

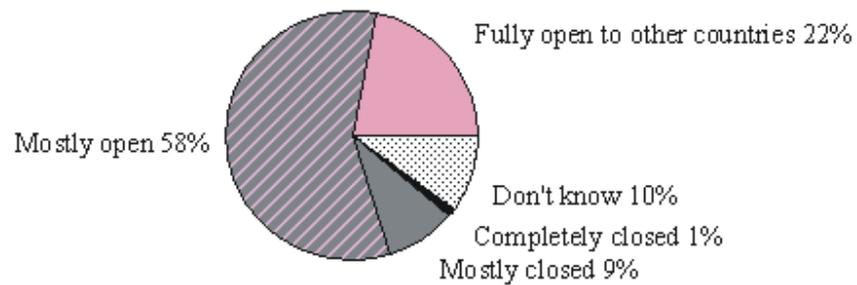
Russia and Europe and the Countries in between: Russia's Stance towards Ukraine, Georgia and Belarus

Chairman: Philip Hanson

Discussion Leader: Oleg Manaev

Oleg Manaev: First, some considerations about Russia, and its role:

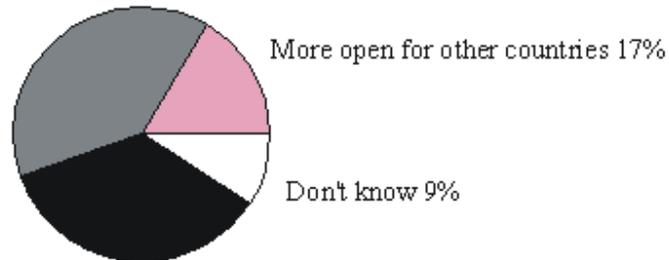
Q1. Do you think Russia is now ...?



Source: Levada Center, nationwide survey, 18-21 January 2008, N=1600

Q2. Would you prefer Russia in future to be ...?

Neither more open, no more closed than now 39%



Less inclined to let other countries into its life 36%

Source: Levada Center, nationwide survey, 18-21 January 2008, N=1600

Q3. How do you think most developed countries in the world relate to Russia now?

	All replies,
	%
As a friend	6
As a partner	34
As a competitor	33
As an enemy	8
They don't pay attention to Russia	10
Don't know	10

Source: Levada Center, nationwide survey, 18-21 January 2008, N=1600

Q5a. Name the five countries which you would regard as the closest friends and allies of Russia.

	All replies,
	%
Belarus	50
Kazakhstan	38
China	18
Germany	17
Armenia	15
India	12

(Only the top six countries are shown)

Source: Levada Center, nationwide survey, 22-26 May 2009, N=1 599

Q5b. Name the five countries which you would regard as the most unfriendly and hostile to Russia

	All replies,
	%
Georgia	62
USA	45
Ukraine	41
Latvia	35
Lithuania	35
Estonia	30

(Only the top six countries are shown)

Source: Levada Center, nationwide survey, 22-26 May 2009, N=1 599

Table 1. PERCEIVED THREATS TO RUSSIAN SECURITY

Q. Do you think that any of the following countries could be a substantial threat to the security of Russia?

2000a	2000b	2001	2003	2005	2007
(% perceiving some or big threat)					

USA	49	45	48	48	49	54
National minorities	44	56	44	47	48	30
Immigrants/refugees					37	24
Germany	15	18	11	11	17	14
Islamic countries				38		
China			22	31		
Iraq	25		18			
EU	23		18			
Ukraine	10		8			

Source: New Russia Barometer VIII, IX, X, XI, XIV, XV

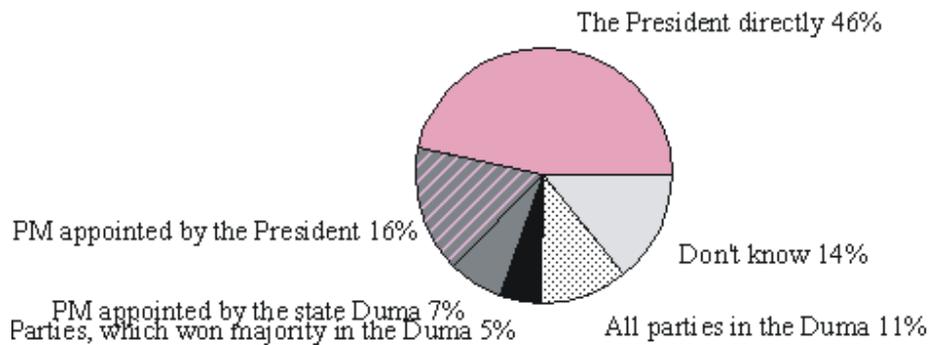
Table 2. RUSSIANS LESS INCLINED TO FEEL EUROPEAN
Q. Do you consider yourself European?

