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Dear readers!

In the 70th issue (a respectable age for a quarterly periodical in Belarusian conditions!) of the analytical bulletin "IISEPS News" we offer to your attention materials reflecting the most interesting results of Institute's work in the fourth quarter of 2013.

Our surveys show that the unstable character of **Belarusians' "economic well-being"** became even more noticeable in the fourth quarter after its return in autumn after the spring-summer period of stabilization. Thus, noticeably decreased the ratio of those whose financial standing became better over the last three months to those whose financial standing became worse. The number of Belarusians, who consider Belarusian economy in crisis, increased by more than 11%, despite a certain increase of real incomes. The level of optimism for the future decreased even more. Personal experience leads more and more people to understanding of the essence of the "Belarusian model". For example, according to 28.7% of respondents "without the help of Russia there would be no progress in the Belarusian economy", and 34.1% of respondents consider that "there is no progress in the Belarusian economy". Eventually the number of those who think that "in general the state of things in our country is developing in the right direction" decreases more and more in comparison with those who give the opposite answer, just like in the crisis year 2011.

The worsening of the "economic well-being" of Belarusians inevitably influenced their **attitude to the state power**. Thus, there is a considerable decrease of the level of trust to all state institutes. What's even more important, these moods are spreading on the head of state, just like after the socio-economic crisis in 2011. People disagreed with almost all of the most important A. Lukashenko's statements on the socio-economic state of the country made recently. The growing discontent with the socio-economic policy of the President starts to apply to the attitude towards him. For the first time since December 2011 the number of respondents, who consider that life in Belarus will get better after his demission, exceeded the number of those who share the counter-opinion. For the first time over the year the number of those who don't trust the President exceeded the number of those who trust him. And the most important – the electoral rating of A. Lukashenko started to decrease considerably for the first time since August 2012: while in September 42.6% of respondents were ready to vote for him, today the number is only 34.8%.

How much does the worsening of the "economical well-being" and of the attitude to the state power increase the readiness for changes, including the support to opposition? From the one hand, the number of those who consider themselves in opposition to the present power increased considerably, from the other hand the growth of popular discontent still doesn't lead to supporting the opposition. Electoral ratings of oppositional parties and their leader do not increase and for some of them even decrease. A noticeable increase of rating is observed only for the leader of the civil campaign "Tell the Truth" V. Neklyayev. As for the elections to the local Councils, only 44% of respondents are going to vote on them despite the evident decrease of their role in the social and political process. Only 30.2% of them are going to vote for the candidates supporting A. Lukashenko, almost 22% – for the candidates opposing him, and 34.4% – for "other candidates".

What concerns the **foreign-policy orientation** of Belarusians, there is a thaw in the relations to Europe and a cold snap in relations to Russia. This process is not so evident and needs further investigation if we keep in mind the deep cultural and historical communion of Belarusians and Russians and the limited experience of communication with European culture. For example, the cold snap happened despite the fact that most Belarusians clearly understand the benefits of cooperation with the Eastern neighbor. Probably this is due to the way Belarusian state propaganda has presented the intergovernmental relations and the most important events of the neighboring country recently. At the same time the rapprochement initiatives of the European Union are perceived in a positive way by a lot of Belarusians. This is true for the attitude of Belarusians to the "East Partnership" summit in Vilnius and for the recent statement of the Polish ambassador that his country is "ready not only to reduce the cost of the visa, but to cancel completely entrance visas for Belarusians; and the solution to this question depends only on the Belarusian authorities, who have to sign a special agreement with the EU".

As usual, those readers who are more interested in our figures than in our assessments can analyze the research results on their own. The results are presented by the main socio-demographic characteristics.

In our "Open Forum" rubric we present the most interesting results of work of our colleagues from neighboring countries. In the "Bookshelf" rubric the famous Belarusian political analyst Vladimir Podgol introduces the book of the Young Front movement leader Zmitser Dashkevich. The recent political prisoner reveals the specific character of the Belarusian society through the prism of his experience as a prisoner.

As usual, your feedback and comments are welcome!

IISEPS Board

MONITORING OF PUBLIC OPINION IN BELARUS

In December of 2013 independent sociologists have conducted the nation opinion poll (those face-to-face interviewed are 1.502 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.

DECEMBER – 2013

Another start of the negative trend

All three social indices (the financial standing index (FSI), the expectation index (EI) and the policy correctness index (PCI)) decreased considerably in December in comparison with September (Table 1-3). The FSI decreased by 5.8 points, the EI – by 12.5 points, the PCI – by 14.6 points. An insignificant decrease of social indices was recorded in September as well, but that change didn't allow to make up a conclusion about a new trend in the change of public opinion. Today we can state this negative trend with confidence.

PCI turned out to be the top-decreasing index. It decreased by 14.6 points and this decrease allowed it to come right up to the EI in absolute values. This is the key insight. As a rule authoritative leaders' electoral rating is higher than the share of respondents who agree with the policy of country's development. This difference is provided by the sacral constituent

of the rating. The policy of development can be wrong, but the leader doesn't bear responsibility for it. Those are enemies, both internal and external, who are responsible for this.

The concurrence (within the statistical error) of the electoral rating of A. Lukashenko (34.8% in December) and of the share of respondents who agree with the course of country's development is the signal about exhaustion of the sacral constituent of the rating. Therefore it is not surprising that when at the peak of economic crisis in 2011 the public opinion considered the head of state responsible for the worsening of the financial standing.

Average annual values of social indices are given in Table 4. During the years of presidential elections (2006 and 2010) they, naturally, reached maxima. This is the logic of political and economic cycles. However the values of all three social indices in 2010 were significantly lower than in 2006. There is a fundamental reason behind this difference – the exhaus-

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	03'13	06'13	09'13	12'13
It has improved	24.9	1.6	13.3	13.7	11.6	12.6
It has not changed	57.7	23.2	56.4	63.1	63.9	58.1
It has become worse	16.0	73.4	28.7	21.6	21.6	28.4
FSI*	8.9	-71.8	-15.4	-7.9	-10.0	-15.8

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

Table 2

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

Variant of answer	12'10	06'11	03'13	06'13	09'13	12'13
It is going to improve	30.6	11.9	15.3	17.7	17.5	12.5
It is not going to change	40.7	20.3	44.7	49.1	46.7	46.1
It is going to become worse	17.2	55.5	27.3	23.7	28.1	35.9
EI*	13.4	-43.6	-12.0	-6.0	-10.6	-23.1

* Expectation index

tion of internal resources of the Belarusian model created under the leadership of A. Lukashenko, the exhaustion of all its components – economic, political and social.

The majority of Belarusians associated the crisis of 2009 to external reasons therefore the decrease of the FSI wasn't accompanied by a decrease of EI and PCI (see the fourth column of Table 4). In the year of the fourth presidential election the FSI returned to the pre-crisis level. But the artificial crisis of 2011 introduced qualitative changes into the perception of reality by Belarusians, and that, in particular, resulted in the transition of PCI to a negative area. On the time line between 2005 and 2011 nothing like this was ever observed.

that couldn't but influence the information policy of state mass media. One thing is to criticize America for inability to maintain stability of the global financial system, and absolutely another – to criticize own employer (the head of state) for the triple devaluation of national currency.

But the gap between the reality on TV and the reality behind the window has its limits. In 2011 these limits were more than surpassed. Hence the growth of negative estimations.

The socio-demographic portraits of Belarusians, who estimated the year 2013 in opposite ways, differ slightly. The year was successful for 47.2% of men and for 49.9% of women, for 53.4% of young people of the age of 18-29 years and for 49.3% of people of

Table 3

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

Variant of answer	12'10	09'11	03'13	06'13	09'13	12'13
In the right direction	54.2	17.0	34.5	39.6	39.1	31.9
In the wrong direction	32.5	68.5	51.4	45.5	46.7	54.1
DA/NA	13.3	14.5	14.1	14.9	14.2	14.0
PCI*	21.7	-51.5	-16.9	-5.9	-7.6	-22.2

* Policy correctness index

Table 4

Dynamics of social indices, %

Index	Year:							
	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
FSI	10	-5	-10	-34	-4	-49	-16	-15
EI	32	-5	1	1	11	-29	-9	-13
PCI	28	18	15	14	18	-29	-16	-13

From the dynamics of social indices shown in Table 4 follows that in 2014 a growth of anxious moods in the Belarusian society can be expected with a big share of probability. The power has practically no more internal resources to change the negative trend. The sole hope for the power is an increasing number of grants from "our Russia".

A successful year for young and old

The truth comes through comparison. The data of Tables 5-6 give us this opportunity. The year with the unlucky number, the third year of the fourth five-year period, according to a half of respondents, was "the same, as the previous one" for Belarus, and this allowed the decrease of the level of positive and negative evaluations in comparison with 2012.

The global financial crisis of 2009 influenced negative estimations of Belarus (+8.6 points), but practically didn't affect individual negative estimations (+2 points). This asymmetry is the evidence of a gap between the reality formed by mass media and the reality given to people in experience.

The crisis of 2011, unlike the crisis of 2009, was caused not by external, but by internal reasons, and

the retirement age (60 years and more), for 55.8% of Belarusians with primary education and for 53.1% of Belarusians with higher education. The negative estimations of people of the middle age (30-39 years) and of people with secondary education somewhat "necked down"– 46.2% and 44.4% respectively. But as it was sung in an old Soviet song, younger people have all the doors open, while elder people are held in high esteem. Therefore those who are not young already and not old yet have certain problems, both with the choice of a door, and with getting the esteem.

In 2009 with a similar level of positive estimations, the socio-demographic portrait of successful Belarusians was practically the same. But the estimations' weak dependency on social and demographic characteristics doesn't mean a lack of dependency on political preferences of Belarusians. In Belarus fortune smiles more often at those who trust A. Lukashenko: 57.1% – trust, 40.8% – don't trust (2013); 53.3% – trust, 39.5% – don't trust (2009).

In five years Belarusians survived two financial and economic crises and lived in the expectation of the third one during all the second half of 2013. Its probability, according to independent economists, is

Table 5

Dynamics of answering the question: "Was the past year more difficult or easier for Belarus than the previous one?", %

Variants of answer	12'08	12'09	12'11	12'12	12'13
More difficult	42.8	52.4	74.7	41.0	38.6
The same	44.6	38.3	21.6	41.8	50.4
Easier	7.7	7.6	2.5	14.0	10.1
DA/NA	4.9	1.7	1.2	3.2	0.9

Table 6

Dynamics of answering the question: "Was the past year successful or unsuccessful personally for you?", %

Variants of answer	12'08	12'09	12'11	12'12	12'13
Successful	46.3	48.2	33.0	44.0	48.7
Unsuccessful	33.1	35.1	45.9	35.8	35.7
DA/NA	20.6	16.7	21.1	20.2	15.6

Table 7

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

Variant of answer	09'11	12'11	03'12	06'12	09'12	03'13	06'13	09'13	12'13
Yes	87.6	81.5	77.2	71.7	64.1	64.8	59.8	57.4	68.6
No	8.0	8.0	15.1	21.5	23.8	24.6	29.5	32.4	22.2
DA/NA	4.4	10.5	7.7	6.8	12.1	10.6	10.7	10.2	9.2

quite high. A. Lukashenko confirms this indirectly by constantly emphasizing the fact that the main task of the government for 2014 is to maintain the financial stability.

The guilty one will become the saviour

Within the general tendency to the worsening of social well-being the share of respondents who answered positively to the following question increased: "Do you think that Belarusian economy is in crisis?" (Table 7). The increase amounts to 11.2 points at once. During two years the feeling of economic crisis in Belarusian society was constantly decreasing: from 87.6% in September 2011 to 57.4% in September 2013 (–29.8 points!)

The responsibility for the changing of the two-year trend should be conferred on the real wages (i.e. taking into consideration the consumer price index on goods and services). Its increase was replaced by a decrease. In September it decreased by 4.7% in comparison with August. In October it didn't change in comparison with September, but in November it decreased in comparison with October by 3.9%.

The wages or, more specifically, its dynamics has always been the primary factor forming the social moods in Belarus. Hence the maniacal tendency of the country's leadership to increase the wages even at the price of misbalancing the economy. This particularly led to the triple devaluation of Belarusian ruble in 2011.

While increasing the wages power is aiming not to violate the principle of social justice. In Belarus the statistical factor of the social stratification (the Gini

coefficient) is at a quite low level by European standards. In 2011 it amounted to 26.5 (in Norway – 23.5, in Russia – 43).

But the manpower outflow forces to increase the wages; and this process is uneven: in the first place the wages are increased in those branches, where the workers actively go to bordering countries to earn more money. That is why in November 2013 in comparison with November 2012 the general change of the real wages amounted to 108.9%, while in building industry it amounted to 114.2% and in public health service – to 105.6%. The anti-leader is the transport and transportation equipment manufacturing – only 92.9%!

In spite of the growth of negative moods in society, the distribution of the evaluations of progress of Belarusian economy hasn't changed a lot (Table 8). Optimists sharing the official point of view are a minority as usual. Among the respondents who trust A. Lukashenko, the share of those who believe in the internal reasons of economy progress amounts to 57.3%, amount those who don't trust him, the share amounts to 13.7%.

The stability of the distribution of answers to the question of Table 8 is probably due to the fact that the ratio of supporters and opponents of the head of state in December 2013 is almost equal to the same ratio in December 2012: 37.7% vs. 47.5% and 39.1% vs. 49.1% respectively. And the long-term experience of independent social studies in Belarus testifies that this ratio is the main factor influencing the distribution of answers on politically charged questions.

In the country, where there is only one politician for 9.4 million citizens, the search for the person re-

Table 8

Dynamics of answering the question: "There are different opinions concerning the progress of Belarusian economy model. Which one do you agree to?", %

Variant of answer	12'12	12'13
There is no progress in the Belarusian economy	33.7	34.1
Without the help of Russia there would be no progress in the Belarusian economy	28.4	28.7
the progress of the Belarusian economy is explained by internal reasons; Russian aid is an important but not a decisive factor	28.1	30.5
DA/NA	9.8	6.7

Table 9

Dynamics of answering the question: "Who is responsible for the present crisis in Belarus?", %
(more than one answer is possible)

Variant of answer	09'11	12'11	03'12	12'12	12'13
The President	61.2	53.7	48.6	41.0	45.0
The government	41.3	44.6	46.6	39.1	42.0
The USA	16.3	13.8	12.8	14.5	15.5
Europe	12.0	11.9	16.0	10.9	11.8
Parliament	11.9	19.5	17.4	17.2	19.6
People	10.0	10.9	9.9	8.7	16.3
Russia	7.3	12.6	6.2	7.5	6.6
Opposition	5.0	8.8	6.4	11.5	13.1
DA	13.4	16.1	10.1	11.5	8.6

Table 10

Dynamics of answering the question: "On whom do you most of all pin your hopes for the economic recovery of Belarus?", % (more than one answer is possible)

Variant of answer	03'12	12'12	12'13
On the president	35.9	34.1	36.8
On Russia	25.2	24.0	27.8
On businessmen	24.7	28.8	25.7
On the government	19.9	20.0	21.3
On the West	19.7	20.7	22.7
On the executives of government enterprises	12.3	19.4	16.0
On the opposition	8.6	8.6	9.0
On trade unions	3.0	5.0	4.3

sponsible for the growth of negative tendencies is not a problem since long ago (Table 9). At the peak of the crisis of 2011 the margin between A. Lukashenko and the government amounted to 19.9 points. In December 2012, when the electoral rating of the head of state was growing, the margin dropped to 1.9 points. Today, when the rating is decreasing once more, the margin started to grow again (3 points).

The third place (note the huge margin) of the parliament can be explained not by its effective work, but by its insignificance for the Belarusian model.

The data in Table 9 are ranked by the first column where people as an entity responsible for the economic crisis, occupy the third place from the bottom. But after two years people climbed to the fourth place and left behind all external entities. It's not improbable that this dynamics is caused by the more and more frequent accusations actively made by the head of state.

Unfortunately, the question "On whom do you most of all pin your hopes for the economic recovery

of Belarus?" (Table 10) wasn't present in 2011. But there were no significant changes in the anti-crisis hopes of Belarusians since March 2012. All the entities maintained their positions in the list, both in absolute and relative terms.

