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**Dear readers!**

*In the latest issue of the analytical bulletin "IISEPS News" we offer to your attention materials reflecting the most interesting results of the Institute researches in the third quarter of 2015.*

*Our researches demonstrate that financial well-being of Belarusians in general became worse again. Thus, the number of those, whose financial standing worsened, increased. Average per capita income (including salaries, pensions, social benefits and other incomes) significantly decreased: from \$ 240 in June down to \$ 200 in September (a year ago this figure amounted to \$ 288). The number of respondents who think that Belarusian economy is in crisis exceeded 75%. Anxiety for the future is not passing away: only every fifth respondent expects that socio-economic situation in the country will improve in the near future, while every third expects a worsening of the situation. Probably, this is the reason why more than half of Belarusians approve of the fact that Russia transferred another credit to Belarus.*

*Belarusians' attitude to the state power remains quite skeptical. Indices of trust to almost all of state institutions except the President remain negative. The number of those who think, that political life in Belarus is developing towards democracy, decreased; majority of respondents keep talking about "reinstallation of past Soviet orders" or even about "formation of authoritarianism, dictatorship". Evaluating the recent law "On battling corruption", majority of respondents thinks that "it won't influence the level of corruption" and "the level of corruption will only increase". Although the number of those who blame Belarusian powers and the President for the crisis significantly decreased, almost half of respondents think that the state of affairs in our country is developing in the wrong direction, while only a third thinks that the direction is right. However, the readiness for changes in society is still quite low.*

*Attitude to the state power and its opponents is best reflected in the main political event of the year – presidential campaign. Majority of those who expect changes connect these changes to elections. 72.5% of respondents expressed their readiness to vote; only 15.5% support boycott. According to the results of all post-election surveys the turnout was higher than expected, so it makes sense to suppose that the required barrier of 50% of voters will be exceeded in these elections too. Peace and stability turned out to be the biggest problem influencing the choice between the candidates. Electoral rating of the President increased up to 45.7%, trust rating remained at 47%. According to the closed question 17.9% of voters are ready to vote for the candidate from the civil campaign "People's Referendum" T. Korotkevich, while according to the open question this share amounted to 7.2%. Total electorate of "opposition outside elections" did not exceed 8%. Real results depend on the turnout, and a simple calculation demonstrates that if people who expressed their readiness to vote will actually vote, then 45.7% of votes for A. Lukashenko will turn into 64%, and 17.9% for T. Korotkevich will turn into 25%. Three thirds of respondents believe that the President will be elected in the first ballot; almost 58% of respondents agreed that the results of the elections are predetermined; only 36.4% of respondents think that conditions for all candidates are equal, while almost a half of them disagreed with this. At the same time almost 48% believe that these elections will be free and just, and 35% don't think so. Half of respondents think that official results of the elections will be trustworthy; one third of respondents believe in the opposite. Answering the question "If you believe that the results of presidential elections would be falsified, how would you react to this?" almost a half of respondents said that they "will accept them because it will be impossible to change them"; more than a quarter of respondents chose the variant "I won't believe these results and will be very upset, but I won't take part in mass protests"; and only 10% will "take part in mass protests to try to change these results".*

*Isolationist moods still prevail in foreign-policy orientations of Belarusians. The share of "Euro-Belarusians" slightly decreased, while the share of "Belo-Russians" slightly increased. Over 28% of respondents think that people in Belarus treat Western countries with respect or sympathy, 21% – with concern, 15% – with disregard or fear, and 32.8% – without any special feeling. Among the current candidates the most pro-European electorate chooses T. Korotkevich, the most pro-Russian one – A. Lukashenko. The idea of the "Russian World" is regarded positively by 35% of Belarusians, 41% of respondents are indifferent towards it, and 16% are negative. Evaluating the accession of Armenia and Kyrgyzstan to the Eurasian Economic Union in 2015, 55.3% of respondents said that it reinforced the union, expanded the shared market and increased the political weight of the union. 32.6% of respondents think that poor countries were added, and other participants of the union would be obliged to help them. Ukrainian-Russian crisis remains one of the most important factors influencing the changes in foreign-policy orientations of Belarusians. It should be noted that sympathies of the majority of Belarusians are still with Russia. Although the level of support has slightly decreased, majority of Belarusians continue to support Russia in this conflict.*

*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 as a plain count up according to the main socio-demographic characteristics.*

*In our "Open Forum" rubric we continue to present the most interesting results of the latest surveys of our colleagues from neighboring countries.*

*As usual, your feedback and comments are welcome!*

**IISEPS' Board**

## MONITORING OF PUBLIC OPINION IN BELARUS

In September of 2015 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.

### SEPTEMBER – 2014

#### The closer elections are, the higher is the rating

According to A. Lukashenko's statement made on the 28<sup>th</sup> of August, "this log has another end". In this case under "this log" we understand maximal concentration of power in one pair of hands, and under "another end" we understand the responsibility for the negative occurrences in economy.

Table 1 demonstrates that in September 2011 the head of the state was an indisputable leader in the list of entities responsible for the crisis. He was ahead of the government by 19.9 points! Let us remind you that in 2011 Belarusian ruble was devaluated triple-fold, and the price hike exceeded 100%. Such a "success" of Belarusian model was a consequence of realization of social obligations, taken by the government on the fourth All-Belarusian People's Assembly in 2006.

The fifth presidential campaign in Belarus is held amid the decrease of household disposable income of people. In particular, according to Belstat, over January-July 2015 incomes had dropped by 5.1% in comparison with the same period of 2014. It would seem that in these conditions a return to the situation of 2011 should be expected. However, September survey didn't confirm this expectation. It recorded a position swap between the main parties responsible for the crisis: the President – 34.1%, the government – 40.5%.

This didn't happen due to an increase of responsibility of the government, but due to a decrease of the President's responsibility by 10.1 points! The level of responsibility of the government is stable. It fluctuates between the limits of a statistic error.

This means that the new social contract is functioning, and it's functioning quite efficiently. This is the first conclusion drawn from Table 1. The second con-

**Table 1**

**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	12'12	12'13	09'15
The President	61.2	41.0	45.0	34.1
The government	41.3	39.1	42.0	40.5
The USA	16.3	14.5	15.5	15.9
Europe	12.0	10.9	11.8	21.5
Parliament	11.9	17.2	19.6	14.0
People	10.0	8.7	16.3	11.8
Russia	7.3	7.5	6.6	10.7
Opposition	5.0	11.5	13.1	6.6
DA	13.4	11.5	8.6	10.9

\* The table is sorted according to the first column

During the years of relative economic stability (see the second and the third column of Table 1) the difference between the "responsibility ratings" of A. Lukashenko and the government was minimal. Nevertheless, the first position was always occupied by the head of state.

clusion is that despite the fact that there is no massive mobilization campaign (note that the power had decided not to hold another All-Belarusian People's Assembly), the mobilization of electorate happened nevertheless.

We should also emphasize a significant growth of "responsibility rating" of Europe. It's likely caused by

everyday TV images of refugees from Northern Africa and Middle East countries.

The "responsibilities" of Parliament (from 19.6% in December 2013 down to 14% in September 2015), people (from 16.3% down to 11.8%) and opposition (from 13.1% down to 6.6%) significantly decreased.

Parliament never had any important role in Belarusians' lives. Majority of electorate perceive state as a big family, and the head of state as "bat'ka" ("father"). There is no place for the Parliament in this scheme, as well as there is no place for numerous state officials. Nevertheless, Belarusian parliamentarians take part in the formation of informational background. However, on the threshold of presidential elections, their input became significantly smaller. Thus the results of the survey.

**Table 2**

**Dynamics of electoral rating of President A. Lukashenko, %**

Date	12'13	03'14	06'14	09'14	12'14	03'15	06'15	09'15
Rating	34.8	39.8	39.8	45.2	40.0	34.2	38.6	45.7

**Table 3**

**Dynamics of trust rating of President A. Lukashenko, %**

Variant of answer	12'13	03'14	06'14	09'14	12'14	03'15	06'15	09'15
Trust	37.7	45.9	49.6	53.5	49.9	48.8	49.0	47.0
Don't trust	47.5	44.1	39.0	33.3	35.6	39.7	39.1	37.1
DA	14.8	10.0	11.4	13.2	14.5	11.5	11.9	15.9

As for the decrease of people's responsibility, it would be more correct to call it a return to the habitual value. The thing is that prior to the December 2013 survey A. Lukashenko quite sharply suggested that people were responsible for the crisis ("It's your own fault!"). Some of his supporters agreed with this, and it was registered by the survey.

Double decrease of "responsibility rating" of the opposition is the result of propaganda relaxation during the period of electoral campaign. Phrases like "enemies of the state" and "the fifth column" have disappeared from the vocabulary of A. Lukashenko and official propagandists.

Under the new circumstances electoral rating of A. Lukashenko gained 7.1 points over a quarter, and now equals to 45.7% (Table 2). This is the maximal value over the last five years. The previous maximum was registered in December 2010 – 53%.

Among the respondents who answered the question on participation in the forthcoming elections "yes, sure" A Lukashenko's rating amounted to 73.3%, "rather yes" – 40.9%, "rather no" – 19.5%, "sure, no" – 5.1%, and 23.2% among those who gave no answer. Summary rating in the first two groups amounted to 57.1%.

In June summary rating was lower by 7.5 points – 49.6%. At the same time the distribution according to groups was as follows: "yes, sure" – 57%, "rather yes" – 42.6%, "rather no" – 17.3%, and "sure, no" – 4.8, "don't know" – 17.1%. Thus, the main input in A. Lukashenko's rating growth was made by re-

spondents who have no doubts about their participation in the voting.

In September along with the open question on rating (Table 1) we also asked respondents a closed question about rating. This question listed five possible candidates: A. Lukashenko, T. Korotkevich, S. Gaydukevich, V. Tereshchenko and N. Ulakhovich. The switch from an open question to a closed one didn't change A. Lukashenko's rating. This testifies on a high level of mobilization of potential supporters of the head of state.

This conclusion is also confirmed by the dynamics of trust rating of A. Lukashenko (Table 3). As a rule, trust rating is higher than electoral rating. In June 2015, for example, the surplus amounted to 10.4 points. In September these two ratings were almost

equal, and this became possible due to the growth of electoral rating.

IISEPS asks an open question "If presidential elections in Belarus were held tomorrow, who would you vote for?" to define the electoral rating. The question seems to be rather straightforward. However, in absence of real electoral campaign not all respondents trusting A. Lukashenko express their readiness to vote for him. This is a kind of a protest ("a finger behind the back"). It's not difficult to find a cause for such a protest on everyday level.

However, during the electoral campaign personal resentments become less topical. People, who choose not only a head of state, but a "bat'ka" (these people are in majority among Belarusian electors), take their decision based on basic values. Dissatisfaction with the roof which wasn't fixed may influence electoral behavior when a deputy of a local council is being chosen. Of course, you can take offense with "bat'ka" too, but he doesn't stop to be a "bat'ka", so these offenses don't provoke a need for alternative.

### **Between democracy, dictatorship and chaos**

Many years protest potential of Belarusian society remains the same. Let us remind you, that answers to the question of Table 4 don't record real readiness to protest, this is only declarative readiness. So we don't advise you to turn these percents into real numbers of people protesting in the streets of Belarusian towns.

**Table 4**

**Dynamics of answering the question: "If there are protests against the worsening of financial standing in your city (region), are you ready to take part in them?", %**

Variant of answer	09'07	12'08	09'11	03'14	03'15	09'15
Yes	17.4	18.6	14.7	22.9	15.4	17.3
No	72.7	71.8	73.9	68.3	72.6	71.5
DA/NA	9.9	9.6	11.4	8.8	12.0	11.2

**Table 5**

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

Variant of answer	04'06	10'10	06'11	12'12	12'13	06'14	09'15
Yes	18.5	14.9	25.8	21.3	18.9	17.8	20.7
No	73.3	72.4	60.3	65.8	73.5	70.6	68.8
DA/NA	8.2	12.7	13.9	12.9	7.6	11.6	10.5

**Table 6**

**Trust rating of oppositional parties, %**

Date	12'12	12'13	12'14	03'15	06'15	09'15
Trust rating	20.0	15.8	16.0	18.8	13.4	13.1

Economic crises don't lead to a growth of protests moods in Belarus, despite a viewpoint which is popular among oppositional politicians, analytics and journalists. The minimal value of positive answers (the third column), recorded in December 2011, is a good proof of this. And this is amid the situation when only 5.1% of respondents noted that their financial well-being improved, while 73.7% noticed a degradation of their financial position.

It is natural that youths more decisively declare their readiness to protest: 24.8% in the group between 18-29 years old, 12.6% in the group of 60 years old and older. Here are the figures for the opponents and supporters of A. Lukashenko: 25.3% vs. 12.2%. The fact that answers of two extreme age groups coincide with the answers of people with opposing political views is not accidental.

Comparison of the answers to the questions of Tables 4 and 5 during the crisis year of 2011 permits us to uncover a surprising paradox: economic crisis, as we've just noted it, leads to a decrease of protest moods, but at the same time it increases the share of people with oppositional moods. It is possible that these opposite courses are caused by the fact that the answers to the first question reflect people's readiness to act (even if it is declarative readiness). But majority of Belarusians tend to react to external negative challenges not by seeking new solutions, but by passive accommodation (negative adaptation). As for the growth of oppositional moods, this is only an indicator of diffuse dissatisfaction, nothing more.

You should note the inconsistency between the trust rating of A. Lukashenko and the share of citizens who state that they oppose their current power: 37.1% of respondents don't trust the head of state; only 20.7% consider themselves in opposition. That is to say that it is easier to express dissatisfaction with

someone specific than to change one's own political identity.

Trust rating of oppositional parties decreased by 5.7 points over 2015 (Table 6). Today it is close to its historical minimum. Thus, discussions about the apathy of Belarusian society, which are actively being held between the party activists, are not without foundation. However, this apathy is one-sided, it doesn't relate to A. Lukashenko, as his trust rating had increased.

The answers to the question of Table 7 permit us to evaluate the chances of candidates in the forthcoming presidential elections. (V. Tereshchenko is present 7th in the list, although he was not registered after the procedure of signature checking. This is due to the fact that the survey was prepared before we had final information about candidates' registration.)

8.1% of Belarusians expressed their wish to vote for the might-have-been candidate. Who will receive these votes now? There is no clear answer to this question, of course. Nevertheless, we can suppose that the "main batch" of potential votes for an economist with a US university diploma will go to the candidate from the "People's Referendum" campaign T. Korotkevich.

If our supposition justifies, then it will mean that electoral resource of the only oppositional candidate will amount to nearly 25%, i.e. the same share that candidates of opposition received during all previous presidential elections. Then this is the best illustration of stability of the structure of Belarusian electorate.

However this is only a supposition. If we rely on the results from Table 7, then 17.9% of T. Korotkevich is the share of all respondents. If we recalculate it taking into account only those, who declared their readiness to take part in the elections, we'll have 9.8%.

Table 7

**Distribution of answers to the question: "On the 20<sup>th</sup> of July the CEC closed the registration of initiative groups for nomination of candidates for the post of the President. If the names of politicians listed below are in the voting paper, who will you vote for?"**

Variant of answer	%
Alexander Lukashenko, the President of Republic of Belarus	45.7
Tatyana Korotkevich, the candidate from the "People's Referendum" campaign	17.9
Sergei Gaydukevich, the leader of the Liberal Democrat Party	11.4
Victor Tereschenko, economist	8.1
Nikolai Ulakhovich, the ataman of Belarusian Cossacks	3.6
NA	13.3

Table 8

**Dynamics of answering the question: "What is the direction of development of political life in Belarus?", %**

Variant of answer	09'10	12'11	06'14	09'15
Development of democracy	24.7	16.5	30.0	26.8
Reinstallation of past Soviet order	19.9	16.5	23.6	22.2
Formation of authoritarianism, dictatorship	29.4	31.7	23.1	21.8
Intensification of chaos, anarchy, coup d'état threat	7.3	19.5	10.6	13.1
DA/NA	18.7	15.8	12.7	16.1

Table 9

**Dynamics of answering the question: "If you knew a person who could successfully compete with A. Lukashenko in the next presidential elections, would you vote for him or for A. Lukashenko?", %**

Variant of answer	12'11	09'15
I would vote for this candidate	44.6	38.7
I would vote for A. Lukashenko	21.7	32.3
I don't know yet, I would decide depending on the circumstances	33.4	28.1
NA	0.3	0.9

Let us turn to Table 8 now. Despite the fact that A. Lukashenko is running for the fifth presidential term, the share of respondents who are sure that democracy is developing in Belarus, did not decrease: 24.7% in September 2010, 26.8% in September 2015.

5.9% of A. Lukashenko's opponents and 48.1% of his supporters believe that political life in Belarus is developing according to a democratic path. It is natural, that we need to raise a question on the meaning that respondents put into the term "democracy". As a possible answer let us quote a statement which the head of Belarusian state made to the UN General Assembly on the 27<sup>th</sup> of September 2015: "We have no maternal mortality, and child mortality rate is the lowest in the world. This is democracy, and not what our western teachers try to impose to us".

There is no prevailing opinion in the answers to the question on the direction of political life in Belarus. There is nothing surprising about it. This is a specific trait of imitational democracy. For those, who cannot or do not want to notice its imitational character, regime appears to be democratic. For the people capable of reflexion, formation of authoritarianism and dictatorship is evident. It's a pity that the share of those people over 5 years decreased from 29.4% down to 21.8%.

### Portrait of an ideal candidate

A. Lukashenko, four times winner of presidential campaigns and the only real pretender to win on the 11<sup>th</sup> of October, however has one serious contender. This is an unknown candidate, an invisible man. Nothing is known about him, but this didn't prevent him from having a rating two times as high as the rating of the real head of state (44.6% vs. 21.7%, see Table 9) during the survey conducted in December 2011, in the end of the financial crisis in Belarus.