	2000a	2000b	2001	2003	2004
Never	19	15	20	54	46
Rarely	29	25	27	17	17
Sometimes	35	35	31	16	18
Often	18	23	22	12	19

Source: New Russia Barometer VIII, X, XI, XIII.

[Trend...](#)

Q5. Who should form the Government of Russia?



Source: Levada Center, nationwide survey, 5-10 October 2007, N=1600

[Trend...](#)

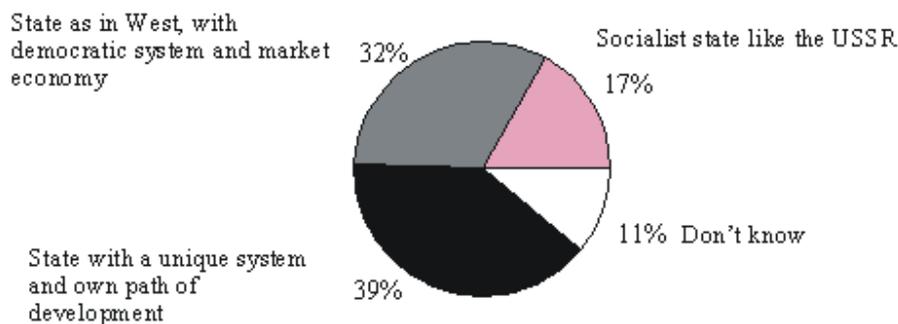
 Q7. What kind of democracy does Russia need?

	All replies, %
Like that in developed countries of Europe, America	20
Like that in the Soviet Union	18
Russia needs its own unique type of democracy following national traditions	38
Russia doesn't need democracy	10
Don't know	14

 Source: Levada Center, nationwide survey, 11-17 June 2009, N=1,600

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 Q8. What type of state would you want to see in Russia in future?



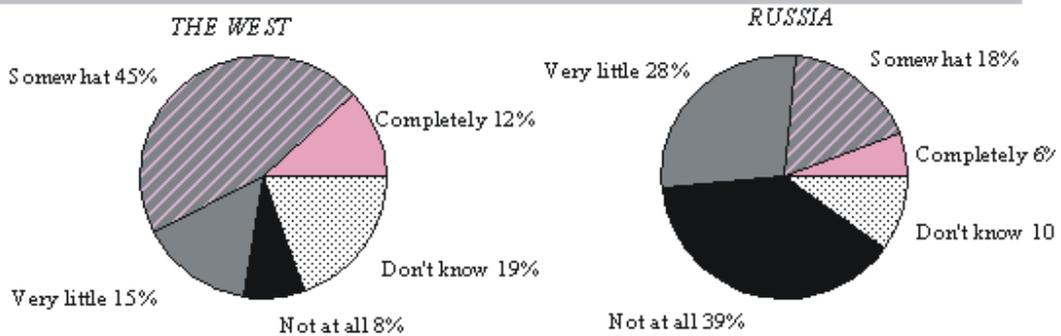
 Source: Levada Center, nationwide survey, 18-21 January 2008, N=1600

 Q9. When you hear about a "special Russian path" what comes to your mind?

	All replies, %
Economic development, but with more concern for people rather than profit	34
Different values between Russia and the West	22
Taking into account spiritual, moral sides of relations between state and citizens	18
Taking into account such factors as the hostile environment and threat of attack	9
Dominance of the interests of the authorities over the interests of the population	7
Preparedness of citizens to sacrifice themselves for Russian greatness	7
Don't know what "special path" means, nothing comes to mind	16
Never heard about that	11
Don't think Russian development should differ from that of other countries	9
Don't know	9

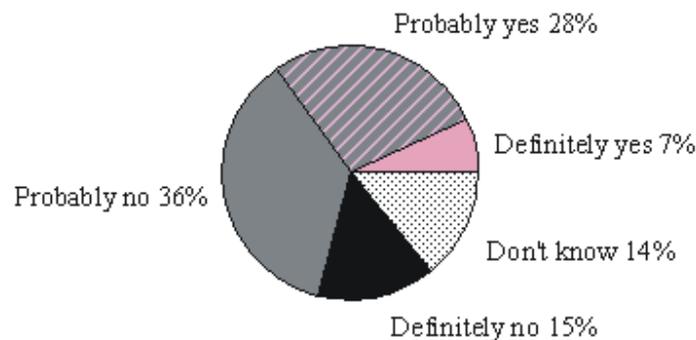
 Source: Levada Center, nationwide survey, 18-21 January 2008, N=1600

Q10. To what extent do you think the citizens of developed countries in a) the West and b) Russia can control the activities of state organs?