The intensification of negative aspirations in society is evident. Still the present state of the economy differs distinctly from its state in 2011, and it differs for the better. Hence the considerable difference in the answers on the question of Table 11. As anyone can see the share of reform supporters decreased by 7.3 points in a year – from 67% to 59.7%. Among the respondents trusting A. Lukashenko the share of reform supporters decreased by 8.6 points, while among the respondents not trusting him – only by 4.7 points. And the share of respondents who had difficulties answering the question decreased more in the first group: 6.3 vs. 1.9 points. This signifies that the crisis not only contributes to the growth of demand of reforms, but also increases the uncertainty of public opinion.

Table 11

Distribution of the answers to the question: "Do you consider it important to carry out market-type reforms in Belarus?", %

Variant of answer	12'11			12'13		
	All respondents	Attitude towards A. Lukashenko		All respondents	Attitude towards A. Lukashenko	
		Trust	Don't trust		Trust	Don't trust
Yes	67.0	54.4	75.5	59.7	45.8	70.8
No	16.5	23.3	14.2	27.8	38.2	20.8
DA/NA	16.5	22.3	10.3	12.5	16.0	8.4

Table 12

Dependency of the media trust level on the age, %

Age (years)	18-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 +
State media	24.6	22.1	22.9	36.2	49.1
Non-state media	48.9	46.4	44.6	41.7	25.4

Table 13

Dynamics of the real people's incomes of (RPI) (as percentage of the previous year's values) and of the average annual value of President Lukashenko's electoral rating (PLER)

Year	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
RPI	114	128	104	104	110	118	118	113	113	103	115	99	121	117*
PLER	36	41	30	29	39	47	55	46	41	41	45	29	32	38

* January-October

The group of supporters of the head of state consists mainly of social groups whose incomes are directly determined by the state (the so-called "budget-getters"). In these social groups women, low-educated people and pensioners prevail. The latter are inclined to change their attitude to the reforms more than others: in December 2011 market-type reforms were supported by 59.6% of people aged 60 years and more and by 71.8% of people aged 18-29 years; the ration in December 2013 is as follows: 37.2% and 69.7% respectively. The share of reform supporters in the eldest age group decreased by 22.4 points, while in the youngest one – only by 2.1 points. Taking into consideration the high share of pensioners in Belarusian society it's not difficult to understand the mood swings of the social opinion, which are documented in the context of growing economic instability.

The state propaganda in Belarus aims at influencing the whole society, but manages to do it only within the groups of budget-getters. The data of Table 12 is the confirmation for this. While in the youngest age group the level of trust to state mass media is two-times lower in comparison with non-state mass media, the ratio for the eldest age group is inverse.

That is why the share of positive answers to the question "According to the National Bank there is a significant growth of purchasing of foreign currencies by the citizens. In view of the aforesaid A. Lukashenko stated: "If you are going to run all day long from one exchange office to another and buy foreign currency, you yourself will lead to the weaken-

ing of the national currency". Do you agree with that?" amounted to 24.6% in the youngest age group and to 57.4% in the eldest one (while there were 34.7% of positive answers and 61.3% of negative answers in general).

Judging by the planned for 2014 growth of incomes, which is quite low by Belarusian standards, the feeling of crisis intensification will increase. At what rate? The answer to this question depends mainly on the state of economy, which in its turn, is a derivative of the level of Russian grants.

The second advent of the "new majority"?

Reserves for the growth of A. Lukashenko's electoral rating are sweepingly decreasing judging by the results of December survey. The rating steadily increased from September 2011 to September 2013, and gained altogether 22.1 points – from 20.5% to 42.6% (the decrease by 4.8 points in June 2012 should be regarded as an exception proving the rule). But the decrease by 7.8 points at once in December down to 34.8% should rather be called an implosion. The same rate of the state of head's electoral rating decrease was regarded in 2011. But at the time it had not been decreasing in the splendid isolation, but following the decrease of the national currency known officially as "Belarusian ruble" and unofficially as "hares".

There is nothing of the kind today. Even if the "hare" is "pawing nervously the ground", he's still not "galloping down the slope". Thus, the dynamics of the

Table 14

Dynamics of answering the question: "Do you trust the president of Belarus?", %

Variant of answer	11'06	12'10	09'11	03'13	06'13	09'13	12'13
I trust him	60.3	55.0	24.5	43.4	48.9	46.7	37.7
I don't trust him	26.0	34.1	62.0	43.2	40.6	36.7	47.5
DA/NA	13.7	10.9	13.5	13.4	10.5	16.7	14.8

Table 15

Dynamics of answering the question: "What is in your opinion the political strategy of the country leaders headed by President Alexander Lukashenko?", % (more than one answer is possible)

Variant of answer	Belarus	Russia*
To remain in power and to control the situation in the country as long as possible	36.0	24
To maintain public order and political stability	25.3	21
To improve progressively the quality of life of citizens	22.6	16
To continue the modernization of the country	15.3	14
There is no strategy at all	22.5	16
30	2.3	10

* Data from "Levada-center" (November 2013)

electoral rating has outdone the ruble exchange rate dynamics. This is a new situation. If it is able to turn into a new trend is something we're going to learn in the incoming year.

If we pass from the December electoral rating of A. Lukashenko to its average value in 2013 (Table 13), we won't see any occasions for emotional feelings – either merry or sad (this is a matter of taste). The real incomes of Belarusians in January-October increased by 17% in comparison with the same period of the previous year, and this increased the average annual value of the state of head's electoral rating by 6 points.

But the horizon of social memory is limited only by 3-4 month. That is why after the renewal of the growth of incomes most people forget the past misery quite rapidly and stop looking for the answer to the question "Who's to blame?" But under the conditions of the change of a positive economic trend to a negative one, the opposite is true, which is documented in the December survey.

According to the forecast of the socio-economic development for 2014 the growth of household incomes should amount to 6%. If the plans will coincide with the facts (any deviation is possible) we can speak with a high probability about the repetition of the situation of 2002-2003. The possibility of repetition of the 2009 anomaly should be completely excluded. We do not idealize public opinion, nevertheless it is able to tell an apple from an orange, i.e. a contribution of the global financial crisis to the slowing down of the income growth from a contribution of the "state for the people" and its leader.

In December the sun was shining on the street of enthusiasts of the theory of a "new majority": the share of respondents not trusting A. Lukashenko exceeded the share of those trusting him. The shares kind of switched their places (Table 14). The new "new majority" lacks 14.5% to reach the record of

September 2011, but the prospects for the incoming year are quite alluring.

The answers to the question: "What is the political strategy of the country leaders headed by President Alexander Lukashenko in your opinion?" illustrate the logic of forming of the new "new majority" (Table 15).

22.6% of respondents believe that A. Lukashenko has the strategy of "improving the quality of life of citizens" and 15.3% believe in the strategy of "modernization". When we consider that respondents could choose several variant of answer we can conclude that the shares of citizens believing in positive strategies are with a high probability lower than 37.9% (22.6% + 15.3%).

Among the respondents trusting A. Lukashenko variants "to maintain public order and political stability" and "to improve progressively the quality of life of citizens" were the most popular ones. But even these variants didn't get the half of votes: 45.7% and 44.3% respectively (10.9% and 7.3% respectively among the respondents not trusting A. Lukashenko).

For the political opponents of the head of state his strategy associates in the first place with remaining in power – 47.5%, but this association is not alien even to every fifth supporter of A. Lukashenko.

The answers of Russians to a similar question are shown in the second column of Table 15. Naturally, there was the name of the Russian president in the questionnaire instead of the name of the Belarusian president. In general two "sister nations" evaluate the strategic priorities of their leaders in the same way. The only exception is the first variant of answer. Belarusians' evaluation of A. Lukashenko's aspiration to remain in power is higher by 12 points than the similar evaluation of Russians' for V. Putin. And the matter is not only the difference in their innings. Much more important is the difference in the condition of economies in Belarus and Russia which directly influences the attitude towards the leaders. Thereupon

we should note that the trust rating of V. Putin (according to "Levada-center") is 1.6 times higher than the trust rating of A. Lukashenko (61% vs. 37.7%).

While public opinion expressed in ratings and concerning the attitude towards A. Lukashenko fluctuates sensibly, the attitude towards the possible changes after his retirement is quite stable (Table 16). This testifies that a major part of the society doesn't see the direct connection between the politics and the level of well-being. The mass inability to see this connection is one of the main reasons of the political apathy of Belarusians.

Table 16

Dynamics of answering the question: "Some people think that after A. Lukashenko's retirement from the post of the president the life in Belarus will get better, others think that it will get worse. What is your opinion?", %

Variant of answer	10'10	09'11	12'12	12'13
Life will get better	28.7	23.8	25.9	21.5
Life will not change	28.6	26.9	36.5	40.7
Life will get worse	25.3	35.2	24.5	25.2
DA/NA	17.4	14.1	13.1	12.6

In the last quarter of 2013 A. Lukashenko made a number of statements which were much talked of in the society (Table 17). Two of these statements were rapidly turned into laws (the confiscation of cars of drunk drivers and the state duty for the issuance of permissions for carrier vehicles to participate in traffic).

The strongest backing was given to the suggestion to confiscate cars of drunk drivers. Even among the respondents not trusting the head of state it was supported by the absolute majority (52.3%). The ambiguity of such confiscations in respect to the modern ideas of legality didn't embarrass a lot of people. Within the framework of Belarusian cultural tradition the end justifies the means, and in this case the end is noble. No one's going to argue on that.

The opinions on accusations of inclinations to stealing and evading taxes were divided equally. In the soviet times stealing from the state wasn't considered as something shameful (and there was no question of paying taxes in the conditions of centralized economy). Nevertheless this doesn't mean that everyone was stealing. No, a major part of the society had no possibility to steal because of external circumstances. What could a school teacher steal? Or a pensioner? This inequality of possibilities is present nowadays as well, and this is documented in the survey.

Only every fourth Belarusian evaluated positively the modernization activity of A. Lukashenko in 2013. The difference of evaluations between the supporters and the opponents of the head of state is quite impressive.

A record share of A. Lukashenko supporters wasn't able to define their attitude towards the sources of funding of the Palace of Independence (27%). Life experience prevents from agreeing with the statement that "there is no single budget ruble".

But disagreeing with that means showing the idol up as a public liar. To settle this contradiction they had chosen the variant "difficult to answer".

Introduction of additional taxes is never approved in any country of the world; therefore it is a drastic measure, used by leaders and legislators. Similar initiatives often lead to a loss of executive positions and statuses. Belarusians are not exceptions to this rule. But the originators of the introducing of new taxes are truly an exception, because these acts practically do not affect their careers.

In recent years A. Lukashenko made numerous

attempts to shift the responsibility for the loss of the financial stability of the country on the society. A third of Belarusians is ready to plead people guilty. That's the same story as the story with stealing. The main thing is that the power is not yet switching from abstract accusations of people to accusations of particular persons.

The weakest support was given to A. Lukashenko's suggestion to introduce the exit duty. It's not surprising that the matter didn't come to practical realization. Introducing an exit duty is an example of a decision which automatically goes into personals. That is why it is the least popular initiative of the head of state.

How much did the listed offers contribute to the decrease of A. Lukashenko ratings? It's hard to answer the question without ambiguity. The main reason for this decrease is undoubtedly the halting in the growth of population's incomes. But the majority of the head of state's initiatives acted in unison with the main reason.

Negative dynamics of trust to institutes

American futurologist F. Fukuyama considers the prevail of social distrust as an additional tax to the national economics. Economic activities are joint activities of people first of all. Low level of trust of economic actors to each other and high level of distrust of economic actors to state and public institutions raise transaction costs (costs incurred by contract awards), and this is equal to the introduction of an additional tax.

Belarusian socio-economic model hampers the development of horizontal relations between people because of its inclination to centralization. That is why 70% of Belarusians are confident that it is necessary to be very careful in contacts with people.

Table 17

Attitude towards the initiatives of president A. Lukashenko depending on the degree of trust, %

Variant of answer	All respondents	Trust to A. Lukashenko	
		Trust	Do not trust
<i>Recently a law allowing confiscating cars of drunk drivers has been passed in Belarus. How do you evaluate this law?</i>			
This is a right measure	61.1	74.8	52.3
This penalty is too cruel	25.8	15.7	32.4
It doesn't matter to me	11.7	8.8	13.6
<i>Many Belarusians are complaining about worsening of their economic well-being, some even talk about poverty. Thereupon the president said once: "People... steal recklessly. There are lots of cars, you cannot force your way. And they are mostly new. While people are indigent. How is that possible? Do they steal or evade taxes?" Do you agree with that?</i>			
Yes, I agree	46.9	65.1	32.1
No, I don't agree	47.9	31.0	62.8
<i>In his end-of-the-year broadcast President A. Lukashenko said that the accelerated modernization of enterprises in 2013 is the pledge of strengthening of the Belarusian statehood and growth of people's well-being. Some people think that the modernization had succeeded; others think that it had actually failed. What do you think?</i>			
The major part of the plan for modernization of enterprises in 2013 had succeeded	25.4	50.8	7.1
The major part of the plan for modernization of enterprises in 2013 had actually failed	59.0	31.2	82.4
DA/NA	15.6	18.0	10.5
<i>A new Palace of Independence was built in Minsk. A. Lukashenko said that "there is no single budget ruble" in it. Do you agree with this?</i>			
Yes	21.9	38.3	10.8
No	60.0	34.7	80.0
DA/NA	18.1	27.0	9.2
<i>Because of the worsening of the economic well-being Belarusian powers are planning to introduce a tax on unemployed (2.6 million rubles) and a state duty (up to 1.5 million rubles) for the issuance of permissions for carrier vehicles to participate in traffic. Do you approve these actions?</i>			
Yes, I approve it	22.5	38.9	10.0
No, I don't approve it	60.5	42.0	75.2
It doesn't matter to me	14.9	17.9	12.8
<i>According to the National Bank there is a significant growth of purchasing of foreign currencies by the citizens. In view of the aforesaid A. Lukashenko stated: "If you are going to run all day long from one exchange office to another and buy foreign currency, you yourself will lead to the weakening of the national currency". Do you agree with that?</i>			
I agree	34.7	55.8	18.8
I disagree	61.3	40.1	78.2
<i>Recently A. Lukashenko has suggested charging a fee of \$ 100 on every Belarusian citizen going abroad. What's your attitude towards this suggestion?</i>			
Positive	14.1	23.0	8.1
Negative	64.7	50.0	75.5
It doesn't matter to me	19.6	25.1	16.0

As for the trust to state and public institutions, in December 2013 the confidence index was positive only for the Orthodox Church and for the army, i.e. they were more trusted than distrusted (Table 18). In November 2006 the number of trusted intuitions was 15! Among them were Courts (+0.153), the Central Election Commission (+0.052) and the National Assembly (+0.048). Effective functioning of these institutions directly influences the level of competitiveness of national economies. But today these important institutions not merely don't contribute to overcoming of the gap inside the Belarusian society, but on the contrary enlarge this gap.

We've already mentioned more than once that state institutions in Belarus (excluding the army and the quasi-state-owned Orthodox Church) have no legitimacy. That is why their trust ratings follow the trust rating of the head of state like a thread follows a needle (Table 19). As for public institutions, their trust ratings are more stable due to a weak dependency on the political climate.