In September 2015 under the circumstances of a real electoral campaign the unknown candidate's rating lost 5.9 points, while A. Lukashenko's rating inversely gained 11.6 points. However the positions did not switch. The unknown candidate kept his leadership.

When the variant "I don't know yet, I would decide depending on the circumstances" is not present, the unknown candidate's rating increases even more. In particular, in March 2013 69.1% of respondents were ready to vote for him, while only 30% of respondents were ready to vote for A. Lukashenko.

This *sociology* constantly makes oppositional politicians believe that it is possible to find a real candidate to replace the invisible man. It's possible that

regular large-scale campaigns destined to find a "common" candidate are stimulated by the popularity of the unknown candidate.

If we use biblical terms, "everything is meaningless, a chasing after the wind". Electoral potential of the unknown candidate is generated by the fact that he is unknown, so that respondents construct their own image of the candidate. No real candidate, no matter how many advantages he would have, will ever satisfy all people who are not satisfied with the policy of A. Lukashenko.

reelected for the fifth time, as his monopoly for the "real power" has only grown according to electorate. 53.3% of his supporters and only 5.9% of his opponents agree with this.

You should also note the last row of Table 9. In September 2001 the share of respondents who had difficulties in choosing the answer amounted to 26.1%. This is not a "misprint". The high share of "DA" was registered in answers to most questions in the nineties and the beginning of aughties. This phenomenon should probably be regarded as a *left-over*

**Table 10**

**Dynamics of answering the question: "Why are you ready to vote for this politician?", %**  
(more than one answer is possible)

Variant of answer	08'01	10'10	09'15
He has real power and can improve the situation in the country	23.0	20.8	29.3
He expresses interests of people like me	26.9	26.1	19.8
I like this politician for a long time	9.5	9.8	14.7
Majority of people I know support him	10.6	10.9	7.8
Other	3.9	4.4	6.3
DA	26.1	4.7	5.4

\* The table is sorted by the third column

**Table 11**

**Distribution of answers to the question: "What are the traits that the future President of Belarus should have according to you?" depending on the attitude to A. Lukashenko, %**

Variant of answer	All respondents	Attitude to A. Lukashenko	
		Trust	Don't trust
He should support the current course	37.4	68.7	6.6
He should support cardinal changes to the current course	40.0	16.3	70.8
Doesn't matter	22.4	14.9	22.4
He should support the strengthening of presidential power	30.3	51.4	9.0
He should support the separation of powers	37.5	16.3	62.0
Doesn't matter	30.5	31.0	26.9

A real contender for the presidential post should express "interests of people like me", as it follows from Table 10. It would seem that elaboration of programs, which correspond to the interests of "majority", and selection of politicians able to voice these programs, is a purely technical problem. But let us turn to the first row of the table: "He has real power and can improve the situation in the country". Demonstrate real power is an extremely difficult task for someone who has no power. Only rare people with charismatic personality are able to do this. This ability was demonstrated by A. Lukashenko in 1994.

Despite the Plutarch's quote "It is not the places that grace men, but men the places", the role of the place in authoritarian political systems is very important. Nonseparatedness of the power and the property gives the first figure almost unlimited authority in the field of resources, and people perceive this as the "real power".

Let us note that A. Lukashenko has lost his image of a person who "expresses interests of people like me", but he won't have any problems in being

from the Soviet epoch, when there was no other opinion except the official one. Accordingly there was no problem of choice.

Despite the powers' efforts to carry out the elections in a "boring" mode, September survey registered an effect of electoral mobilization. An evidence of this mobilization is the strengthening of political polarization of Belarusian society.

Let us turn to the data of Table 11. The share of electors who want the future president to continue the current course is nearly equal to the share of electors who are ready to support a president who will be a reformer: 37.4% vs. 40%. However, in the first variant the difference between the supporters and the opponents of A. Lukashenko is 10.4-fold, and in the second variant – 4.3-fold.

Conservative president will be supported by 29.9% of men and 43.7% of women; 20.8% of young people aged between 18 and 29 and 66% of electors aged 60 and older; 66.7% of people with primary education and 34.5% of people with higher or incomplete higher education.

Table 12

**Dynamics of answering the question: "What are the traits that the future President of Belarus should have according to you?", %**

Variant of answer	12'05	10'10	09'15
He should support further rapprochement with the EU	29.6	30.6	23.3
He should support further integration with Russia	64.6	29.1	45.6
Doesn't matter	—*	38.1	30.7
He should support market economy	—	47.7	43.1
He should support state-planned economy	—	19.9	22.9
Doesn't matter	—	30.2	33.4

\* This variant wasn't in the list

Table 13

**Dynamics of answering the question: "Are you going to vote in presidential election in October 2015 (September 2001, March 2006, December 2010)?", %**

Variant of answer	08'01	02'06	10'10	06'15	09'15
Sure yes	88.4	80.0	73.2	34.7	36.2
Rather yes				36.7	36.3
Rather no	9.6	6.4	13.9	17.3	16.0
Sure no				4.8	7.8
DA/NA	2.0	13.6	12.9	6.5	3.7

Close ratios can be observed in the groups of electors having opposite views on the concentration of power in the hand of the head of state.

Majority of electors are ready to support a candidate who advocates further integration with Russia (Table 12). In comparison with 2010 presidential campaign this share significantly increased: from 29.1 up to 45.6%. This is the direct result of the fact that many Belarusians rethought their geopolitical preferences after "Crimeaisours". Before the presidential elections 2006 64.6% of Belarusians were ready to support a pro-Russian candidate. Partially this high figure was caused by a purely technical reason: "Doesn't matter" variant was absent. However one should not forget that the third presidential elections coincided with the peak of Belarusian model; and that is why pro-Russian policy of A. Lukashenko easily transformed into the growth of the number of Russia supporters.

Majority of Belarusians declaratively support market economy. Naturally, there is a significant difference between supporters and opponents of A. Lukashenko: market economy – 38% and 7.3%, state-planned economy – 29.5% and 59.9%.

The split of Belarusian society, even more prominent because of polarization, rules out formation of a social consensus. In its turn, this fact makes impossible a compromise political figure. That is why another "candidate" program of A. Lukashenko starts with a statement on two possible ways of development for Belarus: "The first way is the way forward. This is the way of keeping stability and order, freedom and independence. This is the way of unity and harmony, of development and progress. This is the way of peace and creation.

Another way is the way backward. The way to disorder and chaos of the nineties, to bandit capitalism and carve-up of property, to weakening of the state and loss of independence. This is the way of revolution, blood and war".

However, as it can be seen from the results of September survey, the first way (the way of stability and order, freedom and independence) in practice doesn't include unity and harmony, so there is no chance left for development and progress.

### Why election boycott will not happen

Many oppositional politicians and independent publicists and analysts repeat, that people won't participate in elections this year because of apathy and realization of the meaningless character of electoral farce. Respecting these people's views, we'd like to note however that the results of the September IISEPS survey do not confirm this hypothesis (Table 13).

As you can see, people's readiness to participate in elections has been gradually decreasing since 2001. However, it is still quite high: more than 70% of electors are ready to participate. In September 2015 (a month before the elections) the readiness to participate was the same as two months before the elections in 2010.

Public propaganda of boycott is currently prohibited by law in Belarus. However, advocates of boycott often circumvent this prohibition by speaking of "ignoring" instead of "boycotting" the elections. How do Belarusians respond to the direct question on boycott?



**Table 14**

**Distribution of answers to the question: "What is your attitude to the boycott, supported by a part of opposition, of the future presidential elections?"**

Variant of answer	%
Positive	15.5
Negative	27.4
Indifferent	25.1
Never heard about it	26.9
DA/NA	5.1

**Table 15**

**Distribution of answers to the question: "On the 20th of July the CEC closed the registration of initiative groups for nomination of candidates for the post of the President. If the names of politicians listed below are in the voting paper, who will you vote for?"**

Variant of answer	%
Alexander Lukashenko, the President of Republic of Belarus	45.7
Tatyana Korotkevich, the candidate from the "People's Referendum" campaign	17.9
Sergei Gaydukevich, the leader of the Liberal Democrat Party	11.4
Victor Tereschenko, economist	8.1
Nikolai Ulakhovich, the ataman of Belarusian Cossacks	3.6
NA	13.3

**Table 16**

**Socio-demographic characteristics and electoral behavior\*, %**

Characteristics	"Are you going to vote in presidential election in October 2015?"		Positive attitude to the boycott of elections 2015
	Sure yes/Rather yes	Rather no/Sure no	
<i>Gender</i>			
Male	67.3	29.5	20.1
Female	76.7	19.0	11.6
<i>Age</i>			
18-29	66.8	28.3	19.3
30-59	69.4	26.1	15.6
60+	85.3	13.5	11.3
<i>Education</i>			
Primary	91.6	8.4	10.4
Incomplete secondary	83.0	15.0	11.8
Secondary	70.4	25.0	13.7
Vocational	67.8	28.9	17.2
Higher (incomplete higher)	71.7	23.5	19.9
<i>Settlement type</i>			
Capital	52.6	40.9	24.1
Region center	81.8	15.4	8.2
City	68.2	27.9	11.1
Town	80.2	16.7	19.9
Villages	78.1	19.0	14.6

\* The table is read across

15.5% is approximately a half of those who, answering the question of Table 13, said that they didn't plan to participate in elections or didn't gave an answer at all (Table 14).

However, a detailed analysis demonstrates that paradoxically advocates of boycott are not only those who are not planning to participate. Each tenth of those, who answered "sure yes" or "rather yes" to the

question on whether or not they will vote, expressed a positive attitude to boycott. On the other hand, less than a quarter (23%) of those who told that they are probably not going to vote, and less than a half (48.7%) of those who are definitely not going to vote expressed a positive attitude towards a boycott.

Answering the question of Table 13, 27.5% of respondents either directly stated that they don't want

Table 17

## Evaluations of elections and electoral behavior\*, %

Characteristics	"Are you going to vote in presidential election in October 2015?"		Positive attitude to the boycott of elections 2015
	Sure yes/Rather yes	Rather no/Sure no	
Who would you vote for in the presidential elections 2015?			
A. Lukashenko (45.7)**	90.5	7.6	6.4
T. Korotkevich (17.4)	47.2	45.0	22.6
S. Gaydukevich (11.4)	75.4	22.2	19.3
N. Ulakhovich (3.7)	53.7	40.7	18.5
Do you share the opinion that the results of the elections this year are predetermined?			
Yes (57.6)	67.2	28.6	18.8
No (28.8)	79.2	18.0	12.2
Which of the following statements do you agree with?			
Central Election Commission of Republic of Belarus is an unbiased institution, guided only by the law (39.9)	89.0	9.5	9.0
Central Election Commission of Republic of Belarus is an institution, guided mostly by the instructions of the President (50.0)	61.4	34.1	22.5
Do you think that the elections of the President of Belarus in October 2015 will be free and fair?			
Yes (47.6)	91.2	7.4	7.6
No (34.4)	49.0	46.9	30.2
According to you, do all candidates have equal conditions in the presidential campaign?			
Yes (36.4)	90.1	8.2	8.6
No (48.9)	58.2	37.2	21.5
Do you have enough information about the candidates to make your choice?			
Yes (43.0)	84.1	13.6	13.9
No (56.7)	63.6	31.5	16.6
Do you agree that official results of elections are trustworthy?			
Yes (49.9)	88.1	9.9	7.3
No (32.7)	50.6	44.7	30.4
If you believe that the results of presidential elections would be falsified, how would you react to this?			
I will accept them because it will be impossible to change them (48.6)	81.2	15.9	10.4
I'll take part in mass protests to try to change these results (10.1)	57.9	33.8	48.0
I won't believe these results and will be very upset, but I won't take part in mass protests (26.4)	60.1	35.4	14.1

\* The table is read across

\*\* Numbers in brackets in the left column are the shares of according answers in the whole panel

to vote, or evaded the question altogether. However, approximately twice as little of respondents refused to vote while answering the question on the group of candidates, whose initiative groups were registered.

If we don't exclude those who didn't answer the question of Table 15, and the supporters of V. Tereshchenko, who was dropped out of the presidential race, 78.6% of voters have made their choice from the registered candidates. Some oppositional politicians urged T. Korotkevich to withdraw her candidature from the elections. According to their point of view, this would wreck the elections. However, results of Table 15 do not confirm this hypothesis. Electorates of A. Lukashenko, S. Gaydukevich, and N. Ulakhovich include 60.7% of voters.

Getting back to the results of Tables 13 and 14, let us try to find out who is ready to vote, who is going to ignore the elections and who is inclined to boycotting them (Table 16).

As you can see, out of all socio-demographic groups potential turnout is on the 50% threshold only among Minsk citizens. Readiness to vote in all the other groups is significantly higher than this barrier. Some patterns are evident, they could be observed in the surveys related to the previous elections: men, youths, people with higher education are less inclined to vote and more sympathetic towards the boycott. However, even in these groups, inclined to absenteeism, more than two thirds are to some extent ready to vote.

Table 18

**Dynamics of answering the question: "Do you think that the elections of the President of Belarus in October 2015 will be free and fair?", %**

Variant of answer	06'01	02'06	10'10	09'15
Yes	46.1	54.9	46.8	47.6
No	33.9	32.1	32.9	34.4
DA/NA	20.0	13.0	20.3	18.0

How do projective evaluations of the elections and their results influence the readiness to vote? Table 17 results answer this question.

As you can see from Table 17, absenteeist moods do more damage to the results of T. Korotkevich than to elections. Her electorate is the most inclined to ignore the elections. T. Korotkevich's oppositional colleagues advocating for boycott or "ignore" can have only one result: she will receive less votes in the elections. The present president's electorate is not only large, but is also completely immune to pro-boycott and pro-absenteeism propaganda.

When people have doubts that elections are fair and their votes are counted correctly, their readiness to vote drops and they become more inclined to boycott. However, the extent and the proportions matter here. Among those who have no such doubts readiness to vote exceeds 80%. However, among those, who evaluate the future elections oppositely, the readiness to vote is quite high too, and exceeds 50% as a rule. In particular, only among those who think that elections 2015 will not be free and fair (slightly more than a third of respondents) the share of those who don't want to vote exceeds the share of those who are ready to participate.

From our point of view this can be explained by several reasons. One of them is the "spiral of silence", described by the German sociologist Elisabeth Noelle Neumann: people tend to support those who they consider as the majority. Despite the certitude of some politicians and political analysts, it looks like there is a conviction in society that majority of people will participate in the elections. Not to do it means to be in the minority, and people tend to avoid it, when they don't have a strong motivation.

The second reason why people, who a priori think that elections will not be fair, will participate is the comparative evaluation of consequences of one or another behavior. These people think that a different (in comparison with what they expect) outcome of elections is highly unlikely. But it looks even less likely to them that anything will change if they don't participate.

The third possible reason is a notion of civic duty, connection with the nation-wide political process, even if it's mutilated under the conditions of political system of modern Belarus. People may consider that they are obliged to vote even if they think that their vote will be stolen.

These various motives are not topical for all electors who think that elections in Belarus this year will not be a free declaration of people's will. But they are

topical for many of them, and it's enough to make the elections happen not only according to the reports of the CEC, but also in reality.

### **"People should go to elections as if it were a celebration"**

Another election in Belarus is planned to be carried out as a celebration, but without a show. This is what A. Lukashenko stated on the 1<sup>st</sup> of October during a meeting on the current socio-economic and political situation in the country.

Let us cite one more phrase from the official press-release. We suppose that this is a key phrase. "Alexander Lukashenko urged Belarusians to come to polling stations and vote as they see fit, because each vote is important for the future of the country. "We are obliged to realize that when we choose the head of state, we also define the further way of development for the country. This way is based on the care about our people, our families, our incomes, calm life and safety" – noted the President".

Thus, elections in Belarus have an important difference with elections in Soviet Union: each one can vote as they see fit. No constraints from the state. But however the people would vote the chosen way will be based on the "care of our people" and so on. Does this mean that this way can be provided by each of the four candidates? No, in accordance with A. Lukashenko's candidate program this way is guaranteed only by him, and any alternative leads to the chaos. But there will be no chaos, however people would vote.

On the 1<sup>st</sup> of October A. Lukashenko emphasized that forthcoming presidential elections should be held "democratically, peacefully, on a high level of organization". But IISEPS surveys conducted over many years record that there is no consensus on democratic character of elections (Table 18). Let us note that the ratio of positive and negative evaluations remains stable over the 15 years. The maximum of positive evaluations in 2006 was related to the peak of Belarusian model development.

Naturally, the structures of answers of supporters and opponents of A. Lukashenko are significantly different. In particular, the share of positive answers among the former amounted to 81.3%, and among the latter – to 10.6%.

National peculiarity of mass consciousness' perception of the fairness of presidential elections becomes clear when you pass from Table 18 to Table 19. Compare: 47.6% of respondents believe that

Table 19

**Dynamics of answering the question: "According to you, do all candidates have equal conditions in the presidential campaign?", %**

Variant of answer	10'10	09'15
Yes	41.6	36.4
No	46.3	48.9
DA/NA	12.1	14.7

Table 20

**Distribution of answers to the question: "Which of the following statements do you agree with?"**

Variant of answer	%
Central Election Commission of Republic of Belarus is an unbiased institution, guided only by the law	39.9
Central Election Commission of Republic of Belarus is an institution, guided mostly by the instructions of the President	50.0
DA/NA	10.1

Table 21

**Dynamics of answering the question: "If you believe that the results of presidential elections would be falsified, how would you react to this?", %**

Variant of answer	08'01	02'06	10'10	09'15
I will accept them because it will be impossible to change them	42.6	37.1	40.5	48.6
I'll take part in mass protests to try to change these results	11.0	9.2	10.9	10.1
I won't believe these results and will be very upset, but I won't take part in mass protests	27.9	34.9	24.1	26.4
DA/NA	18.5	18.8	24.5	14.9

Table 22

**Dynamics of answering the question: "Do you believe that the elections of the President will be recognized by the international community?", %**

Variant of answer	10'10	09'15
Yes, they will be recognized	43.9	50.1
They will be recognized by Russia, but not by the West	9.3	31.4
They won't be recognized either by Russia or by the West	21.8	8.2
DA/NA	24.5	10.3

elections are just and fair, but only 34.6% of respondents agree that all candidates have equal conditions! 11.2 points of difference.

