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www.iiseps.org; iiseps@iiseps.org

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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 first quarter of 2016.

Our research studies demonstrate that in general financial well-being of Belarusians significantly worsened, getting close to the level of crisis year 2011 according to many indicators. Less than 6% of respondents say that their financial position improved, while 10 times as much of them say that it became worse. Average per capita income (including salaries, pensions, social benefits and other incomes) decreased from \$ 195 in December down to \$ 147 in March (in June this figure amounted to \$ 285, i.e. over 9 months Belarusians' income decreased by 40%). The level of trust to the national currency has significantly dropped; the fear of another devaluation of Belarusian ruble in the next few months has increased. The number of those who think that Belarusian economy is in crisis increased by 20%, exceeding the value of the crisis year 2011. Over 40% of respondents believe that "these hardships will be with us for a long time, it's time to tighten our belts"; and 24% of respondents see "a collapse of Belarusian economy". Millions of Belarusians expect future with a growing anxiety: less than 13% of respondents believe that socio-economic situation in the country will improve in the next few years; almost 43% expect a worsening of the situation.

Belarusians' attitude to the state power became significantly worse as well. The number of people who don't trust the main state institutions today is bigger than the number of those who trust them. For the current crisis Belarusians mostly blame the government (48.3%) and the President (47%). Two thirds of respondents see the increase of communal tariffs as "an unfair decision: most people have no money to pay for these tariffs". Conflict of the power with individual entrepreneurs negatively affected financial well-being of millions of Belarusians: almost 55% of respondents said that they "bought goods from them, because they were more expensive in other places". That is why only 16.2% of respondents share the power's position in this conflict, while 45% support individual entrepreneurs. On the eve of the 30th anniversary of the Chernobyl disaster, over 70% of respondents are dissatisfied or satisfied only partly with the way the power deals with the consequences of the catastrophe. According to 34% of respondents, "it is almost impossible to obtain fair and just solutions in the conditions of existing Belarusian judicial system". Today only 23.5% of respondents believe that the state of things in our country is developing in the right direction; nearly 60% consider the chosen direction wrong.

Amid this background the desire for changes became significantly stronger. Today less than a quarter of respondents supports maintaining of the current situation, while two thirds advocate changes. In September 2014 53.5% of respondents trusted A. Lukashenko, while 33.3% didn't; today the ratio is 41.7% vs. 47.7%. Back in September 45.7% of respondents were ready to vote for him, in December this indicator amounted to 33.3%, and today this share equals to 27.3%. At the same time protest potential remains low. Rating of oppositional parties reached a minimum – 11.3% (18.8% in March 2015). If another presidential election was held tomorrow, 6.9% of respondents would vote for T. Korotkevich, 2.9% of respondents would vote for N. Statkevich; the shares of votes for every other oppositional politician are below 1%. Suggestion of a group of oppositional leaders to carry out the Congress of Democratic Forces in May 2016 to "consolidate democratic forces and decide on further actions" is supported by less than 22% of respondents.

The pendulum of foreign-policy orientations of Belarusians once again swung in favor of Europe. In the answers to the "either... or"-question in December 53.5% of respondents were for integration with Russia and 25.1% for joining the EU, today the ratio is 48% vs. 31.2%. It is possible that these results were affected by the recent thaw in the relations between the EU and Belarus, in particular, the cancellation of sanctions against Belarus. Thus, almost 40% of respondents believe that "the EU made the right decision; they should respect the choice of Belarusian people and cooperate with the power which enjoys people's support". At the same time, these changes should not be over-estimated. Majority of Belarusians are still characterized by a deep cultural and psychological proximity to Russia. Thus, almost three quarters of respondents consider themselves closer to Russians, and only one quarter – to Europeans. 43.7% of respondents agree that there is a war between Russia and Ukraine; 75% of respondents believe that there is a civil war in Ukraine. Almost 45% of respondents blame the West for "returning to the times of the cold war", as Russian Prime Minister D. Medvedev put it. Less than 13 % of respondents blames Russia for it. On the other hand, Belarusians are more and more anxious about the growing tension between Russia and the West, and many of them would like to distance themselves from this process. Thus, over 45% of respondents are worried that "as Belarus is the closest ally of Russia, the confrontation between Russia and the West will inevitably affect Belarus". Today only 22% of respondents are positive about the idea of a Russian military airbase in Belarus (in December this share amounted to 27%).

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 March of 2016 independent sociologists have conducted the nation opinion poll (those face-to-face interviewed are 1.508 persons aged 18 and over, margin of error doesn't exceed 0.03).

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

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

MARCH – 2016

Unhappy beginning of another 5-year period

The first quarter of 2016 draw a line under the Anomalies-2014 and 2015. As we've emphasized it, in the long run economic factors win over political factors in the struggle for the influence on public opinion. Beginning from March 2014, the "image of the world" of an average Belarusian was formed under a significant influence of Russian TV channels. Over 60% of population of the "partisan country" were sincerely happy about "Crimeaisours", and this fact stopped the negative trends outlined by the end of 2013.

For a long time, social well-being of population did not correspond to economic situation. It was like Russian TV cut Belarusians off reality, but social indices collapsed in March. Real incomes of population, decreasing for the second year running, started to matter in the end. And, as it often happens, clarity came unexpectedly.

For three quarters running index of financial standing (FSI) was oscillating near -30 mark (Table 1), but it lost 22.2 points in March in comparison with December. If FSI continues to decrease at the same rate, then the absolute low of June 2011 will be outstripped in the next quarter.

standing became worse. 10.7% of households assessed positively the changes in their financial standing in comparison with 2014. 55.7% of households noted stability of their financial standing.

Almost half of households (47.7%), which pointed out a worsening of financial standing, named significant price hike as the main reason of these negative changes. 19.3% of respondents named a decrease of incomes, 10.1% named switch to a lower paid work, underemployment or unemployment.

Answers to the question of Table 2 confirm sound reasoning of the significant decrease of FSI. In comparison with September 2014, the share of respondents who can hardly make both ends meet ("don't have enough money to buy food") increased by a factor of 4 – from 4.8% to 19.4%! The share of those for whom "buying clothes is a real problem" significantly increased as well: from 25.5% up to 41.8%. These changes were made possible at the expense of almost symmetrical decrease of answers in the following two "nominations".

In perfect agreement with Karl Marx's formula "existence determines consciousness" we registered a tight connection between the evaluation of country's policy and the answers to the question of Table 2. In particular, among respondents, who assess the policy positively, only 10% of respondents ascribed themself-

Table 1

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	03'15	06'15	09'15	12'15	02'16
It has improved	1.6	12.6	10.1	8.6	9.0	9.8	10.5	5.5
It has not changed	23.2	58.1	63.3	44.0	51.3	44.4	45.9	33.4
It has become worse	73.4	28.4	25.2	46.3	37.2	42.5	42.4	59.6
FSI*	-71.8	-15.8	-15.1	-37.7	-28.2	-32.7	-31.9	-54.1

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

IISEPS data for 2015 are not fundamentally different from Belstat data, obtained during a selective survey of Belarusian households' life standards in 2015 (unfortunately, the exact date of survey is not known). Every third household (33.6%) noted that their financial

standing became worse. 10.7% of households assessed positively the changes in their financial standing in comparison with 2014. 55.7% of households noted stability of their financial standing.

For the first time over the last two years the policy correctness index (PCI) is lower than its' pre-"Crimeaisours" value (Table 3). Majority of Belarusians

(58.5%) agreed that the state of things in the country is developing in the wrong direction. These evaluations are quite different from the statements of the head of state about normal functioning of "the existing system in Belarus", which "doesn't rouse criticism from people".

As it is expected for an authoritarian leader, A. Lukashenko enjoys support mostly among peripheral social groups, which cannot survive without state support. The largest in numbers of these groups is retired people group. However, even among people older than 60 years old, 38.2% of respondents admit that the course of development in the country is wrong.

Belarusians save money on food, can't by clothes for themselves and their children, and thus they correlate their overblown expectations with their abilities. Such was the start of another 5-year period with A. Lukashenko.

During the crisis people prefer a living dog to a dead lion

87.8% of Belarusians admit that there is a crisis in the country, however only 24% of them think that Belarusian economy has collapsed. Relevance of this ratio is confirmed by results of Table 5. Crisis didn't

Table 2

Dynamics of answering the question: "Which group of population can you assign yourself to?", %

Variant of answer	03'11	06'13	09'14	03'16
We can hardly make both ends meet and we don't have enough money to buy even food	10.3	8.5	4.8	19.4
We have enough money for food, but buying clothes is a real problem	33.7	37.2	25.5	41.8
We have enough money for food and clothes, but buying durable goods is a problem	44.1	45.3	52.8	30.1
We can easily buy durable goods, but it is difficult to buy really expensive things	10.9	8.3	15.0	7.0
We can afford some quite expensive buys – a flat, a summer residence and so on	0.7	0.6	1.6	1.5
NA	0.3	0.1	0.3	0.2

Table 3

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

Variant of answer	09'11	12'13	03'14	03'15	06'15	09'15	12'15	03'16
In the right direction	17.0	31.9	40.2	36.9	34.6	34.8	36.7	23.5
In the wrong direction	68.5	54.1	46.2	45.8	49.4	48.0	50.9	58.5
DA/NA	14.5	14.0	13.6	17.3	16.0	17.2	12.4	18.0
PCI*	-51.5	-22.2	-6.0	-8.9	-14.8	-13.2	-14.2	-35.0

* Policy correctness index

Table 4

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	03'15	06'15	09'15	12'15	03'16
It is going to improve	11.9	12.5	24.0	23.1	21.7	20.6	16.5	12.7
It is not going to change	20.3	46.1	45.0	36.1	36.0	37.2	40.2	34.3
It is going to become worse	55.5	35.9	26.1	33.6	36.5	36.2	36.4	42.9
EI*	-43.6	-23.1	-2.1	-10.5	-14.8	-15.6	-19.9	-30.2

* Expectation index

Dynamics of the expectation index (EI) repeat the dynamics of PCI and their value go below their pre-"Crimeaisours" value (Table 4). For 2 years Belarusians demonstrated willingness to be patient, but for the first time since 2011 the share of pessimists exceeded 40%.

The symbolic battle between the TV and the fridge was won by the fridge. Mobilization bubble, inflated by Russian propaganda and reinforced by horror stories from A. Lukashenko, told during the presidential campaign, is completely blown out.

lead to a reevaluation of economic perceptions of Belarusians. In particular, it didn't lead to a decrease of mass belief into efficiency of state-owned property. On the contrary, March 2016 survey registered an insignificant shift of economic priorities in favor of state-owned property.

Need for security is one of the basic human needs. New and unknown are scary. That is why the demand for stability rises during the epoch of changes. Just like a monkey in Harry Harlow's experiment, a man under stress prefers to cuddle himself up to something

familiar and well-known. Security is more important than financial well-being. According to Harry Harlow, the results of his experiment demonstrated, that the need for contact comfort is more important than nursing.

The rise of belief in efficiency of state property amid the crisis spawns the "contact comfort". This rise is based on the instinctive inclination to cuddle up to the "breast of state" and increase your own level of security.

jump with the next age group: 50-59 – 52.3%. And another smooth increase: 60+ – 59.8%.

This dependency on age is based on life, and Belarusians' awareness of latest economic theories doesn't affect it. Equality of all forms of property is declared in the Constitution (Article 13). However, in reality declared equality is not observed, and financial support from budget to state enterprises is much bigger than support to private enterprises.

Growing concerns about possible loss of habitual

Table 5

Dynamics of answering the question: "Which proprietary type is more effective economically according to you?", %

Variant of answer	12'93	11'94	06'97*	03'14	03'16
State	29.0	39.7	48.3	37.7	40.6
Private	52.8	45.9	44.0	51.3	46.1
Reasonable mix of both	11.7	8.6	–	–	–
Collective	1.0	0.5	–	–	–
Other	0.9	2.9	5.7	2.8	3.5
NA	4.6	2.4	2.0	8.2	9.8

* As the list of proposed variants was changed, it wouldn't be correct to compare the results of 1993-96 yrs. to the results of 1997-2016 yrs.

Table 6

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

Variant of answer	11'97	06'06	10'08	09'09	03'11	03'13	03'14	03'16
State enterprise	53.5	52.0	44.9	44.1	43.0	40.5	40.2	41.0
Private enterprise	35.7	33.0	33.1	28.0	36.2	41.0	41.1	42.1

Table 7

Dynamics of answering the question: "What would you choose?", %

Variant of answer	04'92	03'14	03'16
A high salary with a high risk of losing your job	51.4	47.1	39.8
A low salary on a guaranteed job	45.9	51.8	51.5
DA/NA	2.7	1.1	8.7

It is natural, that supporters of A. Lukashenko, devoid of personal resources, find state-owned property more efficient more often than their political opponents: 64.2% vs. 21.6%. Two years ago the ratio of economic priorities was quite similar: 61.2% vs. 16.7%. Hence, the crisis enforced the belief in efficiency of state property in both supporters and opponents of A. Lukashenko.

It is difficult for public opinion to evaluate rationally the efficiency of different forms of property. There is no consensus among Belarusian economists as well. That is why respondents, when they are answering questions like this, are guided by their ideological preferences as a rule. But the question about kind of enterprise where respondent would like to work is very down-to-earth, especially for those, who are looking for employment (Table 6).

The older respondents are, the more they prefer state property: 18-29 – 26.1%, 30-49 – 29.5% and 40-49 – 36.1%. Smooth increase is replaced by a sharp

stability is illustrated by the dynamics of answering question of Table 7. The share of people who are ready to risk for higher incomes decreased by 7.3 points over two years. However, current concern shouldn't be regarded as panics. We recommend you to pay attention to the second row of Table 7. The decrease of the share of people willing to risk did not lead to an increase of the share of people who prefer lower salary on a guaranteed job. This is possible at the expense of the increase in the row "DA/NA". Redistribution of answers in favor of undecided respondents is a sure sign of a transition state.

For solving mutually exclusive tasks of maintaining stability and adapting to changes nature introduced gender division. Women are responsible for maintaining stability, and men are responsible for adaptation. Hence the reinforced readiness to risk among the representatives of "sterner sex". Particularly, answering the question of Table 7, first variant of answer was chosen by 46.2% of men and 34.6% of women.

Table 8

Dynamics of answering the question: "Would you wish your children run their own private businesses, associate their lives with entrepreneurship?", %

Variant of answer	11'99	12'02	06'06	06'08	03'11	06'12	07'13	03'16
Yes	38.1	46.4	46.8	32.6	53.8	46.0	48.0	40.8
No	26.0	37.1	34.3	49.7	33.8	40.4	36.3	41.1
DA/NA	35.9	16.5	18.9	17.7	12.3	13.6	15.7	18.1

Table 9

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

Variant of answer	12'12	12'13	03'15	03'16
There is no progress in the Belarusian economy	33.7	34.1	27.0	37.1
Without the help of Russia there would be no progress in the Belarusian economy	28.4	28.7	35.4	31.2
This progress is explained by internal factors; Russian aid is an important but not decisive factor	28.1	30.5	32.4	26.2
DA/NA	9.8	6.7	5.2	5.5

Table 10

Dynamics of answering the question: "Which currency do you trust more?", %

Variant of answer	06'06	06'11	03'13	03'16
U.S. dollars	46	53	53.6	52.7
Euro	18	20	15.3	15.4
Belarusian ruble	28	17	19.7	20.6
Russian ruble	1	4	7.9	6.0

Readiness to risk naturally declines with age: from 55.7% in 18-29 group down to 17.6% in 60+ group.

Natural desire to minimize the risks in the conditions of economic crisis didn't lead to a change in the answers to the question "Should state set limits (a "cap") for the maximal personal income of its citizens?" In March 2016 21.2% of respondents answered in favor of a "cap". In March 2014 this share amounted to 21.6%, and in its turn, it was almost the same as in March 1993 – 22.5%.