As an example, let's compare the trust ratings of state and non-state media during the electoral mobilization (December 2010) and at the peak of economic crisis (June 2011). The rating of state media had decreased from 52.9% to 39.2% (-13.7 points). The rat-

ing of non-state media practically hadn't changed. It proved to be resistant to the crisis, because society made responsible the head of state and the government responsible for it.

comparison with December 2012 (Table 20), but during the year 2013 it was insignificantly fluctuating around the historical "bottom". What does that mean? Does that mean that the efforts of the party staff are

Table 18

Distribution of answers to the question: "Do you trust the following state and public institutions?", %

Variant of answer	Trust	Don't trust	DA/NA	Index*
Orthodox Church	63.0	26.2	10.8	+0.371
Army	44.1	39.8	16.1	+0.043
Business associations	39.7	41.4	18.9	-0.017
Bar association	39.4	42.1	18.5	-0.027
Non-state media	41.0	46.1	12.9	-0.052
Catholic Church	36.6	42.2	21.2	-0.056
International organizations (UN, EU, OSCE, European Parliament, Council of Europe and others)	36.9	43.1	20.0	-0.062
Independent research institutes	36.0	44.0	20.0	-0.081
President	37.7	47.5	14.8	-0.097
KGB	33.9	46.4	19.7	-0.127
Free and independent trade-unions	31.9	44.7	23.4	-0.129
Human rights groups (Belarusian Helsinki Committee and others)	28.7	42.5	28.8	-0.140
Courts	34.9	49.1	16.0	-0.143
Public Prosecutor's Office	34.5	49.4	16.1	-0.150
Militia	34.9	51.6	13.5	-0.167
Trade-unions, members of the Federation of Trade Unions of Belarus	30.0	48.4	21.6	-0.185
National Assembly	31.5	50.5	18.0	-0.191
State research institutes	31.5	52.1	16.4	-0.207
Central Election Commission	32.0	53.7	14.3	-0.218
State media	31.6	55.3	13.1	-0.239
Local Executive Committees	28.6	53.8	17.6	-0.254
Government	29.4	54.8	15.8	-0.256
Local Councils of Deputies	28.9	54.8	16.3	-0.260
Political parties supporting the present power	19.9	59.0	21.1	-0.393
Opposition political parties	15.8	63.4	20.8	-0.480
Protestant Church	10.9	62.1	27.0	-0.519

* Confidence index – the ratio of the difference between those who trust and those who don't trust to the number of respondents who had answered the question

One of distinctive features of the December survey is the simultaneous decrease of trust ratings of both state and non-state institutions, while the trust rating of A. Lukashenko remained more or less stable (39.1% in December 2012 vs. 37.7% in December 2013). This decrease affected even the Orthodox Church (-7.6 points) and the army (-8.7 points).

It is common practice even among independent experts to explain the low efficiency of Belarusian economy by technical reasons (incompetence of members of the government is probably the most popular one). However technical reasons are just ripples on the socio-cultural basin. Trust should be regarded as an absolute humanitarian value, and trust to the power – as a compulsory part of the general trust. Its' absence gives warnings of the ill health of society and state.

In expectation of the growth of opposition moods

The trust rating of opposition parties did not escape the common lot and decreased by 4.2 points in

inefficient or that there is no demand for political alternative in the society? We are more inclined to the second answer.

If even the economic crisis of 2011 didn't manage to switch the Belarusian society from political apathy to political agitation, then a local worsening of social moods (in December comparatively to September) is certainly unable to cope with such a task. Low trust rating of political parties supporting the present power is another evidence of society being in political apathy. In December 19.9% of respondents trusted those parties, while 59% did not trust them.

Nevertheless the share of respondents considering themselves in opposition to the present power decreased by 4.7 points over the past three months (Table 21). Let's compare the first and the last column. Three years ago, in the context of electoral mobilization of A. Lukashenko's supporters and opponents, the level of oppositional moods was exactly the same.

Political optimists can draw additional occasions for far-reaching conclusions from this coincidence.

Table 19

Dynamics of trust rating of state and public institutions, %

Institutions	12'10	06'11	12'12	12'13
Orthodox Church	68.3	63.3	70.6	63.0
President	55.0	35.7	39.1	37.7
Army	53.6	45.4	52.8	44.1
State media	52.9	39.2	38.1	31.6
Government	51.6	33.6	35.0	29.4
Bar association	49.9	43.2	48.3	39.4
Courts	49.0	43.4	40.8	34.9
Central Election Commission	47.5	34.6	32.9	32.0
Public Prosecutor's Office	47.3	38.1	37.8	34.5
Non-state media	46.3	46.2	48.1	41.1
International organizations (UN, EU, OSCE, European Parliament, Council of Europe and others)	45.8	43.0	38.7	36.9
Militia	45.6	35.3	37.4	34.9
Independent research institutes	44.0	44.6	45.1	36.0
Local Executive Committees	43.5	36.5	30.5	28.6
KGB	43.2	33.8	37.2	33.9
Local Councils of Deputies	41.2	34.6	31.5	28.9
Human rights groups (Belarusian Helsinki Committee and others)	38.0	32.6	33.5	28.7
Business associations	36.2	33.5	45.1	39.7
National Assembly	35.7	27.2	33.1	31.5
Catholic Church	35.4	38.0	44.1	36.6
Trade-unions, members of the Federation of Trade Unions of Belarus	35.4	27.6	34.1	30.0
Political parties supporting the present power	33.8	21.7	23.7	19.9
Free and independent trade-unions	33.3	33.5	38.7	31.9
Protestant Church	18.4	17.4	16.3	10.9
Opposition political parties	16.3	20.1	20.0	15.8

Table 20

Dynamics of trust rating of opposition parties, %

Date	12'12	03'13	06'13	09'13	12'13
Rating	20.0	13.1	15.4	15.3	15.8

Table 21

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

Variant of answer	12'10	09'11	03'13	09'13	12'13
Yes	18.9	28.3	16.9	14.2	18.9
No	72.4	56.0	72.0	75.6	73.5
DA/NA	8.7	15.7	11.1	10.2	7.6

There is a certain reason for this. Objective prerequisites for the growth of oppositional moods are developing more and more confidently every month. Only about 10 points separate the current figure from the maximum of September 2011 (28.3%). If this gap will be reduced in 2014 depends on the ability of A. Lukashenko to wheedle additional resources out of Russia, as Belarusian model exhausted its internal resources for the maintenance of financial stability as long ago as in the end of 90s.

There is a need for a well-balanced policy of opposition parties despite a number of objective factors, having a dominant role in forming of social moods. The restricted ability to convey positive messages to the apathetical society doesn't mean that negative messages stay unnoticed. Let's remember the main

Hippocratic principle which says that one should abstain from doing harm.

Unfortunately the leaders of opposition parties don't always observe this principle. It would seem that in a society where only several percents of adults use the Belarusian language (about 20% admit that they speak "trasianka", a Belarusian-Russian mixed language) politicians cannot permit themselves to do what the leader of the Conservative Christian Party of the Belarusian People's Front Y. Belenky had done (Table 22). Nevertheless such declarations occasionally get into the mass media.

The response to the declaration of Y. Belenky was predictable. The share of those who *disagreed* with it is 5.2 times bigger than the share of those who *agreed*. But for a society, proud of its tolerance, even

a 15% share of *agreement* is something beyond the limits. The split of the Belarusian society is thus kept up not only by the intentional efforts of state propaganda, but by the initiatives of certain oppositional politicians.

two decades script, if we judge by the results of formation of territorial election committees (only several representatives of opposition are included in 1331 committees of regional, district and city levels).

A record-low (by the Belarusian standards) at

Table 22

Distribution of answers to the question: "One of the leaders of the Conservative Christian Party of the BPF Y. Belenky has recently said: "If you speak Russian, you are in the occupational army, you shoot at your own nation". What do you think about this declaration?"

Variant of answer	%
I agree with him	15.0
I disagree with him	77.6
DA/NA	7.4

Table 23

Dynamics of answering the question: "Are you going to vote on the elections of deputies to local Soviets in March 2014?", %

Variant of answer	12'02	11'06	03'10	12'13	Attitude towards A. Lukashenko	
					Trust	Don't trust
Yes	63.6	65.7	62.9	44.0	67.1	27.2
No	16.6	20.3	37.1	39.1	19.9	56.4
DA/NA	19.8	14.0	—*	16.9	13.0	16.4

* This variant of answer wasn't present

In December we've asked questions directly related to the future presidential election, despite the fact that they will take place only in a year and a half. We found out in particular that presidential election in Belarus is not a mechanism for the country's policy correction; therefore the programs of candidates are secondary. Personality characteristics of the candidates are secondary as well, while the present head of state is able to consolidate the bureaucracy and the budget-getters, who make up the basis of the electoral "majority".

The ability to consolidation of the present head of state directly depends on his ability to distribute resources "on an equity basis". But in this case equity doesn't mean "equality". There is a standard of equitable consumption for each class of the divided society (national security officers, civil servants, government employees and so on). These standards are assigned through laws (the law "On Public Service in the Republic of Belarus", the law "On Status of Military Servicemen" and others).

Only if the state of head loses his consolidation ability, this may cause a mass demand on a new leader and create real possibilities for his appearance. What's needed from the contender for the role of a new leader is not a program, but a manifestation of force, a manifestation of ability to bear the cross of a new consolidator.

Civil duty and survival strategy

There will be elections to the local Soviets in Belarus in the end of March. The elections will be conducted according to the tried-and-true over the last

tendance may become the main peculiarity of the forthcoming elections. In December only 44% of respondents confirmed their intention to take part in the elections (Table 23). The main reason for the refusal to vote is the non-belief in the ability of local Soviets to "solve anything". In December 2012 23.3% of respondents pointed at that, in March 2010 this share amounted to 18.2%. The lack of belief in the integrity of elections is on the second place in the list of reasons. The growth is almost twofold – from 11.7% to 20.3%!

The decrease of this index by 20 points at once should be regarded as abnormally high if we take into account that the average potential readiness to vote on local elections amounted to 64% in the beginning of the century.

At first glance the reason for this abnormal behavior is evident. The survey was conducted three months prior to the election, i.e. in the context of almost total absence of election information in the media. In 2010 survey was conducted a month before the election, in 2006 and 2002 – two months prior to the election.

However, local and parliamentary elections in Belarus are "dull" since long ago and this is what distinguishes them from presidential elections. There is a total lack of purposeful efforts for the mobilization of voters; since any mobilization polarizes the voters (as mobilization involves both the supporters and the opponents of the power). That is why the state mass media curb their function in local and parliamentary elections by simply publishing official materials of the Central Electoral Commission.

But the probable low attendance doesn't look so abnormal against the background of an equally ab-

normal decrease of trust ratings of state and civil institutes (see Negative Dynamics of Trust to Institutes). We can affirm with a high probability that both cases show different forms of manifestation of the Belarusian society passing to a whole new level of atomization.

electoral support of A. Lukashenko was different as well (42.7%). Respectively, the readiness to vote for the ruling party candidates was higher (Table 24). But political opponents had equal theoretical chances to be elected in December 2012. Theory however wasn't confirmed by practice. And the CEC is no

Table 24

Dynamics of answering the question: "For which candidate would you like to vote on this election?", %

Variant of answer	12'02	11'06	03'10	12'13
For a candidate supporting A. Lukashenko	31.1	49.6	34.6	30.2
For a candidate opposing to A. Lukashenko	31.2	18.6	10.0	21.9
For another candidate	12.4	12.5	25.3	34.4
DA/NA	25.3	19.3	30.1	13.5

Table 25

Dynamics of answering the question: "For who will vote the majority of voters in your opinion?", %

Variant of answer	12'02	03'10	12'13
For a candidate supporting A. Lukashenko	36.5	49.1	39.5
For a candidate opposing to A. Lukashenko	24.7	7.5	16.6
For another candidate	8.0	14.3	23.9
DA/NA	30.8	29.1	20.0

Table 26

Dynamics of answering the question: "Do you know who is the deputy of your district in the local Soviet?", %

Variant of answer	11'06	03'10	12'13
Yes	44.6	33.8	32.7
No	50.9	62.3	62.9
DA/NA	4.5	3.9	4.4

This passage started in 2011. The artificial financial crisis was accompanied by a catastrophic decrease of social indices in June-September. The process of rehabilitation started in December 2011. It went on until September 2013. But the society did not regain its initial (pre-crisis) state. Furthermore, its sensitivity to negative economic signals became higher, and this was documented in the last survey.

In such circumstances the demand for individual strategies of surviving becomes higher. (It is true mainly for the societies that don't have the experience of collective actions.) And this isn't the right time for taking part in elections, this only legal form of fulfilling the civic duty.

We recommend to the representatives of opposition, who proclaim triumphant strategies on local and parliamentary elections, to pay attention to the last two columns of Table 23. Numerical advantage of A. Lukashenko's opponents against his supporters is not something that should be expected, despite the fact that in December the share of his opponents exceeded the share of his supporters (37.7% vs. 47.5%). In December the level of declarative readiness to vote among the supporters of the head of state exceeded the same indicator for his opponents by 2.5 times.

The survey of March 2010 was conducted in different socio-economic conditions, when the level of

stranger to it.

The ability of society to adequately perceive the political reality formed in Belarus over the last 20 years is characterized by the distribution of answers to the question of Table 25. Every fifth of respondents (!) had difficulties answering the questions, and 16.6% of respondents were sure, that the majority of Belarusians would support candidates opposing to A. Lukashenko. Every fourth of the respondents not trusting the head of state believes in the readiness of the majority of voters to vote for opposition candidates.

The high level of volatility of the distribution between the columns should be noted. Power lacks the resources for maintaining socio-economic stability during the intervals between presidential elections. That is why the elections of deputies to local Soviets are conducted in conditions which are not always optimal for the demonstration of the *unity of power and people*.

Absolute majority of Belarusian voters have difficulties with answering the question: "Do you know who is the deputy of your district in the local Soviet?" (Table 26). There were no statistically significant changes in the level of awareness since March 2010. It is not surprising that the supporters of A. Lukashenko answer positively the question of Table 26 almost twice as often as the opponents of the

head of state – 42.9% vs. 23.4%.

The majority of A. Lukashenko's supporters are "budget-getters". The distribution of "individual budget allowances" is organized within the local bodies of power. So the supporters of the head of state have to contact them regularly.

their readiness to vote on the elections in April. Two months later, in June, 64.6% of respondents confirmed their participation in the elections. Three years and nine months later only 43.6% confirmed their participation (Table 29). The decrease by 21 point of the share of those who voted on the elections is caused

Table 27

Dynamics of answering the question: "To what extent do local Councils and their deputies influence your life?", %

Variant of answer	12'02	11'06	03'10	12'13
Influence significantly	9.3	18.4	14.4	10.4
Influence insignificantly	34.7	37.1	36.2	45.2
Do not influence at all	47.3	36.5	46.2	39.8
DA/NA	8.7	8.0	3.2	4.6

Table 28

Dynamics of answering the question: "How do you think, should the powers of local Soviets be enlarged?", %

Variant of answer	12'02	11'06	03'10	12'13
Yes	26.1	34.0	25.9	27.8
No	51.6	43.8	58.0	56.9
DA/NA	22.3	22.2	16.1	15.3

Table 29

Dynamics of answering the question: "Did you vote on the local Soviets deputies' election in April 2010?", %

Variant of answer	11'06	03'10	12'13
Yes	58.1	49.5	43.6
No	27.9	42.6	44.6
Don't remember	13.2	7.3	11.6
NA	0.8	0.6	0.2

Table 30

Distribution of answers to the question: "Which opinion on the October Revolution do you share?"

Variant of answer	%
It is clearly a negative historical event	17.1
This event is hard to evaluate, there are more negative than positive consequences to it	25.4
This event is hard to evaluate, there are more positive than negative consequences to it	24.4
It is clearly a positive historical event	19.1
DA/NA	14.0

But local bodies of power only distribute allowances formed on the highest level of the vertical of power. That is why the influence of local Soviets increases in the "years of abundance" and decreases in the "years of famine" (Table 27). This explains the wave-like change of the structure of answers in the consecutive transition from one column to another.

Belarusians do not express much desire to enlarge the powers of local Soviets (Table 28), although they note the low level of influence on their lives. The supporters of A. Lukashenko are keener on the idea of enlarging the powers of local Soviets than his opponents – 36.3% vs. 22.3%. This is explained by the fact that budget-getters are more interested in functioning of local bodies of power.

In March 2010 62.9% of respondents declared

by the forgetfulness of respondents (local Soviets election is a brush fire event) and by the natural reason – the generation change.

How much will the real attendance in March 2014 differ from the attendance manifested in December 2013? Probably it will be higher but won't achieve the level of previous elections. The question is open, but one thing is sure: Belarusians shouldn't expect that the two-digit rate of the incomes' growth will be preserved.

"The young October is ahead"?