The share of answers to the first question is almost equal to A. Lukashenko's rating, and this is not a coincidence. When a respondent trusts to the head of state, it is natural that he also trusts the procedure of election of this head of state. In the second question we ask about the conditions for all candidates. On the level of ordinary thinking there is no obvious connection between the first and the second question. That is why the share of positive answers in the group of A. Lukashenko's supporters is by 17.8 points lower (63.5%) in comparison with the answers to the first question.

Let us note that over five years the belief in equality of conditions for all candidates dropped by 5.2 points. But this is a problem for candidates, not for electors. At least, majority of electors think so.

Correctness of our explanation is supported by the answers to the question "Do you agree that official results of elections are trustworthy?" "Yes" answer

49.9% of respondents. Logical, isn't it? Fairness of elections is directly related to official results. Even a specialist will have difficulties finding a difference in this question.

Let us note that in October 2010 52.4% of respondents stated that they trust official results.

When we pass to Table 20 we stumble upon the inconsistency noted above once again: 49.9% of respondents trust the official results, however only 39.9% trust the CEC, i.e. 10 points less. Every second potential voter doesn't believe in the CEC's independence: 81.9% among A. Lukashenko's opponents and 29.5% among his supporters.

Over 15 years there were no significant changes in perception of objectivity and independence of the institution which is responsible for carrying out the elections. So electoral stability in Belarus manifests itself not only in voting (electorate's structure), but also in evaluations of the institution responsible for the voting.

Table 21 results permit to monitor the changes in Belarusians' reaction to the falsification of elections.

Table 23

**Distribution of answers to the question: "Do you share the opinion that the results of the elections this year are predetermined?" depending on the attitude to A. Lukashenko, %**

Variant of answer	All respondents	Attitude to A. Lukashenko	
		Trust	Don't trust
Yes	57.6	46.2	74.5
No	28.8	37.6	19.6
DA/NA	13.6	16.1	5.9

Table 24

**Dynamics of answering the question: "Do you think that the President will be elected in the first ballot or a second ballot will be required?", %**

Variant of answer	08'01	10'10	09'15
The President will be elected in the first ballot	47.5	63.3	75.6
The President will be elected in the second ballot	35.9	17.1	10.8
DA/NA	16.6	19.6	13.6

Table 25

**Dynamics of answering the question: "Do you have enough information about the candidates to make your choice?", %**

Variant of answer	08'01	02'06	10'10	09'15
Yes	65.4	43.3	31.7	43.0
No	23.8	55.3	66.4	56.7
NA	10.8	1.4	1.9	0.3

First of all you should pay attention to the second row of the table ("I'll take part in mass protests to try to change these results"). Over 14 years readiness to protest hasn't really changed. It wasn't even lower in the "fat" 2006. Naturally, this is only the declarative readiness to protest.

As for the passive resignation to falsifications, its level significantly grew over the last 9 years and is close to 50%.

There is a tight connection between the question on recognition of the results by Belarusians and mass perception of international community's evaluation of the results (Table 22). 2010 elections were carried out under the conditions of the so-called liberalization, and this contributed to a growth of pro-European moods. Choosing between joining the EU and integration with Russia, Belarusians preferred Europe: 42.2% vs. 35.4%. In September 2015 because of well-known events geopolitical preferences of Belarusians has significantly changed: 26.4% vs. 52.7%.

This regrouping divided by 2 the share of respondents who didn't know what to answer. At the same time the share of those who expect that elections will be recognized by Russia, but not by the West, was multiplied by 3. Popularity of answer "Yes, they will be recognized" jumped by 6.2 points, and this can be regarded as another example of post-Crimea anomaly.

57.6% of Belarusians believe that the results of elections are predetermined (Table 23). Taking into account almost 20 years of the CEC's experience in the field of summing up the results of national votes, this result is quite unexpected. The most surprising is

the distribution of answers depending on respondents' attitude to A. Lukashenko. There is an evident disbalance in favor of his opponents.

What can explain this? Probably, propaganda. L. Yermoshina, the chairwoman of the CEC, is the main newsmaker during this electoral campaign. She doesn't make any harsh or unambiguous statements. The future electoral triumpher also avoided statements on elections. The meeting of the 1<sup>st</sup> October is not taken into account, it happened after the survey.

When we pass to Table 24, we should note another inconsistency. 57.6% of respondents believe that the results of the elections are predetermined, but three thirds of electors believe that only one ballot will be required: 81.3% of A. Lukashenko's supporters and 72.4% of his opponents.

Let us note that the belief in one-ballot elections consecutively increased after each elections: August 2001 – 47.5%, September 2015 – 75.6%. This is the dialectics of the power without alternative.

Under the conditions of a "boring" electoral campaign the share of respondents who have enough information on the candidates significantly increased: October 2010 – 31.7%, September 2015 – 43% (+8.3 points). And there is only one candidate from opposition! This change can partially be explained by the overabundance of candidates in 2010, which created a lot of problems for ordinary voters. Simplification of the situation increases informational certainty for the supporters of A. Lukashenko in the first place: 63.7% of them gave a positive answer to the question of Table 25. This share among his opponents amounted to 22.6%.

Table 26

**Dynamics of answering the question: "Have you received informational materials of some of the candidates or have you ever met his representatives and discussed with them?", %**

Variant of answer	04'06	12'10	09'15
Yes	40.6	50.7	32.4
No	58.5	49.2	67.2
NA	0.9	0.1	0.4

Table 27

**Dynamics of answering the question: "Which problems will you consider as the most important ones when taking a decision for whom you will vote in the next presidential elections?", %**

*(more than one answer is possible)*

Variant of answer	04'06	12'10	09'15
Peace and stability	–	–	47.6
Overall quality of life	43.9	24.5	37.0
Price hike	19.2	24.7	30.0
Jobs	19.9	15.0	20.3
Healthcare improvement	18.2	13.6	15.5
Democracy and independence of Belarus	21.5	17.5	15.0
Payout of pensions	16.3	12.0	8.0
Relations with the West	6.2	7.1	6.9
Relations with Russia	7.4	3.9	5.8
Corruption in society	8.6	4.7	4.4
Education	7.4	6.3	3.5
Freedom of belief	0.9	1.0	2.0
Criminality	5.2	4.2	1.9
Threat of terrorism	5.9	3.6	–
Demand for freedom in Belarus	9.0	9.7	–

Correctness of our hypothesis is confirmed by the answers to the question of Table 26. The growth of electorate's awareness was registered amid a significant decrease of information provided during the electoral campaign.

You should note the abnormally high share of respondents who received informational materials or met candidate's representatives in 2010. This is the direct consequence of the overabundance of candidates. During the electoral campaign of this year the decrease of the volume of informational materials led to an increase of awareness of voters. Important remark: this paradox is an illustration of the role of subjective constituent in the answers of respondents.

Summing this all up, we should recognize that another electoral strategy of A. Lukashenko, aimed at keeping the personal power, will almost certainly be successful. For the umpteenth time the key success factor is the fact that Belarusians are not ready for changes.

### Telly vs. fridge

The fifth presidential elections in Belarus are being carried out under the conditions of changing social contract. Internal resource of Belarusian model is exhausted. It is no more able to provide a growth of people's incomes. That is why the power is obliged to abrogate unilaterally the previous contract, which stipulated that citizen's loyalty will be rewarded by a

growth of incomes. The new contract suggests people to change their loyalty for survival.

A. Lukashenko's election program is a manifest of this new social contract. Here are its main statements:

"As the first President of the independent Belarus I can firmly promise you: our country will never be involved in other's wars and conflicts. We will always protect our Fatherland from any threat".

"Here in Belarus we manage to keep the peace, we don't hear shots and explosions, we have a chance to work calmly, to bring up children and to enjoy peaceful life".

"TO KEEP PEACE AND ORDER IN THE COUNTRY – this is my second most important task".

As you can see from Table 27 Belarusian society accepted this contract. In the list of problems, which influence elector's choice, peace and stability are beyond comparison. The importance of this problem exceeded the price hike by 17.6 points. And this is amid the two-digit inflation, which devaluates Belarusians' incomes.

Let us note that during presidential campaigns of 2006 and 2010 the variant of answer "peace and stability" wasn't even in the list. It is clear that its popularity is fueled by the war in the East of Ukraine.

The increase of popularity of the variant "Overall quality of life" by 12.5 points also testifies on the problems which Belarusian model faces today. The variants taking the third and the fourth place (price hike

Table 28

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

Variant of answer	06'11	12'13	03'14	09'14	12'14	03'15	06'15	09'15
It has improved	1.6	12.6	10.1	13.5	13.7	8.6	9.0	9.8
It has not changed	23.2	58.1	63.3	58.8	53.6	44.0	51.3	44.4
It has become worse	73.4	28.4	25.2	24.6	31.0	46.3	37.2	42.5
FSI*	<b>-71.8</b>	-15.8	-15.1	-11.1	-17.3	-37.7	-28.2	-32.7

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

Table 29

**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	09'11	12'13	03'14	09'14	12'14	03'15	06'15	09'15
In the right direction	17.0	31.9	40.2	43.0	43.8	36.9	34.6	34.8
In the wrong direction	68.5	54.1	46.2	43.5	42.9	45.8	49.4	48.0
DA/NA	14.5	14.0	13.6	13.5	13.3	17.3	16.0	17.2
PCI*	<b>-51.5</b>	-22.2	-6.0	-0.5	0.9	-8.9	-14.8	-13.2

\* Policy correctness index

Table 30

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

Variant of answer	06'11	12'13	03'14	09'14	12'14	03'15	06'15	09'15
It is going to improve	11.9	12.5	24.0	18.6	23.6	23.1	21.7	20.6
It is not going to change	20.3	46.1	45.0	49.5	33.4	36.1	36.0	37.2
It is going to become worse	55.5	35.9	26.1	22.5	33.9	33.6	36.5	36.2
EI*	<b>-43.6</b>	-23.1	-2.1	-3.9	-10.3	-10.5	-14.8	-15.6

\* Expectation index

Table 31

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

Variant of answer	09'11	12'13	03'14	09'14	12'14	03'15	06'15	09'15
Yes	87.6	68.6	54.6	54.2	52.3	67.5	72.0	75.1
No	8.0	22.2	34.5	36.5	35.3	20.0	16.9	16.2
DA/NA	4.4	9.2	10.9	9.3	12.4	12.5	11.1	8.7

and jobs) also gained popularity in comparison with 2010 (+5.3 points). Against the background of the aforementioned changes the "ratings" of other problems changed insignificantly.

The conflict between the telly and the fridge, which began in March 2014 after the annexation of Crimea by Russia, hasn't lost its topicality a year and a half later. While the index of financial standing (FSI) in September decreased by 4.5 points (Table 28), the policy correctness index (PCI) on the contrary increased, although insignificantly (Table 29).

As a result, in comparison with December 2013, FSI decreased by 16.9 points, while PCI increased by 9 points. That is, under the condition of decreasing financial standing of people, they become even more convinced that the chosen policy is right!

The expectation index didn't decrease to the level of December 2013 as well (Table 30). "People must be confident in tomorrow", – said A. Lukashenko on the 1<sup>st</sup> of June. – "This is the most important thing for the power. If we solve this problem, there will be no problems with the elections".

However, only each fifth Belarusian is confident in the future. 37.2% of respondents believe that the situation won't change in the next few years. Under the conditions of the new social contract ("We are going to live!") the belief in invariability of the situation should be regarded as a demonstration of optimism. "This is the most important thing for the power". And we are going to agree with the head of state regarding this.

When we compare the distribution of answers to the questions of Tables 30 and 31, we can draw a

Table 32

**Distribution of answers to the question: "President A. Lukashenko more than once expressed regrets on the subject that 20 years ago Belarus voluntarily abandoned nuclear weapon and gave it to Russia. He says that if our country had nuclear weapon today, it would be regarded differently from the outside world. Some people agree with this, others don't. What is your opinion?", %**

Variant of answer	All respondents	Attitude to A. Lukashenko	
		Trust	Don't trust
We shouldn't have abandoned the nuclear weapon	31.2	30.7	35.1
Abandon of nuclear weapon was a right decision	38.0	41.4	32.3
I don't care	22.4	19.7	25.4
DA/NA	8.4	8.2	7.2

Table 33

**Distribution of answers to the question: "On the 17<sup>th</sup> of July President A. Lukashenko had signed a law "On battling corruption". There are different opinions about this law. Which one do you share?", %**

Variant of answer	All respondents	Attitude to A. Lukashenko	
		Trust	Don't trust
This law will increase the efficiency of battling corruption	37.8	60.1	11.8
This law won't influence the level of corruption	34.2	23.5	46.0
This is just propaganda, and the level of corruption will only increase	22.3	10.6	38.3
DA/NA	5.7	5.8	3.9

conclusion that in the conflict between the telly and the fridge the telly still has its advantage. After a burst of euphoria in March 2014 the share of Belarusians who agree that Belarusian economy is in crisis grew by 20.5 points. Two thirds of respondents gave a positive answer to this question. However, it doesn't undermine the confidence in the future of the majority.

It is impossible to predict how much time the telly as a factor forming the social opinion will dominate over the fridge. However, it will definitely make an important contribution in another "elegant victory". Nothing more is required of it as for now.

### Loyalty in exchange for food

Over the last years A. Lukashenko many times regretted that state's leadership had taken a decision to remove nuclear weapons from Belarus. In particular, he stated this on the 17<sup>th</sup> of October 2014 during a press-conference with Russian regional mass media.

Almost every third citizen of the country, whose national anthem starts with the words "We, Belarusians, are peaceful people...", agreed, that Belarus should not have abandoned nuclear weapon (Table 32). What is interesting is that the share of those who agreed with the head of state is lower among his supporters than among his opponents! It's a unique case. It's hard to find a similar example.

This uniqueness is related to gender factor in the first place. The thing is that women prevail among A. Lukashenko's supporters. There is nothing surprising about it. Fair sex tends to seek protection of a "strong personality". This is the principle of sexual selection, and representatives of Homo sapiens are not exclusion.

But men are more inclined to solutions by force. Hence the double difference in the first variant of answers depending on the gender: men – 40.9%, women – 23.2%.

It is natural that the theme of corruption is constantly present in IISEPS surveys. Sociologists follow the head of state's advice and choose their priorities according to real life problems, and Belarusian life in all its manifestations (economic, social and politic) is literally soaked in corruption.

"Corruption is everywhere in the world". Belarusian officials like to repeat this mantra. And we cannot argue with it. But while in democratic countries corruption is a deviation, in Belarus it plays a role of a social institution, which helps to regulate personal and state interests. That is why fight against corruption turns into a fight of the state against the society and itself. It's not hard to predict the result of this fight.

Nevertheless, the state regularly has a fit of "rooting this evil out mercilessly". The latest example of it is the law "On battling corruption" from July 17, 2015.

Public opinion met it without any real enthusiasm (Table 33). Slightly more than a third of respondents (37.8%) believe in its efficiency. As it was expected, politically charged groups of Belarusian society had different evaluations: the head of state's supporters are 5 times more inclined to believe in the efficiency of the law, while his opponents are 3.6 times more inclined to think that there will be no effect.

The main feature of "merciless" technology in Belarus is its selectivity. The head of state is concerned with rooting out corruption, but this concern should not be overestimated. Factually, he is the one and only proprietor of the unitary enterprise "Belarus", so he understands very well that corrupted officials steal



Table 34

**Dynamics of answering the question: "Do you consider it important to carry out market-friendly reforms in Belarus?", %**

Variant of answer	05'11	12'13	12'14	09'15
Yes	66.6	59.7	63.2	57.5
No	15.6	27.8	22.0	27.3
DA/NA	17.8	12.5	14.8	15.2

Table 35

**Dynamics of answering the question: "Do you consider it important to carry out market-friendly reforms in Belarus?" depending on the attitude to A. Lukashenko, %**

Variant of answer	Attitude to A. Lukashenko			
	12'14		09'15	
	Trust	Don't trust	Trust	Don't trust
Yes	56.1	70.3	42.1	75.6
No	30.1	14.8	41.4	13.4
DA/NA	13.8	15.0	16.5	10.9

Table 36

**Dynamics of answering the question: "Do you think that majority of people in Belarus can live without constant care and guardianship from the state?", %**

Variant of answer	03'09	09'15
Majority can live without state care	18.3	31.5
Majority cannot live without state care	74.2	58.7
DA/NA	7.5	9.8

Table 37

**Dynamics of answering the question: "What's more important for you today: maintaining of the current situation in the country or changing it?", %**

Variant of answer	02'06	12'10	12'11	06'14	09'15
Changing of the situation is more important	53.4	49.7	18.0	38.3	33.3
Maintaining of the situation is more important	37.8	41.2	70.1	52.1	52.7
DA/NA	8.8	9.1	11.9	9.6	14.0

from him. However, the only way to keep officials' devotion is to keep "stability" in exchange for this loyalty.

### Russian devil is better than European blue sky

Information on initiatives in the domain of reforming Belarusian model constantly filters from the top of power vertical. Here is a fresh example: T. Nadolny, First Deputy Chairman of the Board of the National Bank, reported on a preparation of a program of structural reforms for 2016-2020. The program is planned to be published in October. It's highly probable that there will be no practical realization of this plan once again.

