5	9.6	12.0

4. "Which of the following statements about Belarusian state constructed under president A. Lukashenko would you agree with?"

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 +
This is my state, it protects my interests	33.2	25.5	26.0	18.2	19.4	24.6	38.2	57.2
This is partly my state, it does not sufficiently protect the interests of such people as me	45.2	49.0	44.7	59.5	53.4	50.2	42.4	31.2
This is not my state, it does not protect my interests, I do not trust it	15.5	15.7	22.7	17.6	19.8	20.2	13.7	5.7
DA/NA	6.1	9.8	6.6	4.7	7.4	5.0	5.7	5.9

Table 4.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (incomplete higher)
This is my state, it protects my interests	68.8	54.8	26.8	26.7	32.0
This is partly my state, it does not sufficiently protect the interests of such people as me	19.4	33.8	51.4	48.1	44.0
This is not my state, it does not protect my interests, I do not trust it	4.3	5.7	16.4	19.3	17.2
DA/NA	7.5	5.7	5.4	5.9	6.8

Table 4.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	The unemployed, housewives
This is my state, it protects my interests	16.2	33.0	25.7	56.1	16.9
This is partly my state, it does not sufficiently protect the interests of such people as me	53.4	47.6	50.5	32.6	43.8
This is not my state, it does not protect my interests, I do not trust it	24.4	14.2	13.9	5.7	29.2
DA/NA	6.0	5.2	13.9	5.6	10.1

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
This is my state, it protects my interests	20.7	36.7	35.0	53.1	23.4	35.0	35.8
This is partly my state, it does not sufficiently protect the interests of such people as me	54.8	41.5	44.9	33.1	52.8	45.2	40.2
This is not my state, it does not protect my interests, I do not trust it	19.4	17.5	14.0	9.1	15.7	16.9	13.5
DA/NA	5.1	4.3	6.1	4.7	8.1	2.9	10.5

Table 4.5. Depending on the type of settlement

Variant of answer	Type of settlement				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
This is my state, it protects my interests	20.7	36.8	33.0	31.7	41.1
This is partly my state, it does not sufficiently protect the interests of such people as me	54.8	43.0	43.3	44.4	41.6
This is not my state, it does not protect my interests, I do not trust it	19.4	11.7	17.4	19.3	11.6
DA/NA	5.1	8.5	6.3	4.6	5.7

5. "Which of the following statements about corruption in Belarus do you agree with?"

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 +
A. Lukashenko will be able to achieve success in fighting against corruption having carried out an all-out purge among the top rank officials and toughening punishment for such crimes	30.2	22.0	26.5	24.2	19.0	19.2	33.2	50.4
A. Lukashenko will try to fight corruption, but he will hardly be able to achieve much success as corruption in Belarus is ineradicable	27.8	34.0	29.8	27.5	29.5	32.4	26.3	22.1
It is difficult for A. Lukashenko to fight against corruption as he himself depends on corrupt officials to a large extent	19.3	22.0	14.6	15.4	26.1	22.8	20.2	13.9
A. Lukashenko will never seriously fight against corruption as he is interested in it someway or other	18.2	14.0	23.8	29.5	23.5	20.6	15.3	7.9
DA/NA	4.5	8.0	5.3	3.4	1.9	5.0	5.0	5.2

Table 5.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (incomplete higher)
A. Lukashenko will be able to achieve success in fighting against corruption having carried out an all-out purge among the top rank officials and toughening punishment for such crimes	57.6	48.7	26.4	22.5	30.3
A. Lukashenko will try to fight corruption, but he will hardly be able to achieve much success as corruption in Belarus is ineradicable	27.2	19.2	31.6	29.3	22.8
It is difficult for A. Lukashenko to fight against corruption as he himself depends on corrupt officials to a large extent	7.6	16.7	16.7	24.6	21.0
A. Lukashenko will never seriously fight against corruption as he is interested in it someway or other	5.4	9.6	20.0	18.4	23.1
DA/NA	2.2	5.8	5.3	5.2	2.8

Table 5.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	The unemployed, housewives
A. Lukashenko will be able to achieve success in fighting against corruption having carried out an all-out purge among the top rank officials and toughening punishment for such crimes	18.3	27.7	28.4	49.1	16.7
A. Lukashenko will try to fight corruption, but he will hardly be able to achieve much success as corruption in Belarus is ineradicable	31.3	28.2	33.3	23.3	23.3
It is difficult for A. Lukashenko to fight against corruption as he himself depends on corrupt officials to a large extent	20.7	20.6	17.6	14.0	31.1
A. Lukashenko will never seriously fight against corruption as he is interested in it somehow or other	26.9	18.6	14.6	8.3	24.4
DA/NA	2.8	4.9	5.9	5.4	4.4

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
A. Lukashenko will be able to achieve success in fighting against corruption having carried out an all-out purge among the top rank officials and toughening punishment for such crimes	32.3	26.6	33.6	36.6	19.2	25.0	36.1
A. Lukashenko will try to fight corruption, but he will hardly be able to achieve much success as corruption in Belarus is ineradicable	33.7	19.2	28.0	38.3	17.7	25.0	31.7
It is difficult for A. Lukashenko to fight against corruption as he himself depends on corrupt officials to a large extent	18.7	23.6	17.3	9.1	27.8	23.9	14.3
A. Lukashenko will never seriously fight against corruption as he is interested in it somehow or other	15.0	29.7	12.6	11.4	26.8	24.4	8.7
DA/NA	0.3	0.9	8.5	4.6	8.5	1.7	9.2

Table 5.5. Depending on the type of settlement

Variant of answer	Type of settlement				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
A. Lukashenko will be able to achieve success in fighting against corruption having carried out an all-out purge among the top rank officials and toughening punishment for such crimes	32.3	34.1	29.4	26.0	28.9
A. Lukashenko will try to fight corruption, but he will hardly be able to achieve much success as corruption in Belarus is ineradicable	33.7	26.6	27.0	31.0	22.7
It is difficult for A. Lukashenko to fight against corruption as he himself depends on corrupt officials to a large extent	18.7	19.7	17.0	19.8	20.9
A. Lukashenko will never seriously fight against corruption as he is interested in it somehow or other	15.0	10.3	23.4	20.2	21.4
DA/NA	0.3	9.3	3.2	3.0	6.1

6. "How would you assess people who hold power at the moment?"

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 +
These are people preoccupied with their material well-being and career	44.4	51.0	50.0	56.1	53.7	43.4	41.0	32.7
These are honest, but weak people, not able to manage power and keep the peace and a consistent line of policy	15.3	19.6	16.7	11.5	11.9	19.2	15.3	15.3
These are honest but ignorant people who do not know how to lead the country out of the crisis	13.8	3.9	17.3	12.8	14.2	14.9	11.5	14.2
It is a good team of politicians leading the country in the right direction	13.4	5.9	4.7	5.4	8.6	8.6	16.9	27.0
DA/NA	13.1	19.6	11.3	14.2	11.6	13.9	15.3	10.8

Table 6.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (incomplete higher)
These are people preoccupied with their material well-being and career	35.1	31.8	48.2	46.3	44.3
These are honest, but weak people, not able to manage power and keep the peace and a consistent line of policy	11.7	15.3	15.1	14.4	18.2
These are honest but ignorant people who do not know how to lead the country out of the crisis	22.3	11.5	14.0	13.9	11.7
It is a good team of politicians leading the country in the right direction	26.6	22.9	10.9	9.9	14.1
DA/NA	4.3	18.5	11.8	15.5	11.7

Table 6.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	The unemployed, housewives
These are people preoccupied with their material well-being and career	63.9	37.2	45.1	31.8	56.7
These are honest, but weak people, not able to manage power and keep the peace and a consistent line of policy	9.3	19.1	19.6	15.8	12.2
These are honest but ignorant people who do not know how to lead the country out of the crisis	11.6	16.4	12.7	13.4	11.1
It is a good team of politicians leading the country in the right direction	5.7	10.9	9.8	27.9	4.4
DA/NA	9.5	16.4	12.8	11.1	15.6

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
These are people preoccupied with their material well-being and career	62.4	44.3	31.8	30.3	51.8	43.8	37.8
These are honest, but weak people, not able to manage power and keep the peace and a consistent line of policy	10.8	21.5	8.9	28.0	15.7	8.5	16.1
These are honest but ignorant people who do not know how to lead the country out of the crisis	12.9	15.8	16.8	14.9	2.5	10.2	22.2
It is a good team of politicians leading the country in the right direction	7.5	14.0	25.7	18.8	6.1	11.4	13.0
DA/NA	6.4	4.4	16.8	8.0	23.9	26.1	10.9