Belarus is one of the few countries of the world where the 7th of November is still a public holiday celebrating the anniversary of the October Revolution of

Table 31

Dependency of evaluations of the October Revolution of 1917 to socio-demographic characteristics and political preferences, %

Variant of answer	Evaluation of the October Revolution of 1917			
	It is clearly a negative historical event	This event is hard to evaluate, there are more negative than positive consequences to it	This event is hard to evaluate, there are more positive than negative consequences to it	It is clearly a positive historical event
Sex:				
Male	17.7	25.2	24.5	20.5
Female	16.6	25.5	24.4	17.9
Age:				
18-19	28.0	32.0	14.0	8.0
20-24	18.4	29.6	21.1	14.5
25-29	19.7	24.5	19.7	17.7
30-39	17.1	28.5	23.6	14.4
40-49	15.7	24.2	27.4	17.8
50-59	15.2	27.7	24.6	23.9
60 +	16.4	19.8	27.3	24.4
Education:				
Primary	17.9	27.4	17.9	24.2
Incomplete secondary	11.1	20.3	26.1	24.2
Secondary	20.6	21.1	27.4	18.0
Vocational	17.6	27.4	21.4	18.1
Higher	12.7	32.5	24.3	18.8
Does Belarus need market-type reforms?				
Yes	17.2	28.5	22.5	17.4
No	20.1	21.8	25.4	24.2
Do you trust the President?				
Yes	23.7	29.1	20.4	14.8
No	11.2	26.9	24.2	16.6
Do you trust opposition parties?				
Yes	22.7	27.7	18.5	18.1
No	16.5	24.9	26.4	19.6
Do you trust non-state media?				
Yes	17.3	31.4	18.7	17.4
No	18.8	21.0	27.6	19.8
Geopolitical choice:				
Integration with Russia	17.8	21.8	24.9	26.2
Joining the EU	18.5	30.8	21.3	15.1

1917. This event doesn't provoke as many heated discussions and sharp differentiations as, for example, the Great Patriotic War. Revolution is less important for the historical collective consciousness: for Belarusian respondents it takes one of the last places in the list of the most important events of the XX century in contrast to the Great Patriotic War, which occupies the first place (see <http://iiseps.org/old/06-13-06.html>). At the same time the October Revolution is still an important part of the official political discourse in Belarus.

On the other hand, the dethronement of the Lenin monument in Kiev, 22 years after the collapse of communism, shows that the events of 1917 are not a part of long ago history for the post-Soviet countries. They still define certain dispositions in the political space, although only symbolically.

But how do they define it? How do Belarusians

evaluate this historical event?

As one can see from Table 30 the society is divided practically into two equal parts depending on the attitude to October 1917. Extreme and moderate evaluations are almost symmetrical. What are the reasons for these evaluations? A partial answer can be found in Table 31.

It's easy to see that the most differentiating factor is age, and the weakest factor is sex. The attitude of men and women is practically the same, the evaluations of the youngest and the oldest age group diverse several-fold. The weak connection to the trust to non-state media is quite interesting. This fact may be regarded as an indication that this trust is not ideologically determined.

The level of trust to the President is the second most important indicator after the age. The dependency here is one-sided: the shares of those who

Table 32

Dynamics of answering the question: "If a referendum on the integration of Belarus and Russia was held today, what would be your choice?", %

Variant of answer	12'07	12'08	03'09	03'10	12'11	12'12	03'13	06'13	09'13	12'13
For	43.6	35.7	33.1	32.1	29.0	28.7	28.1	31.2	27.6	23.9
Against	31.6	38.8	43.2	44.5	42.9	47.5	51.4	46.5	46.9	51.4

Table 33

Dynamics of answering the question: "If a referendum on the question whether Belarus should join the European Union was held today, what would be your choice?", %

Variant of answer	05'07	09'08	03'09	03'10	03'11	12'12	03'13	06'13	09'13	12'13
For	33.5	26.7	34.9	36.2	48.6	38.9	37.9	37.7	37.8	35.9
Against	49.3	51.9	36.3	37.2	30.5	37.6	39.2	38.1	37.5	34.6

Table 34

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	12'07	12'08	12'09	12'10	12'11	12'12	03'13	06'13	09'13	12'13
Integration with the RF	47.5	46.0	42.3	38.1	41.4	37.7	37.2	40.8	35.6	36.6
Joining the EU	33.3	30.1	42.1	38.0	39.1	43.4	42.1	41.0	42.4	44.6
DA/NA	19.2	23.9	15.6	23.9	19.5	18.9	20.7	18.2	22.0	18.8

Table 35

Distribution of answers to the question: "V. Baumgartner, the CEO of Russian company Uralkali, was arrested in Minsk in August. He is accused of endangament of Belarusian company Belaruskali. How do you evaluate this arrest?"

Variant of answer	%
It's a fair, legal measure	42.7
It's an unfair, illegal measure	25.2
DA/NA	32.1

evaluate the revolution negatively vary several-fold between those who trust A. Lukashenko and those who don't trust him. At the same time the shares of those who evaluate this event positively are almost equal. The dependency on the attitude to market-type reforms is inverse: the percentage of those who consider that the October Revolution had only negative consequences is almost equal among the "market-ers" and "anti-market-ers", as well as among the "Be-lo-Russians" and "Euro-Belarusians". But the shares of those who evaluate the revolution positively vary distinctly in these groups.

Several conclusions should be made on the basis of Tables 30-31. In the first place, the October Revolution is not a consensual value for Belarusians in contrast to the Great Patriotic War. In the second place, there is a noticeable correlation between the ways people position themselves in the political infighting today and their attitude to October 1917. People supporting the present power are more positive about this event than the opponents of the power. In the third place, the differences are not fundamental. The difference between generations is more significant than the difference between political opponents. The Revolution is passing to the history, though only to a recent one.

Geopolitical balance

December 2013 opinion poll shows that Belarusians' geopolitical preferences once again had a swing away from Russia. A new historic minimum is recorded in the answers to the question about voting on a hypothetical referendum about integration of Belarus and Russia (Table 32).

At the same time the decrease of pro-Russian moods didn't lead to an increase of pro-European moods. This is not the first time that it happens like this. A direct question about the attitude towards joining the European Union showed a decrease of the share of "Euro-Belarusians" as well (Table 33).

However, a certain increase of pro-European moods was documented in the answers to a question with a dichotomous choice between integration with Russia or the EU, while there was no significant change of pro-Russian moods (Table 34).

The "potash conflict" was one of the most important topics in Belarusian-Russian relations, and its brightest manifestation was the arrest and imprisonment of Uralkali CEO V. Baumgartner (Table 35).

The share of those who approved the arrest of the Russian businessman equals almost to a half of re-

Table 36

Distribution of answers to the question: "How do you think, who is to blame for the "potash conflict"?", %

Variant of answer	%
Belarusian part	13.6
Russian part	27.3
Both parts are equally guilty	41.4
DA/NA	17.7

Table 37

Connection between geopolitical choice and evaluations of various aspects of the "potash conflict", %

Variant of answer	If you had to choose between integration with Russia and joining the European Union, what choice would you make?		
	Integration with the RF	Joining the EU	DA/NA
<i>Attitude to the arrest of V. Baumgartner:</i>			
It's a fair, legal measure	53.1	36	38.1
It's an unfair, illegal measure	22.4	30.7	17.4
<i>Who's to blame in the "potash conflict"?</i>			
Belarusian part	15.1	52.2	5.3
Russian part	33.8	21.2	28.8
Both parts are equally guilty	39.1	42.6	43.4

Table 38

Distribution of answers to the question: "Recently there were ethnic clashes between Russians and Caucasians in the Moscow district Biryulevo. Do you think that similar events are possible in Belarus?"

Variant of answer	%
It's inevitable	8.0
It's mostly probable	30.5
It's possible, but hardly probable	38.5
No, it's impossible	20.0
DA/NA	3.0

spondents, and it is 1.5-fold higher than the share of those who found the arrest unfair (Table 36). As for the conflict itself, much more of respondents lay the blame on Moscow than on Minsk, and this is exactly as it happened before more than once. Although, a relative majority thinks that both parts are guilty.

The attitude of respondents towards the "potash conflict" is related to their geopolitical preferences in a quite counterintuitive way (Table 37). As it has already happened in IISEPS surveys more than once, it's not the adherents of the integration with Russia but their geopolitical opponents who are ready to take the part of Russia (see, for example, Table 2 in <http://iiseps.org/old/03-10-12.html>).

What calls attention is the ten-fold (!) spread between the shares of those who lay the blame for the conflict on the Belarusian side in the groups of adherents of Euro-integration and of those who preferred to elude the geopolitical choice.

The ethnic conflict in the Moscow district Biryulevo is one of the most important events of the social life of Russia over the past few months. It doesn't affect Belarusian-Russian relations directly, but we can discuss its projection on Belarus in two ways (Table 38). Firstly, the deepening of integration with Russia may lead to similar conflicts in Belarus. Secondly, there is an inner potential of similar conflicts in Belarus. Al

most 40% of respondents leave open the possibility of repetition of Biryulevo in their country.

If we take into account this quite high level of apprehensions of ethnic conflicts, the reaction of respondents on the generous invitation of A. Lukashenko to Russians is not surprising: "We need not 10, but 20 million people. We can easily nourish them. If a Russian person from any region wants to move to Belarus, you're welcome, we will only greet this".

It's hard to say if the invitation was sincere, but a considerable part of Belarusians is not ready to welcome a massive arrival of Russians to Belarus (Table 39).

The connection of the two latter subjects to the geopolitical choice is quite natural: the supporters of the European way more than others apprehend the ethnic conflicts and negatively regard the invitation to Russians (Table 40). However there is a certain paradox to it. Modern Europe rests on the openness to "others", but "Euro-Belarusians" are not so open to the "others" from the East.

The idea of Belarus joining the EU is supported by 35-45% of respondents, as follows from Table 33 and 34. But certain forms of Euro-integration are approved by a bigger share of respondents, constituting an absolute majority (Table 41).

Table 39

Distribution of answers to the question: "How do you regard the invitation to Russian people to come to Belarus for a permanent residence?"

Variant of answer	%
Positively: Belarus needs working hands	23.8
Negatively: there shouldn't be a lot of strangers	39.0
It doesn't matter to me	33.3
DA/NA	3.9

Table 40

Connection between geopolitical choice, evaluation of the possibility of repetition of Biryulevo in Belarus and attitude towards the invitation to Russians, %

Variant of answer	If you had to choose between integration with Russia and joining the European Union, what choice would you make?		
	Integration with the RF	Joining the EU	DA/NA
<i>Recently there were ethnic clashes between Russians and Caucasians in the Moscow district Biryulevo. How do you think, are similar events possible in Belarus?</i>			
It's inevitable	5.5	10.6	7.1
It's mostly probable	22	38.5	28
It's possible, but hardly probable	42.5	37.8	32.3
No, it's impossible	28.5	10.1	26.6
<i>How do you regard the invitation to Russian people to come to Belarus for a permanent residence?</i>			
Positively: Belarus needs working hands	37.8	14.9	17.1
Negatively: there shouldn't be a lot of strangers	26.9	51.6	32.7
It doesn't matter to me	31.8	31.3	40.9

Table 41

Distribution of answers to the question: "Recently the Polish ambassador in Belarus said that his country was ready not only to reduce the cost of the visa, but to cancel completely entrance visas for Belarusians. From now on the solution to this question depends only on the Belarusian authorities, who have to sign a special agreement with the EU. Some people support this initiative, others don't. What's your opinion?"

Variant of answer	%
I support this initiative	54.5
I don't support this initiative	16.8
I'm indifferent to this initiative	24.6
DA/NA	4.1

Table 42

Distribution of answers to the question: "On the recent Eastern Partnership Summit in Vilnius Moldova and Georgia signed agreements on joining the free-trade zone with the EU. Now they have a prospect of economic rapprochement with the EU. Belarus remained aside from the process because of the problems with democracy and human rights. Some people think that our country should change its policy and approach the European Union as well. Others disagree with this. What do you think?"

Variant of answer	%
Belarus should change its policy and approach the EU as well	44.5
Belarus should not change its policy and approach the EU	21.7
It doesn't matter to me	26.6
DA/NA	7.2

40% of respondents in one way or another don't support the initiative of cancelling entrance visas for the EU. This fact denies the popular belief that all Belarusians without exceptions are dying to at least visit Europe. A proper, self-sufficient world, ending on the Bug river, is more than enough for many of them.

But what calls attention is the fact that only an insignificant part of Belarusians feel a harsh, probably ideologically charged, rejection of the idea. The majority of those who don't need Europe are just indifferent to it.

The Eastern Partnership Summit in Vilnius turned out to be somewhat of a watershed: Georgia and Moldova made a solid step towards the integration with the EU, Euro-integration became a subject of a harsh political conflict in Ukraine, Armenia, for safety reasons above all, opted for the Eurasian integration, Azerbaijan made an official statement on the undesirability of the advanced forms of cooperation with the EU.

Belarus had never been an excellent "student" within the partnership. After the presidential election of 2010 Minsk-Brussels relations were in fact suspended. But a relative majority of respondents does not consider this normal and desirable, and this is documented in the survey (Table 42).

Answering the question of Table 42 respondents spoke not only in favor of rapprochement between

Belarus and the EU (this can be achieved due to the Europe's concessions, and this is what A. Lukashenko is for) but in favor of changes in the Belarusian policy, which would make this rapprochement possible.

In Table 42 the question is only about an abstract idea of rapprochement and doesn't mention specific forms like association. This form became a reason for a political "storm" in Ukraine. But the results of the survey don't mean that the unwillingness of official Minsk to change its policy and to approach Europe will cause a Belarusian Euromaidan. However these results show that a major part of the society will appreciate the decision of power to change its policy.

Probably not all Belarusians are convinced Europeans, but there not so many of conceptual Eurasians, firm in their beliefs, among them.

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

1. "Was the past year easier or more difficult for Belarus than the previous one?"

Table 1.1. Depending on age

Variant of answer	All respondents	Age, years						
		18-19	20-24	25-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 +
More difficult	38.6	34.7	43.1	32.7	43.9	42.3	37.5	33.7
Same as the previous one	50.4	57.1	46.4	51.0	46.6	45.5	54.2	55.0
Easier	10.1	4.1	9.2	15.6	8.8	11.1	7.6	11.2
DA/NA	0.9	4.1	1.3	0.7	0.7	1.1	0.7	0.1

Table 1.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (including incomplete)
More difficult	38.9	34.0	36.1	41.1	42.3
Same as the previous one	51.6	56.2	57.1	44.2	44.4
Easier	9.5	7.8	5.9	14.3	13.0
DA/NA	0	2.0	0.9	0.5	0.3

Table 1.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	The unemployed, housewives
More difficult	36.6	43.6	40.7	33.7	38.2
Same as the previous one	49.7	46.9	49.5	56.2	52.6
Easier	13.4	8.5	7.7	10.1	6.6
DA/NA	0.3	1.0	2.1	0	2.6

Table 1.4. Depending on place of 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
More difficult	33.6	29.9	42.6	34.3	44.2	36.6	50.2
Same as the previous one	62.3	49.1	52.3	53.3	41.7	49.1	41.0
Easier	4.1	19.2	4.6	11.2	13.6	13.1	7.9
DA/NA	0	1.8	0.5	1.2	0.5	1.2	0.9

Table 1.5. Depending on settlement type

Variant of answer	Settlement type				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
More difficult	33.6	38.8	45.6	38.3	38.8
Same as the previous one	62.3	48.5	42.7	47.4	47.4
Easier	4.1	12.4	11.0	13.0	13.0
DA/NA	0	0.3	0.7	1.3	0.8

2. "Was the year 2013 successful or unsuccessful personally for you?"

Table 2.1. Depending on age

Variant of answer	All respondents	Age, years						
		18-19	20-24	25-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 +
Successful	48.7	55.1	53.5	53.4	45.2	46.2	47.3	49.3
Unsuccessful	35.7	28.6	32.2	33.6	39.2	40.1	36.8	32.3
DA/NA	15.6	16.3	14.3	13.0	15.6	13.7	15.9	18.4

Table 2.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (including incomplete)
Successful	55.8	44.4	43.7	51.9	53.1
Unsuccessful	26.3	37.3	41.5	32.6	31.8
DA/NA	17.9	18.3	14.8	15.5	15.1

Table 2.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	The unemployed, housewives
Successful	55.0	46.6	54.3	47.1	35.1
Unsuccessful	28.3	37.6	34.8	36.5	55.8
DA/NA	16.7	15.8	10.9	16.4	9.1

Table 2.4. Depending on place of 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
Successful	46.9	59.6	33.8	56.8	33.2	55.2	56.4
Unsuccessful	26.4	31.6	58.8	39.1	45.2	21.8	30.0
DA/NA	26.7	8.8	7.4	4.1	21.6	23.0	13.6

Table 2.5. Depending on settlement type

Variant of answer	Settlement type				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
Successful	46.9	54.3	41.8	53.9	47.3
Unsuccessful	26.4	30.2	47.9	34.0	39.4
DA/NA	26.7	15.5	10.3	12.1	13.4

3. "There are different opinions concerning the progress of Belarusian economy model. Which one do you agree with?"