As for the society, majority of Belarusians have a positive attitude towards market-friendly reforms (Table 34). During crisis years there is naturally a higher demand for reforms, and this can be regarded as an indicator of dissatisfaction with the current state of affairs in the country. Nowadays, under the conditions of pre-electoral mobilization, which led to a growth of A. Lukashenko's electoral rating, the demand for re-

forms dropped to a minimum: May 2011 – 66.6%, September 2015 – 57.5%.

Table 35 confirms the correctness of our assumption that electoral mobilization makes social demand for reforms decrease. This decrease happened at the expense of A. Lukashenko's supporters: December 2014 – 56.1%, September 2015 – 42.1% (-14 points). On the contrary, among the head of state's opponents the share of reform supporters increased: 70.3% and 75.6% accordingly (+5.2 points).

Table 36 demonstrates probably the most unexpected result of the September survey. The share of Belarusians believing that majority of people can live without the care of the state increased by 1.7 in comparison with March 2009. A. Lukashenko's supporters made the biggest contribution in this deliverance from the paternalistic care: March 2009 – 16.8%, September 2015 – 35.8% (+9 points). The input of the head of state's opponents is smaller: 21% and 25% accordingly (+4 points).

We cannot exclude that we observe an adaptation of Belarusians to the new social contract, which doesn't include increased social obligations of the

state anymore. Our supposition is confirmed by the increased reaction of A. Lukashenko's supporters. They are always the first to react to the oscillations of the general course.

You should also note the weak dependency between the belief in ability to live without state care and socio-demographic characteristics of respondents. In particular, in four age groups out of five (from 18 up to 60 years old) the shares differ by tenths of percent: from 34.4% to 34.9%! Only in the oldest age group (60 years old and older) the share of positive answers amounted to 21.6%.

Reforms demand money. Taking into account the fact that majority of Belarusians after "Crimeaisours" tend to give their geopolitical preference to Russia (52.7% of respondents are for integration with Russia, 26.4% are for joining the EU), possible financial dependence on International Monetary Fund worries Belarusians significantly more than dependence on Russian oligarchic capital: 36.8% vs. 25.6% (Tables 38-39).

Naturally, A. Lukashenko's supporters are more worried about the dependence on western capital than his opponents: 39.2% vs. 33.9%. As for the de-

**Table 38**

**Distribution of answers to the question: "Belarus is negotiating with the International Monetary Fund about a credit. The main condition laid down by the fund is carrying out structural reforms. What is your attitude to this?"**

Variant of answer	%
Positive. Belarusian economy needs reforms	36.3
Negative. Belarus will be financially dependent on the western capital	36.8
I don't care	16.7
DA/NA	10.2

**Table 39**

**Distribution of answers to the question: "On the 28<sup>th</sup> of July Russia provided Belarus with another credit of \$ 760 billion. What is your attitude to this?"**

Variant of answer	%
Positive. Belarusian economy cannot efficiently grow without financial help from Russia	53.2
Negative. Belarus becomes more and more financially dependent on Russian oligarchic capital	25.6
I don't care	15.4
DA/NA	5.8

Prevalence of men over women is insignificant too: 34.9% and 28.8% (6.1 points). The share of positive answers among respondents with primary education turned out to be almost the same as across the sample in March 2009: 17.9% vs. 18.3%.

In the "fat" 2006 one month before the presidential elections majority of Belarusians advocated for maintaining of current situation in the country: 53.4% vs. 37.8% (Table 37). Belief that stability is more important was still popular in society five years later, but the shares of advocates and opponents were drawn together. Crisis of 2011 generated a mass demand for changes (see the third column of Table 37).

Anomalous reality perception, caused by Russian propaganda, brought the share of change advocates significantly down. However, they still constitute a majority. Let us remind you, that in September 34.8% of respondents approved of the course of country development, while 48.8% disapproved of it. These figures correlate with the answers to the question of Table 37.

Naturally, the question on maintaining/changing the current state of affairs in the country is extremely politically charged. The distribution of answers among the supporters of A. Lukashenko was in favor of maintaining: 56.5% vs. 28.8%; his opponents prefer changes (by the factor of 12.6!): 6.8% vs. 85.9%.

dependence on Russian oligarchic capital, we can observe an inverse relationship: 20.3% vs. 34.6%. Accordingly, the share of those, who prefer western credits to the credits from the East, is significantly lower: 36.3% vs. 53.2%.

Belarus is entering into uncertainty. Belarusian model had exhausted its internal resource back in 2006. Population didn't notice this against the background of favorable external situation, but the drop of world prices on raw materials makes evident what yesterday could be understood only by specialists.

"Crimeaisours" and military actions in Ukraine slowed down the process of perception of new reality. This contributed to a relatively painless transition to the new social contract. But how much time the telly will win over the fridge? This question will be answered soon after the electoral campaign.

### **Geopolitical background of presidential elections**

September 2015 survey didn't register any substantial changes in geopolitical priorities of Belarusians. As in June, almost half of respondents expressed negative attitude to both joining the EU and integration with Russia (Tables 40-41). Nearly one quarter of respondents support joining the EU, and nearly one third – integration with Russia.

Table 40

**Dynamics of answering the question: "If there was a referendum on Belarus joining the EU, how would you vote?", %**

Variant of answer	09'08	03'09	03'10	03'11	12'12	12'13	09'14	03'15	06'15	09'15
For	26.7	34.9	36.2	48.6	38.9	35.9	25.0	24.6	25.1	27.5
Against	51.9	36.3	37.2	30.5	37.6	34.6	50.3	45.0	51.0	51.9

Table 41

**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	12'08	03'09	03'10	12'11	12'12	12'13	12'14	03'15	06'15	09'15
For	35.7	33.1	32.1	29.0	28.7	23.9	23.9	26.3	28.3	32.6
Against	38.8	43.2	44.5	42.9	47.5	51.4	58.4	48.9	50.9	49.1

Table 42

**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	12'08	12'09	12'10	12'11	12'12	12'13	03'14	12'14	03'15	06'15	09'15
Integration with the RF	46.0	42.3	38.1	41.4	37.7	36.6	51.5	44.9	46.5	51.4	52.7
Joining the EU	30.1	42.1	38.0	39.1	43.4	44.6	32.9	34.2	30.8	31.4	26.4
DA/NA	23.9	15.6	23.9	19.5	18.9	18.8	15.6	20.9	22.7	17.2	20.9

Table 43

**Distribution of answers to the question: "In 2015 Armenia and Kyrgyzstan joined the Eurasian Economic Union besides Belarus, Kazakhstan and Russia. Which estimation of this fact do you agree with?"**

Variant of answer	%
It reinforces the union, expands the shared market, and increases the political weight of the union	55.3
Poor countries joined the union, and other members will be obliged to help them	32.6
DA/NA	12.1

Table 44

**Distribution of answers to the question: "This year Greece sharply conflicted with the EU because of a very big debt to its European partners. The opinions on this conflict are very different. Which one do you share?"**

Variant of answer	%
Greeks are to blame, they should pay their debts	35.7
European Union imposed to Greece conditions which destroyed its economy	47.6
DA/NA	16.7

In comparison with June survey, both the number of people who advocate joining the EU (in terms of question from Table 40) and the number of those who prefer integration with Russia (in terms of question from Table 41) increased (the number of latter increased more).

In the answers to the dichotomous question on geopolitical choice a decrease (–5 points) of pro-European moods can be observed (Table 42).

Although the change was insignificant comparatively to previous month, the share of Euro-Belarusians (in terms of question from Table 42) turned out to be the lowest over the last 7 years of observation.

Preponderance of pro-Russian moods is indirectly confirmed by the answers to the questions on the expansion the Eurasian Economic Union and on the situation in Greece. A priori, Armenia and Kyrgyzstan joining the EEU could have provoked an irritation by the fact that life standards in this comparatively poor country should be improved at the expense of wealthier participants of the union, including Belarus (Table 43). However, this motive wasn't prevailing among the majority of respondents.

At the same time a relative majority of respondents consider that conditions which the EU makes to Greece before helping them are unfair (Table 44).

Table 45

**Dynamics of answering the question: "Last year V. Putin justified the annexation of Crimea by the restitution of historic territories of Russia and reunification of the "Russian world". Patriarch Kirill said that "Russian world" is a separate civilization, and people, who call themselves Russians, Ukrainians, and Belarusians, are part of this civilization". Some people in Belarus express positive attitude towards the idea of the "Russian world", others are negative. What is your attitude?", %**

Variant of answer	06'15	09'15
Positive	38.9	35.4
Indifferent	39.4	41.4
Negative	15.2	15.9
DA/NA	6.5	7.3

Table 46

**Dynamics of answering the question: "How do you evaluate the annexation of Crimea by Russia?", %**

Variant of answer	06'14	09'14	12'14	03'15	06'15	09'15
It's an imperialistic usurpation and occupation	26.9	27.2	31.6	22.0	21.5	26.5
It's a restitution of Russian lands and reestablishment of historical justice	62.2	59.9	56.8	58.5	62.3	57.4
DA/NA	10.9	12.9	11.6	19.5	16.2	16.1

Table 47

**Dynamics of answering the question: "Do you support independence of Novorossiia?", %**

Variant of answer	12'14	03'15	06'15	09'15
Yes, people of Novorossiia have a right for self-determination	49.5	42.0	47.4	47.1
No, I support territorial integrity of Ukraine	22.1	25.5	27.0	28.1
There is no Novorossiia, there is only Russian aggression against Ukraine	18.4	15.9	10.5	12.0
DA/NA	10.0	16.6	15.1	12.8

The attitude of respondents to the idea of the "Russian world" and different topics of Ukrainian conflict hasn't really changed over the past quarter (Tables 45-47).

Positive attitude to the "Russian world" has slightly decreased. Possibly, this happened due to the negative statements made by the President of Belarus on this topic. The attitude to the annexation of Crimea and the "Novorossiia" project has become slightly worse as well.

September IISEPS survey was conducted at the height of the electoral campaign. Answering the closed question on voting for the candidates whose initiative groups were registered at the time, 45.7% of respondents gave their vote to A. Lukashenko, 17.9% – to T. Korotkevich, 11.4% – to S. Gaydukevich, 8.1% – to V. Tereshchenko, and 3.6% – to N. Ulakhovich.

Open question registered somewhat different results: 45.7% of respondents named A. Lukashenko as their preferred candidate, 7.2% – T. Korotkevich, 4.7% – S. Gaydukevich, 2.8% – V. Tereshchenko, and 1.5% – N. Ulakhovich.

It's worth noticing that A. Lukashenko's rating is the same in the open and closed question. This means that his electorate is very much consolidated. Same can hardly be said about his rivals. But it seems that their ratings according to the closed question are an approximate limit which they could reach in the conditions of a favorable electoral campaign.

Among the candidates who do not participate in

the elections 2015 for one reason or another maximal rating according to the open question has N. Statkevich – 3.5%. Besides him respondents named some other politicians from democratic camp while answering the open question.

The thesis that registered candidates do not represent oppositional part of Belarusians society is often voiced during political discussions.

To understand if this is true let us have a look at geopolitical preferences of electorates of registered candidates as well as electorates of politicians who don't participate in the elections. As for the latter, their rating according to the closed question is too low (N. Statkevich has the maximal one among them) to make any meaningful conclusions. That is why let us introduce category "opposition outside elections", constituted of respondents, who gave their preference to one of ten politicians from this list: A. Kozulin, A. Milinkevich, Z. Poznyak, O. Karach, A. Lebedko, A. Sannikov, V. Neklyayev, N. Statkevich, S. Shushkevich and A. Mikhalevich. Their total rating amounts to 8%.

Several instructive conclusions can be made based on results of Table 48. First, fears (or hopes) that N. Ulakhovich is a double agent of Kremlin, and his role is to test how large pro-Russian electorate is, seem to be unfounded. Probably, someone had this purpose in mind (and still has), but this candidate's electorate is not the most pro-Russian one. The most

Table 48

**Geopolitical priorities of presidential candidates and opposition outside elections\*, %**

Variant of answer	All respondents	Electorate					
		A. Lukashenko (closed question)	S. Gaydukevich (closed question)	N. Ulakhovich (closed question)	T. Korotkevich (closed question)	T. Korotkevich (open question)	Opposition outside elections (open question)
<i>If you had to choose between integration with Russia and joining the European Union, what choice would you make?</i>							
Integration with the RF	52.7	69.8	52.6	33.3	32.8	47.2	19.1
Joining the EU	26.4	12.1	28.7	35.2	51.9	40.7	61.2
<i>How do you evaluate the annexation of Crimea by Russia?</i>							
It's an imperialistic usurpation and occupation	26.5	15.9	25.6	27.3	41.3	38.9	67.9
It's a restitution of Russian lands and reestablishment of historical justice	57.4	69.7	58.1	45.5	43.1	47.2	27.2
<i>Attitude to the idea of the "Russian world"</i>							
Positive	35.4	51.9	26.7	21.8	22.3	33.6	12.6
Negative	15.9	6.6	16.3	16.4	32.0	25.2	47.5

Table 49

**Geopolitical choice of presidential candidates' electorate in 2006-2010\*, %**

Variant of answer	"Do you support integration with Russia or joining the European Union?"		
	Integration with Russia	Joining the EU	NA/DA
<i>Who did you vote for in 2006?</i>			
A. Kozulin	36	55	9
A. Milinkevich	16	75	9
A. Lukashenko	75	13	12
<i>Who did you vote for in 2010?</i>			
V. Neklyayev	18	71	11
A. Sannikov	18	62	20
Alternative candidate**	22	65	13
A. Lukashenko	52	20	28

\* The table is read across

\*\* Joined electorate of all candidates except A. Lukashenko

pro-Russian candidate, if we judge by electoral setups, is the present President A. Lukashenko.

Second, the statement that classic oppositional electorate doesn't have its candidate in these elections is not unfounded. As you can see, geopolitical setups of 10 oppositional politicians, who are not represented in this year's elections, are quite significantly different from geopolitical preferences of population as a whole and of each candidate taking part in the elections. However, even the total rating of 10 oppositional politicians (according to an open question), who will not make it into the ballot paper, is approximately equal to the rating of T. Korotkevich according to the same open question. And her rating according to the closed question is twice as high as her rating according to the open question.

Third, geopolitical priorities of both "hard" (according to the open question) and "soft" (according to the

closed question) electorates of T. Korotkevich are significantly different from the geopolitical setups of the present president. The setups of S. Gaydukevich's supporters are the closest to the average results of the panel. Priorities of T. Korotkevich's electors are noticeably shifted towards Eurointegration, condemnation of Crimea annexation, and negative attitude towards the "Russian world".

It should be noted that geopolitical setups of T. Korotkevich's supporters are different not only from the opposition outside the current elections, but also from the setups of geopolitical candidates of previous elections.

It's easy to see that electorate of T. Korotkevich, even the "hard" one, is distinctly more pro-Russian than electorates of past candidates, except maybe for A. Kozulin. It's possible that this is one of the reasons

Table 50

Distribution of answers to the question: "What is your attitude towards the US all in all?", %

Variant of answer	Levada, Russia, 05'15	IISEPS, Belarus, 09'15
Very good	1	6
Rather good	14	37
Rather bad	41	33
Very bad	32	10
DA/NA	12	14

Table 51

Distribution of answers to the question: "How do you evaluate relations between Belarus (Russia) and the US?", %

Variant of answer	Levada, Russia, 01'15	IISEPS, Belarus, 09'15
Friendly	1	3
Good	1	7
Normal	2	30
Cool	13	35
Tense	37	17
Hostile	42	4
DA/NA	4	5

why majority of oppositional parties aspire to "demote" the candidate from opposition. However, T. Korotkevich's electorate is still much more pro-European than the head of state's electorate and Belarusians as a whole. This candidate manages to attract potential voters, who were unreachable for opposition before, and their number is quite significant.

A. Kozulin in 2006 also managed to do something similar, but the results were not significant.

However, it is not known yet if T. Korotkevich will succeed in turning her "soft" supporters into real electorate, into people who will come and vote for her.

If yes, then there will be a reason to talk about a new phenomenon in Belarusian politics. "New" not from the viewpoint of size of electoral support (according to IISEPS surveys almost the same number of voters (18%) voted for A. Milinkevich in 2006), but from the viewpoint of the nature of this support. A. Milinkevich's electorate in 2006 was very much pro-European in comparison with A. Kozulin's electorate and with electorates of the main candidates of 2010 as you can see from Table 49. Electorate of T. Korotkevich could be very close to the Belarusian mainstream judging by its geopolitical setups.

If no, if T. Korotkevich will gather votes only of the "hard" electorate, this will undeniably be her own big success, taking into account the fact that several months ago this politician was known only inside her organization.

But it seems that in any case her experience is a demonstration that there is another part of population in Belarus, different from both the classic oppositional

electorate and the classic electorate of A. Lukashenko.

### Belarus and the nuclear war

Currently Russia has become one of the most anti-American countries in the world. It should be noted that this phenomenon is relatively recent: there never was any particular fondness in the attitude of Russians towards the US, but there was no such negative attitude before 2014 (see <http://www.levada.ru/08-06-2015/mezhdunarodnye-otnosheniya-druzya-i-vragi-rossii>).

At the same time Belarusians' attitude to America has always been quite ambivalent: part of society was quite sympathetic, but majority was rather suspicious about the US. America usually was the first in the list of countries expressing hostile attitude towards Belarus according to the IISEPS surveys (see <http://www.iiseps.org/analitica/70>).

What's the attitude of Belarusians and Russian to the US now? Similar questions asked by the IISEPS in Belarus and Levada-center in Russia permit us to compare the results.

As you can see from Table 50, there is a parity of positive and negative evaluations among Belarusian respondents (43 : 43), while in Russia the share of negative evaluations is five times as high as the share of positive ones (73 : 15).