Table 6.5. Depending on the type of settlement

Variant of answer	Type of settlement				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
These are people preoccupied with their material well-being and career	62.4	35.4	53.0	38.2	35.2
These are honest, but weak people, not able to manage power and keep the peace and a consistent line of policy	10.8	19.9	18.0	12.7	14.9
These are honest but ignorant people who do not know how to lead the country out of the crisis	12.9	15.1	8.8	17.4	14.9
It is a good team of politicians leading the country in the right direction	7.5	13.4	9.9	18.1	17.2
DA/NA	6.4	16.2	10.3	13.6	17.8

7. "Which statement describes your attitude to politics?"**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 +
My life depends on politics, I take active part in it	5.4	4.0	2.6	6.0	5.6	5.7	6.5	4.8
My life depends on politics, but I do not participate in it because it is useless	23.7	8.0	19.2	26.8	29.0	28.1	27.0	16.2
My life depends on politics, but I do not participate in it because it is dangerous	11.1	14.0	12.6	15.4	18.2	10.3	7.6	6.0
My life does not depend on politics much	22.5	18.0	21.9	20.8	26.4	26.0	22.8	26.2
I am not interested in politics	34.2	56.0	40.0	28.2	16.4	26.0	22.8	26.2
DA/NA	3.1	0	3.7	2.8	4.4	3.9	3.3	4.6

Table 7.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (incomplete higher)
My life depends on politics, I take active part in it	10.8	5.1	5.3	3.5	6.9
My life depends on politics, but I do not participate in it because it is useless	8.6	18.5	20.4	27.1	32.0
My life depends on politics, but I do not participate in it because it is dangerous	6.5	8.9	10.2	11.8	14.8
My life does not depend on politics much	16.1	28.7	23.5	22.6	19.2
I am not interested in politics	55.9	35.7	39.2	30.2	22.3
DA/NA	2.2	3.1	1.5	4.8	4.8

Table 7.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	The unemployed, housewives
My life depends on politics, I take active part in it	5.7	6.2	3.0	4.9	3.4
My life depends on politics, but I do not participate in it because it is useless	29.7	26.2	18.8	17.1	15.7
My life depends on politics, but I do not participate in it because it is dangerous	14.2	12.9	9.9	5.4	12.4
My life does not depend on politics much	20.4	20.9	21.8	26.9	23.6
I am not interested in politics	27.6	29.9	46.5	41.6	42.7
DA/NA	2.3	3.9	0	4.2	2.2

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
My life depends on politics, I take active part in it	2.0	6.1	6.5	8.0	5.6	2.9	7.4
My life depends on politics, but I do not participate in it because it is useless	23.5	21.9	39.7	19.4	16.2	13.7	27.9
My life depends on politics, but I do not participate in it because it is dangerous	10.9	14.5	10.7	10.3	9.1	12.0	10.0
My life does not depend on politics much	21.5	14.5	18.7	23.4	27.9	28.0	26.2
I am not interested in politics	41.3	42.1	20.6	32.6	36.5	41.7	22.7
DA/NA	0.8	0.9	3.8	6.3	4.7	1.7	5.8

Table 7.5. Depending on the type of settlement

Variant of answer	Type of settlement				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
My life depends on politics, I take active part in it	2.0	5.8	6.4	5.8	6.5
My life depends on politics, but I do not participate in it because it is useless	23.5	25.4	25.2	21.9	22.2
My life depends on politics, but I do not participate in it because it is dangerous	10.9	14.1	8.5	10.8	11.1
My life does not depend on politics much	21.5	26.1	24.1	23.5	18.9
I am not interested in politics	41.3	20.7	33.3	37.3	37.5
DA/NA	0.8	7.9	2.5	0.7	3.8

8. "In 1995 and 1996 national referendums were held. Today on the grounds of their results important state decisions are taken. Do you think it is necessary to hold a new referendum on Belarus future development?"

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	52.3	34.0	54.3	54.7	61.0	62.3	49.6	40.5
No	32.0	44.0	31.1	27.0	24.3	25.6	38.2	39.1
DA/NA	15.7	22.0	14.6	18.3	14.7	12.1	12.2	20.4

Table 8.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (incomplete higher)
Yes	34.4	39.7	52.0	53.4	63.6
No	54.8	35.3	34.0	29.8	22.3
DA/NA	10.8	25.0	14.0	16.8	14.1

Table 8.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	The unemployed, housewives
Yes	61.8	54.0	51.0	42.1	44.9
No	28.2	29.1	29.4	39.3	38.2
DA/NA	10.0	16.9	19.6	18.6	16.9

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	46.3	55.0	62.3	49.1	60.1	48.3	46.5
No	43.9	34.1	23.3	41.7	17.2	25.6	32.5
DA/NA	9.8	10.9	14.4	9.2	22.7	26.1	21.0

Table 8.5. Depending on the type of settlement

Variant of answer	Type of settlement				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
Yes	46.3	55.7	56.4	53.3	50.5
No	43.9	19.9	30.5	34.7	31.2
DA/NA	9.8	24.4	13.1	12.0	18.3

9. "To hold a referendum on Belarus future it is necessary to collect 450 thousand signatures. Would you agree to affix your signature in support of holding such a referendum, if you were asked to do it?"

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 +
Yes	57.5	48.0	62.7	61.5	66.0	64.8	54.0	45.3
No	32.7	48.0	28.7	29.1	22.4	27.0	36.9	42.8
DA/NA	9.8	4.0	8.6	9.4	11.6	8.2	9.1	11.9

Table 9.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (incomplete higher)
Yes	32.2	47.1	57.1	57.7	71.8
No	61.3	36.8	34.4	32.2	19.3
DA/NA	6.5	16.1	8.5	10.1	8.9

Table 9.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	The unemployed, housewives
Yes	66.4	59.6	58.4	47.0	50.6
No	24.5	30.2	33.7	41.6	42.7
DA/NA	9.1	10.2	7.9	11.4	6.7

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
Yes	55.8	55.3	64.0	49.7	67.5	54.9	55.5
No	38.1	35.5	21.0	45.1	21.3	35.4	31.9
DA/NA	6.1	9.2	15.0	5.2	11.2	9.7	12.6

Table 9.5. Depending on the type of settlement

Variant of answer	Type of settlement				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
Yes	55.8	57.2	62.2	53.7	58.1
No	38.1	30.0	31.1	35.9	29.5
DA/NA	6.1	12.8	6.7	10.4	12.4

10. "Would you agree to form part of the initiative group and help collect signatures in favor of the referendum, if you were asked to do 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	22.0	14.0	24.0	26.4	27.2	26.6	19.5	14.7
No	68.3	74.0	62.0	64.9	62.3	61.3	72.9	78.5
DA/NA	9.7	12.0	14.0	8.7	10.5	12.1	7.6	6.8

Table 10.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (incomplete higher)
Yes	12.9	15.9	23.0	22.9	25.1
No	84.9	74.5	67.9	66.2	63.2
DA/NA	2.2	9.6	9.1	10.9	11.7

Table 10.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	The unemployed, housewives
Yes	28.4	21.6	20.6	16.8	21.1
No	63.0	66.7	65.7	76.7	67.8
DA/NA	8.6	11.7	13.7	6.5	11.1

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	11.9	22.7	37.4	16.1	16.2	24.4	27.2
No	84.4	71.6	49.5	75.9	71.2	62.5	57.9
DA/NA	3.7	5.7	13.1	8.0	12.6	14.1	14.9

Table 10.5. Depending on the type of settlement

Variant of answer	Type of settlement				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
Yes	11.9	32.6	24.8	20.2	20.9
No	84.4	51.9	64.2	70.2	70.1
DA/NA	3.7	15.5	11.0	9.6	9.0

11. "Do you think, if political forces suggest holding a referendum on the country's future and collect the necessary signatures the authorities should agree to hold it?"