Table 3.1. Depending on age

Variant of answer	All respondents	Age, years						
		18-19	20-24	25-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 +
The progress of the Belarusian economy is explained by internal reasons; Russian aid is an important but not a decisive factor	30.5	25.5	19.1	22.6	23.6	23.7	32.8	48.4
Without the help of Russia there would be no progress in the Belarusian economy	28.7	17.6	20.4	31.5	31.9	31.5	29.8	27.1
There is no progress in the Belarusian economy	34.1	49.0	49.3	41.1	38.8	36.6	30.9	18.7
DA/NA	6.7	7.9	11.2	4.8	5.7	8.2	6.5	5.8

Table 3.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (including incomplete)
The progress of the Belarusian economy is explained by internal reasons; Russian aid is an important but not a decisive factor	49.5	44.4	27.7	26.7	27.9
Without the help of Russia there would be no progress in the Belarusian economy	25.3	26.1	29.8	29.0	28.6
There is no progress in the Belarusian economy	18.9	22.2	34.9	38.1	37.8
DA/NA	6.3	7.3	7.6	6.2	5.7

Table 3.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	The unemployed, housewives
The progress of the Belarusian economy is explained by internal reasons; Russian aid is an important but not a decisive factor	22.6	29.4	14.3	46.1	15.8
Without the help of Russia there would be no progress in the Belarusian economy	34.0	28.3	19.8	27.1	25.0
There is no progress in the Belarusian economy	39.1	34.9	54.9	20.3	50.0
DA/NA	4.3	7.4	11.0	6.5	9.2

Table 3.4. Depending on place of 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 progress of the Belarusian economy is explained by internal reasons; Russian aid is an important but not a decisive factor	23.5	25.4	25.7	38.8	26.1	45.4	34.6
Without the help of Russia there would be no progress in the Belarusian economy	25.6	30.8	29.8	34.1	32.7	14.9	24.1
There is no progress in the Belarusian economy	47.8	37.1	36.2	20.6	36.2	28.2	24.1
DA/NA	3.1	6.7	8.3	6.5	5.0	11.5	7.2

Table 3.5. Depending on settlement type

Variant of answer	Settlement type				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
The progress of the Belarusian economy is explained by internal reasons; Russian aid is an important but not a decisive factor	23.5	36.2	30.0	33.7	29.7
Without the help of Russia there would be no progress in the Belarusian economy	25.6	26.9	34.6	19.2	34.4
There is no progress in the Belarusian economy	47.8	29.3	28.6	37.3	28.9
DA/NA	3.1	7.6	6.8	9.8	7.0

4. "Do you consider it important to carry out market-type reforms in Belarus?"

Table 4.1. Depending on age

Variant of answer	All respondents	Age, years						
		18-19	20-24	25-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 +
Yes	59.7	66.0	75.0	65.3	69.1	65.0	61.1	37.2
No	27.8	24.0	14.5	25.9	22.1	23.6	26.0	43.8
DA/NA	12.5	10.0	10.5	8.8	8.8	11.5	12.8	19.0

Table 4.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (including incomplete)
Yes	26.3	39.6	61.0	65.2	70.6
No	47.4	46.8	27.2	22.7	19.8
DA/NA	26.3	13.6	11.8	12.1	9.6

Table 4.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	The unemployed, housewives
Yes	69.5	66.4	68.5	38.0	62.3
No	23.7	20.4	20.7	43.5	29.9
DA/NA	6.7	13.3	10.9	18.5	7.8

Table 4.4. Depending on place of 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	72.3	65.6	57.1	45.0	51.8	67.0	51.8
No	21.9	20.5	30.9	42.6	35.7	15.3	31.6
DA/NA	5.8	13.8	12.0	12.4	12.5	17.7	16.6

Table 4.5. Depending on settlement type

Variant of answer	Settlement type				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
Yes	72.3	64.9	51.3	60.0	52.2
No	21.9	24.7	35.5	24.7	31.3
DA/NA	5.8	10.4	13.2	15.3	16.5

5. "Many Belarusians are complaining about worsening of their economic well-being, some even talk about poverty. Thereupon the president said once: "People... steal recklessly. There are lots of cars, you cannot force your way. And they are mostly new. While people are indigent. How is that possible? Do they steal or evade taxes?" Do you agree with that?"

Table 5.1. Depending on age

Variant of answer	All respondents	Age, years						
		18-19	20-24	25-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 +
Yes, I agree	46.9	38.0	33.6	34.0	37.4	44.4	56.1	61.5
No, I don't agree	47.9	54.0	61.2	61.9	56.5	50.2	38.3	34.5
DA/NA	5.2	8.0	5.2	4.1	6.1	5.4	5.6	4.0

Table 5.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (including incomplete)
Yes, I agree	61.1	66.0	45.7	43.9	38.4
No, I don't agree	29.5	30.7	49.6	50.4	56.1
DA/NA	9.4	3.3	4.7	5.7	5.5

Table 5.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	The unemployed, housewives
Yes, I agree	30.6	48.1	38.0	61.8	50.0
No, I don't agree	63.5	46.1	55.4	34.4	44.7
DA/NA	5.9	5.8	6.6	3.8	5.3

Table 5.4. Depending on place of 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 agree	31.8	48.4	53.7	53.3	53.0	63.2	35.7
No, I don't agree	65.8	46.7	37.0	42.0	40.4	33.9	57.7
DA/NA	2.4	4.9	9.3	4.7	6.6	2.9	6.6

Table 5.5. Depending on settlement type

Variant of answer	Settlement type				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
Yes, I agree	31.8	51.1	41.9	51.2	55.2
No, I don't agree	65.8	44.0	52.7	39.8	39.1
DA/NA	2.4	4.9	5.4	9.0	5.7

6. "During a recent study of the labor market and labor relations in Belarus, one young man said: "The employer is trying to cheat the employee, and the employee is trying to cheat the employer. This is a nature law". Do you agree with these words?"

Table 6.1. Depending on age

Variant of answer	All respondents	Age, years						
		18-19	20-24	25-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 +
Yes, I agree	49.8	42.0	56.6	50.3	48.1	48.7	50.4	49.3
No, I don't agree	42.0	46.0	35.5	42.1	42.0	43.0	45.1	9.5
DA/NA	8.2	12.0	7.9	7.6	9.9	8.3	4.5	41.2

Table 6.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (including incomplete)
Yes, I agree	43.8	54.9	49.7	50.8	47.6
No, I don't agree	46.9	37.9	41.6	41.8	43.9
DA/NA	9.3	7.2	8.7	7.4	8.5

Table 6.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	The unemployed, housewives
Yes, I agree	50.1	48.2	41.3	51.9	59.2
No, I don't agree	41.0	44.7	47.8	39.2	34.2
DA/NA	8.9	7.1	10.9	8.9	6.6

Table 6.4. Depending on place of 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 agree	43.2	39.1	44.4	66.7	44.2	47.1	68.7
No, I don't agree	53.4	56.9	46.3	26.8	41.7	36.8	23.8
DA/NA	3.4	4.0	9.3	6.5	14.1	16.1	7.5

Table 6.5. Depending on settlement type

Variant of answer	Settlement type				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
Yes, I agree	43.2	60.3	52.7	43.0	49.2
No, I don't agree	53.4	25.5	40.9	46.1	44.0
DA/NA	3.4	3.2	6.4	10.9	10.8

7. "Do you consider yourself as a patriot of Belarus?"

Table 7.1. Depending on age

Variant of answer	All respondents	Age, years						
		18-19	20-24	25-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 +
Certainly yes	26.4	24.0	20.7	17.0	18.2	20.4	30.2	41.3
More likely yes	45.2	48.0	47.3	44.9	49.6	43.7	44.9	42.2
More likely no	20.9	22.0	24.0	31.3	23.1	24.7	17.4	13.0
Certainly no	4.3	4.0	5.3	5.4	3.8	6.5	4.2	2.3
DA/NA	3.2	2.0	2.7	1.4	5.3	4.7	3.3	1.2

Table 7.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (including incomplete)
Certainly yes	42.7	40.5	21.8	22.7	27.6
More likely yes	42.7	32.7	44.4	48.0	50.2
More likely no	14.6	18.3	25.7	20.8	15.7
Certainly no	0	5.9	5.7	3.8	2.7
DA/NA	0	2.6	2.4	4.7	3.8

Table 7.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	The unemployed, housewives
Certainly yes	19.9	22.9	23.7	40.5	13.3
More likely yes	48.5	47.1	45.2	40.3	41.3
More likely no	22.9	22.9	23.7	13.9	29.3
Certainly no	4.3	3.7	5.4	3.0	13.3
DA/NA	4.3	3.4	2.0	2.3	2.8

Table 7.4. Depending on place of 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
Certainly yes	34.1	33.8	15.3	24.4	32.8	22.4	18.1
More likely yes	45.7	43.6	46.5	44.6	40.9	49.4	45.8
More likely no	13.3	16.9	28.4	23.8	16.2	21.3	29.1
Certainly no	5.5	4.4	5.1	5.4	6.6	1.1	1.8
DA/NA	1.4	1.3	4.7	1.8	4.5	5.8	5.2

Table 7.5. Depending on settlement type

Variant of answer	Settlement type				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
Certainly yes	34.1	19.2	27.9	18.0	30.5
More likely yes	45.7	50.2	44.2	45.3	45.8
More likely no	13.3	26.5	22.5	26.6	17.4
Certainly no	5.5	2.1	2.5	5.1	3.1
DA/NA	1.4	2.0	2.9	5.0	3.2

8. "Do you need to feel proud of your country or is personal well-being enough for you to be happy?"

Table 8.1. Depending on age

Variant of answer	All respondents	Age, years						
		18-19	20-24	25-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 +
I need to feel proud of my country	40.7	38.0	32.2	26.5	33.8	42.9	48.9	48.1
Personal well-being is enough	51.9	52.0	63.2	68.0	58.2	49.2	42.8	44.4
DA/NA	7.3	10.0	4.6	5.4	8.0	7.8	8.3	7.5

Table 8.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (including incomplete)
I need to feel proud of my country	48.4	39.0	37.2	38.6	48.5
Personal well-being is enough	46.3	51.3	55.4	53.1	46.1
DA/NA	5.6	9.7	7.4	8.3	5.4

Table 8.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	The unemployed, housewives
I need to feel proud of my country	35.8	41.6	41.3	48.4	17.1
Personal well-being is enough	58.2	51.1	50.0	43.8	71.1
DA/NA	6.0	7.3	8.7	7.8	11.8

Table 8.4. Depending on place of 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 need to feel proud of my country	52.1	41.3	40.7	40.2	46.2	30.3	29.1
Personal well-being is enough	42.8	54.2	48.1	58.0	46.2	60.0	59.0
DA/NA	5.1	4.5	11.2	1.8	7.6	9.7	11.9

Table 8.5. Depending on settlement type

Variant of answer	Settlement type				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
I need to feel proud of my country	52.1	38.5	37.1	40.8	36.3
Personal well-being is enough	42.8	53.6	57.5	51.4	54.0
DA/NA	5.1	7.9	5.4	7.8	9.7

9. "If presidential elections were held today, for whom would you vote?"**Table 9.1. Depending on age**

Variant of answer	All respondents	Age, years						
		18-19	20-24	25-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 +
For the incumbent president	32.6	16.0	18.4	21.1	19.1	25.4	39.8	56.9
For a candidate from opposition	13.9	16.0	23.0	14.3	14.9	18.3	12.1	6.6
For any other candidate	37.6	54.0	42.1	48.3	46.6	41.2	34.1	21.3
DA/NA	15.9	14.0	16.5	16.3	19.4	15.1	14.0	14.2

Table 9.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (including incomplete)
For the incumbent president	21.8	27.9	15.4	55.2	24.7
For a candidate from opposition	20.8	11.8	25.3	6.8	19.5
For any other candidate	45.8	40.9	42.9	23.0	41.6
DA/NA	11.6	19.5	16.4	15.0	14.2

Table 9.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	The unemployed, housewives
For the incumbent president	11.6	19.4	16.5	15.0	14.3
For a candidate from opposition	21.8	11.8	25.3	26.8	29.5
For any other candidate	45.8	40.8	42.9	43.0	41.6
DA/NA	11.6	28.0	15.3	15.2	14.6

Table 9.4. Depending on place of 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
For the incumbent president	25.3	27.6	38.0	49.4	28.1	43.4	25.1
For a candidate from opposition	16.0	19.6	10.6	11.3	22.1	5.1	10.1
For any other candidate	51.9	44.0	35.2	20.8	35.7	27.4	37.0
DA/NA	6.8	8.8	16.2	18.5	14.1	24.1	27.8

Table 9.5. Depending on settlement type

Variant of answer	Settlement type				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
For the incumbent president	25.3	37.6	32.6	27.0	38.0
For a candidate from opposition	16.0	12.4	14.7	15.2	12.0
For any other candidate	51.9	30.0	40.9	37.5	30.2
DA/NA	6.8	20.0	11.8	21.3	19.8

10. "Some people think that after A. Lukashenko's retirement from the post of the president life in Belarus will get better; others think that it will get worse. What is your opinion?"

Table 10.1. Depending on age

Variant of answer	All respondents	Age, years						
		18-19	20-24	25-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 +
Life will get better	21.5	26.5	31.6	28.6	26.3	21.7	16.3	13.5
Life won't change	40.7	40.8	42.1	44.2	42.0	43.1	41.3	35.1
Life will get worse	25.2	18.4	10.5	14.3	17.2	20.6	29.5	43.7
DA/NA	12.5	14.3	15.8	12.9	14.5	14.6	12.9	7.7

Table 10.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (including incomplete)
Life will get better	14.7	13.0	23.5	22.1	23.4
Life won't change	34.7	33.1	43.3	44.0	37.3
Life will get worse	41.1	44.2	21.3	19.0	26.1
DA/NA	9.5	9.7	11.9	14.9	11.2

Table 10.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	The unemployed, housewives
Life will get better	30.2	18.7	35.2	14.2	22.4
Life won't change	42.3	40.8	38.5	36.5	57.9
Life will get worse	14.8	25.6	9.9	40.8	10.5
DA/NA	12.7	14.9	16.4	8.5	9.2

Table 10.4. Depending on place of 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
Life will get better	27.7	29.3	11.6	11.8	20.7	16.6	26.9
Life won't change	48.3	44.4	49.6	41.2	36.9	25.1	33.9
Life will get worse	19.2	21.8	25.9	35.3	29.3	38.3	14.5
DA/NA	4.8	4.5	12.9	11.7	13.1	20.0	24.7

Table 10.5. Depending on settlement type

Variant of answer	Settlement type				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
Life will get better	27.7	14.4	21.5	21.5	22.1
Life won't change	48.3	39.2	41.6	44.9	32.6
Life will get worse	19.2	24.4	25.8	22.7	31.8
DA/NA	4.8	22.0	11.1	10.9	13.5

11. "Do you consider yourself in opposition to the present power?"