Many times A. Lukashenko mentioned the transitive character of Belarusian economy, but not a single time he explained between which states this transition is. Dynamics of answering the question "Would you wish your children run their own private businesses, associate their lives with entrepreneurship?" (Table 8) give us ground to exclude market economy from the list of possible destinations of Belarusian model.

Over two years the share of positive answers decreased by 7.2 points. We cannot exclude that the conflict between individual entrepreneurs and the state did not affect this. Active phase of this conflict coincided with the first quarter of 2016. But this conflict didn't start without a reason. From the first day as the President the main architect of the "state for the people" treated entrepreneurs as "lice-ridden fleas". Hence there is nothing surprising in the fact that the share of positive answers to the question of Table 8 didn't change much over the last 17 years.

Before the beginning of Anomaly-2014 the share of Belarusians who didn't recognize progress of Belarusian model amounted to 34.1% (Table 9).

Euphoria caused by the restitution of "historic justice" in Crimea decreased the share of negative evaluations down to 27% (–7.1 points). Exhaustion of mobilization resource of "Crimeaisours" led to another increase of negative evaluations.

A. Lukashenko's supporters notice progress in Belarusian economy 7 times as often as his opponents: 50.8% vs. 7.3%.

In contrast to collapsing social indices, economic preferences of Belarusians under the influence of crisis changed insignificantly. As for the perception of "progress of Belarusian model", the shift towards the negative evaluations, observed in the first quarter of 2016, may be regarded as a start of a new trend. It should be noted, that currently there are no external or internal factors, able to stop this trend.

Dollar is not a rival to ruble

Trust is a way of adaption to the uncertainty of future by means of ignoring this uncertainty. In other words, trust is the simplest and the most efficient way to cope with uncertainty.

This pseudo-scientific definition of trust can be understood better based on the results of Table 10. How many goods will you be able to buy for one million of Belarusian rubles, if you save them in March 2016 and use them in a year (we're factoring out the future denomination)? Even financial specialists cannot answer this question. What should non-specialists do in this situation? The simplest way is to convert rubles into a currency which they trust more. According to

52.7% of Belarusians, this currency is the U.S. dollar. Over the last ten years neither euro, nor Russian ruble couldn't compete with the U.S. dollar for the role of *currency of savings*.

Over the same time level of trust to Belarusian ruble dropped by almost a third. If you remember that in 2006 Belarusian model was at its highest, then you should recognize that this denial of trust to Belarusian ruble is rather rational.

According to A. Lukashenko, there is no crisis in Belarus, and things that some "panic-mongers in the government" perceive for crisis are only modifications of conditions for some trends. "Crisis is in our heads!" summed up the head of state the meeting on measures to increase efficiency of social-economic complex on the 16th of February.

March survey gave us the opportunity to count the share of adult Belarusians who have "crisis in their

Table 11

Dynamics of answering the question: "Do you fear another devaluation of Belarusian ruble in the next few months?" depending on attitude to A. Lukashenko, %

Variant of answer	09'13	03'16	Attitude to A. Lukashenko	
			Trust	Don't trust
It is a real threat	32.3	48.3	28.8	66.6
It is possible, but unlikely	39.7	33.7	44.1	23.1
It won't happen	20.5	9.6	15.3	5.6
DA/NA	7.5	8.4	11.8	4.6

Table 12

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

Variant of answer	09'11	12'13	03'14	03'15	06'15	09'15	12'15	03'16
Yes	87.6	68.6	54.6	67.5	72.0	75.1	66.9	87.8
No	8.0	22.2	34.5	20.0	16.9	16.2	17.9	4.4
DA/NA	4.4	9.2	10.9	12.5	11.1	8.7	15.2	7.8

Even among A. Lukashenko's supporters "trust rating" of dollars is higher than of rubles: 39.4% vs. 37.8%. Advantage of dollar doesn't exceed static error, but still...

As for A. Lukashenko's supporters, they are free from ideological setups and the advantage of dollar over Belarusian ruble is almost 10-fold: 63.8% vs. 6.7%.

Fears of another devaluation jumped from 32.2% in September 2013 up to 48.3% in March 2016 (+16.1 points). Among A. Lukashenko's supporters increase amounted to 11.6 points, among his opponents – to 15.3 points (Table 11).

Such is the viewpoint on the near-term outlook for Belarusian ruble formed by public opinion after the end of two-year anomaly.

The government's and the National Bank's natural aspiration for de-dollarization of economy has no results again. Dollarization of economy is not a self-sufficient phenomenon; it is a consequence of dollarization of minds. Belarusians demonstrate high level of rationality in the questions regarding lowering uncertainty and maintaining purchase power of their savings. Otherwise they won't survive.

We won't be helped from abroad

Two last economic crises (in 2009 and 2011) were rather transient, and this gave people hope that they can wait through the crisis of 2015 too, despite the decrease of real incomes by 5.6%. However, "successes" of Belarusian model in the first quarter of the current year decisively cancelled these hopes.

heads". This share is record high; formally it's even higher than at the peak of 2011 crisis (Table 12). This growth amounted to 20.9 points comparatively to December. If the perception of crisis will continue to develop at this rate, then it can happen that by autumn there will be only one head devoid of crisis in Belarus.

Answering the natural in this situation question "Who is to blame?", respondents divided their answers almost equally between the President and the government (Table 13), while in 2015 (one month prior to the presidential election) "responsibility rating" of the government exceeded the President's by 6.4 points.

"Responsibility rating" of the Parliament has significantly increased as well (+8.7 points), while responsibility of other potential offenders hasn't really changed.

Although "responsibility ratings" of the President and the government are almost equal, it is natural that input of supporters and opponents of the head of state was different: 78.9% of opponents and only 12.9 of supporters agreed that the President is to blame for the crisis. Accordingly, this distribution for the government amounted to 64% and 32%, and for the U.S. – to 6.7% and 28%.

Official point of view on the external reasons of the crisis is shared almost by every third Belarusian, on the internal reasons – every second one (Table 14). This doesn't contradict the answers to the previous question. Selling external threats to Belarusians is not as effective as selling them to Russians.

Majority of Belarusians agreed that hardships that Belarus comes across today will last for a long time, but this majority is not absolute (Table 15). Only one

quarter of respondents believes that this is the collapse of Belarusian model. It is understandable, that these answers are politically-charged to an extreme. In the third variant of answer the difference between A. Lukashenko's supporters and opponents is almost 10-fold. You should also note the high share of the head of state's supporters who didn't give any answer.

Every second opponent of A. Lukashenko relies on their own resources; among his supporters the share of self-reliant people didn't even reach 25%. Taking into account socio-demographic structure of these groups, there is nothing surprising in this ratio.

You should also notice the insignificant differences between the answers of politically-charged groups of

Table 13

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	03'16
The President	61.2	41.0	45.0	34.1	47.0
The government	41.3	39.1	42.0	40.5	48.3
The USA	16.3	14.5	15.5	15.9	16.7
Europe	12.0	10.9	11.8	21.5	17.5
Parliament	11.9	17.2	19.6	14.0	22.7
People	10.0	8.7	16.3	11.8	12.9
Russia	7.3	7.5	6.6	10.7	10.1
Opposition	5.0	11.5	13.1	6.6	8.6
DA	13.4	11.5	8.6	10.9	11.4

* The table is sorted by the first column

Table 14

Distribution of answers to the question: "If you agree that Belarusian economy is in crisis, then what are its main reasons?" depending on attitude to A. Lukashenko, %

Variant of answer	All respondents	Attitude to A. Lukashenko	
		Trust	Don't trust
The reasons are external	30.7	47.7	14.5
The reasons are internal	51.9	29.3	75.4
DA/NA	17.4	23.0	10.1

Table 15

Distribution of answers to the question: "How do you evaluate economic problems faced by Belarus today?" depending on attitude to A. Lukashenko, %

Variant of answer	All respondents	Attitude to A. Lukashenko	
		Trust	Don't trust
These problems are temporary, we had survived worse than this in the past	28.5	52.5	8.7
These problems will last for a long time, it's time to tighten the belts	40.5	32.0	45.7
This is the collapse of Belarusian model	24.0	4.8	43.0
DA/NA	7.0	10.8	2.6

Let us remind you that in March 87.8% of respondents agreed that there is crisis in Belarus. But one thing is to admit the crisis, and another thing is to accept the collapse of Belarusian model. The latter means losing any hope on situation improvement. Majority of Belarusians are not ready to accept this prospect.

As for the help in overcoming the crisis, Belarusians mainly lay their hopes on Russia instead of their own powers (Table 16). This distribution of hopes is not surprising when you bear in mind that public opinion holds state institutions (the government, the President, the Parliament) for the main responsible parties of the crisis.

Belarusian society regarding their hopes on Russia and on the Western countries. As for Belarusian opposition, their anti-crisis potential is close to statistical error even among the head of state's opponents.

The power cannot tell temporary issues from a system crisis and cannot work out measures to overcome it. That is why, with a high level of probability, one can affirm, that negative manifestations in Belarusian economy will only increase. Simultaneously, public opinion's evaluations of the power's responsibility will get more and more radical too.

Farewell process to illusions has been started

The last pre-"Crimeaisours" value of electoral rating of A. Lukashenko amounted to 34.8% (Table 17). One quarter earlier the rating was higher by 7.8 points, and amid the decrease of real incomes that was an almost sure sign of a negative trend. Possibly, the last trend in the long-drawn political biography of the constant head of Belarusian state.

However, what seemed indisputable in December 2013 lost it topicality in March 2014. Negative trend didn't even form fully and then made a 180° turn, so that the rating reached its local high a month before the beginning of presidential campaign. After the end of the campaign started the natural demobilization recession. Fear is among well-marketable goods, and it permits to forget about the decrease of real incomes for some time. But it's also a perishable article. You cannot trade it for a long time, and the factor of worsening financial well-being is again in the forefront. That is why current value of A. Lukashenko's rating (27.3%) is the lowest since December 2011, and this should be regarded as another proof of Anomalies 2014 and 2015 coming to an end.

against Belarusian model, and it has no internal resources for growth. Consequently, "the fall of the power", i.e. the decrease of authoritarian leader's rating down to the values close to zero is a question of time. We could have observed this "fall" by the examples of M. Gorbachev and B. Yeltsin.

The growing objective need for unpopular decisions will contribute to the decrease of A. Lukashenko's electoral rating. In this regard let us cite our December article: "However, October 11 passed, the topic of "cruel battle" was eliminated from the agenda. A. Lukashenko transformed into a "talking head", discussing the need to raise the retirement age. There is a world of difference between voting for a fearless fighter against the world evil and for such a talking head".

In March the "talking head" passed from speeches to actions. Their consequences will last for a long time. Amid the decrease of population's real incomes, we can witness formation of the so-called "synergetic effect".

The decrease of electoral rating of A. Lukashenko in December 2015 by 12.4 points wasn't accompanied by a symmetric decrease of his trust rating (Table 18).

Table 16

Distribution of answers to the question: "According to you, who is going to help Belarus overcome the crisis?" depending on attitude to A. Lukashenko, % (more than one answer is possible)

Variant of answer	All respondents	Attitude to A. Lukashenko	
		Trust	Don't trust
No one, we should rely only on ourselves	36.5	22.3	50.7
Russia	26.1	29.5	23.9
Belarusian authority	17.6	31.8	6.3
The Western countries	11.1	9.1	12.5
Belarusian opposition	3.4	2.5	3.8
Other countries	0.9	1.0	0.8
DA	8.8	7.8	6.4

Table 17

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	12'15	03'16
Rating	34.8	39.8	39.8	45.2	40.0	34.2	38.6	45.7	33.3	27.3

* Electoral rating is the percentage of votes, which a politician received in answers to an open question "If presidential elections were held tomorrow, for whom would you vote?"

Table 18

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

Date	12'13	03'14	06'14	09'14	12'14	03'15	06'15	09'15	12'15	03'16
Trust	37.7	45.9	49.6	53.5	49.9	48.8	49.0	47.0	45.4	41.7
Don't trust	47.5	44.1	39.0	33.3	35.6	39.7	39.1	37.1	41.9	47.4
DA	14.8	10.0	11.4	13.2	14.5	11.5	11.9	15.9	12.7	10.9

* Trust rating is the percentage of support in the answers to the question "Do you trust the President?"

As we've noted it multiple times, Belarusian model was at its peak in 2006. High oil prices restrained its degradation for 8 years. But everything comes to its end. For the third year running external factors are

In March trust rating decreased by 3.7 points, at the same time distrust rating reached a record high since December 2013 – 47.4%. As a result, for the first time

since "Crimeaisours" the difference between ratings of trust and distrust is negative.

A. Lukashenko's decreasing trust rating dragged down trust ratings of state institutions as well. In particular, trust rating of the government dropped from 35.6% in December down to 28.4% (-7.2 points); state mass media – from 39.6% down to 30.4% (-9.2 points); the CEC – from 36.1% own to 29.6% (-6.5 points). At the same time there is no demand for alternative institutions amid the deepening economic crisis: trust rating of non-state mass media dropped from 40.6% down to 25.2% (-15.4 points), independent research centers – from 35.1% down to 25.7% (-9.4 points), oppositional parties – from 12.6% down to 11.3% (-1.3 points).

Table 19

Dynamics of answering the question: "According to you, is a significant improvement of Belarusian people's lives possible under the current rule and its policy?", %

Variant of answer	06'01	02'06	03'14	03'15	03'16
Possible	44.2	57.5	47.1	49.1	43.6
Impossible	36.1	30.4	43.8	38.1	43.4
DA/NA	19.7	12.1	9.1	12.8	13.0

Table 20

Distribution of answers to the question: "Which opinion about the work of Belarusian (Russian) Parliament do you agree most?", %

Variant of answer	Belarus	Russia*
The Parliament works proactively and passes legislations important for Belarus (Russia)	16.9	14
Its activity is reduced to servicing the political course of President A. Lukashenko (V. Putin)	31.6	28
Parliamentarians are mostly busy solving their own problems	22.7	36
I don't know what the Parliament does	24.6	14
DA/NA	4.2	8

* Levada-Center results, January 2014

Table 21

Dynamics of answering the question: "Who did you vote for in the last elections of President of Republic of Belarus?", %

Variant of answer	12'15	03'16
Sergey Gaydukevich	5.2	7.4
Tatiana Korotkevich	15.7	13.9
Alexander Lukashenko	35.6	35.6
Nikolay Ulakhovich	1.9	2.2
None of the above	8.9	13.9
Don't remember	0.2	2.0
Didn't vote/NA	32.5	25.0

The decrease of trust to state institutions is also reflected in the dynamics of answering the question: "According to you, is a significant improvement of Belarusian people's lives possible under the current rule and its policy?" During the "fat" year 2006 the difference between positive and negative evaluations amounted to 27.1 points; in March 2015 the difference amounted to 11 points; in March 2016 there is almost no difference between these variants of answers (Table 19).

Table 20 results give us ground to compare Belarusians' and Russians' evaluations of national legislative authorities. In the first and the second variants of answer the difference of evaluations doesn't exceed the limit of statistical error. In the third variant ("Parliamentarians are mostly busy solving their own problems") Russians' evaluations are 13 points higher than Belarusians'. On the contrary, in the third variant of answer ("I don't know what the Parliament does") Belarusians' advantage amounted to 11 points.

These differences are not coincidental. There are no fractions in the Parliament of Belarus, unlike in Russia. Its main aim is to demonstrate unity of Belarusian people around the head of state. It has minimal influence on practical tasks, and therefore its

activities are rarely described on TV.

Russian Parliament is a gathering of sectoral and regional lobbies, which all have their roles in the distribution of budgetary "cake". Naturally, main activities of the Parliament are conducted "under the cover", but public scandals are not rare and this is why Russians are better aware of the Parliament's work.