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 +
Yes	72.3	66.0	69.5	75.2	82.5	78.6	69.8	62.2
No	15.2	24.0	14.6	13.4	9.0	11.7	15.3	22.2
DA/NA	12.5	10.0	15.9	11.4	8.5	9.7	14.9	15.6

Table 11.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (incomplete higher)
Yes	49.5	61.5	70.9	73.3	86.3
No	37.6	17.3	15.5	13.7	8.2
DA/NA	12.9	21.2	13.6	13.0	5.5

Table 11.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	The unemployed, housewives
Yes	84.0	72.3	72.5	61.8	65.2
No	9.1	14.6	16.7	21.7	14.6
DA/NA	6.9	13.1	10.8	16.5	20.2

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
Yes	85.4	73.7	71.5	60.9	74.6	67.4	65.1
No	8.2	16.2	15.4	30.5	6.6	12.6	20.1
DA/NA	6.4	10.1	13.1	8.6	18.8	20.0	17.8

Table 11.5. Depending on the type of settlement

Variant of answer	Type of settlement				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
Yes	85.4	72.9	71.3	66.9	66.1
No	8.2	12.0	17.0	21.5	17.3
DA/NA	6.4	15.1	11.7	11.6	16.6

12. "Do you think a referendum on Belarus future will be able to influence improvement of the situation in our country?"

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 +
Yes	46.1	45.1	39.1	49.3	52.4	47.0	50.4	39.2
No	34.8	33.3	40.4	35.8	28.8	33.8	32.4	39.2
DA/NA	19.1	21.6	20.5	14.9	18.8	19.2	17.2	21.6

Table 12.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (incomplete higher)
Yes	28.0	42.9	43.5	46.7	57.7
No	55.9	32.1	38.0	32.8	25.8
DA/NA	16.1	25.0	18.5	20.5	16.5

Table 12.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	The unemployed, housewives
Yes	51.6	47.5	46.1	40.3	36.7
No	33.2	31.9	38.2	38.5	40.0
DA/NA	15.2	20.6	15.7	21.2	23.3

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
Yes	40.1	46.9	54.0	49.1	44.9	44.3	45.9
No	44.2	38.6	22.5	39.4	28.3	36.4	31.0
DA/NA	15.7	14.5	23.5	11.5	26.8	19.3	23.1

Table 12.5. Depending on the type of settlement

Variant of answer	Type of settlement				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
Yes	40.1	48.1	48.4	42.9	46.1
No	44.2	23.0	33.9	40.5	33.2
DA/NA	15.7	28.9	17.7	16.6	17.7

13. "What is more important in your opinion: freedom or well-being?"

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 +
Both freedom and well-being are important; however, in exchange for my own well-being I am ready to cede part of my rights and civic freedoms to the state	45.6	48.0	48.0	43.6	45.5	39.9	43.7	50.9
Both freedom and well-being are important; however, for the sake of my personal liberty and a guarantee for observance of all civil rights I am ready to tolerate some financial difficulties	37.5	34.0	32.7	37.6	37.7	39.5	43.7	35.0
DA/NA	16.9	18.0	19.3	18.8	16.8	20.6	12.6	14.1

Table 13.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (incomplete higher)
Both freedom and well-being are important; however, in exchange for my own well-being I am ready to cede part of my rights and civic freedoms to the state	58.1	52.3	48.9	40.6	39.0
Both freedom and well-being are important; however, for the sake of my personal liberty and a guarantee for observance of all civil rights I am ready to tolerate some financial difficulties	31.2	34.2	36.0	39.9	40.3
DA/NA	10.7	13.5	15.1	19.5	20.7

Table 13.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	The unemployed, housewives
Both freedom and well-being are important; however, in exchange for my own well-being I am ready to cede part of my rights and civic freedoms to the state	45.9	43.0	47.5	49.7	41.6
Both freedom and well-being are important; however, for the sake of my personal liberty and a guarantee for observance of all civil rights I am ready to tolerate some financial difficulties	35.5	38.6	34.7	37.6	41.6
DA/NA	18.6	18.4	17.8	12.7	16.8

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
Both freedom and well-being are important; however, in exchange for my own well-being I am ready to cede part of my rights and civic freedoms to the state	61.2	46.2	31.3	44.6	51.0	42.9	36.2
Both freedom and well-being are important; however, for the sake of my personal liberty and a guarantee for observance of all civil rights I am ready to tolerate some financial difficulties	19.4	37.9	52.3	43.4	33.8	44.6	39.3
DA/NA	19.4	15.9	16.4	12.0	15.2	12.5	24.5

Table 13.5. Depending on the type of settlement

Variant of answer	Type of settlement				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
Both freedom and well-being are important; however, in exchange for my own well-being I am ready to cede part of my rights and civic freedoms to the state	61.2	36.4	56.4	37.1	38.8
Both freedom and well-being are important; however, for the sake of my personal liberty and a guarantee for observance of all civil rights I am ready to tolerate some financial difficulties	19.4	41.2	30.1	49.0	45.7
DA/NA	19.4	22.4	13.5	13.9	15.5

14. "In your opinion, how well is Belarusians' national identity developed?"

Table 14.1. Depending on age

Variant of answer	Variant of answer	Age, years old						
		18-19	20-24	25-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 +
It is very strongly developed	2.9	3.9	4.7	4.7	1.5	1.1	1.5	4.8
Strongly	18.3	23.5	12.8	17.4	16.1	11.0	20.9	26.1
Moderately	37.5	43.1	42.3	33.6	36.7	43.1	30.0	37.7
Faintly	26.2	11.8	21.5	27.5	29.6	32.7	28.9	20.1
Rather faintly	11.7	11.8	15.4	14.1	13.1	10.3	12.5	8.2
DA/NA	3.4	5.9	3.3	2.7	3.0	1.8	6.2	3.1

Table 14.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (incomplete higher)
It is very strongly developed	5.4	3.8	2.4	3.1	2.4
Strongly	28.0	26.3	19.1	15.6	13.4
Moderately	43.0	35.9	39.8	34.4	36.1
Faintly	15.1	19.9	25.6	28.1	31.6
Rather faintly	6.5	7.7	10.9	13.9	13.7
DA/NA	2.0	6.4	2.2	4.9	2.8

Table 14.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	The unemployed, housewives
It is very strongly developed	3.6	2.2	1.0	4.4	1.1
Strongly	13.5	17.3	14.7	25.1	19.1
Moderately	36.8	36.4	48.0	37.0	37.1
Faintly	31.9	27.5	18.6	21.2	25.8
Rather faintly	12.4	13.5	11.8	8.3	12.4
DA/NA	1.9	3.1	11.9	4.0	12.5

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
It is very strongly developed	2.0	4.0	2.3	6.8	2.0	1.7	2.6
Strongly	24.8	25.1	6.1	21.0	14.6	21.1	13.5
Moderately	41.2	38.3	27.7	43.2	35.7	33.1	41.3
Faintly	25.2	22.0	36.2	15.9	23.6	24.0	33.9
Rather faintly	5.8	10.1	23.9	11.9	20.1	8.6	4.8
DA/NA	1.0	0.5	3.8	1.2	4.0	11.5	3.9

Table 14.5. Depending on the type of settlement

Variant of answer	Type of settlement				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
It is very strongly developed	2.0	2.7	3.9	1.2	4.6
Strongly	24.8	13.4	18.7	12.0	20.9
Moderately	41.2	38.5	39.2	33.3	35.1
Faintly	25.2	26.8	25.1	34.9	21.4
Rather faintly	5.8	12.6	11.7	16.7	12.4
DA/NA	1.0	6.0	1.4	1.9	5.6

15. "Which state symbols (the national emblem, the flag), in your opinion, correspond more to the historical and cultural heritage of the Belarusian nation – the ones which existed from 1991 to 1995 (with the national symbol "Pogonya") or the present ones (resembling the symbols of the BSSR)?"

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 +
The symbols as before 1995 (with the "Pogonya" emblem)	33.9	32.0	36.0	45.0	41.2	34.2	32.8	23.9
The present symbols (resembling the ones of the BSSR)	51.5	50.0	48.0	43.0	43.8	48.4	53.4	63.6
DA/NA	14.6	18.0	16.0	12.0	15.0	17.4	13.8	12.5

Table 15.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (incomplete higher)
The symbols as before 1995 (with the "Pogonya" emblem)	24.7	25.6	32.4	35.0	42.6
The present symbols (resembling the ones of the BSSR)	71.0	55.8	55.2	46.6	43.0
DA/NA	4.3	18.6	12.4	18.4	14.4

Table 15.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	The unemployed, housewives
The symbols as before 1995 (with the "Pogonya" emblem)	46.3	30.2	36.6	23.3	47.2
The present symbols (resembling the ones of the BSSR)	37.7	54.6	47.5	64.1	40.4
DA/NA	16.0	15.1	15.8	12.7	12.3

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
The symbols as before 1995 (with the "Pogonya" emblem)	45.9	39.9	30.4	33.1	36.4	19.9	25.0
The present symbols (resembling the ones of the BSSR)	47.3	49.6	50.9	58.3	45.5	61.4	51.8
DA/NA	6.8	10.5	18.7	8.6	18.1	18.7	23.2

Table 15.5. Depending on the type of settlement

Variant of answer	Type of settlement				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
The symbols as before 1995 (with the "Pogonya" emblem)	45.9	24.5	34.8	34.2	31.0
The present symbols (resembling the ones of the BSSR)	47.3	55.9	50.7	50.0	53.0
DA/NA	6.8	19.6	14.5	15.8	16.0

16. "If you had to choose between integration with Russia and joining the European Union, what choice would you make?"