Table 11.1. Depending on age

Variant of answer	All respondents	Age, years						
		18-19	20-24	25-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 +
Yes	18.9	26.0	26.3	22.4	18.7	21.1	17.0	12.9
No	73.5	68.0	58.6	65.3	73.3	73.6	77.3	81.3
DA/NA	7.6	6.0	15.1	12.3	8.0	5.3	5.7	5.8

Table 11.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (including incomplete)
Yes	18.9	17.2	20.5	18.6	22.5
No	75.8	86.9	73.2	73.6	66.2
DA/NA	5.3	5.9	6.3	7.8	11.3

Table 11.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	The unemployed, housewives
Yes	22.4	17.6	30.8	12.9	27.6
No	71.7	72.0	57.1	82.1	69.7
DA/NA	5.9	10.4	12.1	5.0	2.7

Table 11.4. Depending on place of 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	12.7	25.3	14.4	15.4	33.2	12.1	19.8
No	84.2	71.1	77.8	76.3	54.3	82.8	66.1
DA/NA	3.1	3.6	7.8	8.3	12.5	5.1	14.1

Table 11.5. Depending on settlement type

Variant of answer	Settlement type				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
Yes	12.7	14.8	20.7	20.3	24.5
No	84.2	77.7	72.1	70.3	65.1
DA/NA	3.1	7.5	7.2	9.4	10.4

12. "Which opinion on the October Revolution of 1917 do you share?"

Table 12.1. Depending on age

Variant of answer	All respondents	Age, years						
		18-19	20-24	25-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 +
This is certainly a negative historical event	17.1	28.0	18.4	19.7	17.1	15.7	15.2	16.4
It's hard to evaluate this event; there is more negative than positive in its consequences	25.4	32.0	29.6	24.5	28.5	24.2	27.7	19.8
It's hard to evaluate this event; there is more positive than negative in its consequences	24.4	14.0	21.1	19.7	23.6	27.4	24.6	27.3
This is certainly a positive historical event	19.1	8.0	14.5	17.7	14.4	17.7	23.9	24.4
DA/NA	14.0	18.0	16.4	18.4	16.8	15.0	8.6	12.1

Table 12.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (including incomplete)
This is certainly a negative historical event	17.9	11.1	20.6	17.6	12.7
It's hard to evaluate this event; there is more negative than positive in its consequences	27.4	20.3	21.1	27.4	32.5
It's hard to evaluate this event; there is more positive than negative in its consequences	17.9	26.1	27.4	21.4	24.3
This is certainly a positive historical event	24.2	24.2	18.0	18.1	18.8
DA/NA	12.6	18.3	12.9	15.5	11.7

Table 12.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	The unemployed, housewives
This is certainly a negative historical event	22.1	13.9	17.4	15.9	20.8
It's hard to evaluate this event; there is more negative than positive in its consequences	25.9	25.9	30.4	20.8	37.7
It's hard to evaluate this event; there is more positive than negative in its consequences	19.7	26.1	23.9	27.3	20.8
This is certainly a positive historical event	19.1	17.5	14.1	25.3	6.5
DA/NA	13.2	16.6	14.2	10.7	14.2

Table 12.4. Depending on place of 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 certainly a negative historical event	33.0	23.2	7.4	22.5	10.5	4.0	11.5
It's hard to evaluate this event; there is more negative than positive in its consequences	19.6	17.0	21.8	36.1	29.0	18.4	39.2
It's hard to evaluate this event; there is more positive than negative in its consequences	21.3	22.8	31.5	16.6	28.5	29.3	11.9
This is certainly a positive historical event	17.5	22.3	25.9	11.2	16.0	29.9	11.9
DA/NA	8.6	14.7	13.4	13.6	16.0	18.4	16.5

Table 12.5. Depending on settlement type

Variant of answer	Settlement type				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
This is certainly a negative historical event	33.0	5.5	16.8	8.6	19.8
It's hard to evaluate this event; there is more negative than positive in its consequences	19.6	33.6	26.5	25.1	22.9
It's hard to evaluate this event; there is more positive than negative in its consequences	21.2	27.1	25.8	23.1	24.2
This is certainly a positive historical event	17.5	17.1	19.7	24.3	18.0
DA/NA	8.7	16.6	11.2	18.9	15.1

13. "Are you going to vote on the elections of deputies to local Soviets in March 2014?"

Table 13.1. Depending on age

Variant of answer	All respondents	Age, years						
		18-19	20-24	25-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 +
Yes	44.0	26.5	36.2	30.1	39.9	42.7	52.1	54.2
No	39.1	55.1	49.3	50.7	46.8	41.6	30.2	26.2
DA/NA	16.9	18.4	14.5	19.2	13.3	15.7	17.7	19.6

Table 13.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (including incomplete)
Yes	44.8	53.6	39.4	42.6	49.0
No	26.0	27.4	46.7	37.6	37.4
DA/NA	29.2	19.0	13.9	19.8	13.6

Table 13.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	The unemployed, housewives
Yes	31.5	48.4	31.5	53.8	37.7
No	53.5	35.6	52.2	26.4	44.2
DA/NA	15.0	16.0	16.3	19.8	18.1

Table 13.4. Depending on place of 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	31.5	33.9	53.2	58.2	42.2	54.6	44.5
No	54.8	50.4	22.2	33.3	40.2	29.3	34.4
DA/NA	13.7	15.7	24.6	8.5	17.6	16.1	21.1

Table 13.5. Depending on settlement type

Variant of answer	Settlement type				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
Yes	31.5	56.4	38.1	47.1	46.5
No	54.8	27.1	42.7	33.7	36.8
DA/NA	13.7	16.5	19.2	19.2	16.7

14. "For which candidate would you like to vote on this election?"

Table 14.1. Depending on age

Variant of answer	All respondents	Age, years						
		18-19	20-24	25-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 +
For a candidate supporting A. Lukashenko	30.2	10.2	12.6	22.4	17.9	22.9	29.5	59.5
For a candidate opposing to A. Lukashenko	21.9	28.6	34.4	22.4	23.2	26.9	23.5	9.2
For another candidate	34.4	34.7	35.1	38.8	45.2	38.4	34.1	21.3
DA/NA	13.5	26.5	17.9	16.4	13.7	11.8	12.9	10.0

Table 14.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (including incomplete)
For a candidate supporting A. Lukashenko	70.8	50.3	24.8	23.1	26.5
For a candidate opposing to A. Lukashenko	7.3	13.1	22.6	23.6	27.6
For another candidate	11.5	22.2	38.1	40.7	32.3
DA/NA	10.4	14.4	14.5	12.6	13.6

Table 14.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	The unemployed, housewives
For a candidate supporting A. Lukashenko	15.9	24.8	15.2	56.2	21.8
For a candidate opposing to A. Lukashenko	31.2	19.2	41.3	12.7	21.8
For another candidate	42.5	39.4	23.9	21.8	34.6
DA/NA	10.4	16.6	19.6	9.3	21.8

Table 14.4. Depending on place of 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
For a candidate supporting A. Lukashenko	13.1	24.0	39.6	49.7	27.5	38.9	30.5
For a candidate opposing to A. Lukashenko	34.0	26.2	15.2	16.6	30.0	6.3	17.3
For another candidate	47.8	32.9	30.9	21.9	32.0	30.8	36.7
DA/NA	5.1	16.9	14.3	11.8	10.5	24.0	15.5

Table 14.5. Depending on settlement type

Variant of answer	Settlement type				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
For a candidate supporting A. Lukashenko	13.1	36.1	29.6	28.5	40.2
For a candidate opposing to A. Lukashenko	34.0	17.2	20.0	19.1	19.6
For another candidate	47.8	33.3	35.4	33.6	24.8
DA/NA	5.1	13.4	15.0	18.8	15.4

15. "For who will vote the majority of voters in your opinion?"**Table 15.1. Depending on age**

Variant of answer	All respondents	Age, years						
		18-19	20-24	25-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 +
For a candidate supporting A. Lukashenko	39.5	29.2	35.9	40.1	30.0	32.1	38.0	56.6
For a candidate opposing to A. Lukashenko	16.6	16.7	20.9	18.4	20.5	18.9	14.8	10.4
For another candidate	23.9	27.1	19.6	24.5	27.4	27.9	28.1	15.9
DA/NA	20.0	27.0	23.6	17.0	22.1	21.1	19.1	17.1

Table 15.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (including incomplete)
For a candidate supporting A. Lukashenko	63.2	53.6	35.3	31.9	43.0
For a candidate opposing to A. Lukashenko	11.6	9.8	17.9	20.0	14.3
For another candidate	8.4	16.3	27.7	26.9	21.2
DA/NA	16.8	20.3	19.1	21.2	21.5

Table 15.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	The unemployed, housewives
For a candidate supporting A. Lukashenko	29.3	36.9	29.3	55.1	39.0
For a candidate opposing to A. Lukashenko	21.8	14.1	25.0	12.9	19.5
For another candidate	27.4	26.7	22.8	17.4	20.8
DA/NA	21.5	22.3	22.9	14.6	20.7

Table 15.4. Depending on place of 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
For a candidate supporting A. Lukashenko	13.7	24.8	54.4	60.9	39.1	48.3	50.7
For a candidate opposing to A. Lukashenko	16.2	15.5	12.6	16.0	22.8	9.8	22.0
For another candidate	40.2	39.7	20.5	10.1	23.9	12.1	9.7
DA/NA	29.9	20.0	12.5	13.0	14.2	29.8	17.6

Table 15.5. Depending on settlement type

Variant of answer	Settlement type				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
For a candidate supporting A. Lukashenko	13.7	55.3	36.4	38.7	49.7
For a candidate opposing to A. Lukashenko	16.2	16.5	19.6	13.7	16.9
For another candidate	40.2	11.7	25.7	25.4	18.5
DA/NA	29.9	16.5	18.3	22.1	14.9

16. "Recently the Polish ambassador in Belarus said that his country was ready not only to reduce the cost of the visa, but to cancel completely entrance visas for Belarusians. From now on the solution to this question depends only on the Belarusian authorities, who have to sign a special agreement with the EU. Some people support this initiative, others don't. What's your opinion?"

Table 16.1. Depending on age

Variant of answer	All respondents	Age, years						
		18-19	20-24	25-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 +
I support this initiative	54.4	63.3	70.4	68.7	67.6	52.1	43.0	41.1
I don't support this initiative	16.8	12.2	9.2	14.3	13.0	17.5	21.3	20.7
I'm indifferent to this initiative	24.6	20.4	17.1	12.9	16.8	25.0	29.3	35.6
DA/NA	4.2	4.1	3.3	4.1	2.6	5.4	6.6	2.6

Table 16.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (including incomplete)
I support this initiative	47.9	33.3	52.8	58.6	64.8
I don't support this initiative	20.8	19.0	15.9	14.3	19.8
I'm indifferent to this initiative	28.1	41.8	28.3	21.7	11.9
DA/NA	3.2	5.9	3.0	5.4	3.5

Table 16.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	The unemployed, housewives
I support this initiative	63.3	56.4	67.8	40.3	56.0
I don't support this initiative	12.1	17.1	13.3	22.3	13.3
I'm indifferent to this initiative	19.9	22.2	15.6	33.7	29.3
DA/NA	4.6	4.3	3.3	3.7	1.4

Table 16.4. Depending on place of 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 support this initiative	44.0	50.7	61.1	37.9	63.1	52.3	72.7
I don't support this initiative	13.4	12.9	18.1	35.5	16.2	12.6	13.2
I'm indifferent to this initiative	37.1	31.1	17.1	24.3	18.2	30.5	10.1
DA/NA	5.5	5.3	3.7	2.4	2.5	4.6	4.0

Table 16.5. Depending on settlement type

Variant of answer	Settlement type				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
I support this initiative	44.0	68.0	45.4	54.1	59.3
I don't support this initiative	13.4	14.8	23.9	14.0	17.5
I'm indifferent to this initiative	37.1	15.1	27.1	25.3	19.8
DA/NA	5.5	2.1	3.6	6.6	3.4

17. "On the recent Eastern Partnership Summit in Vilnius Moldova and Georgia signed agreements on joining the free-trade zone with the EU. Now they have a prospect of economic rapprochement with the EU. Belarus remained aside from the process because of the problems with democracy and human rights. Some people think that our country should change its policy and approach the European Union as well. Others disagree with this. What do you think?"

Table 17.1. Depending on age

Variant of answer	All respondents	Age, years						
		18-19	20-24	25-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 +
Belarus should change its policy and approach the EU as well	44.5	60.0	61.2	55.5	57.8	48.2	34.8	24.8
Belarus should not change its policy and approach the EU	21.7	8.0	11.2	15.8	14.1	19.3	25.8	35.4
It doesn't matter to me	26.6	30.0	24.3	22.6	20.9	25.0	28.8	32.6
DA/NA	7.2	2.0	3.3	6.1	7.2	7.5	10.6	7.2

Table 17.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (including incomplete)
Belarus should change its policy and approach the EU as well	21.9	27.5	44.6	47.6	56.0
Belarus should not change its policy and approach the EU	38.5	25.5	19.4	21.0	19.5
It doesn't matter to me	29.2	39.9	28.9	23.8	18.8
DA/NA	10.4	7.1	7.1	7.6	5.7

Table 17.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	The unemployed, housewives
Belarus should change its policy and approach the EU as well	53.5	48.4	63.0	26.1	42.9
Belarus should not change its policy and approach the EU	16.1	19.5	10.9	34.2	15.6
It doesn't matter to me	24.5	23.9	23.9	31.9	32.5
DA/NA	5.9	8.2	2.2	7.8	9.0

Table 17.4. Depending on place of residence

Variant of answer	Region						
	Minsk	Minsk region	Brest and its region	Grodno and its region	Vitebsk and its region	Mogilev and its region	Gomel and its region
Belarus should change its policy and approach the EU as well	37.0	44.6	51.4	37.5	44.9	45.4	51.5
Belarus should not change its policy and approach the EU	19.2	22.3	24.1	22.6	16.2	21.8	26.4
It doesn't matter to me	40.1	25.4	16.7	31.0	34.8	25.9	9.7
DA/NA	3.7	7.7	7.8	8.9	4.1	6.9	12.4

Table 17.5. Depending on settlement type

Variant of answer	Settlement type				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
Belarus should change its policy and approach the EU as well	37.0	55.0	42.5	47.3	41.7
Belarus should not change its policy and approach the EU	19.2	18.2	19.6	20.3	29.2
It doesn't matter to me	40.1	19.2	33.6	21.5	20.1
DA/NA	3.7	7.6	4.3	10.9	9.0

18. "How do you regard the invitation to Russian people to come to Belarus for a permanent residence?"**Table 18.1. Depending on age**

Variant of answer	All respondents	Age, years						
		18-19	20-24	25-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 +
Positively: Belarus needs working hands	23.8	16.3	17.2	16.9	22.4	21.1	30.7	28.5
Negatively: there shouldn't be a lot of strangers	39.0	30.6	40.4	41.2	45.2	37.1	40.5	34.3
It doesn't matter to me	33.3	49.0	41.1	39.2	28.5	37.9	25.8	30.8
DA/NA	3.9	4.1	1.3	2.7	3.9	3.9	3.0	6.4

Table 18.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (including incomplete)
Positively: Belarus needs working hands	26.3	30.7	20.1	21.5	28.7
Negatively: there shouldn't be a lot of strangers	35.8	31.4	39.0	44.4	36.9
It doesn't matter to me	30.5	33.3	36.0	31.0	32.1
DA/NA	7.4	4.6	4.9	3.1	2.3

Table 18.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	The unemployed, housewives
Positively: Belarus needs working hands	21.8	23.8	15.4	27.8	22.1
Negatively: there shouldn't be a lot of strangers	40.9	40.6	39.6	34.2	42.9
It doesn't matter to me	35.2	31.7	40.7	31.9	33.8
DA/NA	2.1	3.9	4.3	6.1	1.2

Table 18.4. Depending on place of residence

Variant of answer	Region						
	Minsk	Minsk region	Brest and its region	Grodno and its region	Vitebsk and its region	Mogilev and its region	Gomel and its region
Positively: Belarus needs working hands	19.2	21.8	17.6	52.7	17.6	14.3	28.2
Negatively: there shouldn't be a lot of strangers	36.0	43.6	49.1	26.0	36.2	44.0	37.4
It doesn't matter to me	43.5	31.1	26.9	16.0	41.7	40.0	28.6
DA/NA	1.3	3.5	6.4	5.3	4.5	1.7	5.8

Table 18.5. Depending on settlement type

Variant of answer	Settlement type				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
Positively: Belarus needs working hands	19.2	26.2	23.3	30.5	21.1
Negatively: there shouldn't be a lot of strangers	36.0	43.4	39.4	33.2	41.9
It doesn't matter to me	43.5	27.6	35.1	32.0	28.9
DA/NA	1.3	2.8	2.2	4.3	8.1

19. "V. Baumgertner, the CEO of Russian company Uralkali, was arrested in Minsk in August. He is accused of endamage of Belarusian company Belaruskali. How do you evaluate this arrest?"