We asked the question about the results of voting in Presidential elections in October 2015 once again in March survey. There were no unexpected results (Table 21). The results are almost same as in

December. The only difference is the variant "None of the above" (+5 points). The increase in this variant happened at the expense of respondents who didn't take part on the voting.

According to the level of electoral support A. Lukashenko remains hors concours. His rating is supported by the mass belief in the possibility of returning back to the course which provided improvement of financial standing in the "noughties". This is on the one hand. On the other hand, there is no alternative, and this situation is formed by state TV channels.

and protect them by way of collective actions is minimal. This doesn't exclude a possibility of a "meaningless and merciless" rebellion. Traditionally, such rebellions are considered as revolutions. In the XX century such revolutions led twice to collapse of empire, in its monarchic and communistic variants. But in both scenarios the principle of one person's power being out of society's control was the same. Under the conditions of absent society, it would be naïve to expect something else.

A. Lukashenko's electoral rating lost 6 points in March comparatively to December: it decreased from

Table 22

Dynamics of trust rating of oppositional parties, %

Date	12'12	12'13	12'14	03'15	06'15	09'15	12'15	03'16
Rating	20.0	15.8	16.0	18.8	13.4	13.1	12.6	11.3

Table 23

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

Variant of answer	04'06	10'10	06'11	12'12	12'13	06'14	09'15	03'16
Yes	18.5	14.9	25.8	21.3	18.9	17.8	20.7	18.0
No	73.3	72.4	60.3	65.8	73.5	70.6	68.8	70.1
DA/NA	8.2	12.7	13.9	12.9	7.6	11.6	10.5	11.9

Table 24

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	03'16
Yes	17.4	18.6	14.7	22.9	15.4	17.3	18.2
No	72.7	71.8	73.9	68.3	72.6	71.5	73.0
DA/NA	9.9	9.6	11.4	8.8	12.0	11.2	8.8

As opposed to his Russian colleague, A. Lukashenko's opportunities to maintain his rating at the expense of overblowing external threats are almost exhausted. As for the struggle with the issues of everyday life, chances of success are close to zero for the 5-time champion, and it was always clear to the Belarusian minority. As for the majority, their illusions are going to collapse in the next few years.

We are not satisfied but we don't protests

By Belarusian tradition, A. Lukashenko's rating decrease did not lead to an increase of oppositional parties' rating (Table 22). The list of reasons for such an unusual (according to the Western standards) phenomenon is caused by a set of objective and subjective factors. However, their summary input is overridden by the absence of politics as such in the country. And it isn't a question of personal characteristics of the head of state (the only politician in Belarus). Authoritarian power led by one person, standing above the law, cannot be reproduced in a competitive environment. And when there is no competition, there can be no politics.

In its turn, this type of power is based on atomized population, whose ability to work out common interests

33.3% down to 27.3%. Like three months ago, other leaders of the top three are presidential campaign runners T. Korotkevich (her rating dropped from 9.9% down to 6.9%) and S. Gaydukevich (his rating is close to the statistical error – 3.3% vs. 3.7% in December). No one else managed to overcome the limits of statistical error either in December or in March.

Economic crisis didn't affect oppositional level of Belarusians (let us emphasize that we are talking about declarative opposition here). Over the last 13 years it oscillates between 15% and 21%. Only at the peak of crisis in 2011 the share of oppositional-minded people significantly increased (Table 23).

Apparently, the reason for this lies in the rate of growth of negative effects. It's easier for people to adapt to a gradual decrease of life standards, and that's what we observe today.

Belarusian stability is not based on people's support of official course, but on Belarusians' inability to act together, as we've noted it earlier. Examples are plentiful: decision to increase retirement age did not provoke any public protests.

Sociologist L. Byzov notes: "Protests need a transmitter. When Yeltsin appeared, Gorbachev's rating dropped, because people could see an alternative. As soon as there is alternative, there is

competition in politics. But people still believe that it's better to deal with something habitual, even if it's not always good. Nobody is going to jump off the deep end and choose something that nobody has ever heard about".

Before alternative starts to shape, some space needs to be freed up for it. Then, alongside the weak power, will appear its "shadow double", created by mass consciousness. This double will be perceived as a savior. But, judging by March rating of A. Lukashenko, it's still early for the demand for an alternative politician to emerge. This is confirmed by the standard level of declarative readiness to protest (Table 24).

We cannot but note that attempts to shape an alternative in the person of a "single candidate" were repeatedly undertaken by opposition. None of them had any results. But these attempts still continue. The last example is the attempt to organize the Congress of Democratic Forces "to consolidate democratic forces and work out further actions". Here are the figures describing respondents' attitude to this initiative (results of March survey): 21.8% of them are ready to support it; 54.2% are against it; 18.9% are indifferent about it; 5.1% found it difficult to answer the question.

Table 25

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	03'16
Maintaining of the situation is more important	53.4	49.7	18.0	38.3	33.3	24.7
Changing of the situation is more important	37.8	41.2	70.1	52.1	52.7	67.3
DA/NA	8.8	9.1	11.9	9.6	14.0	8.0

Table 26

Dynamics of answering the question: "Do you believe that public opinion influences political and socio-economic decisions in our country?", %

Variant of answer	03'04	09'11	09'13	09'15	03'16
Yes, it does	35.8	26.8	41.5	38.0	22.6
No, it doesn't	53.2	64.2	47.5	50.5	69.7
DA/NA	11.0	98.0	11.0	11.5	7.7

Demand for changes in modern Belarus is an indicator of satisfaction with the current state of things (Table 25). In 2006 it was minimal, in 2011, during the crisis, it was maximal. Euphoria, caused by "Crimeaisours", has distorted perception of reality by mass consciousness, but, as we've already mentioned it several times, by March 2016 the "TV" had finally won over the "fridge", and this lead to a significant growth of demand for changes.

42.4% of A. Lukashenko's supporters declared the desire for changes. In September 2015 this share amounted only to 28.8%. This is a significant change. It is in the same course as more general changes registered during the last survey. According figures for the head of state's opponents are 89.7% and 85.9%.

In an atomized society an all-pervading feeling of "lost control over the present" emerges (Z. Bauman), and this leads to paralysis of political will. People don't

believe that they can achieve desired changes by acting collectively. During crises the feeling of "lost control over the present" is magnified, and this is registered in the answers to the question "Do you believe that public opinion influences political and socio-economic decisions in our country?" (Table 26).

March anti-record is natural. Public discussion on the topic of retirement age increase didn't stop it.

Multiple public statements of A. Lukashenko about readiness of "the state for the people" to take into account people's opinion when making decisions are nothing more than declarations. Belarusian model has no mechanisms for taking into account someone's interests, except for a thin layer of higher bureaucracy. Neither elections of all levels, nor referendums, nor public discussions can deny imitational nature of "clear" Belarusian democracy, which differs from "unclear" democracies by this very imitational character.

Conflict between authorities and individual entrepreneurs is a blow to poor people

Conflict between individual entrepreneurs and Belarusian authorities over the conditions of trade

caused various evaluations of the positions of conflicting sides and of the role played by individual entrepreneurs in the national economy. In particular, one of the expressed opinions said that in the past, in the nineties, individual entrepreneurs actually played the key role in filling up consumer goods market with cheap goods, but now trading networks squeeze them out and there is no need for their work.

However, results of March 2016 survey invalidates this theory. As you can see from Table 27, entrepreneurs' strike affected more than half of population and made them buy goods for a price higher than they used to.

Table 28 results demonstrate which parties' financial well-being was mostly affected by the conflict.

It's not difficult to see that entrepreneurs' strike affected not only the relatively well-to-do entrepreneurs' themselves, but also the poorest Belarusians and

Table 27

Distribution of answers to the question: "Since the beginning of 2016 many individual entrepreneurs selling clothes on consumer goods markets stopped their work. Does it influence your well-being?"

Variant of answer	%
Yes, I used to buy goods from them, because they were more expensive in other places	54.2
No, I didn't buy anything from them	19.5
No, I used to buy goods from them, but now I do it in other places	22.4
DA/NA	3.9

Table 28

Relation between the influence of strike of individual entrepreneurs on people's lives, financial well-being, and place of residence, %*

Variant of answer	Since the beginning of 2016 many individual entrepreneurs selling clothes on consumer goods markets stopped their work. Does it influence your well-being?		
	Yes, I used to buy goods from them, because they were more expensive in other places	No, I didn't buy anything from them	No, I used to buy goods from them, but now I do it in other places
<i>Average per capita income:</i>			
Below minimal wage budget (below 1.7 million rubles)	72.5	11.0	12.0
Between minimal wage budget and minimal consumer budget (between 1.7 and 2.7 million rubles)	58.2	19.1	19.4
Between minimal consumer budget and two minimal consumer budgets (between 2.7 and 5.7 million rubles)	46.6	22.4	27.5
Over two minimal consumer budgets (over 5.4 million rubles)	43.0	23.0	26.0
<i>Settlement type:</i>			
Capital (Minsk)	52.9	15.7	28.3
Regional center	48.6	17.5	29.5
City (over 50 thousand inhabitants)	51.2	22.4	19.9
Town (below 50 thousand inhabitants)	58.0	18.7	21.0
Village	59.0	22.3	15.1

* The table is read across

people living in out-of-the-way places. Minsk citizens and citizens of regional centers have an alternative to customer goods markets, but smaller towns don't. The state's war against individual entrepreneurs turned out to be a sensitive blow to the budget of three quarters of the neediest part of population.

It is possible, that the power's desire to establish order and protect people from production of doubtful provenance was sincere. It is also possible, that it was affected by the relics of home-brewed Marxist education of the adepts of Belarusian "economic miracle" – the wish to "bring the bourgeoisie to the heel" and protect "working class".

The results turned out to be opposite the people-loving rhetoric of the power: it affected the poorest and the least protected people, the poor majority.

Apparently, this is the reason why in this conflict of the power with its opponents (in this case socio-econo-

mic opponents) relative majority of Belarusians support the latter (Table 29).

People, supporting individual entrepreneurs in this conflict, are not inveterate oppositionists, at least, not only. According to the survey, only 18% of respondents are in opposition to the current power. The share of people supporting individual entrepreneurs is 2.5 times as high, almost every second respondent.

During the conflict the President harshly spoke against the position of individual entrepreneurs, wording it quite strongly. But he had also mentioned a relation, which is quite grounded: importing cheap clothes from abroad, individual entrepreneurs undermine positions of Belarusian light industry. However, majority of respondents don't share these evaluations and this opinion of the head of state (Table 30).

Table 29

Distribution of answers to the question: "Individual entrepreneurs, selling goods on consumer goods markets, are conflicting with the power over the conditions of work since the beginning of 2016. What is your position in this conflict?"

Variant of answer	%
I share the position of individual entrepreneurs	45.0
I share the position of the authority	16.2
I don't understand the reasons behind this conflict	19.3
I don't care about this conflict	15.9
DA/NA	3.6

Table 30

Distribution of answers to the question: "Recently A. Lukashenko said: "People who import to Belarus raggedy of all kinds, even good quality ones, you should understand: all that we import kills our economy, out light industry. All the more so without certificates. Like this we legislate bandits, criminals! We catch some of them, but let others do it". Do you agree with this?"

Variant of answer	%
Disagree	55.2
Agree	33.3
DA/NA	11.5

Table 31

Dynamics of answering the question: "Do you think that nowadays young people can make a successful career in Belarus?", %

Variant of answer	03'02	04'06	03'11	06'12	09'14	03'16
Yes, they can	43.2	61.6	45.9	46.2	57.6	47.7
No, they cannot	39.4	30.7	44.9	44.4	33.9	39.1
DA/NA	17.4	7.7	9.3	9.4	8.5	13.2

Explaining the drop of A. Lukashenko's rating in the first quarter of 2016 (according to IISEPS survey it decreased from 33.3% in December 2015 down to 27.3% in March 2016), people usually refer to the general decrease of life standards, unemployment, communal tariffs' hike and the initiative on increasing age of retirement.

However, people's attitude to the conflict between individual entrepreneurs and the power demonstrate that this conflict also made a significant input into the worsening of people's attitude to the power. Anti-bourgeois zeal and inclination to order turned into a direct blow to well-being of many people, mostly those that have the least means to live.

"Young people have all the doors open"

Crisis has significantly adjusted respondents' answers to the question "Do you think that nowadays young people can make a successful career in Belarus?" (Table 31). Majority still believes in the possibility of a successful career, but this majority is not absolute anymore, and in comparison with September 2014 it decreased by 9.9 points.

These dynamics remind us again that resource for Anomalies 2014 and 2015 is exhausted. Nevertheless, Table 31 results register that public opinion has issues evaluating reality rationally. When you are not politically engaged, it is difficult to believe in the prospect of a

good career in a country where 123 people compete for one watchman vacancy and where demand for new employees dropped by 20% since the beginning of the year.

Cross-analysis confirms that these answers are indeed politically encaged. Among A. Lukashenko's supporters 64.2% of respondents gave positive answers; among his opponents this share is almost twice as low – 34.6%. 81.9% (!) of Belarusians with primary education (mostly retired women living in villages) believe in career prospects of young people; among Belarusians with higher education this share is significantly lower – 41%. As for the dependency between the age of respondents, there is nothing surprising about it: 18-29 – 40.4%, 60+ – 66.9%.

In July 2014 the effect of "Crimeaisours" was reflected (although minimally) on Belarusians' declarative readiness to move to another country for permanent residence (Table 32). If, owing to understandable reasons, we exclude the results of 2006, then you can see that the total share of people thinking about emigration decreased down to a minimum. "Low base" effect made March increase (+3.9 points) especially noticeable.

According to Eurostat, about 80 thousand Belarusians obtained residence permits in the E.U. countries in 2014. This difference between the real numbers and survey numbers confirms again that respondents' answers are mostly declarative.

Table 32

Dynamics of answers to the question: "Would you like to move to another country for permanent residence provided you have such a possibility?", %

Variant of answer	10'01	06'06	03'11	09'13	07'14	03'16
Germany	18.5	11.4	16.0	11.2	10.3	8.1
U.S.	6.1	7.2	10.3	9.3	7.2	9.3
Poland	5.8	5.0	5.9	6.4	7.9	5.5
Russia	3.6	4.3	4.9	3.8	5.4	5.2
Baltic countries	1.8	2.9	2.5	2.9	2.9	2.2
Other country	6.3	2.7	5.8	6.2	4.2	11.2
Total	42.1	33.5	45.4	39.8	37.9	41.8
I don't want to move	52.0	57.6	50.6	52.3	53.3	50.2
DA/NA	5.9	8.9	3.9	7.9	8.8	8.3

Table 33

Distribution of answers to the question: "Deputy Prime Minister Natalia Kochanova said in February 2016 that "Belarusian doctors are paid according to the way they work". Do you agree with this evaluation?" depending on attitude to A. Lukashenko, %

Variant of answer	All respondents	Attitude to A. Lukashenko	
		Trust	Don't trust
Yes	34.9	39.0	31.4
No	56.1	50.9	61.9
DA/NA	9.0	10.1	6.7

Table 34

Distribution of answers to the question: "In the beginning of the year tariffs on communal services were significantly increased. What is your attitude to it?"

Variant of answer	%
It's an unfair decision: most people have no money to pay for these tariffs	66.9
It's a difficult but needed decision: it's demanded by the International Monetary Fund, and Belarus needs its help	20.8
It's a fair decision: people should pay for communal services as much as they cost	7.2
DA/NA	5.1

In March the shares of respondents not wanting to move out of Belarus were as follows: 46.3% – men and 53.6% – women; 28.5% – aged between 18 and 29 and 77.3% – aged over 60; 87.2% – primary education and 43.4% – higher education. So, the dependency between the level of patriotism and personal resources is confirmed again. If one wants to compete for the title of the "true patriot", one has to be elderly, uneducated, and, if possible, a woman.