Similar differences can be found between the respondents' evaluation of relations between their country and the US. Relations between Washington and Minsk have been bad for a number of years; Belarusian officials are under sanctions, and there

**Table 52**

**Distribution of answers to the question: "Do you believe that the US currently constitute any threat to Belarus (Russia)?" , %**

Variant of answer	Levada, Russia, 04'15	IISEPS, Belarus, 09'15
Sure yes	19	5
Rather yes	40	27
Rather no	26	51
Sure no	6	9
DA/NA	9	8

**Table 53**

**Relation between the attitude towards the US, the attitude towards A. Lukashenko, evaluation of Russian TV channels and geopolitical choice\*, %**

Variant of answer	Attitude to the US		Evaluation of a threat to Belarus from the US	
	Very good/Rather good	Rather bad/Very bad	Yes/Rather yes	Rather no/No
<i>Do you trust the President?</i>				
Trust	37	48	39	52
Don't trust	54	35	26	69
<i>Geopolitical choice</i>				
Integration with the RF	34	55	40	52
Joining the EU	63	21	17	77
<i>How objective are the news in Russian news programs?</i>				
Completely objective	45	42	39	48
Completely biased	66	28	25	70
Completely biased	66	28	25	70

\* The table is read across

**Table 54**

**Distribution of answers to the question: "If there is a war between the Union State of Russia and Belarus (Russia) and the US and NATO countries, who will win according to you?" , %**

Variant of answer	Levada, Russia, 04'15	IISEPS, Belarus, 09'15
The Union State of Russia and Belarus	–	21
Russia	33	–
The USA and NATO countries	5	19
There can be no winners in such a war	52	48
DA/NA	11	12

are economic sanctions against some of Belarusian enterprises since 2007. However, Belarusians' evaluations of relations between their country and America are significantly more positive, than Russians' evaluations of relations between Russia and the US (Table 51).

In a sense there is a mirror-like relation. In Belarus 40% of respondents choose variants between "friendly" and "normal", while this share is 10 times as low in Russia. At the same time, the share of Belarusians considering that relations between their country and the US are hostile is 10 times as low as among Russians.

Answers to the question on potential American threat ([http://www.levada.ru/12-05-2015/ugroza-dlya-](http://www.levada.ru/12-05-2015/ugroza-dlya-rossii-so-storony-ssha)

[rossii-so-storony-ssha](http://www.levada.ru/12-05-2015/ugroza-dlya-rossii-so-storony-ssha)) are less contrasting, but still quite different (Table 52).

Table 53 results demonstrate how political preferences, geopolitical choice and attitude to Russian mass media influence Belarusians' evaluations of the US and their threat to Belarus.

The strongest factor influencing the attitude towards the US is the geopolitical choice. But even among "Belo-Russians" negative attitude towards the US is less expressed than among Russians (see Table 50) – 55% vs. 73%.

In the April survey of Levada-center there were even more tough questions, e.g. on the prospect of a hypothetical war between the West and Russia.

**Table 55**

**Distribution of answers to the question: "In the documentary film "Crimea: The Way Home" Vladimir Putin told that during the Crimea operation he gave an order to be ready to use nuclear weapon. What do you think about this statement?"**

Variant of answer	%
I approve it, because it is the only way to talk to the West: the West only understands when they are addressed from the position of strength	35
I feel alarm and disapproval: such blackmail is unacceptable for a leader of his rank	48
DA/NA	17

**Table 56**

**Distribution of answers to the question: "Please give a mark from 1 to 5 to the level of fear which you feel because of V. Putin's statement on readiness to use nuclear weapon (1 – no fear, 5 – very strong fear)", %**

Variant of answer	Levada, Russia, 04'15	IISEPS, Belarus, 09'15
1	25	13
2	14	18
3	21	25
4	17	18
5	16	18
On the average	2.83	3.07
DA/NA	7	7

**Table 57**

**Distribution of answers to the question: "How do you think, if there is a war with the West, can V. Putin order Russian military forces to use nuclear weapon first?", %**

Variant of answer	Levada, Russia, 04'15	IISEPS, Belarus, 09'15
Very likely	7	9
Quite likely	25	36
Unlikely	42	36
Completely impossible	13	13
DA/NA	14	6

Similar cluster of questions was asked in the September 2015 survey of IISEPS (Table 54).

Belarusians and Russians are close in the answers to this question in the sense that approximately half of respondents in both countries chose the variant "there can be no winners in such a war". However, as you can see, among those Russians, who think that such war can be won, majority believe in Russian victory. Opinions of Belarusians, believing that victory is possible, are divided into two nearly equal parts. Belarusian public opinion is more cautious (or less crazy in someone's eyes) in this question than Russian.

Taking into account the results of Table 54 there is no surprise that Belarusians are rather negative about the President of Russia V. Putin's revelations on possible use of nuclear weapon during the annexation of Crimea (Table 55).

Belarus is under a strong influence of Russian informative field. Majority of Belarusians approve of the annexation of Crimea by Russia (57% in Septem-

ber 2015) and positively evaluate the head of Russian state (60% in June 2015). But these sympathy and approval have their limits: usage of nuclear weapon and even using it as a threat is one of these limits for almost half of Belarusians.

Paradoxically, even though this statement of V. Putin worried Belarusians more than Russians, the difference is not so big (Table 56).

In April the number of people who were not scared by V. Putin's threat at all was twice as high as in Belarus in September. But only twice as high. At the same time Putin's statement quite worried almost equal shares of Belarusians and Russians. The number of Belarusians, who were very scared, is noticeably lower than the number of those who think that there can be no winner in a war between the West and Belarus and Russia (see Table 54). But the threat of escalation of such a conflict to a nuclear one is one of the main reasons why such a war can be a defeat for both sides.



One could suppose that the cause for it lies in the topicality of the statement: Levada-center conducted their survey in hot pursuit, right after the statement was made. Belarusians were asked about their opinion on the threat of the leader of neighbor country almost half a year after it was made. We can suppose that Belarusians remembered this statement of even learnt about it only answering the question of the IISEPS paper. A threat which did not come true half a year later is not that scary.

However, this explanation seems to be at least insufficient in the light of results of Table 57.

Despite expectations, Belarusians are even more convinced than Russians that in a case of a conflict between Russia and the West the President of the Russian Federation will press the nuclear weapon push-button without much hesitation. This is an indirect Belarusians' evaluation of decisiveness of their Eastern neighbor and ally.

Why does this prospect hardly scare them more than Russians? Probably because they hope that the probability of such a war is very low. We cannot also exclude that this is a paradoxical, turned upside down manifestation of Belarusian fear of war as such. It's in genetic code of the nation after its bloody history and horrible experience of the Second World War. However, this is a fear of an "habitual" war. This fear is not enough to feel scared of a prospect of a nuclear end of the world.

### **Comparison of electorates: phenomenon of Korotkevich**

According to the September IISEPS survey 45.7% of respondents are ready to vote for A. Lukashenko and 17.9% – for T. Korotkevich (results for the closed question). In the results to the open question the same 45.7% of respondents named A. Lukashenko, 7.2% – T. Korotkevich. Another 8% of respondents named one of 10 oppositional politicians – A. Kozulin, A. Milinkevich, Z. Poznyak, O. Karach, A. Lebedko, A. Sannikov, V. Neklyayev, N. Statkevich, S. Shushkevich and A. Mikhalevich. For comparison we'll form a category "opposition outside election" constituted of respondents who named one of those politicians.

We did not include S. Kalyakin (who received 1% in the open question) in this list because his electorate is notably different from electorates of other oppositional politicians. What we want to do is compare electorates of presidential candidates with a "pure" oppositional electorate.

During the electoral campaign of 2015 representatives of T. Korotkevich and some experts stated, that she managed to "get out of the electoral ghetto" and attract voters who were unreachable for her predecessors – other oppositional candidates.

It should be noted that this thesis is not confirmed by the results of IISEPS, if we speak about the volume of electorate: T. Korotkevich's rating one month prior to elections is comparable with the rating of A. Milinkevich shortly before elections 2006

(<http://old.iiseps.org/2-06-3.html>) and with the rating of V. Neklyayev before elections 2010 (<http://old.iiseps.org/10-10-10.html>).

At the same time it should be noted that in the mentioned survey of February 2006 A. Milinkevich's open and closed ratings were equal, which testified that his electorate was consolidated. Same cannot be said about electorate of T. Korotkevich. As for V. Neklyayev, in October 2010 his open and closed ratings were almost equal to current ratings of T. Korotkevich, but he wasn't the only candidate of opposition then. Today T. Korotkevich is the only oppositional candidate, and nevertheless her results are almost the same as here predecessors'.

However, T. Korotkevich's electorate is structurally very different from the classic oppositional electorate even by its socio-demographic characteristics (Table 58).

Table 58 results demonstrate standard peculiarities of present president's electorate: the shares of women, retired people, and people with low level of education are higher than average; the share of Minsk citizens is lower than average. These peculiarities can be seen in each of our surveys. Classic oppositional electorate has the opposite characteristics: the shares of men, Minsk citizens and respondents with higher education are higher than average; the share of people aged 60 years old and more is lower than average.

These traits are peculiar not only for the total electorate of "opposition outside elections" in September 2015. You can see them while analyzing electorate of A. Milinkevich in 2006 (<http://old.iiseps.org/3-06-7.html>) and V. Neklyayev in 2010 (<http://old.iiseps.org/12-10-02.html>).

T. Korotkevich's electorate is structurally different from both Lukashenko's electorate and classic oppositional electorate. According to many positions it's somewhere between the figures of opposition and the figures of the current president, e.g. according to the shares of people with primary and higher education, people living in Minsk and in villages. At the same time electorate of T. Korotkevich is the closest to the average values of the panel.

In this sense candidate really managed to reach those groups of population, which were unreachable for her predecessors.

One more peculiarity of supporters of T. Korotkevich should be noted. The gap between the open and the closed rating was specific for oppositional candidates before her. Electorate, defined by the answers to an open question, may be called "hard", nuclear electorate of a politician. Electorate, constituted of people who chose the name of a politician from the list, is a "soft", peripheral electorate. A respondent who had written a name of a politician answering an open question is much more likely to really support this politician than someone who simply checked a name in a list.

In the past the peculiarities of the classic oppositional electorate were more expressed in "hard" electorate of oppositional politicians than in their "soft"

Table 58

**Socio-demographic characteristics of electorates, %**

Characteristic	All respondents	A. Lukashenko (closed question)	T. Korotkevich (closed question)	T. Korotkevich (open question)	Opposition outside elections (open question)
<i>Gender:</i>					
Male	45.4	39.1	43.1	29.9	62.0
Female	54.6	60.9	56.9	70.1	38.0
<i>Age:</i>					
18-29	23.1	16.2	35.7	41.1	24.2
30-59	53.8	48.1	52.8	41.1	62.5
60 +	23.2	35.7	11.5	17.8	13.3
<i>Education:</i>					
Primary	6.3	9.9	4.4	7.5	2.5
Incomplete secondary	10.3	14.9	5.2	4.7	5.8
Secondary	36.0	33.8	35.2	36.4	30.8
Vocational	28.0	23.3	31.9	31.8	28.3
Higher (incomplete higher)	19.4	18.1	23.3	19.6	32.5
<i>Settlement type:</i>					
Capital	19.4	14.6	35.6	30.8	42.6
Region center	19.4	21.8	16.3	17.8	13.1
City	18.6	19.3	16.3	14.0	11.5
Town	17.1	16.8	10.7	15.0	14.8
Village	25.5	27.6	21.1	22.4	18.0

Table 59

**Political setups of electorates, %**

Variant of answer	All respondents	A. Lukashenko (closed question)	T. Korotkevich (closed question)	T. Korotkevich (open question)	Opposition outside elections (open question)
<i>Is Belarusian economy in crisis?</i>					
Yes	75.2	64.6	84.8	88.0	90.9
No	16.1	24.0	9.7	10.2	8.3
<i>How is the state of things in Belarus developing in general?</i>					
In the right direction	34.8	60.4	9.7	15.0	5.8
In the wrong direction	48.1	22.3	75.1	69.2	87.5
<i>Should there be market-friendly reforms in Belarus?</i>					
Yes	57.5	44.9	71.3	67.3	78.3
No	27.3	38.9	15.3	18.7	10.8
<i>Do you trust non-state mass media?</i>					
Yes	33.5	25.9	44.6	43.0	49.6
No	44.5	51.2	36.4	42.1	36.4
<i>Do you trust state mass media?</i>					
Yes	37.4	57.9	14.1	14.8	5.8
No	46.5	23.9	69.5	68.5	83.5
<i>Do you trust oppositional political parties?</i>					
Yes	13.1	9.9	15.6	20.4	33.9
No	59.9	71.1	48.7	50.0	34.7
<i>Are you in opposition to the current power?</i>					
Yes	20.7	9.3	29.0	29.0	50.8
No	68.8	84.7	57.2	58.9	40.0
<i>The future president should...</i>					
Support current course	37.4	66.7	8.2	12.0	7.4
Support cardinal changes to the current course	40.0	15.0	61.9	58.3	75.2

electorate. In other words, for example, the share of men, Minsk citizens, and people with higher education was bigger in the hard electorate than in the soft one.

This can be logically explained: the most loyal supporters of oppositional politicians were the hard oppositional electorate, which has the aforementioned characteristics. Their soft electorate was closer to the average figures in the country.

In case of T. Korotkevich it's not always so. The share of men and Minsk citizens among her nuclear electorate is not higher, but lower, than among her soft electorate. In other words, her most loyal supporters are far from being out-and-out oppositionists. These out-and-out oppositionists are a part of her soft electorate, a part of those who could vote for her without a great conviction. The main support of the candidate is people of the Belarusian "middle".

Gender characteristics of hard and soft electorates of T. Korotkevich are very interesting. Women are an overwhelming majority of her nuclear electorate. It's quite possible that at least for a part of her fervent supporters she is better just because she is a woman. Previous surveys of the IISEPS showed that about 7% of Belarusians would prefer a female candidate for the presidential post (<http://iiseps.org/analitica/126>). It's revealing that hard electorate of T. Korotkevich is almost equal to the aforementioned share.

Results of Table 59 are even more convincing in the demonstration of these "median" parameters of T. Korotkevich's electorate.

Table 59 convincingly demonstrates that political setups of T. Korotkevich's supporters are less radical, less critical of the existing system, than those of classic oppositional electorate, but more critical than those of A. Lukashenko's supporters. Her elector is oppositional, but less oppositional than classic opposition.

Table 59 also confirms the conclusion made after the analysis of Table 58: according to certain indicators, hard electorate of T. Korotkevich is less critical of the modern Belarusian realms than her soft electorate. This is true in relation to the evaluations of the course of the country, of the importance of market-friendly reforms, and desired characteristics of the future president.

In conclusion we may say that T. Korotkevich didn't manage to win a greater support than her predecessors. But the nature of her support is different. Among the supporters of the candidate there is a significant share of people with moderate views who were not attracted by oppositional candidates before. Similar figures of support hide a deep structural reorganization of electoral support. In other words, a part of the classic oppositional electorate, who were ready to vote for A. Milinkevich in 2006 and for V. Neklyayev in 2010, doesn't support T. Korotkevich. But this decrease was compensated by the support of moderately oppositional people, who weren't ready to support A. Milinkevich and V. Neklyayev, but are willing to support T. Korotkevich.

## Some results of the opinion poll conducted in September, 2015 (%)

### 1. "Do you consider it important to carry out market-friendly reforms in Belarus?"

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 +
Yes	57.5	69.4	70.9	63.7	63.1	58.2	58.5	42.1
No	27.3	12.2	15.9	15.8	22.8	28.9	26.0	42.1
DA/NA	15.2	18.4	13.2	20.5	14.1	12.9	15.5	15.8

Table 1.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (including incomplete)
Yes	50.0	35.9	57.1	62.9	64.2
No	37.5	42.5	28.1	21.0	23.5
DA/NA	12.5	21.6	14.8	16.1	12.3

Table 1.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	Unemployed, housewives
Yes	64.8	60.4	65.8	43.6	58.9
No	22.9	26.3	13.2	38.2	17.9
DA/NA	12.3	13.3	21.0	18.2	23.2

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
Yes	68.5	65.9	45.6	34.5	69.8	56.9	52.9
No	23.3	22.2	30.4	54.8	13.1	27.6	26.4
DA/NA	8.2	11.9	24.0	10.7	17.1	15.5	20.7

Table 1.5. Depending on settlement type

Variant of answer	Settlement type				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
Yes	68.5	51.4	57.6	59.8	52.2
No	23.3	29.5	24.8	23.8	32.6
DA/NA	8.2	19.1	17.6	16.4	15.2

### 2. "If there are protests against the worsening of financial standing in your city (region), are you ready to take part in them?"