Table 19.1. Depending on age

Variant of answer	All respondents	Age, years						
		18-19	20-24	25-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 +
It's a fair, legal measure	42.7	38.0	34.9	31.5	35.7	41.2	44.9	56.2
It's an unfair, illegal measure	25.2	22.0	27.6	29.5	31.2	29.4	24.5	15.6
DA/NA	32.1	40.0	37.5	39.0	34.1	29.4	30.6	28.2

Table 19.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (including incomplete)
It's a fair, legal measure	55.8	52.6	43.4	38.8	37.2
It's an unfair, illegal measure	13.7	18.8	24.0	26.9	32.1
DA/NA	30.5	28.6	32.6	34.3	30.7

Table 19.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	The unemployed, housewives
It's a fair, legal measure	33.3	42.1	28.3	56.7	36.8
It's an unfair, illegal measure	37.4	22.9	31.5	15.7	23.7
DA/NA	29.3	35.0	40.2	27.6	39.5

Table 19.4. Depending on place of 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's a fair, legal measure	38.7	34.7	42.9	52.1	33.3	48.0	52.0
It's an unfair, illegal measure	34.2	29.3	27.6	27.8	26.3	9.1	16.7
DA/NA	27.1	36.0	29.5	20.1	40.4	42.9	31.3

Table 19.5. Depending on settlement type

Variant of answer	Settlement type				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
It's a fair, legal measure	38.7	39.0	42.3	38.7	51.3
It's an unfair, illegal measure	34.2	22.8	30.5	18.3	20.8
DA/NA	27.1	38.2	27.2	43.0	27.9

20. "How do you think, who is to blame for the "potash conflict"?"

Table 20.1. Depending on age

Variant of answer	All respondents	Age, years						
		18-19	20-24	25-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 +
Belarusian part	13.6	12.0	19.1	17.7	14.4	15.0	12.5	9.2
Russian part	27.3	16.0	22.4	19.7	17.9	22.9	29.1	43.4
Both parts are equally guilty	41.4	48.0	35.5	45.6	47.5	47.1	40.0	32.9
DA/NA	17.7	24.0	23.0	17.0	20.2	15.0	18.4	14.5

Table 20.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (including incomplete)
Belarusian part	6.3	10.5	13.1	15.2	16.4
Russian part	50.5	37.9	28.1	22.4	19.5
Both parts are equally guilty	20.0	37.9	42.0	42.9	47.4
DA/NA	23.2	13.7	16.8	19.5	16.7

Table 20.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	The unemployed, housewives
Belarusian part	20.4	12.1	17.6	8.4	14.5
Russian part	21.0	22.1	14.3	43.9	25.0
Both parts are equally guilty	42.7	45.5	45.1	33.0	43.4
DA/NA	15.9	20.3	23.0	34.7	17.1

Table 20.4. Depending on place of 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
Belarusian part	22.9	19.1	9.7	13.7	9.5	2.9	11.9
Russian part	29.4	28.0	26.3	29.8	30.7	28.2	18.9
Both parts are equally guilty	39.6	34.7	43.8	36.9	43.2	55.7	39.3
DA/NA	8.1	18.2	20.2	19.6	16.6	13.2	29.9

Table 20.5. Depending on settlement type

Variant of answer	Settlement type				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
Belarusian part	22.9	12.3	14.9	9.8	9.4
Russian part	29.4	19.9	30.2	24.7	30.5
Both parts are equally guilty	39.6	49.3	42.0	35.3	40.5
DA/NA	8.1	18.5	12.9	30.2	19.6

OPEN FORUM

In this issue of the IISEPS analytical bulletin under the heading "Open Forum" we continue to publish a selection of data from sociological surveys conducted by our colleagues in foreign countries with our brief comments.

Despite purposeful efforts of the Belarusian leadership to design their own model of development, its uniqueness is relative. This conclusion applies to economic, political, social and other components of the Belarusian model. We believe that the comparative analysis of social processes in other countries will allow readers to better understand the results of researches on the Belarusian society.

POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE SIDES OF THE BREAK-UP OF THE SOVIET UNION

In December a survey on the topic "Did the break-up of the Soviet Union benefit or harm your country?" was conducted by the Gallup Institute in 11 countries that were part of the union. In general residents of these countries are more than twice as likely to think that the break-up harmed their countries than benefited them: 51% vs. 24% (Table 1).

It is noteworthy that Ukraine takes the third place according to the level of negative evaluations (56%). It's 18 points more than Belarus (38%). Why there is such a significant difference between two "sister nations" in the evaluations of the 22-years old events? From our point of view the reason for this is the level of Russian grants to the Belarusian economy, which exceed 15% of the GDP.

Evaluation of the consequences of the break-up of the Soviet Union significantly depends on the age of the respondents (Table 2). The level of negative eva-

Table 1

Distribution of answers to the question: "Did the break-up of the Soviet Union benefit or harm your country?", %

Country	Benefit	Harm	Neither	DA/NA
Total	24	51	15	11
Turkmenistan	62	8	9	22
Kazakhstan	45	25	12	19
Azerbaijan	44	31	8	18
Georgia	37	33	9	21
Tajikistan	27	52	12	10
Moldova	26	42	10	22
Belarus	26	38	15	21
Ukraine	23	56	10	10
Russia	19	55	18	8
Kyrgyzstan	16	61	8	14
Armenia	12	66	10	12

The leader of negative evaluations is Armenia (66%), which suffered a massive military conflict with Azerbaijan in 1991-1994 over the control on Nagorno-Karabakh. The conflict is not settled even today. The border between Armenia and Azerbaijan is closed, relations to Turkey are only formal, and all this negatively influences the state of Armenian economy.

The leader of positive evaluations is Turkmenistan (62%). This country with the population of 4.5 million people (valid data is unknown) takes the fourth place in the world in natural gas reserves. World practice shows, that totalitarian rule, traditional people and significant natural resource royalty make up social systems with a high satisfaction level of the citizens. Precisely this can be observed in the case of Turkmenistan.

evaluations in the elder age group is 2.3-fold than in the younger age group (76% vs. 33%). For the majority of former Soviet Republics the "biggest disaster of XX century" meant the collapse of free public medicine system and the loss of secured pensions. That is why this trend is observed in 10 countries out of 11. The only exception is Georgia, where positive evaluations prevail in all age groups.

More educated respondents are less likely to negatively evaluate the break-up of the Soviet Union. Kyrgyzstan is the exception. The shift from the Soviet Union's centrally planned economy to a free market led to a significant decrease of jobs demanding higher education in this country.

Respondents who say that "most people" in their country are afraid to openly express their political views are more likely to say that the collapse harmed

their country (Table 3). According to the analysts of the Gallup Institute, this suggests the freedom they thought they might have after the fall of the Soviet Union has not materialized – and in some cases, the situation may be even worse. For example, in Tajikistan 61% of those who say most people are afraid also say the breakup hurt their country, compared with 35% of those who say no one is afraid.

Table 2

Distribution of answers to the question: "Did the break-up of the Soviet Union benefit or harm your country?" depending on the age, %

Age	Benefit	Harm	Neither	DA/NA
15-30	30	33	16	20
31-44	29	45	17	9
45-64	19	61	15	5
65 +	11	76	8	5

Table 3

Distribution of answers to the question: "Did the break-up of the Soviet Union benefit or harm your country?" depending on the fear of respondents to openly express their political views, %

Variant of answer	Benefit	Harm	Neither	DA/NA
Most are afraid	23	57	12	9
Many are afraid	20	58	14	9
Someone are afraid	24	53	15	9
No one is afraid	27	45	18	10

Overall, respondents who see opportunities for their children and themselves to succeed are more likely to say the breakup benefited their country (30%) than those who do not. In all countries, respondents who say people in their countries can get ahead through hard work are almost twice as likely to say their country benefited than those who do not think they can get ahead – 29% vs. 17%.

Whatever happened in the past, consider the analysts of the Gallup Institute, the future in these former republics is in the hands of the youth. Governments in these countries would be wise to focus not only on their country's economic prosperity, but also on of an atmosphere where all residents would feel free to speak their minds.

SOCIOLOGY OF MAIDAN

Ukraine is a country with two national identities. The first of these identities was formed after the First World War under the Polish rule. An integral part of this identity is antagonistic attitude towards the Soviet Union, hence towards Russians. The other identity was formed in the Soviet Ukraine, where anti-Soviet propaganda was punished by the death penalty. A Russian is not a stranger, not an enemy for the Ukrainians with the Soviet identity. He's "in". People with this identity fought for the good cause together with Russians in the Second World War.

But despite the conflict both identities are truly Ukrainian. There is no diffusion between them, that is why all modern Ukrainian politicians are either pro-East or pro-West. The situation in Ukraine can be

best defined by the same way that Hegel defines the tragedy: "The tragedy is a conflict not between good and evil but between two goods".

There are three levels of questions in the current conflict. The first level question which directly caused the current crisis is the non-signing of Association Agreement with the EU by the Ukrainian executives on the summit in Vilnius in November 2013.

The second level question is the principal direction of the political and economic integration of Ukraine in the mid-run (the European Union or the Customs Union).

The third level question is the choice of the strategic positioning of Ukraine: the West (the European Union) or the East (Russia).

Let us see the dynamics of electoral preferences of Ukrainians to better understand the current state of minds in the split society (Table 4).

The general trend of the elections' results over the last two decades is evident despite certain volatility. The comparative number of votes for the candidates and parties supported mainly in the East and the South of Ukraine is gradually decreasing, while the number of votes for the candidates and parties supported by the West and by the Center is, on the contrary, gradually increasing.

The evolution of the public opinion about joining the EU was studied by the Razumkov Center during 12 years. Since 2005 the number of supporters of it was gradually increasing despite the noticeable rises and falls. In 2010-2012 the number of the European Integration supporters was unalterably about twice as high as the number of opponents.

However, this massive numerical superiority shouldn't be accepted in all good faith. The grains of the real readiness to act should be separated from the husk of vain declarations. Let's demonstrate it with the answers to the question: "Do you consider yourself as a European?": certainly yes / more likely yes than no – 34.3%, more likely no / certainly no – 55% (The Razumkov Center, May 2013).

Table 4

Number of votes on presidential and parliamentary elections for the candidates and parties supported, on the one hand, mainly by the West and by the Center of Ukraine, and, on the other hand, by the East and by the South, %

Presidential and parliamentary elections	Pres. 1991	Pres. 1994	Parl. 1998	Parl. 2002	Pres. 2004	Parl. 2006	Parl. 2007	Pres. 2010	Parl. 2012
Candidates and parties supported by the West and by the Center	23.2	45.1	19.5	30.8	39.9	36.2	44.9	45.5	49.9
Candidates and parties supported by the East and by the South	61.6	52.2	41.3	33.1	39.3	41.5	39.8	49.0	43.2
Difference	-38.4	-6.9	21.8	-2.3	0.6	-5.3	5.1	-3.5	6.7

Table 5

Dynamics of answering the question: "Does Ukraine need to join the EU?", %

Variant of answer	09'05	12'06	09'07	10'08	11'09	10'10	10'11	12'12
Yes	40.1	48.5	45.7	47.2	44.4	57.9	51.2	48.4
No	36.1	32.0	36.1	30.2	38.3	25.0	30.3	29.2
Difference	4.0	16.5	9.6	17.0	6.1	32.9	20.9	19.2

Table 6

Distribution of answers to the question: "Which direction of integration should Ukraine choose?" depending on the age of respondents, %

Variant of answer	Age (years)					All respondents
	60+	50-59	40-49	30-39	18-29	
Joining the EU	30	38	45	45	54	42
Joining the CU	45	39	28	22	19	31
Difference	-15	-1	+17	+23	+35	+11

* *The Ilko Kucheriv Democratic Initiatives Foundation, May 2013*

Here you see an example of sociology where the 1.5-fold excess of the supporters of European Integration over the supporters of integration with Russia goes side by side with the 1.5-fold excess of citizens not considering them as Europeans over those considering themselves as Europeans!

As for the attitude of Ukrainians to the Association Agreement with the EU, in October 2013 it was supported by 50% of Ukrainians and not supported by 33%. At the same time 48% of respondents were ready to support the joining of the Customs Union, while 36% were opposing it (according to the International research agency IFAK UKRAINE LLC).

Most analytics explain the strengthening of the pro-European integration vector over the independent years by a generational change (Table 5). It's not difficult to understand the optimistic analysts. Young people are more actively oriented towards the West than the elder generations everywhere in the post-Soviet countries.

Young Ukrainians are not an exception. If we follow the data from the eldest age group to the youngest one, we can see that the difference between the supporters of joining the EU and the Customs Union changes from -15 up to +35 (Table 6).

Still one shouldn't overestimate the demographic trend, without rejecting it completely. Belarusian youth has pro-European moods as well and is more active

during the elections. This peculiarity of the youth was documented during the first IISEPS surveys in the beginning of the 90s.

Let's refer to the Table 7 data. The low percentage in the first column for all age groups shouldn't seem surprising. On the first presidential election there were four pro-Soviet candidates opposed to the democratic ones. They had pulled a number of votes off A. Lukashenko. Considering this effect (the second column), we can obtain the standard Belarusian distribution of votes.

It's easy to see that the wave-like dynamics of the electoral support for A. Lukashenko is due not to the demographic factor, but to the state of Belarusian economy. Elections of 1994 are an exception: it was the borderline between two "epochs", and this caused a mass demand for a "savior"-candidate.

Yes, young people more actively support democratic candidates on the elections, and they do prefer joining the European Union to the integration with Russia. But 20 years ago the picture was the same. As times go by the age structure of Belarusian society's preferences changes insignificantly. That means that these are the preferences of certain Belarusians that change. Becoming older they lose their competitive advantage on the labor market and become more and more dependent on the generosity of the paternalistic state.

Table 7

Dynamics of A. Lukashenko's electoral support on the presidential elections of 1994, 2001, 2006 and 2010 depending on the age of the respondents, %

Age	For A. Lukashenko				
	1994	1994*	2001	2006	2010
18-29	22	37	30	37	31
30-39	29	49	26	50	42
40-49	32	57	44	58	52
50-59	39	60	58	67	55
60 +	55	71	81	80	73
All respondents	35	54	48	58	51

* Taking into account the votes for A. Dubko, V. Kebich and V. Novikov

"Maidan of Independence" and surrounding streets of Kiev were full of people on the 8th of December. The total number of protesters amounted to a million of people according to optimistic estimations. Estimations of pessimists were next smaller. Three of the most common reasons that made people come to Maidan are: the severe beating of the protesters on Maidan in the night of the 30th of November (70%); the V. Yanukovich's refusal to sign the Association Agreement with the EU (53.5%); the aspiration to change the life in Ukraine (50%). The aspiration to change the power in Ukraine (39%) was rather well expressed too. The opposition's appeal were a motive for only 5% (!) of the protesters. The same number of protesters came in order to take revenge on the power for everything they had done. (The questioning of the participants was conducted by the The Ilko Kucheriv Democratic Initiatives Foundation and by the Kiev International Institute of Sociology).

Most popular demands among those made on Maidan are: release of all the arrested participants of Maidan, halt of repressions (82%), resignation of the government (80%), resignation of the President V. Yanukovich and carrying pre-term presidential elections (75%), signing of the Association Agreement with the EU (71%), initiation of criminal cases against people guilty of beating demonstrators on Maidan (58%), dissolution of the Verkhovna Rada and carrying pre-term parliamentary elections (56%). A significant share of the participants expressed themselves in favor of initiation of criminal cases against all corrupted officials (50%), general increase of the life level of people (47%), release of Y. Timoshenko (38%) and changing the Constitution and going back to the constitutional reform of 2004, which was limiting the power of the president (38%).

There were 50% of Kievans and 50% of out-of-town visitors on Maidan. The absolute majority of the participants of Maidan (92%) came independently. Arrival of 6% of respondents was organized by a public organization or a social movement; arrival of 2% of respondents was organized by one of the political parties. 92% of participants do not belong to any political party, public organization or social movement. 4% of respondents are members of political parties, 3.5% are participants of public organizations and 1%

– of social movements.