"They are paid according to the way they work"

There is nothing surprising in the fact that Deputy Prime Minister in Belarus can afford to make a statement which would cost their job to a Western colleague. Belarusian model doesn't include a real mechanism of social responsibility of the "servants to the people". However, Belarusian officials don't come from Mars, and many of their public statements, inadmissible according to the Western standards, don't cause rejection of people.

One of such statements was used in a question in March (Table 33). Slightly more than one third of respondents agreed with the words of Deputy Prime

Minister N. Kochanova, which means that people recognize that there is a direct relation between the quality and quantity of Belarusian doctors' work and their salaries: "they are paid according to the way they work".

There is no fundamental difference in the answers of A. Lukashenko's supporters and opponents. Nevertheless, you can observe a higher extent of dissatisfaction with doctors' work among supporters. It's possible that the reason for this is respondents' age. Elderly people (most of them support the head of state) have to deal with doctors more often. Thus the difference between the answers of extreme age groups: 18-29 – 29%, 60+ – 39.9%.

Communal services tariffs hike has never caused positive emotions anywhere. Belarusians confirm this rule. People, who are duty-bound to regular "revisions" of rent bills, can at best count on people's understanding.

It wasn't difficult to predict which answer to the question "In the beginning of the year tariffs on communal services were significantly increased. What is your attitude to it?" will be the most popular (Table 34). Two thirds of respondents consider the

increase of communal tariffs unfair. They have no such money! How can you talk about fairness there..?

Surprisingly, the level of *social consciousness* among A. Lukashenko's supporters turned out to be significantly lower than among his opponents – 53.7% vs. 77.9%. The reason for the non-standard distribution of answers between the two parts of split Belarusian society lies in the second variant of answer: "It's a difficult but needed decision: it's demanded by the International Monetary Fund, and Belarus needs its help". The IMF factor permitted the head of state's supporters to transfer their discontent, caused by the violation of the principle of social fairness, to the ideologically alien Western financial institution. Let us note, that neither gender, nor age, nor education level affected the attitude to the IMF's requirement. The only thing that mattered was ideological preference. This isn't registered very often.

Table 35

Dynamics of answering the question: "Have you been treated badly by representatives of government bodies over the last three years?", %

Variant of answer	03'05	03'08	06'11	03'13	03'16
No, I haven't	73.8	57.4	61.1	68.1	76.1
Yes, many times	7.2	6.8	4.8	3.3	2.9
Yes, several times	13.6	18.1	17.8	11.4	8.4
Yes, once	5.2	13.1	11.1	12.1	12.5
Total share of badly treated people	26.0	38.0	33.7	26.8	23.8
DA/NA	0.2	4.1	5.2	5.1	0.1

Table 36

Dynamics of answering the question: "According to you, does militia cope with their duties (enforcement of public order, advocacy of rights and interests of citizens) rather well, acceptably or badly?", %

Variant of answer	06'10	03'16
Rather well	19.1	22.5
Acceptably	48.1	47.7
Badly	26.9	24.1
DA/NA	5.9	5.7

The last variant of answer, which gathered only 7.2% of votes, didn't brought out any ideological differences: 8.4% – A. Lukashenko's supporters, 7.1% – opponents.

The problem of increasing people's remuneration of housing and communal services is not a novelty. During the "fat" years the government was increasing it gradually, wisely assuming, that amid the general background of increasing incomes, increase of communal tariffs won't cause any particular resignation among population. During the crisis year of 2011, despite the resolution of the IV All-Belarusian People's Assembly, remuneration of communal services by people wasn't increased. On the contrary, it was decreased.

Peculiarity of the current development stage of Belarusian model lies in cutting down social programs. The state has no resources to maintain them at the same level as previously. However, judging by the results of March survey, people don't fully understand it yet.

Cultural gene of death penalty is bred in the bone

Judging by independent mass media, it's easy to make a conclusion that Belarus is a typical police state. Information about arrests of oppositional activists comes in on almost daily basis. It would seem that amid the developing economic crisis, which cuts government's ability to buy people's loyalty, we should see an increase of the repressive constituent of stability maintaining. However, March survey doesn't confirm this hypothesis (Table 35).

Starting from summer 2011 the share of "offended" people constantly decreases, reaching an absolute low of 23.8% in March 2016. Traditionally, we divided respondents into supporters and opponents of A. Lukashenko and added up people who said that they were treated badly (rows 2-4). The results are as

follows: supporters – 14.7%, opponents – 32.8%. In other words, every third opponent of the head of state was treated badly by government bodies over the last three years!

This ratio one again permits us to establish conclusion that Belarusian variant of "the state for the people" interacts with people in a very selective way.

All of above-mentioned is relevant for analysis of answers to the question "According to you, does militia cope with their duties (enforcement of public order, advocacy of rights and interests of citizens) rather well, acceptably or badly?" (Table 36). The principle "My militia takes care of me", declared by poet Vladimir Mayakowski in the thirties, is used by Belarusian militia very selectively, and this is registered by the difference of positive answers between supporters (40.5%) and opponents (8.6%) of A. Lukashenko.

Over 6 years the assortment of unlawful actions of militia significantly decreased, according to respondents' evaluation (Table 37). We suppose that this significant leap in perception of militia's work won't

Table 37

Dynamics of answering the question: "If you (or people you know) have ever endured illegal actions from the side of militia, what were those actions?", % (more than one answer is possible)

Variant of answer	06'10	03'16
Reluctance to react to complaints, refusal to accept statements	24.8	10.6
Lack of professionalism	21.5	16.4
Ungrounded arrest	19.6	12.2
Gratuitous violence	15.1	5.9
Extortion	7.0	2.7
Other	3.5	3.7
DA/NA	16.9	50.2

Table 38

Dynamics of answering the question: "How do you think, is it possible to obtain fair and just solutions in the conditions of existing Belarusian judicial system?", %

Variant of answer	06'04	04'06	03'16
Yes, it is possible	38.7	51.8	52.7
No, almost impossible	46.9	38.3	34.0
DA/NA	14.4	9.9	13.3

Table 39

Dynamic of answering the question: "According to you, should Belarus abolish death penalty?", %

Variant of answer	09'08	10'10	09'12	03'16
No, it should be preserved	47.8	48.3	49.1	51.5
Yes, it should be abolished	44.2	42.4	40.7	36.4
DA/NA	8.8	9.3	10.2	12.1

be easy to explain for those who suppose that IISEPS's results are "drawn on a napkin" or even made for "thirty pieces of silver".

From our part, we make an assumption that "responsibility" for the decrease of unlawful actions of militia should be lain, above all, on the deepening atomization of society. Amid developing economic crisis private strategies of survival become more and more important. People become unsociable and try to come into contact with the state as rare as possibly, including militia.

Number of non-guilty verdicts in Belarus doesn't exceed 0.3% from the number of all verdicts, while in Russia this share amounts to 3%, in Europe – 6%, in the U.S. – 20%. "Partisan republic", according to A. Lukashenko, is an island of honesty and justice: "It's not just me who thinks so. It's not just you who think so. People as far as thousand kilometers from our borders think so too. And by no means we, and I above all, shouldn't spoil this image of honest and fair country" (Independence Day lecture, June 2012).

Nevertheless, even when the share of non-guilty verdicts is measured by tenths of percent, absolute majority of Belarusian believe that it's possible to obtain fair and just solution via the court (Table 38). It should be noted, that over the last 12 years the share of optimists increased by 14%. Socio-demographic characteristics of optimist are predictable. A. Lukashenko's supporters' prevail over his opponents (70.3% vs. 38.3%), women prevail over men (32.1% vs. 20.5%), people over 60 years old

prevail over young people of 18-29 (68.6% vs. 48.1%), and people with primary education prevail over those with higher education (85.1% vs. 46.1%).

Belarus is the only country in Europe that still has death penalty. All calls to repeal it are ignored. The last call was in March. Representative of European External Action Service urged Belarus to join death penalty moratorium when the Supreme Court of Belarus confirmed death penalty verdict for I. Kulesh, handed down by the Grodno Court in November 2015.

By convention, to explain Belarusian uniqueness in this question, people refer to the public opinion, legalized by the referendum of 1996 (67% supported death penalty). Whether this official results are trustworthy is a separate question. But IISEPS surveys confirm it to a certain extent (Table 39). The share of death penalty advocates over the last 8 years amounts approximately to a half of adult population of the country.

According to American economist John Kenneth Galbraith, there are three basic ways of coercing people to a certain behavior: ideal and material reward, and punishment. They exist in all cultures, however, one of these ways can dominate. Cultures, which use punishment more often, are called "repressive cultures"; alternative cultures are "rewarding cultures" (it's interesting, that there is no word in the Russian language to designate such cultures).

We've already noted multiple times that in Belarusian culture fear of punishment is an important

element of integration. In particular, this is one of the reasons of the high level of trust to security agencies.

Culture is "bred in the bone", therefore there is nothing surprising in the fact that the share of death penalty supporters among people aged between 18 and 29 years old amounts to 49% (58.9% in the 60+ group). This share is also higher among women than among men: 55.3% vs. 46.9%.

"Blood-thirstiness" of fair sex can be explained by the fact that choosing between stability and changes women are more inclined to prefer stability. A strong (and therefore repressive) state has no rivals for the role of stability guarantor in the culture of Belarusian majority.

Belarus – the EU: a thaw, not a summer

Normalization of relations between the official Minsk and the EU, cancellation of European sanctions, and softening of the anti-Western tone of Belarusian officials led to a certain increase of pro-European moods in Belarus. In particular, this was registered in the answers to the standard IISEPS question about Belarus hypothetically joining the EU (Table 40).

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	09'15	12'15	03'16
For	26.7	34.9	36.2	48.6	38.9	35.9	25.0	27.5	19.8	23.4
Against	51.9	36.3	37.2	30.5	37.6	34.6	50.3	51.9	56.1	53.9

Table 41

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	12'14	12'15	03'16
Integration with the RF	46.0	42.3	38.1	41.4	37.7	36.6	44.9	53.5	48.0
Joining the EU	30.1	42.1	38.0	39.1	43.4	44.6	34.2	25.1	31.2
DA/NA	23.9	15.6	23.9	19.5	18.9	18.8	20.9	24.1	20.8

Table 42

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	12'15	03'16
For	35.7	33.1	32.1	29.0	28.7	23.9	23.9	29.7	24.8
Against	38.8	43.2	44.5	42.9	47.5	51.4	58.4	51.5	52.4

However, this is only a slight improvement in comparison with the "disastrous" long-term low registered in December 2015. Current level of pro-European moods remains very low. However, previous experience of normalization of relations in 2008-2010 doesn't exclude hope for a quick growth of these moods.

Their positive dynamics are confirmed by the answers to the following question, where geopolitical choice is represented as an alternative (Table 41).

Table 41 results testify on a decrease of record-high level of pro-Russian moods, registered three

months ago. It is possible that this isn't a new trend (increase of pro-European moods and decrease of pro-Russian moods), but only a correction: the figures are going back to their balanced state after a dramatic change registered in the end of 2015.

Dynamics of answering the question about integration with Russia also confirm a slight decrease of pro-Russian moods (Table 42).

The 2nd of April 2016 is the 20th anniversary of the first treaty about union between Belarus and Russia. To a certain extent formulation of questions Tables 41 and 42 are a tribute to political context existing in Belarusian-Russian relations in the second half of the nineties, when the question of real integration of Belarus and Russia was topical, at least, rhetorically. Today no one discusses it even theoretically. However, mass consciousness perceives the term "integration" not as a strict legal formula of consolidation of two states into one, but as a deepening of union.

Returning to the topic of the Belarusian-European "thaw" on the level of capitals, political elites, and public consciousness, it should be noted that majority of respondents approved of cancellation of sanctions against Belarusian officials (Table 43).

Respondents could choose their answer while positioning themselves relative to two notional axes: axis of attitude to the current power ("authoritarianism – democracy") and axis of attitude to Russia ("for – against"). It's curious to see that the present power (authoritarianism) wins over democracy (39.3% vs. 17.7%), but Russia loses (10.5% vs. 18.1%). And this is despite the quite high level of sympathy towards Russia (Tables 41 and 42).

The matter is that mentioned axes are not independent, and part of pro-Russian and pro-authoritarian respondents evaluated the decision of the

EU based on their home policy setups: the power is satisfied, we support the power, thus the decision is right, even if Russia doesn't like it.

However, Belarusian society doesn't demonstrate readiness for a deep institutional rapprochement with the West. As it was demonstrated above (Tables 40 and 41), the number of people wanting Belarus to join the EU isn't particularly high. We should also remember that all countries of Central Europe, before joining the EU, joined NATO – organization, guaranteeing military security. Fervent breath of the "Russian World", noticeable in the Crimea and Donbass, could potentially increase the desire to hide under the "security umbrella" of North-Atlantic Alliance. But results are opposite: over 10 years the share of people opposing Belarus entering NATO significantly grew (Table 44).

the Minister of External Affairs V. Makey or the BPF Party. Dramatic events in Cologne and other European cities on New Year night have likely added some fuel to the fire of these reactions.

In other words, there is a lot of barriers on the way to Europe. And Europe is hard to understand. Russia is closer and more understandable. For many years over two thirds of respondents, answering the question, who is closer to them in cultural sense, chose Russians, and only one quarter of respondents chose Europe.

However, it doesn't mean that Belarusians are ready to support all unexpected changes in Russian policy, especially if these changes affect their own country and themselves.

Thus, only a minor part of respondents thinks that Minsk should take Russia's position in the serious conflict between Russia and Turkey. The number of

Table 43

Distribution of answers to the question: "Recently there was thaw in relations between Belarusian power and the European Union. In February the EU canceled majority of sanctions against Belarus. There are different opinions about this move. Which one do you share?"

Variant of answer	%
The EU made the right decision; they should respect the choice of Belarusian people and cooperate with the power which enjoys people's support	39.3
The EU made the right decision, because no matter what the power in Belarus is, the most important is to weaken the dependency of Belarus on Russia	18.1
The EU abandoned their own principles playing ball with Belarusian power	17.7
The EU made the wrong decision, because they try to split Belarus and Russia	10.5
DA	16.6

Table 44

Dynamics of answering the question: "If there was a referendum on whether Belarus should enter NATO, and you could vote "for", "against", or abstain from voting, what would be your choice?", %

Variant of answer	04'06	03'16
Against	46.2	55.8
For	14.4	13.3
I wouldn't vote	22.6	21.4
DA/NA	16.8	9.5

Table 45

Dynamics of answering the question: "During the last months there is a crisis in the EU countries caused by a stream of migrants from African and Asian countries. What opinion do you share on this crisis?", %

Variant of answer	12'15	03'16
Refugees should be sent back and not allowed in, because they don't belong to Europe	52.2	59.8
These people should be accepted, because they flee wars and poverty and need help	32.6	26.8
DA/NA	15.2	13.4

It is possible that the attitude to Europe could have improved even more noticeably, if not for the additional factor of migration crisis. December 2015 survey of ISEPS has already shown that majority of Belarusians do not support the approach practiced in many European countries, especially in Germany. This approach means readiness to admit majority of refugees in (Table 45). It is not a problem for Belarus (at least, not yet), but EU policy in this question provokes negative or perplexed reaction even among people who are not involved into it directly, for example

those who advocated real steps in this direction is even lower (Table 46).

Balance of public opinion's evaluations of the prospect of Russian military airbase in Belarus was never in favor of this idea. But since the end of the previous year negative attitude to these planes only increased, and today its opponents almost constitute an absolute majority (Table 47).

Belarusians aren't also unanimous about the confrontation with the West, which the head of Russian

Table 46

Distribution of answers to the question: "Relations between Russia and Turkey seriously aggravated after Turkish air defense shot down Russian military plane. Russia has introduced a number of sanctions against Turkey. What should Belarusian politics be like in relation to this conflict?"