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 +
Yes	17.3	25.0	25.2	24.5	17.8	14.6	15.9	12.6
No	71.5	62.5	60.9	62.6	68.2	72.6	76.1	78.7
DA/NA	11.2	12.5	13.9	12.9	14.0	12.8	8.0	8.7

Table 2.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (including incomplete)
Yes	12.5	16.2	17.4	16.9	19.8
No	80.2	76.0	69.6	72.6	67.9
DA/NA	7.3	7.8	13.0	10.5	12.3

Table 2.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	Unemployed, housewives
Yes	20.4	16.7	30.7	10.0	25.8
No	66.1	72.0	58.7	81.6	60.8
DA/NA	13.5	11.3	10.6	8.4	13.4

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
Yes	12.7	14.6	17.6	11.8	9.5	12.6	39.8
No	79.0	76.5	66.2	76.3	79.9	81.6	42.9
DA/NA	8.3	8.9	16.2	11.9	10.6	5.8	17.3

Table 2.5. Depending on settlement type

Variant of answer	Settlement type				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
Yes	12.7	17.5	19.6	21.1	16.4
No	79.0	64.0	70.4	68.4	74.2
DA/NA	8.3	18.5	10.0	10.5	9.4

### 3. "Do you think that majority of people in Belarus can live without constant care and guardianship from the state?"

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 +
Majority can live without state care	31.5	30.6	33.8	36.3	34.5	34.9	34.5	21.6
Majority cannot live without state care	58.7	46.9	53.0	47.3	57.5	55.5	58.0	71.8
DA/NA	9.8	22.5	13.2	16.4	8.0	9.6	7.5	6.6

Table 3.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (including incomplete)
Majority can live without state care	17.9	22.9	31.4	36.0	34.5
Majority cannot live without state care	71.6	68.0	57.7	54.4	57.7
DA/NA	10.5	9.1	10.9	9.6	7.8

Table 3.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	Unemployed, housewives
Majority can live without state care	41.1	29.3	36.0	22.6	33.3
Majority cannot live without state care	49.4	58.9	50.7	71.0	56.3
DA/NA	9.5	11.8	13.3	6.4	10.4

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
Majority can live without state care	38.4	22.6	23.6	24.9	38.2	31.6	38.4
Majority cannot live without state care	58.6	70.8	62.0	69.2	55.8	52.9	42.7
DA/NA	3.0	6.6	14.4	5.9	6.0	15.5	18.9

Table 3.5. Depending on settlement type

Variant of answer	Settlement type				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
Majority can live without state care	38.4	28.8	31.3	29.7	29.7
Majority cannot live without state care	58.6	54.5	60.8	56.3	62.5
DA/NA	3.0	16.7	7.9	14.0	7.8

4. "On the 17th of July President A. Lukashenko had signed a law "On battling corruption". There are different opinions about this law. Which one do you share?"

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 +
This law will increase the efficiency of battling corruption	37.8	28.6	31.1	24.7	27.7	32.9	36.4	60.3
This law won't influence the level of corruption	34.2	36.7	41.1	39.0	40.5	39.3	32.2	21.6
This is just propaganda, and the level of corruption will only increase	22.3	22.4	23.8	29.5	25.4	25.0	24.6	12.1
DA/NA	5.7	12.3	4.0	6.8	6.4	2.8	6.8	6.0

Table 4.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (including incomplete)
This law will increase the efficiency of battling corruption	75.0	53.6	32.2	33.2	34.3
This law won't influence the level of corruption	17.7	23.5	37.7	35.3	36.9
This is just propaganda, and the level of corruption will only increase	5.2	12.4	23.8	26.0	24.9
DA/NA	2.1	10.5	6.3	5.5	3.9

Table 4.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	Unemployed, housewives
This law will increase the efficiency of battling corruption	25.8	34.6	26.7	58.8	32.2
This law won't influence the level of corruption	40.6	36.7	44.0	22.0	34.4
This is just propaganda, and the level of corruption will only increase	28.5	22.6	21.3	13.6	28.1
DA/NA	5.1	6.1	8.0	5.6	5.3

**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
This law will increase the efficiency of battling corruption	25.8	33.6	38.6	50.6	38.7	41.1	44.1
This law won't influence the level of corruption	38.5	30.1	34.0	30.4	42.7	35.1	27.8
This is just propaganda, and the level of corruption will only increase	33.0	30.1	20.9	14.9	16.1	17.2	16.7
DA/NA	2.7	6.2	6.5	4.1	2.5	6.6	11.4

**Table 4.5. Depending on settlement type**

Variant of answer	Settlement type				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
This law will increase the efficiency of battling corruption	25.8	40.5	38.4	43.8	40.6
This law won't influence the level of corruption	38.5	34.0	36.6	30.1	32.0
This is just propaganda, and the level of corruption will only increase	33.0	15.1	19.4	19.9	23.2
DA/NA	2.7	10.4	5.6	6.2	4.2

### 5. "What's more important for you today: maintaining of the current situation in the country or changing it?"

**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 +
Changing of the situation is more important	33.3	28.6	19.2	21.1	24.3	31.0	36.5	51.3
Maintaining of the situation is more important	52.7	61.2	70.9	69.4	62.4	56.9	48.7	29.1
DA/NA	14.0	10.2	9.9	9.5	13.3	12.1	14.8	19.6

**Table 5.2. Depending on education**

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (including incomplete)
Changing of the situation is more important	45.8	47.4	31.8	27.0	33.4
Maintaining of the situation is more important	30.2	35.7	54.0	59.9	56.3
DA/NA	24.0	16.9	14.2	13.1	10.3

**Table 5.3. Depending on status**

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	Unemployed, housewives
Changing of the situation is more important	25.3	31.2	23.7	50.3	18.8
Maintaining of the situation is more important	63.3	55.8	65.8	30.0	70.8
DA/NA	11.4	13.0	10.5	19.7	10.4

**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
Changing of the situation is more important	29.8	28.3	38.7	44.0	24.6	47.1	26.7
Maintaining of the situation is more important	65.1	60.6	37.8	51.8	62.3	40.2	45.3
DA/NA	5.1	11.1	22.5	4.2	13.1	12.7	28.0

Table 5.5. Depending on settlement type

Variant of answer	Settlement type				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
Changing of the situation is more important	29.8	37.0	28.7	33.5	36.5
Maintaining of the situation is more important	65.1	44.5	62.0	47.9	45.8
DA/NA	5.1	18.5	9.3	18.6	17.7

## 6. "Are you going to vote in presidential election in October 2015?"

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 +
Sure yes	36.2	34.0	26.3	22.6	30.9	33.6	32.3	55.6
Rather yes	36.3	42.0	41.4	39.7	31.7	35.4	44.5	29.7
Rather no	16.0	12.0	17.8	21.9	22.6	18.9	10.3	10.1
Sure no	7.8	6.0	8.6	11.6	9.1	8.6	8.7	3.5
DA/NA	3.7	6.0	5.9	4.2	5.7	3.5	4.2	1.2

Table 6.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (including incomplete)
Sure yes	70.1	48.1	31.7	28.9	37.5
Rather yes	20.6	35.1	38.7	38.9	34.1
Rather no	7.2	7.8	16.9	19.3	16.7
Sure no	2.1	7.1	8.1	9.5	6.8
DA/NA	0	1.9	4.6	3.4	4.9

Table 6.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	Unemployed, housewives
Sure yes	23.7	36.6	37.8	52.6	21.9
Rather yes	36.7	36.0	47.3	32.3	43.8
Rather no	21.8	17.0	8.1	8.7	20.8
Sure no	12.1	6.3	5.4	4.9	10.4
DA/NA	5.7	4.1	1.4	1.5	3.1

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
Sure yes	18.1	28.3	45.2	45.6	39.2	42.5	44.1
Rather yes	34.5	34.5	31.3	32.5	47.2	37.9	36.6
Rather no	23.5	19.9	15.2	15.4	10.1	10.9	12.8
Sure no	17.4	12.4	3.2	4.7	2.0	6.3	3.5
DA/NA	6.5	4.9	5.1	1.8	1.5	2.4	3.0

Table 6.5. Depending on settlement type

Variant of answer	Settlement type				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
Sure yes	18.1	44.2	34.8	38.7	43.1
Rather yes	34.5	37.7	33.3	41.8	34.8
Rather no	23.5	12.7	18.6	14.1	12.2
Sure no	17.4	2.7	9.4	2.3	6.8
DA/NA	6.5	2.7	3.9	3.1	3.1



## 7. "What are the traits that the future President of Belarus should have according to you?"

**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 +
He should support the current course	37.4	30.0	17.9	20.5	28.8	31.0	37.5	66.0
He should support cardinal changes to the current course	40.0	50.0	58.3	49.3	47.0	43.8	36.0	21.0
Doesn't matter	22.4	20.0	23.8	30.1	23.9	25.2	26.1	12.7
NA	0.2	0	0	0.1	0.3	0	0.4	0.3

**Table 7.2. Depending on education**

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (including incomplete)
He should support the current course	67.7	61.0	35.0	27.2	34.5
He should support cardinal changes to the current course	21.9	20.1	41.9	45.6	44.7
Doesn't matter	10.4	18.2	23.1	26.7	20.8
NA	0	0.7	0	0.5	0

**Table 7.3. Depending on status**

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	Unemployed, housewives
He should support the current course	23.1	35.3	28.0	62.3	19.8
He should support cardinal changes to the current course	46.3	42.7	56.0	23.6	50.0
Doesn't matter	30.3	21.8	16.0	13.8	30.2
NA	0.3	0.2	0	0.3	0

**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
He should support the current course	23.4	30.1	44.5	59.5	32.8	42.9	39.4
He should support cardinal changes to the current course	41.6	49.1	32.6	27.4	50.0	29.7	44.2
Doesn't matter	35.0	20.8	22.5	13.1	16.7	26.9	16.4
NA	0	0	0.4	0	0.5	0.5	0

**Table 7.5. Depending on settlement type**

Variant of answer	Settlement type				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
He should support the current course	23.4	43.0	37.6	36.7	44.4
He should support cardinal changes to the current course	41.6	37.1	40.1	41.4	39.9
Doesn't matter	35.0	19.9	22.2	21.1	15.4
NA	0	0	0.1	0.8	0.3

## 8. "What are the traits that the future President of Belarus should have according to you?"

**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 +
He should support further rapprochement with the EU	45.6	40.8	42.4	30.8	35.0	45.2	45.8	62.0
He should support further integration with Russia	23.3	28.6	28.5	29.5	30.8	20.3	19.7	16.7
Doesn't matter	30.7	30.6	28.5	39.0	33.8	34.5	33.3	20.5
NA	0.4	0	0.6	0.7	0.4	0	1.2	0.8

Table 8.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (including incomplete)
He should support further rapprochement with the EU	71.9	53.9	44.4	40.6	42.1
He should support further integration with Russia	14.6	17.1	24.0	24.3	26.4
Doesn't matter	13.5	27.0	31.4	34.6	31.2
NA	0	2.0	0.2	0.5	0.3

Table 8.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	Unemployed, housewives
He should support further rapprochement with the EU	31.1	47.2	52.0	62.1	29.2
He should support further integration with Russia	30.6	19.3	22.7	16.6	38.5
Doesn't matter	37.8	33.0	25.3	20.5	32.3
NA	0.5	0.5	0	0.8	0

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
He should support further rapprochement with the EU	33.1	38.1	43.3	53.3	56.8	56.3	47.3
He should support further integration with Russia	25.6	21.2	27.6	26.6	16.6	8.0	33.2
Doesn't matter	41.3	40.7	28.2	20.1	25.6	34.5	18.6
NA	0	0	0.9	0	1.0	1.2	0.9

Table 8.5. Depending on settlement type

Variant of answer	Settlement type				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
He should support further rapprochement with the EU	33.1	51.4	50.7	44.1	47.8
He should support further integration with Russia	25.6	21.2	22.1	19.1	26.6
Doesn't matter	41.3	26.7	26.8	35.2	25.3
NA	0	0.7	0.4	1.6	0.3

**9. "Which problems will you consider as the most important ones when taking a decision for whom you will vote in the next presidential elections?" (more than one answer is possible)**

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 +
Peace and stability	47.6	42.9	35.8	35.6	39.9	50.0	46.2	63.7
All other problems	52.4	57.1	64.2	64.4	60.1	50.0	53.8	36.3

Table 9.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (including incomplete)
Peace and stability	77.9	53.6	56.6	55.0	54.3
All other problems	22.1	46.4	56.6	55.0	54.3

Table 9.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	Unemployed, housewives
Peace and stability	41.4	46.8	33.3	62.6	29.2
All other problems	58.6	53.2	66.7	37.4	70.8

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
Peace and stability	44.9	42.0	57.9	43.5	46.2	63.8	38.1
All other problems	55.1	58.0	42.1	56.5	53.8	36.2	61.9

Table 9.5. Depending on settlement type

Variant of answer	Settlement type				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
Peace and stability	44.9	52.6	43.7	50.0	46.9
All other problems	55.1	47.4	56.3	50.0	53.1

10. "Which problems will you consider as the most important ones when taking a decision for whom you will vote in the next presidential elections?" (*more than one answer is possible*)

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 +
Democracy and independence of Belarus	15.0	20.4	17.2	18.5	16.3	16.7	13.6	10.4
All other problems	85.0	79.6	82.8	81.5	83.7	83.3	86.4	89.6

Table 10.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (including incomplete)
Democracy and independence of Belarus	7.3	6.5	15.0	13.8	23.5
All other problems	92.7	93.5	85.0	86.2	76.5

Table 10.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	Unemployed, housewives
Democracy and independence of Belarus	80.3	85.7	80.0	90.0	85.4
All other problems	19.7	14.3	20.0	10.0	14.6

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
Democracy and independence of Belarus	25.1	16.8	12.0	6.5	10.6	13.8	13.7
All other problems	74.9	83.2	88.0	93.5	89.4	86.2	86.3

Table 10.5. Depending on settlement type

Variant of answer	Settlement type				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
Democracy and independence of Belarus	25.1	10.7	12.9	15.2	12.0
All other problems	74.9	89.3	87.1	84.8	88.0

**11. "On the 20th of July the CEC closed the registration of initiative groups for nomination of candidates for the post of the President. If the names of politicians listed below are in the voting paper, who will you vote for?"**

**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 +
Sergei Gaydukevich, the leader of the Liberal Democrat Party	11.4	5.9	9.3	11.6	14.4	14.2	11.7	8.0
Tatyana Korotkevich, the candidate from the "People's Referendum" campaign	17.9	23.5	28.5	27.9	20.8	19.2	12.1	8.9
Alexander Lukashenko, the President of Republic of Belarus	45.7	39.2	29.1	32.7	33.7	38.8	50.4	70.4
Victor Tereschenko, economist	8.1	9.8	12.6	6.8	12.1	8.5	5.7	5.2
Nikolai Ulakhovich, the ataman of Belarusian Cossacks	3.6	7.8	2.0	3.4	4.5	4.4	4.5	2.0
NA	1.3	13.8	18.5	17.6	14.5	14.9	15.6	5.5

**Table 11.2. Depending on education**

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (including incomplete)
Sergei Gaydukevich, the leader of the Liberal Democrat Party	6.3	9.7	14.0	12.1	8.2
Tatyana Korotkevich, the candidate from the "People's Referendum" campaign	12.6	9.1	17.6	20.5	21.6
Alexander Lukashenko, the President of Republic of Belarus	71.6	66.2	42.9	38.1	42.5
Victor Tereschenko, economist	3.2	5.8	8.7	10.2	6.5
Nikolai Ulakhovich, the ataman of Belarusian Cossacks	3.2	4.5	3.5	2.9	4.5
NA	6.1	9.7	13.3	19.2	16.7

**Table 11.3. Depending on status**

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	Unemployed, housewives
Sergei Gaydukevich, the leader of the Liberal Democrat Party	11.1	13.0	7.9	6.7	26.8
Tatyana Korotkevich, the candidate from the "People's Referendum" campaign	25.5	16.9	19.7	9.2	23.7
Alexander Lukashenko, the President of Republic of Belarus	34.0	41.7	40.8	69.5	25.8
Victor Tereschenko, economist	7.6	9.2	15.8	5.4	10.3
Nikolai Ulakhovich, the ataman of Belarusian Cossacks	3.5	4.1	6.6	2.6	3.1
NA	18.3	15.1	9.2	6.6	10.3

**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
Sergei Gaydukevich, the leader of the Liberal Democrat Party	4.5	8.4	10.2	14.3	22.1	6.3	16.3
Tatyana Korotkevich, the candidate from the "People's Referendum" campaign	32.9	15.9	14.8	13.1	15.1	9.2	17.2
Alexander Lukashenko, the President of Republic of Belarus	34.2	38.8	48.6	57.7	42.2	56.9	49.8
Victor Tereschenko, economist	8.2	8.8	9.7	4.8	8.0	8.6	7.9
Nikolai Ulakhovich, the ataman of Belarusian Cossacks	2.7	3.5	4.6	1.8	2.5	5.7	4.8
NA	17.5	24.6	12.1	8.3	10.0	13.3	4.0

Table 11.5. Depending on settlement type

Variant of answer	Settlement type				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
Sergei Gaydukevich, the leader of the Liberal Democrat Party	4.5	12.4	10.7	13.6	14.9
Tatyana Korotkevich, the candidate from the "People's Referendum" campaign	32.9	15.1	15.7	11.3	14.9
Alexander Lukashenko, the President of Republic of Belarus	34.2	51.2	47.1	44.7	49.3
Victor Tereschenko, economist	8.2	9.6	8.2	7.4	7.6
Nikolai Ulakhovich, the ataman of Belarusian Cossacks	2.7	2.8	3.6	5.4	3.9
NA	17.5	8.9	14.7	17.6	9.4

## 12. "Do you think that the elections of the President of Belarus in October 2015 will be free and fair?"

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 +
Yes	47.6	42.9	34.4	32.7	37.6	41.3	48.5	72.1
No	34.4	40.8	44.4	42.9	46.0	40.2	31.8	14.4
DA/NA	18.0	16.3	21.2	24.5	16.4	18.5	19.7	13.5

Table 12.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (including incomplete)
Yes	84.4	69.5	44.4	39.8	41.0
No	8.3	13.0	35.6	40.5	43.0
DA/NA	7.3	17.5	20.0	19.7	16.0

Table 12.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	Unemployed, housewives
Yes	33.6	46.0	42.7	70.8	28.1
No	47.3	35.0	44.0	14.9	45.8
DA/NA	19.1	19.0	13.3	14.3	26.1

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
Yes	34.2	44.2	50.7	60.7	40.2	59.2	52.9
No	51.4	46.9	25.3	26.2	39.2	17.8	22.9
DA/NA	14.4	8.9	24.0	13.1	20.6	23.0	24.2

Table 12.5. Depending on settlement type

Variant of answer	Settlement type				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
Yes	34.2	51.9	44.1	51.6	54.3
No	51.4	23.7	39.1	28.1	30.3
DA/NA	14.4	24.4	16.8	20.3	15.4