The absence of mass protests in Belarus is usually explained by the absence of charismatic leaders and inability of political parties' staff offices to generate ideas consolidating the protest electorate. But the surveys quoted above contradict these explanations. Mass protests are derived from the state of power and society. The historian V. Buldakov said: "Riot is not a conceptual opposition to any power, but an attempt to escape the power which doesn't frighten anymore". Belarusian power is consolidated and therefore has the resource to constantly frighten the society. Ukrainian power had never had this resource. Thus the Maidan phenomenon. This is a purely Ukrainian genre of a group political holiday, when the participants feel that they are a European nation.

THUS PASSES THE GLORY OF THE WORLD

According to a survey of the Levada-Center, the share of residents who are ready to vote for V. Putin on the presidential elections amounts to 47% (Table 8). This number decreased by 8% since two years. This is caused by the dissatisfaction of the power, by the natural tiredness of the constant presence of the same principal character and by the increase of political competition. However the level of support of V. Putin is still very high (though not as high as it had been) and it can easily lead to a victory in the first ballot.

Another case is the presidential rating of the Prime Minister D. Medvedev. Five years ago 24% of respondents were ready to vote for him. Two years ago, after the news on the casting, the figure was 12%. Now his level of support does not exceed 1%, so to say it is within the level of statistical error. D. Medvedev keeps his senior position in the power system, but he has no more prospects of a public politician. The Putin-Medvedev tandem is becoming a matter of the past as well.

Here is a quotation from the editorial of the "Nezavisimaya Gazeta" by way of a comment: "Rating of Medvedev, which is next to nothing, means that the ruling elite don't promote its politicians, who could be able to find or at least to look for the understanding with the liberal voters. There was a demand for it

Table 8

Distribution of answers to the question: "If presidential elections were next Sunday, for whom would you vote?", % (an open question)

Variant of answer	11'99	11'02	11'05	11'08	11'11	11'13
Vladimir Putin	48	70	63	56	55	47
Gennadiy Zyuganov	18	11	5	6	14	17
Vladimir Zhirinovskiy	4	2	5	5	11	12
Sergey Shoygu	4	1	2	<1	–	7
Alexei Navalny	–	–	–	–	–	5
Mikhail Prokhorov	–	–	–	–	–	5
Sergey Mironov	–	<1	–	–	3	2
Dmitry Medvedev	–	–	–	24	12	1
Grigory Yavlinsky	5	2	1	–	1	1
None of the above	4	6	10	4	–	–
Others	17	8	14	3	3	3

before the casting and the mass protests in Moscow, when it seemed that politics can exist only within the circle of power, and thus ruling elite needed two faces: a conservative, "close to the people" one (Putin), and a liberal, "urban" one (Medvedev). Now it's not important anymore. The power wants to defeat the protégés of the liberal electorate and not to overpersuade them. The system became simpler".

Russia, as well as Belarus, is a country of a "unique politician". He's the only one who has the moral right to dispose of resources, and as long as the "unique politician" succeeds in this, no one can give him a good run for his money. D. Medvedev didn't leave the circle of power, but the power doesn't need him anymore to defeat liberals, and opposition doesn't consider him as a leader capable to achieve a real renewal of the elite. So the opposition places the stakes on their own candidates, more radical and less integrated in the existing power. In this context the rating of A. Navalny, which exceeded the bounds of a statistical error for the first time, is quite noteworthy.

S. Shoygu has the highest rating among the members of the "power vertical". Certain members of the Federation Council publicly suggest promoting him to the First Vice Prime Minister. However, electoral rating for a minister is more of a disadvantage than of an advantage. That is why S. Shoygu himself constantly emphasizes that he had never had political ambitions. He's proud of working in the team of V. Putin, he considers his current position as an important mission and he's ready to become a chief ranger is presidents wishes that.

An ideal model for the so called "Russian power" is a model when the only public politician is V. Putin and other members of the team are just loyal technical characters. In this case the successor will be

someone who commands a high level of loyalty. It is important that his rating should be not his own but delegate: in other words, V. Putin should share with his successor his own political score points. That is the way which was used when D. Medvedev was slated as a future president.

The model of "Russian power" is stable only if the electoral rating of the "unique politician" is high enough. But V. Putin is losing his popularity among Russian, and this negative for him trend is documented not only by the Levada-Center, but by the pro-Kremlin All-Russian Public Opinion Research Center as well. Thus, while in 2007 56% of respondents called V. Putin an "energetic, decisive and determined", in October 2013 only 33% of respondents think so. Even fewer Russians (22% in 2013 vs. 36% in 2007) consider the head of state as a farsighted politician. The same amount of respondents thinks that he ensures stability while in 2007 the figure was 42%. Twice as little of Russians as before think that the President is able to sort out the mess in the country (17% in 2013 vs. 37% in 2007).

According to the sociologist L. Byzov there are two reasons for this dynamics. Firstly, there is the factor of moral tiredness, as any leader who rules that long provokes a number of complains. Citizens instinctively begin to look for an alternative, but do not find it, and this makes them even angrier. Secondly, during the last few years a number of negative trends emerged because of the fact that V. Putin lost his control over the elite. In place of being a ruler over the elites who can adjust a conflict in favor of the society, V. Putin became a hostage of certain groups and started to bulldozer some very ill-conceived decisions in favor of those groups. Thus he gets at odds with complete social groups which commanded loyalty to him before.

BOOKSHELF

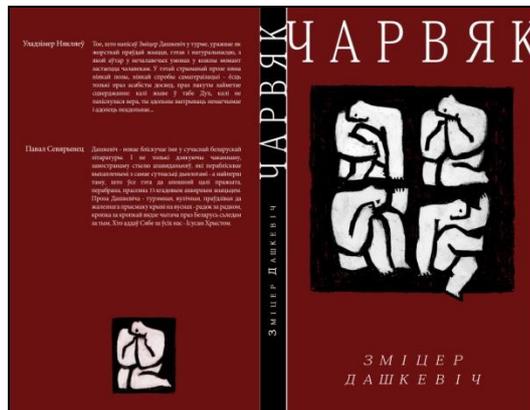
Zmitser Dashkevich. "A Worm". – Vilnius, 2013, 164 pp.

I have two criteria when I evaluate a text that claims artistic value: 1) if I like it or not and, therefore, if I want to read it further; 2) if I see a movie when I read the text.

For me both criteria were satisfied in Zmitser Dashkevich's nonfictional description of his adventurous journey behind the bars. I found the reading interesting; I put aside, or, to be more specific, forgot a number of my occupations; and I was watching a movie in my mind while reading the book. I think that Dashkevich's text is a good base for a feature film. I had written these lines when I began reading the book, and when I had almost finished it, I had read that author really considers (kiddingly) receiving an Oscar for his script.

If I try to describe Dashkevich's phenomenon in depth, I will have to say that his text is a tissue of images. In my opinion, it could even claim to be a poem, just written as a blank verse, without rhyme but with a precisely perceived rhythm. And this rhythm is set by author's heart, which beats more rhythmically not when it feels a physical and moral pain, but when author stifles from the smothering of Belarusian society and suffers from the impossibility to lay his bare heart before God.

What's singular for this text is that the well-known problems of our society, reflected here in characters of prisoners, are seen through the mind and soul of a religious person. I have almost never met such a spiritual tinge in modern literature. Author gives the problematic psychological situations not in a moth-eaten primitive way like "here I am, I believe in God, and you all are sinners, and all this is just tough for you". On the contrary, he uses a particular kind of irony which he turns against his belief and himself – and this self-irony introduces a specific Belarusian context to the text. Author finds funny elements in dramatic and psychological confrontations of characters, and thus he shows the "Belarusianness" of people, even though they are criminals. The ability to laugh at themselves and at circumstances is the basic trait of Belarusians. When people get to the border of humanity destruction, only laughter can save them. This is something that brings together Belarusians and Jews. In the text the phenomena of irony and aggression are described in a very natural way. Dashkevich finds these phenomena in his jailmates, and he looks



through the prism of laughter at prisons, imprisoned people, and wardens and at the whole national system.

Description of people and events by means of analyzing their choices is another criterion of artistic value of this non-fiction work. This is done with a masterly skill as if Zmitser was a professional writer and went to prison to make researches for a fictional book. The problem of choice is analyzed both

in simple everyday situations (like when a recent enemy, who a moment ago wanted to kick the tar out of the author, calms down, understands his mistake and even shares his grub) and in situations which are much more particular (like political leaders, who spoke publicly the Belarusian language when they were free, and in prison no one had ever heard a Belarusian word from them). And the author poses a rhetorical question: how can we revive Belarusianness, if even the "initiated" people can speak Belarusian only in the offices of their parties?

Another singularity of the text lies in demonstration of the way how the choice of author's companions of one or another deed to perform passes through a sieve of its own experience, of its friend's experience, and finally concludes in the choice of Bible characters like David. Author himself takes part in this when he helps his friend to make a choice, and he does this in a Socratic way, subtly guiding the hesitating person through the Biblical choice.

In short, the book is a history of a young believer who is thrown in hell by devil's acolytes in order to destroy his belief in God and his love to a woman. But he manages to keep his belief and his love; he doesn't turn into a victim to take pity of. He finds the force to be a defender of sacrificed souls, to give help and advice to those who also fight against devil's acolytes and eventually defeat the satanic force and save several human souls, directing them to the way of love to God.

The first encounter with the Devil's acolyte required courage and will from Dashkevich. Here is the author's description:

"Everything started right after my arrival to Mozyr, right after the first call to the governor. When the penal prison governor heard that I was a protestant that made him squirm:

"What, a Baptist?! I thought you had something on your shoulders, and you're just a Baptist – a misfit, a betrayer of Orthodoxy, of your parents, of your ancestors' belief! Now I see!"

"Why am I a betrayer?" I asked calmly despite the aggression from the very beginning.

"Cause all these sects are inoculated by the West to oppose the true Orthodox belief!" burst up the governor, punctuating every second word with obscenities. "I'm a religious person as well, look," he smacked his medals, "I've received an Orthodox decoration for the belief, we've built a church in the camp, Metropolitan Philaret himself came to consecrate it. And I've always turned the sectarians from the door, though there are lots of you, walking with Bibles and wishing to get in the camp. But no one will find his way as long as I'm here, I will not let this disease spread!"

Another revelation for Dashkevich was a meeting with the Devil's advocate, when author tried to appeal to a representative of the satanic system:

"I confirm veracity if this information. What's the point to repeat all those offenses: "Belcher! Faggot! Jerk!" and so on, and so forth. I will solely remark that I haven't seen such barbarity even among the prisoners who spent here 20 or 30 years, who studied in school only a couple of years. And here we see majors and colonels – almost generals – the big league of the militia, after universities and academies, who behave like this".

"You should understand," answered with a sad smile the young lieutenant, who himself probably has completed his studies just recently, "people work here for many years, they get soaked by this subculture".

This explanation impressed me, I admit.

"I understand, it's not my first time", I said with the same sad smile and added to myself: "Maybe this one will get to the truth?"

These citations show how artistically author describes the problem of coexistence of the Orthodox Church and its leaders with "orthodox atheists" and evil acolytes in militia. When a monster in a military uniform beats a man and at the same time feels proud of his decorations from churchmen, we cannot but bother about the future of our country, our children and grandchildren. But author leads readers to this feeling not by means of procurator's accusations, but by using literary devices of dialog description. From this emerges the impression, that evil acolytes are not only those who wear military uniform, but also those who wear copes and give medals to the "Orthodox atheist" for the spiritual renovation.

From the psychological point of view one of the most interesting peculiarities of Dashkevich's text is the natural demonstration of myth genesis in a community isolated from information. This genesis of myths is demonstrated in a form of dialogs mixed with true facts.

"No, blokes, that's Luka's last term, he won't last anymore. Do you see what's going on?! Europe cancelled the world hockey championship!" dumbfound-

ed everyone Denizen. And preempting questions about veracity of the fact, added: "I heard it by myself, on the radio!"

"No way?!" wondered merrily someone. "Gonna be a lotta fun!"

"That's right! They should have blocked everything at once! Luka would have had a stroke on the spot!"

"Yup, on the spot!" agreed another prisoner. "Now he's fussing over his ice palaces like an old hen! He wouldn't have survived that! I bet he wouldn't!" added this merry chap, and a number of voices started to giggle.

"Calm down, no one can ever do anything here. And if someone rises high, he will end up like Zakharenko or Gonchar", someone pointed out his deep knowledge of Belarusian reality, "we had a book in the camp, it was called "The Death Squad". The governor gave it to us. It's just horrible what's written there, how the shoot us..."

"Bullshit!" another gabby added some emotions to the electrified atmosphere.

"If that was bullshit, Ignatovich wouldn't be serving his whole-life tariff here. And it's all the same in the movies, you remember that one..."

"The Godfather?" prompted Denizen.

The problem of leadership in the opposition, the most disputable and, in fact, a politological one is demonstrated in Dashkevich's text through the evaluations of zeks imprisoned together with presidential candidates. Author is not hiding his own attitude to those leaders, but he shows it sideways, without imposing his point of view.

The attitude to love and to a woman is described in a very down-to-earth way, without baby talks. The text reveals a value-oriented approach to family formation, which was traditionally common for Belarusians before the immoral power and people in power destroyed it.

Author's soul is crying about assassinations of unborn children in Belarus by way of abortions. His way of comparing how current officials in power murder children with the ways Hitler's and Stalin's people killed people makes us look differently at the criminal basis of the present system, on its anti-Christian essence. Thus author leads readers to reflections on time-honored traditions of Belarusian families, which usually counted many children.

There is a great number of descriptions of people of an evil sort. This is naturally connected to the specifics of the population of the prison and of the whole Republic as well, because author compares it to a camp. Despite all this, examples from Bible, cited by Dashkevich, sound like a hymn to a human nature:

The Apostle Paul knew about this inclination of human hearts and warned us: "Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good" (Romans 12:21). These words may seem very simple, as we've often heard them in our families, schools, read them in philosophical books. But it's so difficult to answer the evil with the good in our everyday life. And you can find the force to act so only if the source of Divine benevolence and love lives in your heart:

"Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love" (1 John 4:7-8).

If one of us wants to know God, these words should be his guiding light in the battle with evil of no matter which system: system of thievery, system of militia or any other. Because only love can defeat the pro-Soviet ideology and atheism, despotism and lawlessness. Only love for your neighbors can stop this evil ruling on our tormented land.

The adventures of Dashkevich in prisons somehow reminded me of biblical scenes. Christ, after he was crucified, dead and buried, descended into hell, saw the agonies of humans and went back to heaven, having saved people's souls by his sacrifice.

Something similar happened to the author when he descended into the hell of orthodox atheists. He describes it with brilliance. Unlike Christ, Dashkevich is not hiding weakness of his soul, his peccability. You can read in the book that the strongest torment for him is not hunger, when demoniac governors starve people, not psychological or physiological tortures. The strongest torment, the strongest pain in his soul appears when he cannot pray God, when his body and soul are so exhausted, that he feels himself as a worm. Still in the book you can see that author is not just a worm, but a worm able to grow wings and soul, and keep in his soul love to God. And this Dashkevich's love to humans and God gives the pos-

sibility to regenerate wings of other worms and to bring them closer to the Author. The fact that this miracle is possible and happened in hell is probably the main moral value of the book.

This has a consequence. Author is not considering himself a celestial. He's a normal young guy, and he cares for old people and even protects them as if they were his own father:

"What's the most surprising is that those new-sprung fighters with the inhuman crappy militia system are reasoning like this: "Those porks are bastards (some officer gave one of them a slap when we were escorted for blood tests), they are torturing people, they beat them, they humiliate them..." And right after this, in a couple of minutes, they start to fling dirt at an old man who had no force to get up from the floor and make some steps in the cell. I told them: "Guys, you reproach policemen lawlessness and inhumanity, but are you different? How can someone, who suffers humiliation every day, humiliate other people?" The prisoners went off the boil and didn't touch that old man anymore".

This guy needed courage to protect that old man from the band of prison sadists. He shows his courage since the first steps of the prison hell ordeal. God grant he doesn't lose his courage and his faith because of his comrades' betrayals.

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