Variant of answer	%
Belarus should support Russia, denounce Turkey and introduce the same sanctions as Russia	16.3
Belarus should support Russia and denounce Turkey, but do not introduce any sanctions	22.8
Belarus should not take any side in the conflict	53.8
DA/NA	7.1

Table 47

Dynamics of answering the question: "Russia suggests that there should be a Russian military airbase in Belarus. What's your opinion on this?", %

Variant of answer	06'13*	12'15	03'16
Positive	19.8	27.0	22.0
Indifferent	35.6	31.2	28.8
Negative	36.0	33.9	42.9
DA/NA	8.6	7.9	6.3

* In June 2013 this question was formulated as follows: "Recently during a meeting with A. Lukashenko, Russian Minister of Defense S. Shoygu announce the possibility of placing a Russian airbase in Belarus. According to him, there would be a wing there. Some people are positive about, some people are negative, and some people don't care. What is your attitude?"

Table 48

Distribution of answers to the question: "Recently Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev said that Russia and the West "returned to the times of the cold war". Who is responsible for it in your opinion?"

Variant of answer	%
Russia	12.8
The West	44.6
Russia and the West	30.4
Other	0.5
DA/NA	11.7

government has recently called the new cold war (Table 48).

Current rapprochement between Belarus and the EU can only cause careful optimism. A thaw is not a summer; after a thaw can come a hard frost caused by Russian pressure or internal political reasons. How far can Belarus go in this rapprochement doesn't depend only on the will of the official Minsk, whose political nature is far from the western values, but also from the position of Belarusian society. Significant majority of this society is even further from these values than the power itself. Belarusians doesn't equal themselves to Russians, but tight connections, cultural, economic and historic, are evident. Europe doesn't impose the "either-or" choice, but it seems that extents of rapprochement with Russia and the EU are mutually dependent in a negative sense, i.e. a condition of a close rapprochement with Europe would be a weakening of connections to Russia.

It's possible that it is still too early to talk about a close rapprochement with Europe. Experience of 2008-2010 demonstrates, that long enough period of normalization can change society's attitude to Europe. These changes of social opinion, in their turn, can

become a foundation for an institutional rapprochement.

Conflict in Ukraine: a Russian view from Belarusian eyes

As we've already noted it in IISEPS analytical materials, in relation to many aspects of Ukrainian conflict Belarusians mostly share Russian position. The results of March survey are not an exclusion.

Before looking closer at the answers, related to practical aspects of conflict, it should be said that they are determined not only by skillful Russian propaganda, but also by ideological setups of Belarusians. These setups were formed long before the conflict.

Peculiarity of Table 49 is in the fact that over 10 years the ratio of answers remains mostly the same. Naturally, the trinity of Eastern-Slavic people doesn't mean that Russia is correct in its actions towards Ukraine, but it should be noted that Russia actively defends the thesis about the trinity, while Ukraine rejects it. Belarusians share Russian position in this question, just like they shared it 10 years ago, when there was no armed conflict.

Table 49

Dynamics of answering the question: "Are Belarusians, Russians and Ukrainians three different nations or three branches of the same nation?", %

Variant of answer	08'06	12'09	03'15	03'16
Three branches of the same nation	65.7	66.5	66.6	65.8
Three different nations	28.3	30.6	27.1	28.6
DA/NA	6.0	2.9	6.3	5.6

Table 50

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	12'15	03'16
It's an imperialistic usurpation and occupation	26.9	27.2	31.6	22.0	21.5	26.5	20.2	27.1
It's a restitution of Russian lands and reestablishment of historical justice	62.2	59.9	56.8	58.5	62.3	57.4	65.7	57.8
DA/NA	10.9	12.9	11.6	19.5	16.2	16.1	14.1	15.1

Table 51

Distribution of answers to the question: "Agreement on reconciliation of the conflict in Donbass was signed in February 2015 in Minsk. According to you, who is responsible for the fact that conflict is still not resolved?" (more than one answer is possible)

Variant of answer	%
Ukrainian authority	51.3
The West	23.6
Russian authority	20.8
Donetsk/Lugansk People's Republics' authorities	17.9
DA	10.5

Table 52

Distribution of answers to the question: "Do you agree that there is a civil war in Ukraine?"

Variant of answer	%
Yes	75.0
No	15.5
DA/NA	9.5

Respondents' attitude to the annexation of Crimea had some oscillations over the last two years, but they were only insignificant deviations from the evident position: majority (approximately 60%) approved it, while minority (20-30%) disapproved it (Table 50). At the same time, it should be noted, that Belarusian power didn't articulate its position on the question. At least, none of these formulations ("occupation" or "restitution") was ever pronounced by the head of state or top officials.

Last year Belarus hosted a meeting where peaceful agreement on the Donbass conflict was signed. Even taking into account all shortcomings of this agreement, world powers share the opinion that there is no alternative to Minsk process and observance of Minsk Protocol. This agreement led to a significant decrease of military actions in Donbass, however, political conflict is still not resolved. Ukraine still doesn't have control over a part of Donbass, including the border of the region with Russia. Political regulation formula is not adopted. Who is to blame for it? Belarusians' answers are in Table 51.

Over a half of respondents blames Kiev for non-resolving the conflict, Moscow comes only third. Almost the same share of respondents blames separatist leaders, viewing them as a separate subject of political process.

However, Belarusians don't always share Russian evaluations of the conflict. According to the official position of Moscow, Donbass conflict is a civil confrontation within Ukraine, and Russia has no whatsoever relation to it. Kiev has the opposite position: there is no civil confrontation in the East of Ukraine, there is only Russian aggression.

Three quarters of Belarusians consider that indeed there is civil war in Ukraine (Table 52).

It is interesting to note that political disagreements between Belarusians don't fundamentally affect the answers to the question of Table 52. In the version of civil war in Ukraine believe 81.2% of supporters of integration with Russia and 66.5% of Eurointegration advocates; 75.3% of A. Lukashenko's supporters and 77.6% of his opponents.

However, not all Belarusians share the Kremlin opinion on the role of Russia in the conflict. Then, not

Table 53**Distribution of answers to the question: "Do you agree that there is a war between Russia and Ukraine?", %**

Variant of answer	IISEPS, Belarus, 03'16	KIIS, Ukraine, 02'16	Levada-Center, Russia, 01'16
Yes	44	63	25
No	46	18	65
DA/NA	10	19	10

even all Russian share it. In the beginning of the current year Levada-center conducted a similar survey in Russia (see <http://www.levada.ru/2016/03/10/rossijsko-ukrainskie-otnosheniya-v-zerkale-obshhestvennogo-mneniya-2/>), while Kiev International Institute of Sociology (KIIS) did the same in Kiev. These surveys included a series of similar questions, including questions related to the war between Russia and Ukraine. It's interesting to compare results of these surveys with the results of March IISEPS survey (Table 53).

As you can see, Belarusians are in the middle between Ukrainians and Russians. Belarusians' answers are divided into two almost equal parts.

Answers to the question of Table 53, generally speaking, don't contradict the answers to the question of Table 52. Considerable part of respondents in Belarus suppose that there is both civil war and war between Russia and Ukraine. Civil war in Russia after the revolution of 1917 was accompanied by a foreign military intervention.

In fine it should be said that Belarusian evaluations of dramatic events in Ukraine mostly coincide with Russian. It doesn't determine state politics of Belarus directly, but it cannot but affect it to a certain extent. These moods are very stable, as you can see. They limit the "corridor of possibilities" where Belarusian politicians act – politicians from both the power and the opposition.

Some results of the opinion poll conducted in March, 2016 (%)

1. "How do you evaluate economic problems faced by Belarus today?"

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 +
These problems are temporary, we had survived worse than this in the past	28.5	22.0	23.5	17.2	17.4	26.1	27.4	47.2
These problems will last for a long time, it's time to tighten the belts	40.5	36.0	43.1	49.7	45.1	35.7	44.5	33.9
This is the collapse of Belarusian model	24.0	28.0	25.5	26.9	33.0	30.7	22.1	11.0
DA/NA	7.0	14.0	7.9	6.2	4.5	7.5	6.0	7.9

Table 1.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (including incomplete)
These problems are temporary, we had survived worse than this in the past	61.3	44.4	25.4	24.6	21.3
These problems will last for a long time, it's time to tighten the belts	22.6	35.1	43.9	43.3	39.2
This is the collapse of Belarusian model	10.8	10.6	23.5	24.8	34.8
DA/NA	5.3	9.9	7.2	7.3	4.7

Table 1.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	Unemployed, housewives
These problems are temporary, we had survived worse than this in the past	17.2	26.3	27.6	46.3	15.2
These problems will last for a long time, it's time to tighten the belts	45.1	39.3	38.8	34.8	52.5
This is the collapse of Belarusian model	33.5	26.9	21.4	10.5	28.3
DA/NA	4.2	7.5	12.2	8.4	4.0

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
These problems are temporary, we had survived worse than this in the past	15.7	20.7	34.6	20.8	53.3	23.4	35.1
These problems will last for a long time, it's time to tighten the belts	41.6	41.4	41.5	45.8	29.6	48.0	36.8
This is the collapse of Belarusian model	38.2	34.8	15.2	19.0	13.6	19.4	19.7
DA/NA	4.5	3.1	8.7	14.4	3.5	9.2	8.3

Table 1.5. Depending on settlement type

Variant of answer	Settlement type				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
These problems are temporary, we had survived worse than this in the past	15.7	30.4	31.7	32.9	31.4
These problems will last for a long time, it's time to tighten the belts	41.6	41.6	37.7	37.6	42.9
This is the collapse of Belarusian model	38.2	18.8	19.9	24.0	20.3
DA/NA	4.5	9.2	10.7	5.5	5.4

2. "Who is responsible for the present crisis in Belarus?"

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 +
President	47.0	49.0	55.9	56.8	58.2	52.9	41.9	29.5
Other answers	53.0	51.0	44.1	43.2	41.8	47.1	58.1	70.5

Table 2.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (including incomplete)
President	25.5	28.5	46.5	51.5	57.4
Other answers	74.5	71.5	53.5	48.5	42.6

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	Unemployed, housewives
President	59.9	48.6	48.0	27.3	64.0
Other answers	40.1	51.4	52.0	72.8	36.0

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
President	69.3	62.1	40.1	26.0	42.4	40.6	34.2
Other answers	30.7	37.9	59.9	74.0	57.6	59.4	65.8

Table 2.5. Depending on settlement type

Variant of answer	Settlement type				
	Capital	Resgion centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
President	69.3	32.9	39.9	49.2	44.2
Other answers	30.7	67.1	60.1	50.8	55.8

3. "In the beginning of the year tariffs on communal services were significantly increased. What is your attitude to it?"

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 +
It's an unfair decision: most people have no money to pay for these tariffs	66.9	68.0	67.4	66.4	66.4	63.2	67.5	69.2
It's a difficult but needed decision: it's demanded by the International Monetary Fund, and Belarus needs its help	20.8	18.0	18.4	22.6	21.4	22.9	19.2	20.9
It's a fair decision: people should pay for communal services as much as they cost	7.2	4.0	7.9	5.5	7.6	8.9	8.7	5.1
DA/NA	5.1	10.0	5.3	5.5	4.6	5.0	4.6	4.8

Table 3.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (including incomplete)
It's an unfair decision: most people have no money to pay for these tariffs	66.3	71.5	66.8	67.1	64.4
It's a difficult but needed decision: it's demanded by the International Monetary Fund, and Belarus needs its help	27.4	19.9	20.7	18.9	22.4
It's a fair decision: people should pay for communal services as much as they cost	2.1	6.6	7.0	8.1	8.5
DA/NA	4.2	2.0	5.5	5.9	4.7

Table 3.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	Unemployed, housewives
It's an unfair decision: most people have no money to pay for these tariffs	64.3	66.1	70.4	69.5	67.0
It's a difficult but needed decision: it's demanded by the International Monetary Fund, and Belarus needs its help	20.7	22.6	17.3	19.5	21.0
It's a fair decision: people should pay for communal services as much as they cost	10.3	6.1	6.1	5.5	7.0
DA/NA	4.7	5.2	6.2	5.5	5.0

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
It's an unfair decision: most people have no money to pay for these tariffs	74.0	74.6	63.1	66.9	65.8	70.9	51.8
It's a difficult but needed decision: it's demanded by the International Monetary Fund, and Belarus needs its help	16.4	18.9	19.4	19.5	29.1	19.4	24.6
It's a fair decision: people should pay for communal services as much as they cost	5.8	2.2	8.8	9.5	3.5	4.0	16.6
DA/NA	3.8	4.3	8.7	4.1	1.6	5.7	7.0

Table 3.5. Depending on settlement type

Variant of answer	Settlement type				
	Capital	Resgion centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
It's an unfair decision: most people have no money to pay for these tariffs	74.0	55.0	69.9	67.7	68.1
It's a difficult but needed decision: it's demanded by the International Monetary Fund, and Belarus needs its help	16.4	27.5	17.4	19.5	22.6
It's a fair decision: people should pay for communal services as much as they cost	5.8	10.7	7.1	8.2	4.9
DA/NA	3.8	6.8	5.6	4.6	4.4

4. "Do you fear another devaluation of Belarusian ruble in the next few months?"

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 +
It is a real threat	48.3	48.0	55.9	51.0	57.0	49.5	50.6	34.6
It is possible, but unlikely	33.7	32.0	32.9	33.3	29.7	33.3	35.5	36.3
It won't happen	9.6	6.0	4.6	6.8	8.3	8.2	6.4	18.1
DA/NA	8.4	14.0	6.6	8.8\9	5.0	9.0	7.5	11.0

Table 4.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (including incomplete)
It is a real threat	24.7	38.8	51.7	49.2	52.9
It is possible, but unlikely	34.4	32.2	32.5	35.9	33.6
It won't happen	28.0	15.8	9.0	6.1	6.4
DA/NA	12.9	13.2	6.8	8.7	7.1

Table 4.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	Unemployed, housewives
It is a real threat	54.2	52.6	51.5	34.5	54.0
It is possible, but unlikely	31.3	34.8	28.9	36.8	30.0
It won't happen	9.6	4.7	10.3	16.5	7.0
DA/NA	4.9	7.9	9.3	12.2	9.0

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
It is a real threat	55.3	49.3	55.8	40.5	41.7	57.7	35.4
It is possible, but unlikely	36.5	29.5	24.4	35.1	46.7	23.4	38.4
It won't happen	5.5	17.2	8.8	12.5	6.0	6.9	11.8
DA/NA	2.7	4.0	11.0	11.9	5.6	12.0	14.4

Table 4.5. Depending on settlement type

Variant of answer	Settlement type				
	Capital	Resgion centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
It is a real threat	55.3	38.2	47.0	50.6	49.7
It is possible, but unlikely	36.5	31.7	33.8	36.6	31.0
It won't happen	5.5	14.3	9.2	6.6	11.5
DA/NA	2.7	15.8	10.0	6.2	7.9

5."According to you, is a significant improvement of Belarusian people's lives possible under the current rule and its policy?"