## 13. "According to you, do all candidates have equal conditions in the presidential campaign?"

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	36.4	31.3	21.2	20.4	25.8	29.6	39.9	61.4
No	48.9	52.1	64.2	63.3	59.8	55.7	44.5	25.1
DA/NA	14.7	16.6	14.6	16.3	14.4	14.7	15.6	13.5

Table 13.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (including incomplete)
Yes	79.2	56.5	32.5	26.7	32.8
No	10.4	25.3	50.6	60.5	53.9
DA/NA	10.4	18.2	16.9	12.8	13.3

Table 13.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	Unemployed, housewives
Yes	23.4	33.3	28.9	59.2	24.0
No	62.3	52.4	52.6	27.2	56.3
DA/NA	14.3	14.3	18.5	13.6	19.7

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	28.1	37.6	28.2	55.6	35.7	41.4	36.3
No	62.7	50.9	46.3	33.7	49.2	53.4	38.9
DA/NA	9.2	11.5	25.5	10.7	15.1	5.2	24.8

Table 13.5. Depending on settlement type

Variant of answer	Settlement type				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
Yes	28.1	33.9	37.6	44.5	38.3
No	62.7	47.3	48.0	37.9	47.7
DA/NA	9.2	18.8	14.4	17.6	14.0

## 14. "Do you share the opinion that the results of the elections this year are predetermined?"

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 +
Yes	57.6	53.1	62.9	62.6	62.9	59.1	64.0	44.0
No	28.8	28.6	23.2	25.2	24.2	30.2	25.4	37.9
DA/NA	13.6	18.4	13.9	12.2	12.9	10.7	10.6	18.1

Table 14.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (including incomplete)
Yes	37.5	40.3	57.3	64.4	64.2
No	50.0	37.0	29.4	22.9	24.9
DA/NA	12.5	22.7	13.3	12.7	10.9

Table 14.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	Unemployed, housewives
Yes	66.0	59.8	59.2	44.8	58.3
No	22.1	29.0	23.7	36.8	29.2
DA/NA	11.9	11.2	17.1	18.4	12.5

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
Yes	68.5	58.4	46.1	61.3	58.8	47.1	57.7
No	23.6	31.4	35.5	30.4	22.6	36.8	24.7
DA/NA	7.9	10.2	18.4	8.3	18.6	16.1	17.6

Table 14.5. Depending on settlement type

Variant of answer	Settlement type				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
Yes	68.5	53.1	63.2	52.5	52.1
No	23.6	26.7	25.4	34.6	32.8
DA/NA	7.9	21.2	11.4	12.9	15.1

## 15. "Do you agree that official results of elections are trustworthy?"

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 +
Yes	49.9	46.0	36.8	38.8	38.4	45.0	49.6	73.8
No	32.7	38.0	42.1	45.6	43.0	38.2	30.7	11.2
DA/NA	17.4	16.0	21.1	15.6	18.6	16.8	19.7	15.0

Table 15.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (including incomplete)
Yes	79.2	71.9	47.4	40.6	46.8
No	5.2	15.0	33.8	41.5	36.2
DA/NA	15.6	13.1	18.8	17.9	17.0

Table 15.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	Unemployed, housewives
Yes	34.7	49.6	46.1	70.8	37.5
No	45.8	32.9	36.8	13.1	47.9
DA/NA	19.5	17.5	17.1	16.1	14.6

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
Yes	36.0	42.7	50.7	64.3	58.3	62.6	46.5
No	48.3	43.6	27.2	25.6	29.1	14.9	28.8
DA/NA	15.7	13.7	22.1	10.1	12.6	22.5	24.7

Table 15.5. Depending on settlement type

Variant of answer	Settlement type				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
Yes	36.0	53.4	53.9	52.0	53.3
No	48.3	22.9	31.8	30.9	30.0
DA/NA	15.7	23.7	14.3	17.1	16.7

16. "If you believe that the results of presidential elections would be falsified, how would you react to this?"

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 will accept them because it will be impossible to change them	48.6	36.7	45.4	46.9	46.0	50.4	46.6	54.6
I'll take part in mass protests to try to change these results	10.1	10.2	15.8	15.6	13.7	7.5	11.0	4.3
I won't believe these results and will be very upset, but I won't take part in mass protests	26.4	28.6	22.4	25.2	28.1	31.4	28.0	21.6
DA/NA	14.9	24.5	16.4	12.3	12.2	10.7	14.4	19.5

Table 16.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (including incomplete)
I will accept them because it will be impossible to change them	71.1	42.9	48.3	50.6	42.0
I'll take part in mass protests to try to change these results	2.1	10.4	10.6	10.7	10.9
I won't believe these results and will be very upset, but I won't take part in mass protests	14.4	22.7	26.3	27.6	30.7
DA/NA	12.4	24.0	14.8	11.1	16.4

Table 16.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	Unemployed, housewives
I will accept them because it will be impossible to change them	43.9	50.0	40.8	52.8	51.5
I'll take part in mass protests to try to change these results	12.3	10.2	18.4	4.4	17.5
I won't believe these results and will be very upset, but I won't take part in mass protests	33.6	23.7	21.1	24.1	20.6
DA/NA	10.2	16.1	19.7	18.7	10.4

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 will accept them because it will be impossible to change them	41.8	51.8	52.3	56.5	49.7	49.1	43.2
I'll take part in mass protests to try to change these results	12.0	13.3	8.3	6.0	4.5	4.6	18.5
I won't believe these results and will be very upset, but I won't take part in mass protests	34.6	21.7	21.3	19.0	30.2	28.0	26.0
DA/NA	11.6	13.2	18.1	18.5	15.6	18.3	12.3



**Table 16.5. Depending on settlement type**

Variant of answer	Settlement type				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
I will accept them because it will be impossible to change them	41.8	39.9	53.4	52.3	54.4
I'll take part in mass protests to try to change these results	12.0	8.9	7.5	12.5	9.9
I won't believe these results and will be very upset, but I won't take part in mass protests	34.6	25.1	29.0	21.5	22.4
DA/NA	11.6	26.1	10.1	13.7	13.3

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

**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 +
I would vote for this candidate	38.7	41.7	51.0	46.9	48.1	40.4	40.2	19.9
I would vote for A. Lukashenko	32.3	22.9	16.6	14.3	22.3	25.0	34.1	59.9
I don't know yet, I would decide depending on the circumstances	28.1	35.4	30.4	38.1	28.8	32.9	25.4	19.6
NA	0.9	0	2.0	0.7	0.8	1.7	0.3	0.6

**Table 17.2. Depending on education**

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (including incomplete)
I would vote for this candidate	18.8	22.7	40.7	44.2	42.3
I would vote for A. Lukashenko	70.8	53.2	28.9	22.4	29.0
I don't know yet, I would decide depending on the circumstances	10.4	23.4	29.1	32.4	28.3
NA	0	0.7	1.3	1.0	0.4

**Table 17.3. Depending on status**

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	Unemployed, housewives
I would vote for this candidate	47.3	42.8	44.7	20.1	48.5
I would vote for A. Lukashenko	20.0	26.9	26.3	58.1	16.5
I don't know yet, I would decide depending on the circumstances	31.6	28.9	28.9	21.3	35.0
NA	1.1	1.4	0.1	0.5	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
I would vote for this candidate	38.9	47.8	40.4	23.1	43.0	31.6	41.6
I would vote for A. Lukashenko	26.6	30.5	32.6	47.3	21.0	35.6	36.7
I don't know yet, I would decide depending on the circumstances	34.1	20.4	25.7	27.2	36.0	31.0	21.7
NA	0.4	1.3	1.3	2.4	0	1.8	0

**Table 17.5. Depending on settlement type**

Variant of answer	Settlement type				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
I would vote for this candidate	38.9	37.0	38.8	38.8	39.7
I would vote for A. Lukashenko	26.6	31.2	30.9	32.5	38.2
I don't know yet, I would decide depending on the circumstances	34.1	30.1	29.9	27.8	20.8
NA	0.4	1.7	0.4	0.9	1.3

**18. "According to you, how are Western countries treated in Belarus?"** (*more than one answer is possible*)**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 +
With respect	21.1	20.4	25.2	23.3	17.8	18.6	22.3	22.1
With sympathy	7.0	6.1	2.0	4.8	9.9	7.5	7.6	7.2
With concern	21.1	18.4	21.7	19.0	19.7	18.9	20.1	25.6
With disregard	8.3	12.2	7.3	9.6	10.6	9.3	4.9	7.8
With fear	6.8	10.2	7.9	8.2	6.4	6.4	7.2	5.5
Without any special feelings	32.8	34.7	31.1	31.3	32.6	37.4	35.6	28.0
DA	6.9	12.2	6.0	9.5	7.6	5.0	5.7	7.5

**Table 18.2. Depending on education**

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (including incomplete)
With respect	22.1	22.7	19.8	19.1	24.9
With sympathy	3.2	9.8	5.9	7.6	7.9
With concern	32.6	16.2	21.3	19.3	21.8
With disregard	2.1	9.2	8.5	7.9	9.9
With fear	3.2	7.1	7.4	7.6	5.5
Without any special feelings	27.4	26.8	35.1	33.9	31.5
DA	6.3	12.4	5.7	6.9	6.1

**Table 18.3. Depending on status**

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	Unemployed, housewives
With respect	23.7	17.8	22.7	22.1	20.8
With sympathy	6.7	7.5	6.7	7.9	3.1
With concern	19.7	20.0	19.7	23.3	24.0
With disregard	6.9	10.6	10.7	6.7	7.3
With fear	7.2	6.7	12.0	5.4	6.2
Without any special feelings	34.6	33.0	30.7	30.3	35.4
DA	6.0	7.3	8.0	7.4	6.3

**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
With respect	18.2	19.9	17.1	18.9	25.6	16.7	30.5
With sympathy	2.4	4.4	14.8	10.7	8.0	2.9	8.0
With concern	24.0	23.6	23.6	21.4	28.8	12.6	11.5
With disregard	1.0	4.9	13.8	16.1	4.0	14.4	9.3
With fear	7.9	6.2	12.5	4.1	4.0	5.7	5.8
Without any special feelings	49.0	39.6	19.4	26.8	28.6	34.4	24.7
DA	2.7	4.9	9.3	3.0	9.5	14.9	6.6

**Table 18.5. Depending on settlement type**

Variant of answer	Settlement type				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
With respect	18.2	19.9	22.2	24.6	20.8
With sympathy	2.4	11.7	6.1	5.9	8.6
With concern	24.0	23.4	16.5	20.3	21.1
With disregard	1.0	12.7	15.8	4.3	7.8
With fear	7.9	9.6	6.5	4.3	5.5
Without any special feelings	49.0	23.4	30.8	34.8	27.9
DA	2.7	8.9	5.0	7.0	9.6

**19. "In the documentary film "Crimea: The Way Home" Vladimir Putin told that during the Crimea operation he gave an order to be ready to use nuclear weapon. What do you think about this statement?"**

**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 +
I approve it, because it is the only way to talk to the West: the West only understands when they are addressed from the position of strength	35.1	38.8	27.8	32.0	39.0	36.1	35.6	34.9
I feel alarm and disapproval: such blackmail is unacceptable for a leader of his rank	47.8	36.7	50.3	50.3	45.1	45.7	45.8	52.7
DA/NA	17.1	24.5	21.9	17.7	15.9	18.2	18.6	12.4

**Table 19.2. Depending on education**

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (including incomplete)
I approve it, because it is the only way to talk to the West: the West only understands when they are addressed from the position of strength	24.0	35.1	35.4	36.6	35.8
I feel alarm and disapproval: such blackmail is unacceptable for a leader of his rank	66.7	46.1	45.6	46.1	49.1
DA/NA	9.3	18.8	19.0	17.3	15.1

**Table 19.3. Depending on status**

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	Unemployed, housewives
I approve it, because it is the only way to talk to the West: the West only understands when they are addressed from the position of strength	34.1	36.5	29.3	35.4	36.5
I feel alarm and disapproval: such blackmail is unacceptable for a leader of his rank	46.4	46.7	44.0	50.8	51.0
DA/NA	19.5	16.8	26.7	13.8	12.5

**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
I approve it, because it is the only way to talk to the West: the West only understands when they are addressed from the position of strength	24.1	30.5	40.3	42.6	32.7	35.4	45.6
I feel alarm and disapproval: such blackmail is unacceptable for a leader of his rank	62.9	60.6	38.0	39.1	53.8	38.3	34.1
DA/NA	13.0	8.9	21.7	18.3	13.5	26.3	20.3

**Table 19.5. Depending on settlement type**

Variant of answer	Settlement type				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
I approve it, because it is the only way to talk to the West: the West only understands when they are addressed from the position of strength	24.1	43.3	36.2	33.6	37.5
I feel alarm and disapproval: such blackmail is unacceptable for a leader of his rank	62.9	35.7	47.3	48.8	45.3
DA/NA	13.0	21.0	16.5	17.6	17.2

**20. "In 2015 Armenia and Kyrgyzstan joined the Eurasian Economic Union besides Belarus, Kazakhstan and Russia. Which estimation of this fact do you agree with?"**

**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 +
It reinforces the union, expands the shared market, and increases the political weight of the union	55.3	51.0	51.7	48.6	49.8	50.2	56.4	68.0
Poor countries joined the union, and other members will be obliged to help them	32.6	26.5	35.1	39.7	37.6	38.8	30.7	21.6
DA/NA	12.1	22.5	13.2	11.7	12.6	11.0	12.9	10.4

**Table 20.2. Depending on education**

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (including incomplete)
It reinforces the union, expands the shared market, and increases the political weight of the union	73.7	63.6	53.5	52.4	52.2
Poor countries joined the union, and other members will be obliged to help them	18.9	18.8	34.1	35.2	37.9
DA/NA	7.4	17.6	12.4	12.3	9.9

**Table 20.3. Depending on status**

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	Unemployed, housewives
It reinforces the union, expands the shared market, and increases the political weight of the union	44.9	57.4	52.0	65.6	52.6
Poor countries joined the union, and other members will be obliged to help them	43.1	31.6	30.7	21.9	36.1
DA/NA	12.0	11.0	17.3	12.5	11.3

**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
It reinforces the union, expands the shared market, and increases the political weight of the union	50.7	48.2	44.9	73.8	61.8	65.5	51.3
Poor countries joined the union, and other members will be obliged to help them	47.3	37.6	38.0	16.7	28.1	22.4	27.4
DA/NA	2.0	14.2	17.1	9.5	10.1	12.1	21.3

**Table 20.5. Depending on settlement type**

Variant of answer	Settlement type				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
It reinforces the union, expands the shared market, and increases the political weight of the union	50.7	56.2	58.8	50.8	58.7
Poor countries joined the union, and other members will be obliged to help them	47.3	31.5	26.2	32.0	27.4
DA/NA	2.1	12.3	15.0	17.2	13.9

## 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.*

### RUSSIAN SOCIETY TIRED OF UKRAINIAN NEWS

On September 21 Russian Public Opinion Research Center (WCIOM) made a report on how Russians evaluate the state of things in the country and in their personal lives. The survey was conducted on August 29-30. The main conclusion: social moods of Russians start to decrease, their optimism drops, and people are getting ready for things to go worse in the country.

In particular, social mood index describing the current situation in the country (Table 1) has lost 12 points from May to August (from 73 to 61 points), and reached this year's minimum. The current figure is low compared to the September 2014 figure (68 points), however, it significantly exceeds the results of the past years (e.g. August 2009 – 24 points). According to the recent data 11% of respondents believe that "everything is good" in the country; 67% – "everything is normal"; 14% – "everything is bad".

dropped down to a five-month minimum. The increase of negative moods is observed amid a notable decrease in the share of those who believe that "the hard times are over" (from 27% in July down to 21% in August). Less Russians are optimistic about Russia's future than a year ago (–22 points in September 2014); the index is closer to the level of 2009 (–49 points in August).

Since March 2014 social indices were maintained by the "Crimean anomaly". But a year and a half is a significant period. The interest to Ukrainian events started to drop. According to WCIOM surveys, in January 83% of Russians followed the situation (including 38% of those who followed it closely). In September this share amounted to 71% (including 25% of those who followed the information constantly). The interests is more often demonstrated by the elderly (82% of people over 60) than the youth (44% of people aged 18-24).

Significantly less Russians call the events in Ukraine a civil war (50% in January vs. 36% in Sep-

**Table 1**

#### **Dynamics of social mood indices and social expectation index\*, %**

<b>How would you generally assess the situation in the country?</b>												
08'10	07'11	09'12	09'13	09'14	01'15	02'15	03'15	04'15	05'15	06'15	07'15	08'15
28	20	28	38	68	64	67	70	64	73	72	66	61
<b>How would you generally assess the situation in your personal life?</b>												
56	52	68	68	76	80	84	81	77	82	82	79	78
<b>There are different points of view concerning the crisis in Russia. Do you think that today we are going through hard times/the hard times are over or the hard times are yet to come?</b>												
–35	–29	–38	–32	–22	–70	–60	–48	–41	–26	–42	–39	–47

\* Social mood indices are calculated as a difference between answers "everything is normal", "everything is perfect", "everything is good" and "everything is bad", "everything is horrible". Social expectation index shows how optimistic Russians are about the future of the country. The index is calculated as a difference between the answer "It is over" and the sum of answers "it is now", "it is yet to happen"

At the same time Russians assess the situation in personal life much more positively. Despite a small decline, the corresponding index still has high positions (78 points in August). The current value exceeds the figures of similar periods in recent years, including 2014. Who is more positive about their personal life? They are Russians aged 18-24 (37% say that everything is "perfect" or "good"), those who have high income (37%), and residents of small towns (35%).

Social expectation index demonstrates a negative trend again. From July to August the index has lost 8 points (from –39 to –47 points). Thus, the index

tember). The share of those, who consider that Ukraine is enveloped by terror and genocide, has also significantly dropped (from 17% down to 6% accordingly). At the same time, a notable share of respondents (18%) characterizes the situation as a "collapse of the country" and "complete destabilization". Each sixth (17%) respondent says that there is anarchy and banditry in Ukraine.