Source: Levada Center, nationwide survey, 18-21 January 2008, N=1600

Q11. Do you think the democratic system accepted in the West is suitable for Russia?



Source: Levada Center, nationwide survey, 18-21 January 2008, N=1600

Q. Are you for or against increasing the presidential term from four to six years?

	All replies, %
Definitely for	21
Somewhat for	39
Total for	60
Somewhat against	17
Definitely against	9
Total against	26
Don't know	14

Source: Levada Center, nationwide survey, 14-17 November 2008, N=1,599

 Q1a. How on the whole do you feel about the United States?

	All replies
	%
Very good	3
Mostly good	50
Total good	<u>53</u>
Mostly bad	27
Very bad	<u>6</u>
Total bad	33
Don't know	14

Source: Levada Center, nationwide survey, 18-21 September 2009, N=1,600

[Trend...](#)

 Q1b. How on the whole do you feel about the European Union?

	All replies,
	%
Very good	4
Mostly good	59
Total good	<u>64</u>
Mostly bad	16
Very bad	<u>2</u>
Total bad	18
Don't know	18

Source: Levada Center, nationwide survey, 18-21 September 2009, N=1,600

[Trend...](#)

 Q1c. How on the whole do you feel about Ukraine?

	All replies,
	%
Very good	3
Mostly good	43
Total good	<u>46</u>
Mostly bad	35
Very bad	<u>9</u>
Total bad	44
Don't know	10

Source: Levada Center, nationwide survey, 18-21 September 2009, N=1,600

[Trend...](#)

Q1d. How on the whole do you feel about Georgia?

	All replies, %
Very good	1
Mostly good	23
Total good	24
Mostly bad	44
Very bad	21
Total bad	65
Don't know	11

Source: Levada Center, nationwide survey, 18-21 September 2009, N=1,600

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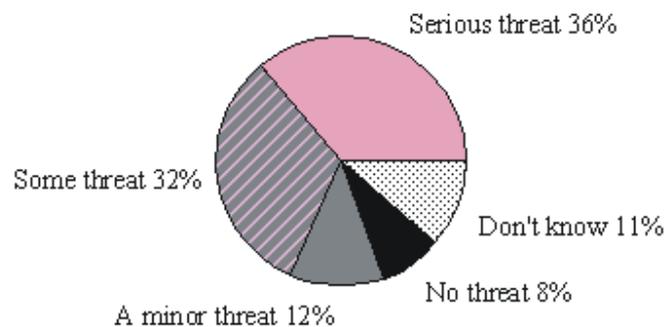
Q2. A) Do you think Western countries in NATO have good reason to fear Russia?
B) Do you think Russia has good reason to fear Western countries in NATO?

	A) West should fear B) Russia should fear		Mar 09
	Jul 08	Jul 08 (percent)	
Definitely yes	11	23	22
Probably yes	21	39	40
Total yes	31	62	62
Probably no	36	21	21
Definitely no	24	8	6
Total no	60	29	26
Don't know	8	9	12

Source: Levada Center, nationwide survey, 18-21 July 2008; 20-23 March 2009; N ~1600 each survey

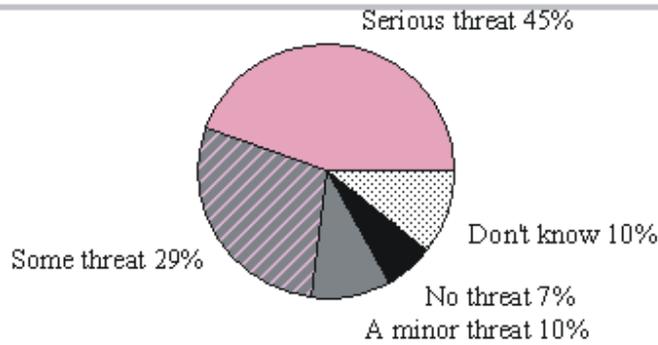
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Q4a. How big a threat would Ukraine's joining NATO represent to the security of Russia?