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 +
Possible	43.6	34.0	32.5	32.9	32.1	38.6	45.3	65.7
Impossible	43.4	44.0	57.0	53.4	53.4	47.1	41.1	24.4
DA/NA	13.0	22.0	10.5	13.7	14.5	14.3	13.6	9.9

Table 5.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (including incomplete)
Possible	73.4	64.9	42.0	36.2	36.8
Impossible	21.3	22.5	45.3	48.7	50.0
DA/NA	5.3	12.6	12.4	15.1	13.2

Table 5.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	Unemployed, housewives
Possible	35.9	41.0	28.1	61.0	33.3
Impossible	52.1	45.5	54.2	26.3	55.6
DA/NA	12.0	13.5	17.7	12.7	11.1

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
Possible	50.7	36.1	50.7	28.4	41.4	40.9	50.7
Impossible	44.2	56.4	30.0	56.8	47.0	37.5	33.9
DA/NA	5.1	7.5	19.3	14.8	11.6	21.6	15.4

Table 5.5. Depending on settlement type

Variant of answer	Settlement type				
	Capital	Resgion centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
Possible	50.7	38.7	48.0	40.1	41.1
Impossible	44.2	38.7	42.0	44.4	46.6
DA/NA	5.1	22.6	10.0	15.5	12.3

6. "Which opinion about the work of Belarusian Parliament do you agree with most?"**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 +
The Parliament works proactively and passes legislations important for Belarus	16.9	14.3	7.2	11.0	11.8	12.5	18.1	30.5
Its activity is reduced to servicing the political course of President A. Lukashenko	31.6	24.5	37.5	38.4	37.0	34.6	29.1	22.6
Parliamentarians are mostly busy solving their own problems	22.7	18.4	20.4	22.6	26.0	29.3	23.0	16.4
I don't know what the Parliament does	24.6	40.8	31.6	24.7	23.3	20.7	23.0	24.6
DA/NA	4.2	2.0	3.3	3.3	1.9	2.9	6.8	5.9

Table 6.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (including incomplete)
The Parliament works proactively and passes legislations important for Belarus	50.0	23.7	16.2	10.9	13.2
Its activity is reduced to servicing the political course of President A. Lukashenko	10.1	17.8	33.5	35.9	32.9
Parliamentarians are mostly busy solving their own problems	8.5	15.1	23.3	25.3	26.4
I don't know what the Parliament does	20.2	36.8	23.3	23.6	23.1
DA/NA	2.2	6.6	3.7	4.3	4.4

Table 6.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	Unemployed, housewives
The Parliament works proactively and passes legislations important for Belarus	10.3	14.8	10.3	29.8	10.1
Its activity is reduced to servicing the political course of President A. Lukashenko	44.3	28.4	29.9	23.0	32.3
Parliamentarians are mostly busy solving their own problems	23.4	27.4	21.6	15.2	26.3
I don't know what the Parliament does	19.0	25.2	34.0	26.0	29.3
DA/NA	3.0	4.2	4.2	6.0	2.0

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
The Parliament works proactively and passes legislations important for Belarus	8.9	17.1	18.9	20.7	19.1	9.2	26.3
Its activity is reduced to servicing the political course of President A. Lukashenko	41.0	21.9	30.0	29.0	42.2	32.8	22.8
Parliamentarians are mostly busy solving their own problems	29.4	32.0	14.3	17.2	13.6	21.8	25.4
I don't know what the Parliament does	18.7	28.1	33.2	25.4	23.5	23.6	16.2
DA/NA	2.0	0.9	3.6	7.7	1.6	5.6	9.3

Table 6.5. Depending on settlement type

Variant of answer	Settlement type				
	Capital	Resgion centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
The Parliament works proactively and passes legislations important for Belarus	8.9	19.5	19.2	18.7	18.5
Its activity is reduced to servicing the political course of President A. Lukashenko	41.0	30.5	28.8	31.9	27.3
Parliamentarians are mostly busy solving their own problems	29.4	21.9	21.0	23.3	18.8
I don't know what the Parliament does	18.7	20.9	27.1	24.5	29.9
DA/NA	2.0	7.2	3.9	1.6	5.5

7. "Since the beginning of 2016 many individual entrepreneurs selling clothes on consumer goods markets stopped their work. Does it influence your well-being?"

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 +
Yes, I used to buy goods from them, because they were more expensive in other places	54.2	58.0	60.3	53.8	56.1	55.7	56.4	46.9
No, I didn't buy anything from them	19.5	14.0	9.9	15.2	20.2	17.1	17.0	29.4
No, I used to buy goods from them, but now I do it in other places	22.4	26.0	23.8	26.9	20.2	21.1	24.6	20.3
DA/NA	3.9	2.0	6.0	4.1	3.4	6.1	1.9	3.4

Table 7.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (including incomplete)
Yes, I used to buy goods from them, because they were more expensive in other places	63.8	42.8	55.2	53.7	55.6
No, I didn't buy anything from them	19.1	35.5	16.5	18.7	17.6
No, I used to buy goods from them, but now I do it in other places	14.9	16.4	23.1	23.9	24.4
DA/NA	2.2	5.3	5.2	3.7	2.4

Table 7.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	Unemployed, housewives
Yes, I used to buy goods from them, because they were more expensive in other places	51.4	55.4	59.2	50.3	70.7
No, I didn't buy anything from them	20.7	15.0	12.2	27.0	13.1
No, I used to buy goods from them, but now I do it in other places	24.7	23.8	24.5	20.0	13.1
DA/NA	3.2	5.8	4.1	2.7	3.1

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
Yes, I used to buy goods from them, because they were more expensive in other places	52.9	70.5	61.6	36.7	48.2	47.2	56.3
No, I didn't buy anything from them	15.7	14.1	16.2	29.6	19.1	25.0	21.4
No, I used to buy goods from them, but now I do it in other places	28.3	13.2	15.7	30.7	26.1	26.1	17.5
DA/NA	3.1	2.2	6.5	3.0	6.6	1.7	4.8

Table 7.5. Depending on settlement type

Variant of answer	Settlement type				
	Capital	Resgion centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
Yes, I used to buy goods from them, because they were more expensive in other places	52.9	48.6	51.2	58.0	59.0
No, I didn't buy anything from them	15.7	17.5	22.4	18.7	22.3
No, I used to buy goods from them, but now I do it in other places	28.3	29.5	19.9	21.0	15.1
DA/NA	3.1	4.4	6.4	2.3	3.6

8. "Individual entrepreneurs, selling goods on consumer goods markets, are conflicting with the power over the conditions of work since the beginning of 2016. What is your position in this conflict?"

Table 8.1. Depending on age

Variant of answer	All respondents	Age, years						
		18-19	20-24	25-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 +
I share the position of individual entrepreneurs	16.2	2.0	10.5	15.0	11.1	9.6	17.8	28.8
I share the position of the power	45.0	61.2	52.6	58.5	55.2	51.4	40.2	25.1
I don't understand the reasons behind this conflict	19.3	14.3	17.8	10.9	14.6	16.8	21.6	28.0
I don't care about this conflict	15.9	20.4	15.8	11.6	16.5	16.4	17.4	15.0
DA/NA	3.6	2.1	3.3	4.0	2.6	5.8	3.0	3.1

Table 8.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (including incomplete)
I share the position of individual entrepreneurs	44.1	26.5	12.1	12.6	14.6
I share the position of the power	20.4	25.2	45.5	50.7	53.9
I don't understand the reasons behind this conflict	30.1	29.8	20.4	15.4	13.9
I don't care about this conflict	5.4	15.2	18.5	17.3	12.5
DA/NA	0	3.3	3.5	4.0	5.1

Table 8.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	Unemployed, housewives
I share the position of individual entrepreneurs	14.5	12.2	11.3	27.0	4.0
I share the position of the power	55.4	47.3	48.5	26.3	62.6
I don't understand the reasons behind this conflict	11.8	17.9	18.6	28.8	19.2
I don't care about this conflict	15.0	18.1	13.4	15.5	12.1
DA/NA	3.2	4.3	8.2	2.5	2.0

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
I share the position of individual entrepreneurs	9.5	16.3	12.9	15.5	13.6	21.1	26.6
I share the position of the power	55.8	55.1	49.3	31.5	47.5	33.1	34.1
I don't understand the reasons behind this conflict	12.9	16.3	18.9	16.7	27.8	24.6	21.4
I don't care about this conflict	20.4	10.6	13.8	31.0	9.1	20.0	8.7
DA/NA	1.4	1.7	5.1	5.3	2.0	1.2	9.2

Table 8.5. Depending on settlement type

Variant of answer	Settlement type				
	Capital	Resgion centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
I share the position of individual entrepreneurs	9.5	22.6	5.7	26.1	17.4
I share the position of the power	55.8	30.1	49.3	40.9	47.7
I don't understand the reasons behind this conflict	12.9	25.7	21.1	17.9	18.7
I don't care about this conflict	20.4	17.1	19.6	12.5	11.1
DA/NA	1.4	4.5	4.3	2.6	5.1

9. "How do you think, is it possible to obtain fair and just solutions in the conditions of existing Belarusian judicial system?"

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 +
Yes, it is possible	52.7	46.0	48.7	47.9	39.3	48.6	54.7	68.6
No, almost impossible	34.0	36.0	35.5	38.4	45.4	39.3	29.8	21.5
DA/NA	13.3	18.0	15.8	13.7	15.3	12.1	15.5	9.9

Table 9.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (including incomplete)
Yes, it is possible	85.1	62.9	52.1	47.2	46.1
No, almost impossible	14.9	25.2	32.8	40.0	38.0
DA/NA	0	11.9	15.1	12.8	15.9

Table 9.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	Unemployed, housewives
Yes, it is possible	46.7	49.3	46.9	64.9	50.5
No, almost impossible	39.6	36.0	34.7	24.6	37.4
DA/NA	13.7	14.7	18.4	10.5	12.1

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
Yes, it is possible	71.3	46.5	52.5	29.8	40.2	56.0	60.1
No, almost impossible	24.9	45.6	20.3	50.6	45.2	30.3	28.1
DA/NA	3.8	7.9	27.2	19.6	14.6	13.7	11.8

Table 9.5. Depending on settlement type

Variant of answer	Settlement type				
	Capital	Resgion centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
Yes, it is possible	71.3	41.3	46.3	53.3	51.3
No, almost impossible	24.9	36.2	39.9	33.5	35.2
DA/NA	3.8	22.5	13.8	13.2	13.5

10. "Soon it will be the 30th anniversary of Chernobyl disaster. Are you satisfied with the way the power deals with the consequences of the disaster?"

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 +
Not satisfied	25.1	20.4	23.2	31.3	28.6	27.4	26.8	18.4
Partly satisfied	45.0	40.8	47.0	42.9	48.5	47.0	42.3	43.3
Completely satisfied	18.9	16.3	15.9	14.3	9.9	16.4	21.9	29.2
DA/NA	11.0	22.5	13.9	11.5	13.0	9.2	9.0	9.1

Table 10.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (including incomplete)
Not satisfied	9.6	19.2	24.6	28.5	28.7
Partly satisfied	33.0	43.7	44.1	48.0	46.6
Completely satisfied	53.2	25.1	17.8	13.8	14.2
DA/NA	4.2	12.0	13.5	9.7	10.5

Table 10.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	Unemployed, housewives
Not satisfied	30.2	25.1	18.4	20.3	29.3
Partly satisfied	46.2	48.3	46.9	40.5	39.4
Completely satisfied	15.0	16.2	12.2	29.0	15.2
DA/NA	8.6	10.4	22.5	10.2	16.1

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
Not satisfied	26.3	29.1	12.9	23.7	20.6	29.1	33.3
Partly satisfied	50.5	35.7	48.8	40.8	53.3	41.7	42.1
Completely satisfied	17.4	30.0	18.0	14.8	14.6	16.0	19.3
DA/NA	5.8	5.2	20.3	20.7	11.5	13.2	5.3

Table 10.5. Depending on settlement type

Variant of answer	Settlement type				
	Capital	Resgion centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
Not satisfied	26.3	25.3	21.3	29.2	24.4
Partly satisfied	50.5	41.6	44.3	44.4	44.4
Completely satisfied	17.4	16.0	20.2	20.6	20.0
DA/NA	5.8	17.1	14.2	5.8	11.2

11. "Do you think that opinion of people like you can influence political, social and economic decisions in our country?"

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 +
No, it cannot	69.7	69.4	73.7	81.0	73.3	75.0	71.3	55.5
Yes, it can	22.6	24.5	18.4	14.3	17.9	18.2	20.0	36.6
DA/NA	7.7	6.1	7.9	4.7	8.8	6.8	8.7	7.9

Table 11.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (including incomplete)
No, it cannot	42.6	60.9	72.1	74.5	71.3
Yes, it can	51.1	29.8	21.1	17.0	20.6
DA/NA	6.3	9.3	6.8	8.5	8.1

Table 11.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	Unemployed, housewives
No, it cannot	76.1	72.3	73.2	55.1	85.0
Yes, it can	18.0	19.2	17.5	35.6	13.0
DA/NA	5.9	8.5	9.3	9.3	2.0

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
No, it cannot	80.8	75.0	73.6	63.9	63.3	73.1	53.7
Yes, it can	13.7	20.2	16.7	29.0	28.6	16.0	37.1
DA/NA	5.5	4.8	9.7	7.1	8.1	10.9	9.2

Table 11.5. Depending on settlement type

Variant of answer	Settlement type				
	Capital	Resgion centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
No, it cannot	80.8	61.1	67.7	69.3	69.6
Yes, it can	13.7	27.0	22.4	23.7	25.4
DA/NA	5.5	11.9	9.9	7.0	5.0

12. "Recently there was thaw in relations between Belarusian power and the European Union. In February the EU canceled majority of sanctions against Belarus. There are different opinions about this move. Which one do you share?"

Table 12.1. Depending on age

Variant of answer	All respondents	Age, years						
		18-19	20-24	25-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 +
The EU made the right decision; they should respect the choice of Belarusian people and cooperate with the power which enjoys people' support	39.3	34.0	38.2	26.7	22.1	36.1	45.7	56.4
The EU abandoned their own principles playing ball with Belarusian power	17.7	12.2	17.8	26.0	27.5	18.6	19.2	5.7
Other answers	16.6	53.8	44.0	47.3	50.4	45.3	35.1	37.9

Table 12.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (including incomplete)
The EU made the right decision; they should respect the choice of Belarusian people and co-operate with the power which enjoys people' support	68.1	53.0	38.9	33.8	31.8
The EU abandoned their own principles playing ball with Belarusian power	3.2	3.3	16.5	22.9	24.3
Other answers	28.7	53.7	55.6	43.3	43.9

Table 12.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	Unemployed, housewives
The EU made the right decision; they should respect the choice of Belarusian people and cooperate with the power which enjoys people' support	29.8	37.7	31.6	53.9	35.0
The EU abandoned their own principles playing ball with Belarusian power	25.9	19.4	17.5	7.3	17.2
Other answers	53.3	42.9	50.9	39.8	47.8

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
The EU made the right decision; they should respect the choice of Belarusian people and cooperate with the power which enjoys people's support	41.3	37.3	43.3	43.8	34.2	31.4	42.1
The EU abandoned their own principles playing ball with Belarusian power	23.5	28.6	10.6	4.7	22.6	18.9	10.5
Other answers	35.2	34.1	46.1	31.5	33.2	49.7	47.4

Table 12.5. Depending on settlement type

Variant of answer	Settlement type				
	Capital	Resgion centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
The EU made the right decision; they should respect the choice of Belarusian people and cooperate with the power which enjoys people's support	41.3	38.7	39.5	41.6	36.4
The EU abandoned their own principles playing ball with Belarusian power	23.5	17.8	10.3	22.6	15.1
Other answers	35.2	43.5	50.2	35.8	48.5

13. "If there was a referendum on whether Belarus should enter NATO, and you could vote "for", "against", or abstain from voting, what would be your choice?"

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 +
Against	55.8	50.0	52.0	46.9	49.6	53.8	66.0	60.2
For	13.3	12.0	12.5	14.3	16.8	14.0	12.5	11.0
I wouldn't vote	21.4	30.0	21.1	24.5	23.7	22.9	14.0	22.0
DA/NA	9.5	8.0	14.4	14.3	9.9	9.3	7.5	6.8

Table 13.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (including incomplete)
Against	37.2	69.7	56.8	55.8	52.9
For	10.6	8.6	12.5	15.6	14.9
I wouldn't vote	45.7	17.1	20.6	18.0	22.4
DA/NA	6.5	4.6	10.2	10.6	9.8

Table 13.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	Unemployed, housewives
Against	55.3	56.0	40.8	60.9	51.0
For	18.0	11.5	14.3	10.8	12.0
I wouldn't vote	17.8	22.8	30.6	20.8	24.0
DA/NA	8.9	9.7	14.3	7.5	13.0

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
Against	64.2	41.6	61.8	51.5	58.3	75.0	39.9
For	9.9	21.2	10.6	21.9	5.5	2.3	21.5
I wouldn't vote	19.8	34.1	18.4	21.9	9.5	15.9	28.1
DA/NA	6.1	3.1	9.2	4.7	26.7	6.8	10.5

Table 13.5. Depending on settlement type

Variant of answer	Settlement type				
	Capital	Resgion centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
Against	64.2	59.9	52.8	54.5	49.4
For	9.9	14.4	12.4	10.9	17.4
I wouldn't vote	19.8	14.0	22.7	26.5	23.9
DA/NA	6.1	11.7	12.1	8.1	9.3

14. "Would you like to work in some country of the EU for some time if you had such an opportunity?"