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 +
Integration with Russia	40.8	36.0	30.7	22.8	28.0	40.2	47.9	58.1
Joining the European Union	41.0	54.0	54.0	63.1	54.1	42.3	33.1	19.3
DA/NA	18.2	10.0	15.3	14.1	17.9	17.5	19.0	22.6

Table 16.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (incomplete higher)
Integration with Russia	68.8	51.3	37.5	38.7	35.4
Joining the European Union	12.9	24.4	44.4	43.9	48.5
DA/NA	18.3	24.3	18.1	17.4	16.1

Table 16.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	The unemployed, housewives
Integration with Russia	32.6	38.1	26.5	57.6	35.6
Joining the European Union	51.7	44.1	60.8	20.4	43.3
DA/NA	15.7	17.8	12.7	22.0	21.1

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
Integration with Russia	49.7	38.6	39.9	50.3	31.7	34.1	37.6
Joining the European Union	42.9	49.1	38.5	34.9	49.2	35.8	34.9
DA/NA	7.4	12.3	21.6	14.8	19.1	30.1	27.5

Table 16.5. Depending on the type of settlement

Variant of answer	Type of settlement				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
Integration with Russia	49.7	42.6	35.8	38.8	37.7
Joining the European Union	42.9	33.0	47.2	39.9	41.9
DA/NA	7.4	24.4	17.0	21.3	20.4

17. "Recently guests from Russia have begun to visit Belarus more and more often. What is your attitude to it?" (more than one answer is possible)

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 +
It is positive, because they are people kindred to us	31.2	68.0	76.2	73.2	76.1	71.9	65.3	58.5
It is positive, because the more tourists, the richer the country	31.0	31.4	29.3	35.6	35.4	34.5	34.0	21.5
It is indifferent	29.5	36.0	35.8	29.1	33.2	29.2	26.6	25.6
It is negative, I don't like the way they behave	8.4	2.0	11.3	10.1	7.5	6.8	7.2	10.2
It is negative, they buy up our goods and housing	7.8	6.0	6.0	7.4	4.9	10.0	8.0	9.3

Table 17.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (incomplete higher)
It is positive, because they are people kindred to us	52.7	35.0	28.2	30.7	28.5
It is positive, because the more tourists, the richer the country	7.5	24.4	31.1	34.7	36.8
It is indifferent	19.6	31.4	32.2	28.3	28.2
It is negative, I don't like the way they behave	12.9	7.1	8.2	7.1	9.6
It is negative, they buy up our goods and housing	10.8	9.0	6.7	8.5	7.2

Table 17.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	The unemployed, housewives
It is positive, because they are people kindred to us	20.9	33.5	22.5	40.3	32.6
It is positive, because the more tourists, the richer the country	34.1	37.8	26.7	21.4	22.2
It is indifferent	37.5	24.5	44.1	24.9	28.1
It is negative, I don't like the way they behave	8.0	6.2	5.9	11.9	11.1
It is negative, they buy up our goods and housing	6.2	7.1	6.9	9.6	12.4

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
It is positive, because they are people kindred to us	23.8	32.0	28.5	41.7	29.4	18.2	45.9
It is positive, because the more tourists, the richer the country	24.6	35.4	44.1	32.2	34.3	40.9	11.4
It is indifferent	52.0	23.2	29.0	18.9	26.8	29.0	18.3
It is negative, I don't like the way they behave	6.1	10.5	5.6	11.4	11.1	2.8	11.4
It is negative, they buy up our goods and housing	4.8	6.1	1.9	5.1	5.1	12.2	13.0

Table 17.5. Depending on the type of settlement

Variant of answer	Type of settlement				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
It is positive, because they are people kindred to us	23.8	40.9	27.7	32.0	31.4
It is positive, because the more tourists, the richer the country	24.6	37.9	27.7	39.8	27.4
It is indifferent	52.0	24.1	26.2	24.0	22.7
It is negative, I don't like the way they behave	6.1	5.8	12.4	2.3	12.7
It is negative, they buy up our goods and housing	4.8	4.8	12.7	4.2	11.1

18. "Some time ago A. Lukashenko said that "Independent Belarus constantly finds itself at gunpoint of the cannonry of an undeclared cold war. We are being strangled with sanctions, bad-mouthed with aspersion. NATO war planes fly along our borders, new military bases are being created, provocations are being committed". Some people agree with this statement, others do not; still others treat it with indifference. And what is your attitude to it?"

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 +
I agree with it	27.0	19.6	18.0	20.1	22.4	23.1	32.8	36.8
It makes no difference for me	35.7	47.1	46.0	38.3	36.9	36.7	30.2	30.9
I do not agree with it	28.2	19.6	26.7	36.9	31.3	29.5	29.8	21.8
DA/NA	9.1	13.7	9.3	4.7	9.4	10.7	7.2	10.5

Table 18.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (incomplete higher)
I agree with it	32.6	38.5	25.3	23.6	26.9
It makes no difference for me	48.9	26.9	38.7	37.0	28.3
I do not agree with it	9.8	22.4	27.8	29.2	36.2
DA/NA	8.7	12.2	8.2	10.2	8.6

Table 18.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	The unemployed, housewives
I agree with it	16.8	29.2	22.5	36.2	22.2
It makes no difference for me	38.2	35.2	47.1	31.5	32.2
I do not agree with it	39.1	25.5	19.6	22.5	33.3
DA/NA	5.9	10.1	10.8	9.8	12.3

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
I agree with it	17.7	21.0	23.8	46.3	21.3	29.7	35.5
It makes no difference for me	48.6	43.7	35.5	28.0	29.9	29.7	26.8
I do not agree with it	31.3	31.9	29.4	12.6	42.6	28.6	18.4
DA/NA	2.4	3.4	11.3	13.1	6.2	12.0	19.3

Table 18.5. Depending on the type of settlement

Variant of answer	Type of settlement				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
I agree with it	17.7	30.6	33.3	26.0	27.5
It makes no difference for me	48.6	28.9	35.1	37.6	30.1
I do not agree with it	31.3	23.0	25.9	29.1	30.6
DA/NA	2.4	17.5	5.7	7.3	11.8

19. "Recently during a meeting with A. Lukashenko Minister of Defense of the Russian Federation S. Shoygu stated there was a possibility of deployment of a Russian air force base in Belarus. According to him, an Air Corps Regiment will be deployed on the base. Some people treated the statement positively, others – negatively, still others – with indifference. And what is your attitude to the statement?"

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 +
It is positive	19.8	19.6	18.0	20.4	17.5	19.2	19.8	22.7
It is indifferent	35.6	45.1	44.7	32.0	35.7	37.0	34.2	31.4
It is negative	36.0	27.5	25.3	42.2	38.3	34.9	37.3	37.4
DA/NA	8.6	7.8	12.0	5.4	8.6	8.9	8.7	8.5

Table 19.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher(incomplete higher)
It is positive	19.4	19.2	18.5	17.5	26.1
It is indifferent	52.7	28.2	40.2	35.2	25.8
It is negative	21.5	41.0	34.2	36.9	39.9
DA/NA	6.4	11.6	7.1	10.4	8.2

Table 19.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	The unemployed, housewives
It is positive	16.8	23.0	17.6	19.7	16.5
It is indifferent	37.0	33.4	50.0	33.9	33.0
It is negative	37.6	33.6	24.5	38.9	45.1
DA/NA	8.6	10.0	7.9	7.5	5.4

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
It is positive	13.6	21.1	20.7	31.4	18.2	12.0	24.5
It is indifferent	52.0	38.6	24.4	34.9	33.3	34.9	25.9
It is negative	33.3	33.3	43.7	29.1	37.9	42.3	33.2
DA/NA	1.1	7.0	11.2	4.6	10.6	10.8	16.4