Crisis index of Ukraine (Table 2) has gained 22 points over the period from January to September (from –34 up to –12 points). For comparison, this figure was significantly higher in October 2014 (21 point).

Table 2

**Dynamics of crisis index of Ukraine\***

March 1-2 2014	March 8-9 2014	March 15-16 2014	April 26-27 2014	June 21-22 2014	August 9-10 2014	October 18-19 2014	January 24-25 2015	September 5-6 2015
-39	-7	-7	-43	-58	-46	21	-34	-12

\* Crisis index of Ukraine is based on the question "According to you, in what direction has the situation in Ukraine been developing recently?" and demonstrates the direction of the general situation change in Ukraine. The index is calculated as a difference between positive and negative answers. The higher the figure is, the more people are convinced that the situation in Ukraine is normalizing

Table 3

**Dynamics of answering the question: "Are current affairs in Russia generally going in the right direction, or is the country going in the wrong direction?", %**

Variant of answer	02'14	03'14	06'15	07'15	08'15	09'15
In the right direction	47	60	64	59	55	55
In the wrong direction	37	26	22	23	29	26
PCI	10	34	42	36	26	29

Table 4

**Dynamics of answering the question: "Do you generally approve or disapprove of Vladimir Putin's actions as President (Prime-Minister) of Russia?", %**

Variant of answer	02'14	03'14	06'15	07'15	08'15	09'15
Approve	69	80	89	87	83	84
Disapprove	30	18	10	12	17	15
NA	1	2	1	1	1	1

Let us turn to the results of Levada-center now (Table 3). Policy correctness index (PCI) didn't react to the Russian victory in the Olympic Games in Sochi. It steeply went up in March after the annexation of Crimea, and reached its peak value in June 2015 thanks to information from Donbass.

The Donbass conflict joined the ranks of frozen conflicts. It cannot attract the attention of Russians as it could before. The society is more and more tired of Ukrainian news, the interest to these news drops and switches to other topics. As a result there is a decrease of PCI. However, it is still three times as high as in the period before "Crimeaisours".

What about the state mass media which were stirring up the topic so actively? The setup has changed. Content-analysis of mass media demonstrates a decrease of the general level of aggressiveness. For example, insulting epithets for Ukraine became significantly rarer. Informational attacks are still there, but they have become less intense. Official comments became more moderate and calm. All this affects mass consciousness, and people's attention switches to economic problems inside the country. The process has started, but its speed is quite low as for now.

Just like any other urgent method of political technologies, propaganda becomes less efficient when used for too long. This is what we can observe right now. Will Syria replace Donbass for Russians? We'll have the answer for this question in the next quarter.

## LOYALTY IN EXCHANGE FOR GREATNESS

Ukrainian crisis provided people's support for the power. The rating of approval of V. Putin's actions, according to Levada-Center, had reached the historical high in June 2015 – 89% (Table 4). The last (September) survey demonstrated that there were no changes in mass consciousness's attitude towards the head of state.

Yes, the rating of the President has slightly decreased. But after the decrease it amounts to 84%. Is there any other country with an economic crisis and such level of support of the leader? Public consciousness stays split since the introduction of sanctions. Patriotic position and support of the leader is one thing. Another thing is everyday reality people live in.

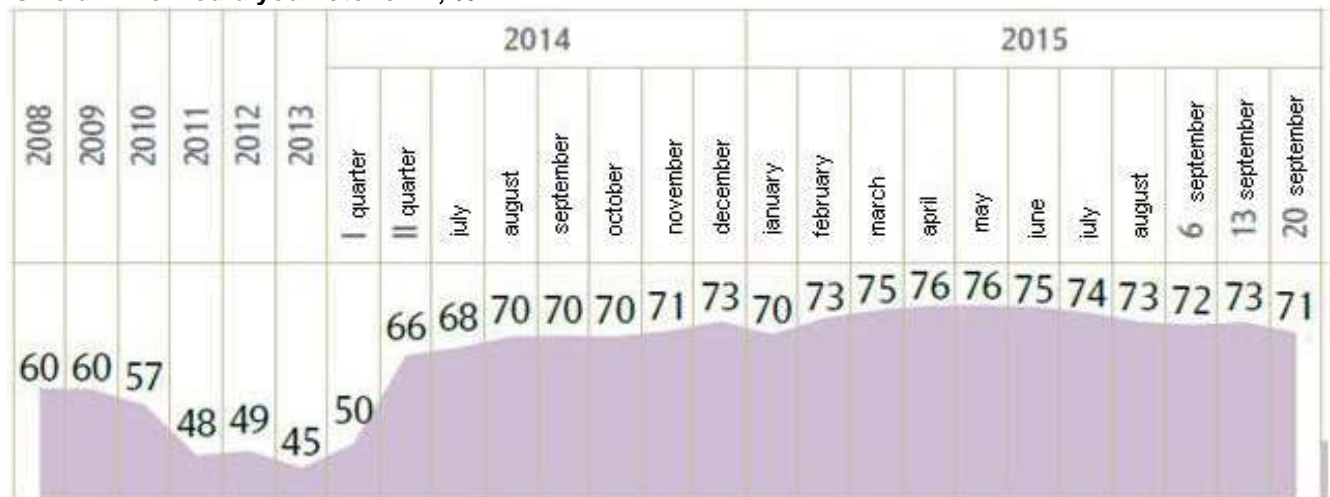
The idea that there is a "war between TV and fridge" in the minds and souls of Russians has been quite popular lately. However, the idea of economic determinism doesn't look convincing for the modern Russia and current state of minds of its citizens. Russian history doesn't confirm the rule which says that satisfied people love the power and hungry people rebel. That is why it won't be surprising if the further worsening of the economic situation only makes society more consolidated. Experience of Latin American countries demonstrates that it's possible.

The rating of the President under the conditions of atomized society lives its own independent life. It be-

comes a symbol. Trusting the President means loyalty to the country. "This is not a euphoric adoration, – says L. Gudkov, the director of Levada-Center, – it's more like a gratitude to "mafia boss", who maintains order and conducts strict policy".

Let us illustrate the quote of the Russian sociologist by a graph taken from the site of the Public Opinion Foundation.

**Dynamics of answering the question: "Imagine that the next Sunday the election of President of Russia is held. Who would you vote for?", %**



Today the rating is threatened not by the increasing poverty, but by the frozen situation in Ukraine. The source of patriotism increase (the annexation of Crimea) doesn't feed the public consciousness anymore. There are no new victories.

What is going to happen due to this? It's quite risky to try to forecast it. Russia is in the stripe of events which hardly have any precedents in history. Scientific community has no understanding of mechanisms of mass consciousness under the conditions of force majeure to make a precise forecast of its behavior in a month or three.

Majority (84%) is the population of the country. Its portrait is the portrait of modern Russia. The aspiration to unite around several symbols is prevailing in Russia (with a few exceptions). The main symbol is "our Victories". There is a direct relation between the current victory over the American scoundrel ("We won because we didn't listen to them") and the victory in the Great Patriotic War.

Russia became different in 2014. The expectations of many people have changed, including expectations for the power and the values to support. The annexation of Crimea and the toughening of the international policy factually meant that instead of prosperity and social safety people were offered the status of Great Power.

Real incomes of people have dropped by 10% in 2015. But people don't come out to the streets. Social indices are high. Consolidation around the power is still considerable. Therefore, the social contract forming since 2014 is quite efficient yet.

And in the conclusion of "rating" topic let us cite the Russian philosopher A. Rubtsov: "Before 2011

the powers' vocabulary was full of terms related to future: modernization, globalization, vector change, diversification, innovations, human capital assets and knowledge-driven economy, technological parks and development zones, hi-tech, startup... The system was rebooted after an "about turn!" order: spiritual values, identity and originality, genetic code, bonds, moral statutes, moral ascendancy and even "chastity"

– all the accessories of stubborn traditionalism. Creativity became an insult; brain drain became an organized process; the turn around to the East is reminiscent of "Primakov's turn around over the Atlantic ocean".

#### UKRAINE: NO PREREQUISITES FOR A NEW MAIDAN

On September 21 the Ilko Kucheriv Democratic Initiatives Foundation (DIF) and Razumkov Centre published a report called "Public opinion of Ukrainian population: Protest moods in the period of crisis". This report is based on a survey conducted in July.

Factually, all the population of Ukraine felt the aftermath of the financial and economic crisis: 59% – very seriously and 37% – "to some extent". Three quarter of respondents listed the rise of tariffs on housing and public utility services as the most serious blow on the family budget. Almost the same amount of people stated that they are obliged to economize on buying clothes and shoes, 67% of respondents started to buy less food, almost 55% limited buying medicines and using medical services.

As a comparison, during the financial and economic crisis of 2008 only 33% of respondents noted very serious consequences, 46% – to some extent, and 16.5% didn't notice any consequences at all.

In July 2015 28% of population considered that mass protests are possible in their cities, towns and villages (6% were sure that it would happen, 22% though it was possible). However, majority of population (60%) consider these protests either unlikely (33%) or completely impossible (27%). These pro-

tests are the most expected in the Central (38%), Eastern (30%) and Western (28%) regions, and the least expected in Donbass (10%).

18% of respondents expressed readiness to take personal part in hypothetic protests (4% – "sure", 14 – "likely"). However, 67% of respondents answered that they would not take part in protest actions. This readiness for protests is the lowest since May 2013. Protest moods were at their high in January 2015, when 43% of population was ready to protest. This was the period when hryvnia was fast devaluating and prices were fast growing.

Population of the Western region demonstrates traditionally high readiness to protest – 33%. This figure is considerably lower in other regions: 21% in the Central region, 13% in the Southern region, 10% in the Eastern region, and 7% in Donbass.

Sociologists found out that 48% of respondents do not see any radical changes in the country a year and a half after the scuttle of V. Yanukovich and the change of the power. The attitude to the role of P. Poroshenko is diametrically opposed: 37% of respondents are convinced that he advances the reforms in the country, while 39% share the opposite opinion.

65% of respondents see the overcoming of the system corruption as the main priority; 58% – radical reformation of law enforcement agencies (militia, courts, public prosecutors' office); 40% – changes in the social safety system; 36% – changes in public health service. Another 31% of respondents call for defensive capacity increase. It's curious that only 17.8% of respondents consider decentralization of power, and only 11.5% care about administrative and territorial reform.

30% of respondents believe that the main reason for the disastrous state in the country is the military actions in Donbass. Only 12% directly blame Russia for opposing Ukrainian reforms. Majority of citizens see other reasons for the crisis: 72% – corrupted power system; 54% – oligarchization of economy; 47% – incompetence of the political leadership of the country.

While a year ago majority of people expressed readiness to suffer hardships for the sake of reforms, now only 36% of respondents agree with a temporary decrease of life standards for the sake of future successful changes in the country. 28% said that they cannot last longer than a year, and every third respondents said that they have no means to survive right now.

It is more and more often stated in Ukraine that what government calls reforms are just increases of tariffs, which is in fact only a consequence of the crisis. I. Bekeshina, the director of the Ilko Kucheriv Democratic Initiatives Foundation noted that "Ukrainians see the reasons of the crisis in internal factors above all, and they include in these factors the actions of political forces which are called out to make reforms". The powers traditionally lay the blame on Russia.

It should be noted that tariffs in Ukraine were increased several times over the last year, while the salaries and pensions remained the same. Electric energy became more expensive by 23% since the 1<sup>st</sup> of September; the price of heating will be higher by 70% in comparison with the last year's tariffs; the price of the gas for population was multiplied by 7 over half a year.

According to S. Taran, the leader of the International Democracy Institute, this sociologic survey testifies on the fact that Ukrainians are tired but didn't lose hope: "During a war, life standards become lower in any country. Our territories are occupied, we have a war situation in Donbass, and we've lost Russian market, which was traditional for Ukrainian goods. Of course the economy has become worse. But we shouldn't neglect the fact that indices start to rise, the situation gains balance. And this happens due to the reforms of the government. We are moving forward, although not as quickly, not as evenly and systematically as we would like to. We are getting out of the economical pit, which was created during the presidency of Yanukovich. People are not satisfied, because it's really difficult for them, but they understand that people in power are not magicians. At least, the level of dissatisfaction with the situation is not equal to the level of distrust to the power".

Most Ukrainian experts agree that amid economic problems the moods in society are radicalized. Probability of mass protests gradually increases. But even if there are some protests, they won't become a new Maidan. There are no prerequisites for it.

In the conclusion of the Ukrainian topic it should be noted that 68% of respondents expressed their readiness to take part in local elections, which will take place in October 2015. Soviet tradition to vote is alive in Ukraine too. Belarusians supporters of boycott should not forget about it.

Significant part of those, who expressed their readiness to take part in the elections, either hasn't decided for which party's representative they are going to vote (23%), or intends to choose candidate independently of his party (16%). Among other voters 14.4% are inclined to vote for a candidate from Petro Poroshenko Bloc "Solidarity"; 9% – party "Self Reliance", 7.5% – "Opposition Bloc"; 7.3% – Radical Party of Oleh Lyashko; 6.9% – All-Ukrainian Union "Fatherland"; 4% – "Right Sector" party.

#### PUTIN VS. OBAMA

According to the results of a survey conducted between March 25 and 27, 2015 by "Pew Research Center" neither Russia nor its President V. Putin enjoys respect or support overseas. On average only 30% of respondents from abroad have positive attitude towards Russia. Almost in all countries its image is much worse than the image of the US. In the countries, where the survey was conducted, only 24% of respondents are convinced that V. Putin's foreign policy is correct; and the level of trust to the Russian



leader is much lower than the level of trust to the US president B. Obama.

Respondents in Poland and Jordan are extremely negative towards Russia (80%). In the case of Poland this is the result of long-term tense relations between two countries. Public opinion in Jordan was likely influenced by Moscow's support to the regime of B. Asad in Syria. Hundreds of thousands of refugees flew from Syria to Jordan. Anti-Russian moods are also very prominent in Israel (74%), Japan (73%), Germany (70%) and France (70%).

The highest level of support to Russia was registered in Vietnam (75%). However, there are only two countries where more than a half of respondents expressed positive attitude to Russia – they are Ghana (56%) and China (51%).

Against the background of mainly anti-Russian moods the attitude to Russia varies depending on respondents' age. Americans aged 50 and older are much more critical of Moscow (78%) comparatively to younger respondents aged 18-29 (56%). Approximately the same scatter of opinions depending on the age was registered in Canada: 69% of elder respondents and only 47% of young respondents expressed negative opinion.

In France there is a significant dispersion of opinions depending on party affiliation: even though representatives of both leading parties are negative towards Russia, socialists are more inclined to perceive Russia negatively (78%) than supporters of UMP (67%).

In majority of countries figures, which reflect positive attitude to Russia and the US, are significantly different in favor of the US. In Europe this range amounts to 43% (69% – the US, 26% – Russia); in African countries – 42% (79% – the US, 37% – Russia). Only in the Middle East the shares of respondents, who are positive about Russia and the US, are almost equal. Although in both cases these shares are not very significant: 29% – the US, 25% – Russia.

Over the last years Americans' attitude towards Russia became worse. In 2011 almost half of Americans were positive about Russia (49%); in 2015 this share dropped down to 22%. Russians' attitude towards the US worsened even more significantly (and quickly). In 2013 51% of Russian perceived America positively, in 2015 this share amounted to only 15% (here and further the figures for Russia are taken from a survey of Levada-Center, conducted in May 2015).

Similar worsening of Russia's image can be observed in Germany as well. This process started even before the war in the East of Ukraine in 2014. In 2010 half of Germans were positive about Russia, while in 2015 only 27% of Germans kept this attitude. Russians' attitude to Germany worsened even more significantly: in 2011 78% of Russians were positive towards Germany; in 2015 this share amounted to 35%.

Over the past year the attitude to Russia became worse in China as well. Currently, nearly half of Chinese people (51%) express positive attitude towards Russia, while in 2014 two thirds of respondents shared this attitude. However, this index only returned to the previous longstanding figures after a one-year burst. Russians' attitude to China improved significantly and jumped from 64% (the index remained in the same level from 2007 up to 2014) to 79% in 2015.

Only in two countries (Vietnam – 70%; China – 54%) more than a half of respondents are convinced that Russian President V. Putin pursues a correct foreign policy. In 39 countries only 24% of respondents (on average) expressed positive attitude towards him.

On average 58% of respondents of different countries are negative towards V. Putin. The most critical of him are people in Spain (92% don't trust him), Poland (87%), France (86%), and Ukraine (84%). At least three quarters of respondents in the countries of the West Europe and the North America, and majority of respondent in the Middle East are critical of Putin.

The dispersion of opinions is much more expressed in the countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America. In Asia-Pacific region nearly 8 people out of ten (81%) are negative towards V. Putin, while in Vietnam seven people out of ten like him. 70% of respondents in Venezuela don't trust him (quite an unexpected result), and only almost a half (52%) in Peru.

In all world regions V. Putin's ratings are significantly lower than Obama's. Three quarters of Europeans believe that B. Obama pursues right foreign policy, and only 15% can say this about V. Putin. In the countries of Africa, Asia, and Latin America the share of those who trust B. Obama is twice as high as the share of those who trust V. Putin. Only in the Middle East the levels of support of these two presidents are comparable. Although this is not because V. Putin's rating is high here (25%), but because B. Obama's rating is quite low (36%).

In the US nearly every fifth (21%) American is convinced that V. Putin pursues the right foreign policy. At the same time the level of trust to B. Obama among Russians dropped by the factor of 4. In 2011 41% of Russians trusted him. In 2015 only 11% of respondents expressed conviction that B. Obama's foreign policy is correct. This share is comparable with the level of trust of Russians to President G. Bush Jr. (8%) in 2008.

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