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 +
No	42.7	4.0	18.5	24.0	20.5	38.4	56.2	76.2
Yes	49.1	88.0	74.2	67.1	69.6	51.2	36.6	17.8
DA/NA	8.2	8.0	7.3	8.9	9.9	10.4	7.2	6.0

Table 14.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (including incomplete)
No	91.5	67.8	40.3	35.2	29.8
Yes	8.5	21.7	52.6	53.9	62.7
DA/NA	0	10.6	7.2	10.8	7.5

Table 14.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	Unemployed, housewives
No	27.3	37.5	13.4	75.0	31.0
Yes	63.5	53.2	78.4	18.8	62.0
DA/NA	9.2	9.3	8.2	6.2	7.0

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
No	46.0	49.8	35.9	35.5	32.7	58.9	39.5
Yes	50.2	46.2	53.0	55.6	50.8	37.1	50.0
DA/NA	3.8	4.0	11.1	8.9	16.5	4.0	10.5

Table 14.5. Depending on settlement type

Variant of answer	Settlement type				
	Capital	Resgion centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
No	46.1	35.8	35.1	46.3	48.8
Yes	50.2	51.9	57.4	44.8	42.9
DA/NA	3.7	12.3	7.5	8.9	8.3

15. "Do you agree that there is a war between Russia and Ukraine?"

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	43.7	42.0	46.1	47.3	41.8	42.1	37.1	48.6
No	45.8	44.0	42.8	45.2	47.1	45.7	51.1	42.7
DA/NA	10.5	14.0	11.1	7.5	11.1	12.2	11.8	8.7

Table 15.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (including incomplete)
Yes	74.5	37.1	38.6	43.2	47.5
No	23.4	53.6	48.2	44.8	45.8
DA/NA	2.1	9.3	13.2	12.0	6.7

Table 15.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	Unemployed, housewives
Yes	38.3	41.9	53.1	47.1	52.0
No	52.3	46.0	35.7	43.9	35.0
DA/NA	9.4	12.1	11.2	9.0	13.0

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	30.0	63.9	24.0	35.1	33.2	64.0	59.6
No	63.5	28.6	52.5	53.6	55.3	29.1	32.9
DA/NA	6.5	7.5	23.5	11.3	11.5	6.9	7.5

Table 15.5. Depending on settlement type

Variant of answer	Settlement type				
	Capital	Resgion centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
Yes	30.0	42.0	38.1	55.3	51.7
No	63.5	42.7	47.7	39.3	37.7
DA/NA	6.5	15.3	14.2	5.4	10.6

16. "Do you agree that there is a civil war in Ukraine?"

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 +
Yes	75.0	72.0	69.1	75.5	76.3	72.5	78.5	75.7
No	15.5	16.0	17.1	16.3	15.6	16.8	13.2	15.3
DA/NA	9.5	12.0	13.8	8.2	8.1	9.7	8.3	9.0

Table 16.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (including incomplete)
Yes	92.6	79.5	71.0	75.6	73.9
No	5.3	11.9	17.4	14.9	17.3
DA/NA	2.1	8.6	11.6	9.5	8.8

Table 16.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	Unemployed, housewives
Yes	76.2	73.3	70.4	76.0	79.0
No	15.2	15.8	17.3	15.3	14.0
DA/NA	8.6	10.9	12.3	8.7	7.0

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
Yes	76.8	76.8	74.7	62.5	75.4	86.8	71.2
No	18.1	13.6	9.7	27.4	10.1	8.6	20.5
DA/NA	5.1	9.6	15.6	10.1	14.5	4.6	8.3

Table 16.5. Depending on settlement type

Variant of answer	Settlement type				
	Capital	Resgion centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
Yes	76.8	74.7	65.1	82.9	75.8
No	18.1	12.7	20.3	12.4	14.1
DA/NA	5.1	12.6	14.6	4.7	10.1

17. "Russia suggests that there should be a Russian military airbase in Belarus. What's your opinion on this?"

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 +
Positive	22.0	16.3	19.1	21.9	19.4	20.1	24.2	25.8
Indifferent	28.8	44.9	36.2	30.8	27.8	27.2	19.6	31.2
Negative	42.9	34.7	41.4	40.4	47.9	49.1	48.3	33.1
DA/NA	6.3	4.1	3.3	6.9	4.9	3.6	7.9	9.9

Table 17.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (including incomplete)
Positive	38.3	25.2	22.0	18.6	20.0
Indifferent	31.9	25.8	33.4	29.0	20.3
Negative	29.8	36.4	37.1	46.9	55.3
DA/NA	0	12.6	7.5	5.5	4.4

Table 17.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	Unemployed, housewives
Positive	20.4	21.9	21.4	25.9	13.0
Indifferent	28.3	25.9	32.7	30.2	36.0
Negative	46.1	47.0	40.8	34.7	43.0
DA/NA	5.2	5.2	5.1	9.2	8.0

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
Positive	13.3	24.2	26.4	21.9	14.5	26.3	29.4
Indifferent	36.9	30.4	25.5	42.0	15.0	27.4	23.7
Negative	47.4	42.7	35.6	30.2	62.0	39.4	39.9
DA/NA	2.4	2.7	12.5	5.9	8.5	6.9	7.0

Table 17.5. Depending on settlement type

Variant of answer	Settlement type				
	Capital	Resgion centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
Positive	13.3	24.7	16.1	29.3	26.0
Indifferent	36.9	23.3	31.4	28.5	25.2
Negative	47.4	41.8	47.9	37.9	40.0
DA/NA	2.4	10.2	4.6	4.3	8.8

18. "Recently Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev said that Russia and the West "returned to the times of the cold war". Who is responsible for it in your opinion?"

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 +
Russia	12.8	16.0	15.1	12.2	17.2	10.4	9.4	12.5
The West	44.6	34.0	38.8	42.9	37.4	42.3	49.4	52.7
Russia and the West	30.4	30.0	30.9	29.9	33.6	35.1	33.6	22.1
Other	0.5	0	0.7	2.1	1.1	0.4	0.1	0
DA/NA	11.7	20.0	14.5	12.9	10.7	11.8	7.5	12.7

Table 18.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (including incomplete)
Russia	20.4	9.2	11.6	13.0	14.5
The West	53.8	53.9	44.6	43.6	38.2
Russia and the West	15.0	23.0	31.9	31.8	33.8
Other	0	0.7	0.7	0.7	0
DA/NA	10.8	13.2	11.2	10.9	13.5

Table 18.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	Unemployed, housewives
Russia	13.3	10.9	17.5	13.8	12.1
The West	43.2	43.6	32.0	51.8	38.4
Russia and the West	34.2	33.5	28.9	22.8	32.3
Other	1.2	0.4	0	0	0
DA/NA	8.1	11.6	21.6	11.6	17.2

Table 18.4. Depending on place of residence

Variant of answer	Region						
	Minsk	Minsk region	Brest and its region	Grodno and its region	Vitebsk and its region	Mogilev and its region	Gomel and its region
Russia	14.0	15.4	10.1	12.5	7.5	5.1	22.4
The West	49.8	36.8	47.9	52.4	41.7	52.3	32.9
Russia and the West	28.3	29.4	29.0	26.2	46.2	29.5	25.0
Other	0.3	0	0.5	1.2	1.5	0.6	0
DA/NA	7.6	18.4	12.5	7.7	3.0	12.5	19.7

Table 18.5. Depending on settlement type

Variant of answer	Settlement type				
	Capital	Resgion centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
Russia	14.0	15.4	13.2	9.3	12.2
The West	49.8	41.0	39.5	45.5	46.2
Russia and the West	28.3	33.1	34.5	32.7	25.2
Other	0.3	0.7	0.4	0	1.0
DA/NA	7.6	9.8	12.4	12.5	15.4

19. "Many people believe that since Belarus is the closest ally of Russia, confrontation between Russia and the West will inevitably affect Belarus. What do you think about it?"

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 +
Yes, I'm worried about it	45.4	44.9	44.7	45.2	45.0	47.9	52.7	38.7
No, I'm not worried about it	30.4	24.5	26.3	30.8	32.4	30.4	29.2	32.5
I don't care about it	17.5	24.5	23.0	17.1	17.6	15.4	11.7	20.1
DA	6.7	6.1	5.9	6.8	5.0	6.4	6.4	8.8

Table 19.2. Depending on education

Variant of answer	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Secondary	Vocational	Higher (including incomplete)
Yes, I'm worried about it	34.0	39.7	41.5	47.8	55.7
No, I'm not worried about it	28.7	38.4	32.2	28.8	26.4
I don't care about it	33.0	11.3	19.3	16.8	13.2
DA	4.3	10.6	7.0	6.6	4.7

Table 19.3. Depending on status

Variant of answer	Status				
	Private sector employees	Public sector employees	Students	Pensioners	Unemployed, housewives
Yes, I'm worried about it	42.1	49.2	49.5	41.0	53.0
No, I'm not worried about it	33.3	29.4	22.7	32.5	23.0
I don't care about it	18.5	15.5	21.6	17.8	20.0
DA	6.1	5.9	6.2	8.7	4.0

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
Yes, I'm worried about it	33.4	43.0	50.5	33.3	44.2	61.9	55.9
No, I'm not worried about it	37.9	30.3	25.9	41.1	25.6	28.4	23.1
I don't care about it	23.9	24.1	15.3	14.3	20.6	8.0	11.8
DA	4.8	2.6	8.3	11.3	9.6	1.7	9.2

Table 19.5. Depending on settlement type

Variant of answer	Settlement type				
	Capital	Region centers	Cities	Towns	Villages
Yes, I'm worried about it	33.4	45.9	50.0	51.6	47.0
No, I'm not worried about it	37.9	29.8	28.6	26.2	29.4
I don't care about it	23.9	14.7	17.5	17.2	15.1
DA	4.8	9.6	3.9	5.0	8.5

OPEN FORUM

In this issue of the ISEPS 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.

PUTIN'S RATING: MARCH VS. JANUARY

On March 3, 2016 VCIOM presented the results of the survey concerning how Russians evaluate the Putin's pre-election promises and whether they are ready or not to support him in the next presidential elections. The survey was conducted on January 23-24, 2016.

Press-release was published under subheading "The declared public support for Putin in the 2018 presidential elections has reached a four-year maximum". From our point of view, the word "declared" is the main word in this subheading.

According to Russians, promises given by Putin during his 2012 pre-election campaign are being increasingly implemented. Thus, since 2013, the share of respondents who believe that the president has accomplished most of his promises has doubled (from 16% to 37%). Among those who say that all the promises were implemented increased the number of young Russians (39% of those aged 18-24; 26% earlier); Russians with high level of income (50%, 34% earlier), residents of million cities (33%, 12% earlier). Positive judgments are also expressed by parliamentary opposition (CPRF – from 16% to 25%, A Just Russia party – from 19% to 40%, LDPR – from 12% to 33%).

About half of respondents (47%) consider that part of promises was implemented, however, most of them are yet to be fulfilled.

ents (78%, 53% earlier), persons with high income (80%, 54% earlier), residents of towns (81%, 42% earlier), supporters of three parliamentary opposition parties, et cetera.

January increase of Putin's rating isn't confirmed by March survey of Levada-center. According to the latter survey, the number of people who "completely trust" or "rather trust" the head of state decreased by 10%. Today this share amounts to 73% vs. 83% in 2015. In the list of feelings that Russians feel towards their president, admiration and sympathy lost some points (2% and 7% accordingly). Meanwhile indifference and suspicion are named more often. Despite this, the number of Russians who support external policy of Putin increased from 16% to 22%. 65% of respondents would like to see him president again.

ECONOMY TAKES OVER

This past February ROMIR research holding again polled Russians asking them a series of questions regarding their perception of the current situation in economy and ways of overcoming the financial difficulties. A similar survey was conducted in March 2015. The gathered results demonstrate that overall reaction and nation's response actions have not changed over the year. Only a larger share of respondents is now convinced that the country has indeed fallen into a deep economic crisis.

If one year ago, when asked to characterize the cur-

Table 1

Dynamics of answering the question: "Putin has not eliminated a possibility to take part in the 2018 presidential elections. Would you support his candidature in the next elections?", %

Variant of answer	10'12	10'13	01'16
Rather yes	40	51	74
Rather no	39	36	15
It will depend on circumstances; Don't know	21	13	11

74% of Russians are ready to vote for Putin in the presidential elections today; this is a four-year maximum (the figure increased from 40% in October 2012). Even among those respondents who think that the president has not fulfilled everything that he promised the share of those who would still support him is equal to 70%. 15% of respondents wouldn't vote for him; another 11% failed to give an answer (Table 1).

Increasing support for Putin is registered in all socio-demographic groups. Those who would vote for him are often men (71%, 46% earlier), young respond-

ent economic situation in the country, respondents' opinions were divided rather evenly – 53% called the situation a crisis, while 39% only saw certain economic problems. Today majority of respondents (71%) are convinced that the country is indeed in a full-fledged crisis. Only 23% of respondents now think that the country is only experiencing some economic problems. At the same time the share of Russians who haven't noticed any economic problems in the country in the past twelve months has remained the same – 2% vs. 3% in the past.

Same as last year, among respondents, who defined situation in the country as a "crisis", prevailed mature age groups, i.e. people aged 45 and up. However, unlike the previous poll where the crisis was mainly mentioned by high income groups, this time the crisis was mainly emphasized by lower- and middle income groups.

The share of those, who perceive the crisis through increasing prices and high inflation, remained unchanged. 79% of Russians think so. Same as last year, about half (52%) of respondents called the devaluation of the Russian ruble the main sign of crisis. That factor provokes slightly more concern among men and people living in big cities.

Next, the respondents mentioned work-related factors. Over a third of Russians (35%) see the crisis manifesting itself in salary cuts. This indicator increased by a third in comparison with the previous year. Another third of respondents (34%) mentioned layoffs and growing unemployment.

However, despite the difficulties at work such as salary and stuff cuts, the number of people experiencing problems with paying off their loans hasn't changed in twelve months and remained at the level of about one fifth of the entire population (19%). A slightly higher percentage of such answers was received from Russians aged 35-44 and residents of cities with a population of under 1 million.

The share of Russians, who perceive the crisis through the tense international situation, decreased by a factor of 1.5: it dropped from 32% down to 21%. The reciprocal sanctions of Russia against the Western countries were mentioned by 11% of respondents which is slightly lower than the previous year result. Thus, we can say that Russians mainly perceives the crisis through the prism of their own wallet, and not through the international events.

As for the ways of overcoming economic difficulties, the answers demonstrate that Russians haven't changed their saving strategies. Thus, 39% of them have started redistributing the budget in favor of food and necessities. Last year this answer was given by 43% of respondents. More often, this strategy was the choice of people over 45, with low-to-medium income, residing in smaller towns of the country.

28% of the respondents have mentioned lowering their spending on vacations and entertainment, which is slightly less than the same indicator the previous year (32%). The share of those who had refused or planned to refrain from making expensive purchases dropped from 30% to 22%.