Table 19.5. Depending on the type of settlement

Variant of answer	Type of settlement				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
It is positive	13.6	27.4	21.6	17.4	19.1
It is indifferent	52.0	25.3	35.1	40.2	27.8
It is negative	33.3	31.5	34.4	33.6	44.3
DA/NA	1.1	15.8	8.9	8.8	8.8

20. "Do you use social networking sites on the Internet?" (more than one answer is possible)

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, I use the social networking site "VK"	28.9	80.0	76.0	68.9	34.0	19.9	10.3	2.0
Yes, I use the social networking site "Odnoklassniki"	28.4	51.0	43.0	44.6	43.7	33.8	17.2	4.5
Yes, I use the social networking site "Face book"	14.8	34.0	30.7	28.2	22.0	11.3	8.4	1.7
Yes, I use the social networking site "Twitter"	7.9	19.6	13.2	17.6	10.4	7.1	4.6	1.1
Yes, I use another social networking site	2.0	2.0	2.6	2.7	3.4	2.1	2.3	0.3
No, I do not	33.3	4.0	5.3	11.4	25.0	39.1	51.7	46.6
I do not know what it is	7.2	0	0	0	0	3.6	3.8	25.5

Table 20.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (incomplete higher)
Yes, I use the social networking site "VK"	0	5.8	33.5	31.7	37.8
Yes, I use the social networking site "Odnoklassniki"	0	8.3	31.3	33.3	35.4
Yes, I use the social networking site "Face book"	0	1.9	16.8	13.0	25.1
Yes, I use the social networking site "Twitter"	0	1.3	8.0	7.1	14.8
Yes, I use another social networking site	0	0.6	1.6	2.0	0
No, I do not	33.7	44.6	30.2	35.5	29.6
I do not know what it is	53.8	16.7	3.8	2.6	0

Table 20.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	The unemployed, housewives
Yes, I use the social networking site "VK"	40.8	29.1	81.4	1.6	34.4
Yes, I use the social networking site "Odnoklassniki"	39.3	34.9	42.2	3.4	33.7
Yes, I use the social networking site "Face book"	25.3	13.3	33.7	1.3	15.6
Yes, I use the social networking site "Twitter"	12.9	7.7	17.6	1.0	6.7
Yes, I use another social networking site	4.4	1.6	2.0	0	3.3
No, I do not	28.9	32.7	4.0	47.8	25.8
I do not know what it is	0.3	2.6	0	23.8	0

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, I use the social networking site "VK"	33.3	24.6	29.9	26.3	26.3	36.9	24.9
Yes, I use the social networking site "Odnoklassniki"	22.1	17.1	43.9	24.0	29.8	31.3	32.8
Yes, I use the social networking site "Face book"	28.9	15.8	16.4	6.3	8.1	13.1	7.0
Yes, I use the social networking site "Twitter"	17.0	10.5	6.5	1.1	4.5	9.1	2.2
Yes, I use another social networking site	2.7	2.2	4.2	2.3	1.0	1.1	0
No, I do not	45.9	37.3	38.3	29.1	26.8	16.5	30.1
I do not know what it is	4.4	9.6	4.2	5.7	4.0	8.0	14.5

Table 20.5. Depending on the type of settlement

Variant of answer	Type of settlement				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
Yes, I use the social networking site "VK"	33.3	33.1	35.5	27.8	18.3
Yes, I use the social networking site "Odnoklassniki"	22.1	36.1	34.6	23.2	26.4
Yes, I use the social networking site "Face book"	28.9	7.6	18.4	10.4	9.6
Yes, I use the social networking site "Twitter"	17.0	4.8	7.4	4.6	5.9
Yes, I use another social networking site	2.7	1.0	1.1	2.3	2.6
No, I do not	45.9	32.0	23.4	34.5	31.0
I do not know what it is	4.4	4.8	3.5	8.9	12.6

OPEN FORUM

In the "Open Forum" rubric of the given issue of the ISEPS 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.

REAL POLICY AND POLICY OF IMITATION

The issue of introducing the Russian ruble in Belarus is, as the saying goes, "hairy". In the following wording "Do you agree to the Russian ruble, which would be put into circulation by Russia alone, to be the common currency in the Union of Belarus and Russia?" it was first asked in July, 2000. Thirteen years ago the score was 43:30 in favor of the Russian ruble introduction supporters. At that over a fourth of respondents (27%) found it difficult to answer.

In March, 2012 while answering the question "What is your attitude to the idea of Belarus switching over to the Russian ruble?" supporters and opponents of the introduction of the Russian ruble swapped places: for – 30%, against – 42%; 28% treated it with indifference or found it difficult to answer. If desired, one may discern a growth in the national identity of Belarusians in the mentioned reshuffle of public opinion.

Poland

The Poles are to solve the problem of renouncing *their* currency (zloty) and switching over to a *strange* one (euro), too. According to the opinion poll held by the Center of Public Opinion Research (CBOS) in February of the current year, 64% of the Poles argue against the introduction of the euro in the country. Only 29% of the population support introduction of the common European currency.

CBOS researchers asked respondents about the most important, in their opinion, consequences of adopting the European currency in Poland. Among

the three most important ones the Poles named a rise in prices (59%), and an unprofitable zloty-euro exchange rate (36%) most frequently. At that 35% of respondents connect a positive outcome of the euro introduction with simplification of monetary transactions when travelling.

At the same time, 21% of respondents paid attention to Poland's loss of the possibility to pursue an independent financial policy, and 19% named settlement of the risk connected with the change of the zloty rate to the euro. Another 16% of respondents pointed at simplification for businessmen and a speedup of economic growth, and 13% expect an increase in foreign investment in Poland.

Continuing the Polish topic let us mention that among Polish politicians president B. Komorowski enjoys the highest trust rating. In May 66% of respondents declared their benevolence to head of state, which is 4% less than in April (CBOS). Only 15% of respondents declared their distrust in head of the Polish state. Ex-president A. Kwaśniewski (47%) and Sejm deputy R. Kalisz (45%) also found themselves among the rating top three. Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs R. Sikorski and leader of the Democratic Left Alliance ex-Prime Minister L. Miller are also among the top five leaders of people's trust (40% each).

At the same time most respondents do not trust current head of the government of the Republic of Poland D. Tusk. Benevolence to the chairman of the Council of Ministers was expressed by 33% of respondents, and distrust – by 48%. Leader of the biggest opposition party J. Kaczyński "Law and Justice" does not enjoy much support among the population either – he is supported by 33% of the Poles, and 46% do not trust him.

Against the short-list of the Polish politicians singularity of the Belarusian political space looks especially vivid. This is the space where *the only politician* has been dominating for almost twenty years already. Cases when ratings of other highest officials of the state exceeded the statistical error can be counted on the fingers of one hand. The ratings of the most popular political opponents of the Belarusian state's head do not, as a rule, exceed 6%.

What stands behind *the only politician's* dominance in Belarus: his personal charisma or weakness of his opponents not able to reach an agreement among themselves? We suppose the reason for Belarusian singularity should be looked for among objective rather than subjective factors. Policy does not begin with politicians; it begins with a customer whose role can be played only by a political nation.

However, the process of forming a political nation is in the early stage in Belarus. For the first time it became evident during the years of Gorbachev's Perestroika. At some time it even seemed that the "process had moved" so surely and that the point of no return had been passed. As it often happens in history, though, a firm step forward was followed by the same firm steps backwards, and construction of a political nation *from below* was adamantly replaced with construction of a state nation *from above*. A state nation is fully satisfied with *the only politician* in the interior of pseudo-democratic institutions. The Parliament, which is not a place for discussion, is a typical example of such an institution.

In March the trust rating of the opposition political parties made up 13% in Belarus, which can be regarded as another proof of the absence of interest in politics as such in society. However, Poland as distinct from Belarus is a parliamentary republic, not a presidential one; that is why the level of parties support is totally different in society. If parliamentary elections were held in the middle of June, 27% would vote for J. Kaczyński's right conservative party "Law and Justice" (the CBOS June opinion poll). Prime Minister D. Tusk's liberal party "Civic Platform" ruling in Poland would be 4% behind. Two more parliamentary parties would get into the Parliament: the Democratic Left Alliance – 9% and the Polish Peasants' Party – 6%. The present parliamentary political force "Ruch Palikota" (3%) that would not overcome the five-percent electoral threshold, according to the poll returns, would find itself beyond the Sejm.

As for the turnout, electoral activity of the Poles does not differ fundamentally from electoral activity of the Belarusians in parliamentary elections. According to the poll, 54% of respondents expressed a desire to participate in the parliamentary elections, 27% are not planning to vote, and another 19% did not decide what to do.