However, the share of those who had to cut their expenses on food and necessities increased from 17% to 27%. Thus, we can assume that, overall, people in Russia prefer saving on food and everyday necessities than deny themselves entertainment, vacations or expensive purchases.

The share of Russians who plan on growing their own fruit and vegetables as additional sources of sustenance has remained stable in the twelve months since the past survey, staying at 12-13%. Also unchanged (at about 10-11%) remains the share of those

who plan on cutting out expensive services, such as private healthcare and private education. Finally, the same share of respondents, 7%, are not planning to change their style of shopping and spending since they admitted to not being affected by the present economic crisis at all.

According to WCIOM surveys, Russians cut their consumer plans: in 2014 20% of respondents planned to repair their flats, in 2015 this share decreased to 16%, in 2016 it decreased even lower: down to 14%. The share of those who planned to by vacancy tours dropped from 16% down to 10%; to spend money on education – from 9% down to 3%.

Monitoring of social well-being of population, published by the Academy of the National Economy (RANEPA) in March, also reflects difficulties of Russians' adaptation to crisis. Researchers cautioned that there is a risk if increasing social tension. First signs of these are already noticeable in regions: salaries payout debts lead to strikes there. Another reason for worrying is hidden unemployment.

Russian ministers declare that the lowest point of crisis is already behind, however, for Russians the crisis is not over and they don't even see its bottom. Surveys registered worsening of the situation during the past year: more and more people have to deal with salary cutoffs and the threat of unemployment. In the end of the year the share of those who was affected by the crisis to some extent reached 75%.

Researchers say: "Population didn't work out any efficient mass practice of social and economic behavior, devoted to successful adaptation to the new economic situation... Analysis demonstrates that there isn't a single social group (even a small one) that succeeded in it".

Judging by the surveys, "respondents believe that thrifty behavior and spending of savings will help them survive the crisis". However, a question arises: how are people going to survive when they run out of savings and their salaries won't return to the pre-crisis level? It looks like personal financial well-being of Russians is on the skids now.

"Understanding of the fact that crisis can last for a long time occurs very slowly, and it doesn't lead to a formation of efficient response models", – say the authors of the research. They warn: "In case of a long-time crisis this can lead to a significant growth of social tension".

Crisis contributes to the increasing financial literacy of population. According to POF, since the summer of 2014, when oil prices started to drop, the share of those who follow their dynamics, grew from 15% up to 41% (and the share of those who is not interested in it dropped from 83% down to 57%). 63% of respondents are convinced that the decrease of oil prices affects Russian economy; 67% of them believe that this affect is unfavorable. The share of those who see a direct influence of oil prices on their lives grew from 53% up to 59%.

Even when asked about the reasons of oil prices drop, Russians demonstrate quite a good understanding: the most popular version (12%) is increasing pro-

duction and decreasing demand. However, 6% name the US politics as the main reason, another 6% – an abstract desire to harm Russia, and 5% – a conspiracy. 47% of respondents didn't know how to answer the question.

Improvement of financial literacy is something that the power desired for a long time – rhetorically. The issue is that amid today's conditions financially literate population isn't really advantageous for the power. If people start to understand the oil price formation, cause-and-effect connections in resource-based economy, the exchange rate of the ruble and the inflation, then they can end up by looking for people responsible for the useless economic policy. And maybe not only economic policy, if they take a closer look at sanctions and anti-sanctions, the level of corruption, and the expenditures for defense industry. That is why the power's rhetoric changed today: "no need to follow the rates", "the peak of crisis is behind", "we're looking for the ways to accelerate the growth", "it's time to stop making wild guesses on oil".

MAINLY BAD AND VERY BAD

According to Levada-Center survey, conducted in February 2016, interest to the Ukrainian events continues to decrease. Currently slightly more than one third of respondents (38%) continue to follow the Ukrainian events. Majority of Russians (60%) express mild interest or no interest at all. In June-July 2014 65% of Russians were attentively following the events in Ukraine.

Table

Dynamics of answering the question: "What is your general attitude to Ukraine/Russia now?", %

Variant of answer	09'12	09'13	09'14	09'15	02'16
<i>Russians' opinions – results of Levada-Center</i>					
Very good/Rather good	74	69	32	33	28
Rather bad/Very bad	17	23	55	56	59
DA/NA	9	8	13	11	13
<i>Ukrainians' opinions – results of KIIS</i>					
Very good/Rather good	83	88	48	34	36
Rather bad/Very bad	11	9	42	53	47
DA/NA	6	3	10	13	17

Perception of annexation of Crimea by Russia as a fair move remains at the same high level (80%) among the Russians. But by February 2016 it decreased insignificantly comparatively to April 2015 (89% vs. 82%). Two thirds of Russians (62%) believe that annexation of Crimea was more favorable than harmful for Russia. At that, over a third of respondents either see negative consequences from the annexation (20%) or cannot give any determined evaluation (18%). On the contrary, 80% of Ukrainians, according to the results of February survey by the Kiev International Institute of Sociology (KIIS), don't support annexation of Crimea by Russia. This annexation is approved only by one tenth part of respondents in Ukraine.

In February 2016 the share of Russians, evaluating the state of things in the East of Ukraine as "tense", reached its high: over 70% of respondents think so.

Almost every fifth respondent (18%) notes "critical and highly explosive" character of the events there. 8% of respondents are convinced that everything is safe and calm in the region. Half of Russians (51%) don't expect any changes in the course of the year; every fifth respondent (22%) worries that the situation in the East of Ukraine may become worse.

Negative attitude towards Ukraine among Russians (59%) and towards Russia among Ukrainians (47%) dominates in the results. The share of positive evaluations of Russia by Ukrainians is higher than the similar indicator among Russians: 36% vs. 28%. Table 2 results visually demonstrate that the turning point in the mutual evaluations happened in 2014.

Significant part of Russians preserves their positive attitude towards Ukrainians, but current leadership of Ukraine causes only negative attitude – 81% of respondents expressed "bad" attitude to it. Attitude towards the leaders of DPR and LPR is on the contrary mostly positive among Russians (63%). Negative attitude to the Ukrainian leaders is separated from Ukrainians themselves: Ukrainian people are perceived positively by 59% of Russians.

Despite the increase of negative perception of the "neighbor", the idea that Russia and Ukraine should be independent but friendly countries (with open borders, without visas, customs and so on) is supported by every second Russian (52%). Only a third of respondents believe that relations between Russia and Ukraine should be modeled according to the relations with other countries, including closed borders, visas and customs.

As for the public opinion of Ukraine, there is no consensus regarding this question. Although with the beginning of the Ukrainian crisis the share of Ukrainians advocating "open borders" dropped almost by a third (from 73% in November 2013 down to 44% in September 2014), currently equal shares of Ukrainians advocate opposite opinions on relations with Russia – 43% vs. 43%.

Perceptions of Russia's involvement in the Ukrainian conflict are very different in Russian and Ukrainian public opinions. While Russians suppose that there is no war between Russia and Ukraine and there is no Russian army in Ukraine (65% and 52% accordingly), Ukrainians are convinced of the contrary: 63% of them believe that two countries are in the state of war, and almost two thirds of respondents (65%) believe that there are Russian military forces in Ukraine.

Russians' attitude to Ukraine mainly depends on propaganda, because TV is their main source of news. Ukrainians in their turn see that a part of their territory was captured and the military conflict in the East is stagnating. They blame Russian leadership for the conflict.

It's makes sense to suppose that with the change of propaganda course Russian hate towards Ukraine will disappear rather quickly. But what can be done with the Ukrainian hate towards Russia? A. Levinson from Levada-Center believes that relations on the behavioral level will be restored after the political resolution of the conflict (which is unlikely to happen soon). As for the level of setups, negativity will remain for at least two generations. Ukrainians won't excuse Russia soon. For them the ongoing conflict is a national tragedy, and one of the aspects of this tragedy are relations between Donbass and the rest of Ukraine.

And in fine of the Ukrainian topic let us turn to the results of February survey of Gorshenin Institute.

Over a year the share of Ukrainians advocating joining the EU dropped from 62.2% down to 55.2%; at the same time the share of supporters of joining the Customs Union remained practically unchanged – 13.5% vs. 12.7%. The most important change is the increase of the share of adepts of "special way" by 7.1 points – "Neither the EU, nor the CU" – from 14.2% up to 23.3%.

Table 3

Trust ratings of politicians, %

Variant of answer	Trust	Don't trust	DA
A. Lukashenko	43.2	44.6	11.6
A. Merkel	33.0	50.1	15.9
B. Obama	26.6	56.4	16.1
V. Putin	6.8	87.7	4.7

Decrease of the share of supporters of European integration was also reflected in the answers to the question "If a referendum on Ukraine entering NATO was held today, how would you vote?" 47.1% answered in favor of NATO in 2016 (compare with 54.1% in 2015). These dynamics, apparently, should be recognized as natural. All revolutions cause inflated expectations (a reverse interpretation is also possible: inflated expectations cause revolutions), that is why euphoria is inevitably followed by disappointment.

Disappointment in European integration was apparently reflected in the relatively low ratings of the Western leaders – A. Merkel and B. Obama (Table 3). They are noticeably less popular than Belarusian "father" A. Lukashenko. You should also notice 6.8% of V. Putin. This is the result of coercive integrational policy of Russia, started with the annexation of Crimea.

UNPOPULAR WAR

Diminishing attention of Russians to the events in Ukraine is partly caused by state propaganda switching to the participation of Aerospace Security Forces of Russia in military actions in Syria.

Russians want the Syrian campaign to continue and support B. Assad. At the same time majority of population is not informed about Syrian conflict and expresses less and less interest in it, according to a survey of Levada-Center. In January 2016 only 18% of respondents gave positive answers to the question whether they follow the events in Syria. In October-November 2015, when Aerospace Forces of Russia intensively bombed positions of the forbidden in Russia terroristic organization "Islamic state" (ISIS), 25% of respondents followed the news.

Recently informational background goes further and further away from the topic of war and battle against ISIS, and concentrates more and more on internal Syrian negotiations. This is much more difficult to understand for an average man, than the idea of battling the international terrorism. At the same time majority of Russians are convinced: military operation in Syria should be continued. 18% of respondents are convinced in this without any hesitations, 41% are inclined to think so. 11% of respondents want Russian military operation in Syria to stop, 16% are less convinced, but still share this opinion.

Despite the low level of understanding of the Syrian conflict, respondents are sure that the aims of the Russian army are the same as they were declared by the power. When V. Putin declared his decision to start the Syrian operation, he stated that the only correct

way to battle international terrorism was "to act in advance", "don't wait when terrorists come to us". "You don't need to be a specialist in these questions to understand: if they achieve success in Syria, they will come back to their countries, and they will come to Russia", – emphasized V. Putin.

According to Levada-Center, 53% of respondents are convinced that Russia aspires to neutralize and eliminate the threat of military actions, involving Islamic radicals and terrorists, on the territory of their country. This share constantly increases: 49% in November, 47% in October.

The second top point of view is that Russia started the war in Syria to protect the government of B. Assad and prevent a chain of the so-called "color revolutions", provoked by the US all over the world. 24% of respondents think so, this number didn't change since November.

Only 8% of respondents support the opinion that Russia aspires to divide the coalition of the Western countries to weaken the threat of complete isolation of Russia and further sanctions. The same share of respondents found it difficult to answer the question.

Recently the powers didn't make any detailed and clear statements on their aims in Syria, that is why Russians keep up with the initial version, declared by V. Putin during sending off the military forces to the Middle East. Low popularity of the opinion that Russia got involved in the Syrian conflict to overcome its own isolation is based on the fact that this version is quite complex, according to Levada-Center expert. Moreover, this way of thinking is defeatist, and because of the constant active propaganda, majority of Russians are used to thinking that all conflicts that Russia takes part in are in some way directed to confrontation with the West. This is the reason of popularity of the version that Syrian campaign is an attempt to stand against "color revolutions" provoked by the US in the world.

The rating of problems is invariably topped by the state of economy and dissatisfaction with the government (Table 4). Unemployment is on the third position. In February its rating has doubled in comparison with the January low.

Institute experts note that there is a significant difference in the level of anxiety concerning the state of economy depending on party affiliation of respondents. Currently, 28% of Republicans put economy in the first place (16% in February, 8% in December). Among Democrats and independent respondents, the shares of people placing economy on the first place amounted to 12% and 16% accordingly.

The increased anxiety of Republicans about the state of economy apparently reflects their agreement

Table 4

Dynamics of answering the question: "What do you think is the most important problem facing the country today?", %

Variant of answer	01'16	02'16	03'16
Economy	13	17	17
Dissatisfaction with government	16	13	15
Unemployment	5	10	11
Immigration	8	10	8
Healthcare	4	6	6
Racism	4	6	8
Terrorism	9	7	6
Elections	2	—	5
Federal budget deficit	5	6	5
Moral decline	4	2	4
Education	3	5	4

On March, 14, V. Putin unexpectedly ordered that main Russian forces should be withdrawn from Syria starting from March, 15. Director of Levada-Center L. Gudkov doesn't exclude the possibility that the power, taking this decision, took into the account both internal and external factors. "There are some real considerations that public should be calmed before the elections", – said L. Gudkov. He argued that starting the military operation in the Middle East Kremlin hoped to achieve a split in the West and, therefore, a relaxation of sanctions against Russia. The expert is convinced: "As you can see, this plan didn't succeed. People inside the country don't even understand why Russia got involved in this war. Of course, there is an abstract notion of protection of geopolitical interests, but people aren't involved in this process like they were during the conflict in Donbass". According to L. Gudkov, the powers' actions only led to an increase of the number of those who live in the atmosphere of anxiety and expectation of something unpleasant or even catastrophic.

AMERICA HAS TWO PROBLEMS: ECONOMY AND GOVERNMENT

Gallup Institute monthly asks Americans a question on the most important problems facing the U.S. This is an open-ended question, so relatively low shares of answers shouldn't astonish you.

with the statements of Republican presidential candidates regarding economic problems facing the country.

Presidential elections will be held in November, but only 5% of respondents named elections as a problem worth attention. And this is despite the beginning of the active phase of the electoral campaign (so called "primaries" were held in a number of states in March). Meanwhile "only 5%" is a record for March, judging by Gallup's surveys conducted since 2001.

The share of Americans attentively following the electoral campaign increased from 31% in January up to 40% in March (from 40% to 49% among Republicans and from 30% to 38% among Democrats). These dynamics didn't lead to a wider appreciation of ideas declared by the candidates: January – 47%, March – 48%. Level of appreciation is equal among Republicans and Democrats – 51%.

In March 68% of respondents gave a positive answer to the question if any candidate is worth being the President. 69% of Republicans and 78% of Republicans expressed such a confidence.

27% of respondents agree that the state of things in the country is developing in the right direction (including 44% of Democrats, 25% of independents, and only 10% of Republicans). Current level of satisfaction with the state of affairs in the country is significantly lower than the average over many years – 37%. This deviation from the average on the eve of presidential elec-

tions testifies on problems in the party whose representative is in the White House now.

In fine of the forthcoming presidential elections in the U.S. topic let us mention candidates' ratings. Let us note that Gallup Institute doesn't measure electoral ratings, which Belarusians are accustomed to, but candidates' net favorable ratings among Republicans and Democrats. This rating is calculated as a difference between positive and negative opinions.

On the 17th March, rating of Ted Cruz among Republicans amounted to 21%, rating of Donald Trump – 22%. Among democrats Bernie Sanders had a significant advantage over Hillary Clinton: 60% vs. 45%.

wciom.ru; levada.ru; romir.ru; ranepa.ru; kiis.com.ua; fom.ru; institute.gorshenin.ua; gallup.com

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IISEPS Executive Director:

Dr. Algirdas Degutis

IISEPS News

Jogailos g. 4, LT-01116 Vilnius

Editor Algirdas Degutis (+370-6) 887-50-00

E-mail: *iiseps@iiseps.org; iiseps.iiseps@gmail.com*

www.iiseps.org

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