Ukraine

There is no doubt that the Poles are a political nation, however political passions run high in Ukraine, too. According to the latest opinion poll of

Razumkov's Center, president V. Yanukovich remains the most popular candidate against all odds, even if Y. Timoshenko would go into the election. In this case the incumbent president would receive 23.4% from those who intend to take part in the election, Y. Timoshenko would rank second (16.3%), V. Klichko would get 15.5%, A. Yatsenyuk – 8.4%, O. Tyagnibok – 6.7% of the electors' votes. If Y. Timoshenko were not able to take part in the election, V. Yanukovich would still rank first (23.1%), V. Klichko – second (17.9%), and A. Yatsenyuk – third (15.9%).

If one marks an interval on the political nations' maturity scale restricted by the points "Belarusians" and "Poles", then the point "Ukrainians" will find itself between them, though not in the middle, but closer to the point "Belarusians". It means that politics does exist in Ukraine, but it is unique. Its central element is intra-elite fracas.

Any uniqueness in behavior becomes secured in the language. What, for instance, does "parliamentary party-switching" mean? Let us refer to the article under a catchy heading "The West Bets On Klichko", published in the newspaper "Ukrainian Truth": "In spite of the fact that Yatsenyuk inherited from Timoshenko the main opposition force, it turned out that it had not influenced his personal rating much. Moreover, the rating has been actively destroyed for the last six months thanks to the parliamentary "party-switching" of the people who were entered in the list of "Batktivshchina" by Nikolai Martynenko, who has an absolute impact on Yatsenyuk".

For a Belarusian reader trying to understand such a text of 12 thousand characters is the same as to understand a birch-bark manuscript: "Only Yatsenyuk has party-switchers at the moment", "UDAR" and "Svoboda" keep allegedly aloof now as these are not their party-switchers". Who are "party-switchers"? As it happens, these are the deputies repurchased by the competing factions. The main initiator of such policy is the Presidential Administration, which is not surprising.

However, what is all the fuss over? Over the future of Ukraine? One would like to believe it, but cannot. A battle for "party-switchers" is a battle for distribution of the budget pie among the oligarchic clans. And the Ukrainian Parliament is far from being just a marginal participant in the battle; it is a serious political player.

The most important sociological characteristic of elite is its openness, i.e. public nature of assessing candidates, their activity, income and moral features. In Ukraine a huge step forward has been made in this direction (in comparison with the Soviet period); nevertheless, the most important political decisions are still made behind closed doors.

Let us remind the readers that the main function of elite resides not in governing, but rather in producing moral values, symbols and patterns. That is why a policy based on bald, cynical fight for party-switchers may be followed by society's degradation only. This is exactly what is being observed now.

Lithuania

From Belarus southern neighbor let us turn to the neighbor in the North – to Lithuania, and the Center of Studying the Market and Public Opinion "Vilmorus OOO" will help us do it. In May, in particular, it measured the trust ratings of state and non-governmental institutions. Firemen proved to be without a rival: 87.6% trust them, 2.9% do not! The army is lagging far behind (54.1% and 10.7% respectively), as well as the president (56.5% and 16%), the church (50.2% and 17.3%) and the educational system (42.4% and 14.6%). The list is rounded out by the parliament (8.7% and 58.1%) and ... by political parties (6.3% and 66.8%)! In other words, the former Soviet republic and today's fully legitimate member of the European Union has an altogether Belarusian structure of the institutional trust.

Russia

Let us allude to the opinion of L. Gudkov, director of Levada-Center: "The main thing going on (in Russia) is weakening of the regime's support (for a variety of reasons, including the ever-growing mass realization that power is criminalized). The trend is quite stable. Only within four months of the current year the number of respondents trusting Putin (the question "Name 5-6 politicians you particularly trust") has decreased by 7 points – from 38% in January to 31% in April (in Moscow – 23%, in towns – 36%). If we compare it with the recorded support maximum that falls on the pre-crisis period, then Putin has already lost about half of the resource. The support structure is changing, too: the number of adamant supporters is decreasing (now they make up approximately 15% of the whole population, and I think, the number will not decrease in future any more); the number of those who treat him critically or negatively is growing. In the last months the rate made up 35-36% of the adult population.

There are two types of the discontented. The first type is made up by the liberal part of society, by the representatives of the compact urban class, who have matured to understand the reactionary nature of the regime and the need for institutional reforms. Their proportion is approximately 15-18% of the population. However, a rather large part of the discontented is dispersed on the periphery, and the nature of their discontent is completely different: they are dissatisfied with the state's "discarding" of social obligations. These are pensioners, public sector employees, employees of state enterprises, i.e. the groups dependent on the state, for which the inevitable changes carry a threat of losing their present position and of social degradation.

The mass of discontented citizens will certainly grow. I would estimate its growth threshold (under the present distribution of forces and economic conditions) at 40-45%. It will not grow any more as it is constrained by the mass of laymen grounded to

themselves and estranged from what they call "politics" under the present conditions. This type of people and this type of consciousness exactly are the backbone of Putin's regime. These are the folks indifferent to everything that does not directly concern the circumstances of their existence or conditions of their survival, aloof, impervious to everything apart from the TV entertainments, apolitical, not at all wishing to interfere with anything and justifying such attitude of theirs to the sphere of "common interests" by the concept that people like them are not able to influence anything. Their cunning lies in the following: they do not want to be responsible for anything, and do not want to participate in anything. Even being discontented they will still vote the way it is necessary for the administration, and get very vexed at the opposition.

At the same time tiredness of Putin is accruing, the unwillingness to see him is intensifying. According to the April opinion poll, 55% would not want to see Putin after the year of 2018 at the head of the state; at that 41% would like to see as president a political leader able to offer a policy fundamentally different from Putin's. Only 26% would prefer to keep Putin after 2018, too. Moscow rules the roost here: already 61% of Muscovites would not want to see Putin as president after the next elections. 40% of respondents suppose that the top-down command structure created by him "brought more harm to the country, than use" (32% do not agree with it).

The latest corruption scandals have only intensified the mass presumption of guilt of the leadership. 80% of respondents consider that ceaseless information about the malversation and embezzlement of State property among the highest officialdom testifies to the complete decay of power. These are, generally speaking, fantastic figures already. Assurances that Putin has assumed some firm measures to fight against corruption will lead nowhere, as a powerful paradigm that corruption is the essence of the regime has been formed by the population.

Putin's populist slogans and his populist policy are taken into consideration by public opinion and still work, however with a smaller result. Paternalistic consciousness has not disappeared anywhere: the institutional system reproduces such paradigms and this type of mass illusions, demands and expectations. However, there is less and less faith that Putin exactly can correspond to the expectations. 61% of the Russians agree that the population got tired of waiting that Putin would fulfill his promises and pre-election plans. One should not expect any mass enthusiasm as a respond to new propaganda motions and new national projects any more.

That is why the trust fall trend is extending far into the future. A change in the ideological course, a change in the social policy can hardly overcome it. At the present moment some worsening in social and economic conditions is felt in the polls, and mass anxiety is growing in connection with it, though slightly so far. The inertia of mass conviction that people began to live better under Putin and illusions (especially

in the social gutter, in the province where the improvement was not so considerable) that, perhaps, Putin will manage to restore the growth in the living standards, the trend, which existed from 2002 to 2008 are still preserved".

RELIGION

According to the IISEPS February opinion poll, the proportion of Belarusians who did not attribute themselves to any religion made up 7.5%. According to this rate Belarusians go almost level with the Puritan America where there is only 6% of non-believers (the data of 2005). In Russia 25% do not consider themselves believers (hereinafter the results of the Public Opinion Fund poll of April, 2013 are cited for Russia).

The Orthodox confession in Belarus is beyond competition – 74.2%; 14.7% consider themselves Catholics, 1% – Protestants. In Russia 64% of fellow citizens reckon themselves among Orthodox, 6% – among Muslims, 1% – among other Christian confessions each (Catholics, Protestants, Baptists, Uniates and others) and other religions.

Let us take a closer look at the Orthodox Russians. The POF analysts divided them into 5 types.

The Churched (12% of all the Orthodox). Representatives of this group visit the church once a month and more often, constantly make their communion, pray the church prayers, abide by the morning and evening rule. At that a fourth of them have never opened the New Testament. The core of the Churched is made up by the off-the-job retirees (more exactly, retired women).

The Half-Churched (33% of all the Orthodox). Go to church several times a year, but less frequently than once a month, know church prayers, make their communion once in several months at most, virtually do not observe fasts; about half of them have never read the New Testament. As for the social structure, here the share of non-manual workers is large. Women predominate in this group, too.

Slightly Churched (31% of all the Orthodox). These people go to church 1-2 times a year, seldom make their communion (64% have never done it), and do not observe fasts. Representatives of this group do not virtually differ from the rest of the population according to their socio-demographic characteristics.

Weakly Churched (16% of all the Orthodox) and **very weakly churched** (8% of all the Orthodox). They go to church very seldom, do not observe fasts; an overwhelming majority among them has never opened the New Testament, and if they pray, they use their prayers, not the church ones. There are much more men in these groups than in the rest of them.

The poll of POF duplicated the research conducted in the USA in 2005 (*The poll was held in August, 2005 by Newsweek Magazine together with Beliefnet. <http://www.beliefnet.com/News/2005/08/Newsweekbeliefnet-Poll-Results.aspx>*). When the results of the two polls are compared a different than in Russia type of

piousness is seen in America with the naked eye. First of all, an overwhelming majority of Americans are Protestants – 68%, approximately a fifth (22%) – Catholics. However, the main difference is revealed when answers of believers to the questions about faith and religion are being analyzed.

The first question sounded as follows: "What do you think is the most important purpose of a prayer?" In Russia people more often see a means of asking for help for themselves in a prayer, and only then – a means to thank God, to get instructions how to lead a righteous life. In the American poll the answer "to ask for help for oneself" ranks last. It seems that the purpose of a prayer for the Russians is, in the first place, pragmatic and selfish.

When answering the question: "What does your faith give you, in the first place?" the Russians more often mention that religion assigns their life a meaning and a purpose (21%). For the Americans their faith helps them, first of all, to open up personal relations with God (39%). Only 6% of the Russians chose that position.

POF sociologists explain the revealed difference in the following way. For Americans faith is an aspect of partnership with God. Faith helps to establish relationship with him. Any personal relations presuppose mutual accountability. Besides, it is impossible to establish personal relationship with something abstract. God turns out to be personified, even if he is a higher being. If one considers how communication with God is interpreted by believers in Russia, the model here is more likely paternalistic: I am asking God for help, but he is unreachable for me, I do not seek any personal relations, mutual accountability; it is enough for me that he exists. God is transcendental. It means communication requires an intermediary, and only the church can act as such.

Devoutness of a considerable part of Orthodox believers is limited to the ritual constituent. It follows from the statistics of reading the Scriptures (52% of the Orthodox have never opened them) best of all. It is interesting that among the Orthodox only 57% believe that the Universe was created by God, and 43% – that the soul goes either to heaven or to hell after death. A fourth of the Orthodox, following the Hindu tradition, believe in reincarnation, and the churched ones believe that aliens came to the Earth and contacted people more often than others.

The corresponding questions were not asked in Belarus, but it can be ascertained with high probability that answers of the Belarusians would not basically differ from the answers of the Russians, as the two "fraternal peoples" belong to the same civilization – the Eastern Church civilization. Its backbone is made up by a different social type of man who developed practically beyond the three great European phenomena: the Renaissance, Reformation and Enlightenment.

Table 1

The level of economic problems topicality depending on the type of the country, %

Type of problem	Type of country	
	Developed	Developing
Unemployment	68	91
Price surge	57	88
Gap between the rich and the poor	53	74
National debt	61	71

ECONOMY

Cross-country research of the Pew Research Center revealed that in consequence of the world crisis residents of developed and developing countries all of a sudden changed places. The rich lost their faith in themselves and their future, although they did not grow much poorer. And the poor from developing countries suddenly believed in themselves and now look to the future with obvious optimism.

The Spanish, Italians, French rich by the world standards, do not believe in their own future any more, do not believe that their children will live better than they do; do not believe in the national economy. And the poor Chinese, Brazilians and Hindus believe in all that and believe strongly. Russia finds itself somewhere in the middle together with Turkey and Argentina: these countries' economies are developing, but their pessimism is well developed at a good European level.

On average, 53% of developing countries' residents say that the national economy of their countries is in good trim. In developed countries there are 24% of such respondents (in 2007 – 44%). The Chinese are the most satisfied ones with the situation in the national economy – among them 88% are contented with the situation in the economy. Then come Malaysia with 85% and Brazil with 85%. At that in both countries the sentiment has appreciably improved after the crisis. In Russia 33% are positive that things are going well in the economy against 38% before the crisis.

A real collapse in sentiment happened in Spain: before the crisis in 2007 65% of respondents estimated the economy's condition as good against 4% in 2013; in Great Britain 69% against 15% respectively. The course pursued by the country is not liked by 97% of the Greeks, 96% of the Italians and 94% of the Spanish. In China 85% of the population are satisfied with the country's course. They are followed by the Malaysians with 82%. In Russia 37% of the population are satisfied with the course the country is pursuing, and 57% are not.

Respondents were asked which of the four problems – inflation, economic growth, growth in inequality and growth in the national debt – worries them most of all. Two thirds of respondents in the majority of the world countries are sure that the price surge and unemployment prevent them from living well.

Unemployment bothers 87% of the residents of South Africa, 85% of the Venezuelans, 82% of the

Mexicans, as well as 99% of the Greeks, 97% of the Italians, 94% of the Spanish, and 80% of the French. The price surge bothers residents of developing countries. In Europe mostly residents of the South worry about it; inflation scares 94% of the Greeks.

Comparative assessments given in Table 1 should be recognized as unexpected: a high level of economic problems' topicality in developing countries is able to combine with the population's high optimism level.

People in developed countries are sure that the government should deal with unemployment in the first place. In Russia, as it should be in a developing country, 33% of respondents believe that the government must first of all fight against the rise in prices, 15% think that it is necessary to fight against unemployment, and 14% – against the growth in inequality.

In developed countries only every fourth respondent hopes that the economic situation will change for the better within the next year. The Americans are the most optimistic ones (44%); they are followed by the Japanese and residents of South Korea – 40% each. In Greece there are more pessimists than anywhere else – 64%. In developing countries people are disposed more optimistically: in China the share of optimists makes up 80%, in Brazil – 79%. The Russians are the most pessimistic ones in this group of countries: only 24% of the Russians wait that the situation in the economy will improve within the next year.

80% of the polled residents in developed countries are sure that the gap has considerably grown in the last five years. First of all Europeans believe in it, e.g. 90% of the Spanish and 88% of the Germans. The Malaysians worry about inequality least of all (41%). The Russians found themselves in the middle – 59%.

For whom is the economic system just? In the opinion of 95% of the Greeks – "only for the rich", merely 4% of Hellas inhabitants believe in its justice "for everyone". The most just economy is created by the Australians: "only for the rich" – 44%, "for everyone" – 51%. Australia is the only country where the answer "for everyone" was chosen by more than half of respondents. Among developing countries Chile (86% vs. 12%) and South Africa (64% vs. 30%) found themselves in the utmost positions. Russia has 78% and 13% respectively.

Many respondents consider economic mobility to be the remedy for inequality. In many countries of OECD there is low economic mobility among generations – children's salaries are lower than their par-

ents' salaries. Only the countries of the European North, as well as Australia and Canada, became an exception. Two thirds of the developed countries' residents are sure that the economic situation in their children's life will be worse than in their parents'. The Russians seem optimists against such background: every fourth respondent thinks that the life of the children will be worse than the life of the parents.

Belarus did not get into the study of the Pew Research Center. However, the Belarusians considerably outstrip the Russians according to the pessimism level after the man-made economic crisis of 2011. It is enough to remind the readers that in March, 2013 64.8% of respondents agreed that the country's economy was in crisis.

BOOKSHELF

"Tożsamości zbiorowe Białorusinów", ed. Ryszard Radzik. – Lublin, UMCS, 2012, 423 pp.,

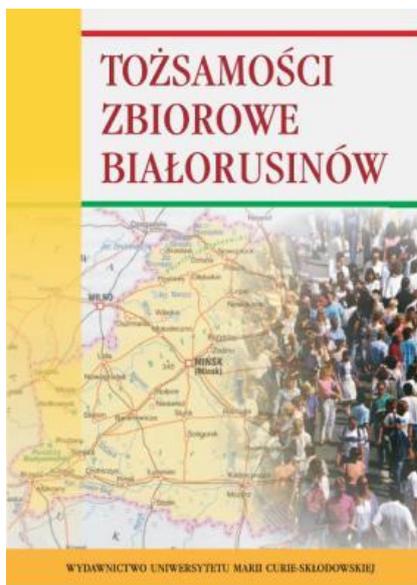
Ryszard Radzik. "Białorusini – między Wschodem a Zachodem". – Lublin, UMCS, 2012, 262 pp.

Belarusian Identity if the Focus of International Experts

Two important books concerning modern Belarusian identity published recently by Maria Curie Skłodowska University Press confirm a strong position of Lublin as an academic centre of Belarusian studies. Apart from their subject matter, there is also a personal connection: Ryszard Radzik, a leading authority in the field, is the editor of one and author of the other. Significantly, both publications make an extensive use of surveys conducted and published by the Independent Institute of Socio-Economic and Political Studies (IISEPS), which certainly confirms a status this independent public opinion research centre has achieved over two decades of its activity.

Tożsamości zbiorowe Białorusinów (Belarusian collective identities) is a volume of eleven articles revolving around, or specifically focusing on, Belarusian identity issues, mainly national and ethnic identity. The editor has successfully brought together an impressive group of specialists from Belarus, Poland, the USA, Ukraine and the Czech Republic. The collection includes texts by authors from different countries, representing different traditions of thought and schools of research, which gives a broad spectrum of problems and approaches to the past and present of Belarusian social identity.

The book opens with two texts providing a general overview of the issue of national identity. In the first one, Oleg Manaev, the founder and long-time director of the IISEPS, and Yuri Drakokhrust, a foreign correspondent for Radio Svaboda, focus on features of Belarusian national identity today, basing their con-



clusions on representative Belarusian public opinion surveys conducted by the IISEPS in the last fifteen years. Structural features under consideration involve emotional, cognitive, behavioural, and motivational components shaped by geographical, historical, cultural, psychological and linguistic factors. The article includes a very interesting set of tables presenting survey results which indicate patterns of correlation between the socio-demographic profile of respondents and their perception of their national identity (based on their responses to questions that included negatively marked identity features and components discussed in the article, such as taking pride in being

Belarusian). Concluding their analysis, the authors suggest that Belarusian national identity today is shaped by a political factor rather than geographical, historical, cultural (linguistic) or psychological ones. The attitude to Lukashenka has become "the touchstone of identity" of Belarusian people. An embodiment of attitudes and values of a larger (and conservative) part of the Belarusian society, the president ignores or marginalizes the values of its smaller (but more dynamic) part and limits their prospects (p. 44).

In the second introductory text, Grigory Ioffe, an American academic, concentrates on the historical background of Belarusian national identity and Belarusian national mythologies today. As put forward by the author, the latter include three major projects: native and pro-European, liberal and pro-Moscow, and, finally, a creole identity based on a pre-national awareness which is a "peculiar extrapolation of the "local" identity" (p. 92).

The remaining articles address more detailed questions, focusing on particular aspects of Belarusian identity, and usually adopting an empirical approach. Nina Miechkovskaia, a professor of linguistics at the Belarusian State University in Minsk, discusses the question of the Belarusian and Russian language as an identity factor. Olga Breskaya, a sociologist from Brest, writes on Belarusian religious identity and Katarzyna Waszczyńska, an ethnologist from Warsaw University, concentrates on the national identity of the people of Brest and its environs. Historical identity is the focus of texts by Andrej Kazakievič, director of the Institute of Political Studies, and Volha Hush-

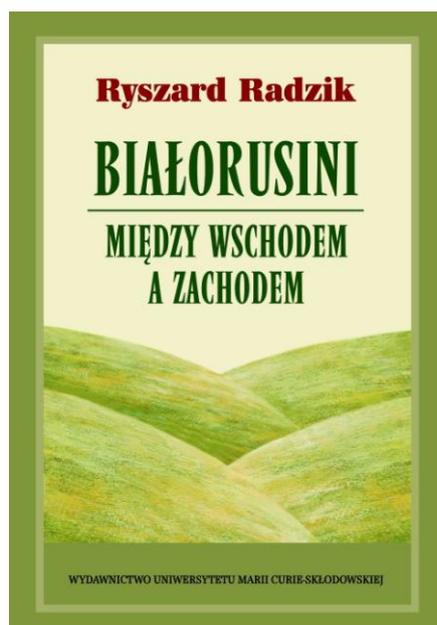
chava, a sociolinguist from the Belarusian State University. Drawing on her long-ranging ethnographical studies, Anna Engelking, director of the Institute of Slavic Studies, Polish Academy of Sciences, analyses the identity of Belarusian *kolkhoz* people at the turn of the XXI century, which is situated "between the Jew and the landlord". Nelly Bekus-Goncharova, a Minsk-born Belarusian, doctor of philosophy and sociology, currently working at Warsaw University, presents her own vision of Belarusian nation and its identity.

The last two articles, by Mykola Ryabchuk, a Ukrainian scholar and intellectual working at the Ukrainian Centre for Cultural Studies, and by Miloš Řezník, a Czech historian and co-chair of the German-Czech Historical Commission, offer a comparison between Belarusian, Ukrainian and Czech identity. Both texts attempt to pinpoint the underlying elements of the differences they observe, including historical factors.

Quite obviously, the volume presents different views on the nature of Belarusian collective identities and different opinions concerning the stage of their development, especially with regard to national identity. The publication can be treated as a starting point for a wider, not only academic, discussion on the issue.

The other book under discussion, *Białorusini – między Wschodem a Zachodem* (Belarusians: Between the West and the East), also addresses issues of Belarusian collective identities today. In one of the chapters, the author observes that:

An overall analysis of Belarusian society of the last few decades will benefit from making a distinction between certain major types of collective identity, presented here in an idealistic simplification. Leaving aside West Russian identity which goes back to the Russian Empire, the two extremes of the scale would be Soviet West Russian identity and nationalist identity of the occidental type. What is left between them could be distinguished as two types: anational Soviet



collective identity (based on class ideology and practically non-existent in its pure form at any time or location, but rather superimposed on a certain culture or ethnic and national structures) and a real social phenomenon of post-Soviet West Russian identity. ... In Belarusian social reality these types go beyond their core characteristics, become blurred and tend to overlap. (p. 198)

The quote can be seen as an important element of a theoretical framework underlying more detailed studies throughout the volume. Indeed, Ryszard Radzik points to historical factors that confirm this typology and presents his deeper analyses of the formative process of modern Belarusian

nation and society. These subjects are discussed in the opening chapter and are the main focus of the first two parts of the volume. In "An unknown neighbour. In lieu of an introduction" the author answers the questions why Poland and the West know so very little about Belarus and how Poles see Belarusians, and outlines the core elements that make Belarusians socially and culturally distinct. "The rise of a nation", the first part of the book, presents the emergence of Belarusian national community in the context of a similar process in selected Central-Eastern European societies, and considers civilisational, cultural and political factors involved. The second part ("Belarusianness in literature and publicist writings") studies the emergence of modern Belarusianness in the context of literary works that are crucial to an understanding of Belarusian identity and mentality, such as *Novaya zyamlya* (A new land) by Yakub Kolas and *Tuteyshya* (The locals) by Yanka Kupala. Further on, the author analyses texts published in *Nasha Niva* (Our land) between 1906 and 1915 and reconstructs historical visions of Belarusian identity and perceptions of the concept of nation.

The third part is the main and the largest one in the volume (six chapters: "Belarusian cultural and civilisational identity", "Two visions. Between the Soviet and Belarusian history", "Belarusian identities. Between the Russian, the Soviet and the national", "What future for Belarus? An analysis of identity issues", "Is Belarus a part of Europe?", "What are we like? Intellectuals on their visions of culture, nation and society"). Almost all of them are devoted to the issues of Belarusian society today (1991-2012). Apart from historical arguments mentioned above, this part of the book also considers the results of ethnographical and linguistic field studies and, most importantly, sociological surveys conducted by the author himself or by other specialists and research centres, mainly the IISEPS. In Ryszard Radzik's analyses this kind of data are often used to offer a general picture and a

synthetic overview of problems under consideration, as illustrated by the fragment quoted above.

It remains to be added that some of the texts appear in print for the first time. Those previously published as articles or presented as conference papers have mostly been changed or enlarged for the purposes of the book. As noted by the author himself, the volume can be treated as a continuation of his

earlier *Kim są Białorusini?* (Who are Belarusians?), (Toruń: Wydawnictwo Adam Marszałek, 2002, 2003, 2004).

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Analytic Bulletin of the Independent Institute of Socio-Economic and Political Studies

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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
www.iiseps.org
ISSN 1822-5535
ISSN 1822-5543 (on line)
250 copies

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