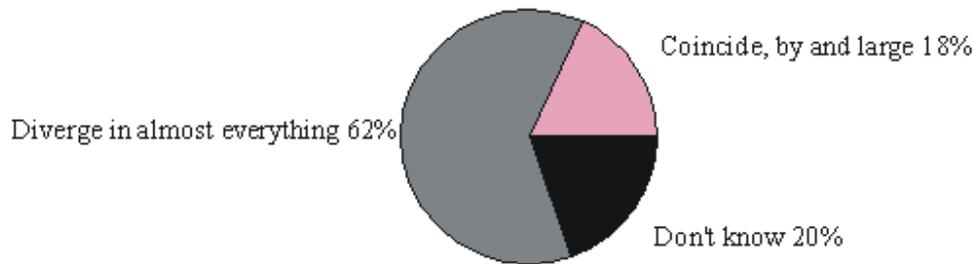
Source: Levada Center, nationwide survey, 12-15 September 2008, N=1,597

Q4b. How big a threat would Georgia's joining NATO represent to the security of Russia?



Source: Levada Center, nationwide survey, 12-15 September 2008, N=1,597

Q5. Do you think the national interests of Russia and the USA by and large coincide, or do you think they diverge in almost everything?



Source: Levada Center, nationwide survey, 11-14 April 2008, N=1,600

Q1. What do you think is the main reason for the conflict in South Ossetia?

	All replies, %
The leadership of the United States is trying to spread its influence to countries neighbouring Russia	49
The Georgian leadership follows a discriminatory policy towards the Ossetians and Abkhazians	32
The leadership of South Ossetia and of Abkhazia is trying to retain power by constantly provoking tension	5
The Russian leadership is trying to follow a policy of "divide and rule" to maintain its influence in the Caucasus	5
Don't know	10

Source: Levada Center, nationwide survey, 15-18 August 2008, N=1600

Q4. With which of the following opinions concerning the actions of the Russian leadership in the Georgian-Ossetian conflict would you most agree?

	All replies, %
They did everything possible so as to avoid escalation of the conflict and bloodshed	70
They gave in provocation by the Georgian side and were dragged into the conflict	16
They deliberately stirred up the Georgian-Ossetian conflict for their own geopolitical interests	4
Don't know	9

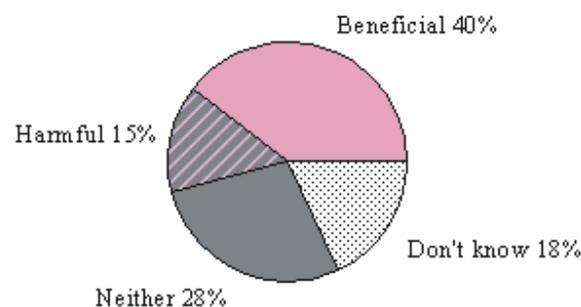
Source: Levada Center, nationwide survey, 15-18 August 2008, N=1600

Q5. Why do you think Western leaders support Georgia in the South Ossetian conflict?

	All replies, %
Because they are trying to weaken Russia and push it out of the Caucasus	66
Because Russian troops' firing on military targets in Georgia led to civilian deaths	8
Because in sending its troops into Georgia, Russia violated that country's territorial integrity	7
Because Russia's actions led to the widening of the conflict in particular to Abkhazia	5
Don't know	14

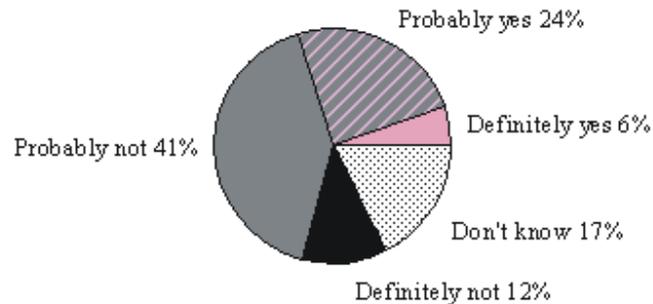
Source: Levada Center, nationwide survey, 15-18 August 2008, N=1600

Q8. Do you think the recognition by Russia of South Ossetia and Abkhazia will be beneficial or harmful to Russia, or do you think it will be neither?



Source: Levada Center, nationwide survey, 12-15 September 2008, N=1,597

Q10. Do you think sanctions with which Western countries are threatening Russia in connection with her policy towards Georgia could exert serious influence on Russia?



Source: Levada Center, nationwide survey, 12-15 September 2008, N=1,597

All tables from: http://www.russiavotes.org/security/security_usa_nato.php

And now about Belarus:

According to the Freedom House' "*Freedom in the World 2009*" Annual Report, in terms of freedom and democracy Belarus was ranked as one of "the worst from the worst" among almost 200 monitored countries¹. Another Freedom House' Annual Report, "*Nations in Transit*" clarified indicators of this ranking:

¹ http://www.freedomhouse.org/uploads/fiw09/FIW09_OverviewEssay_Final.pdf

Table 1. Belarus Nations in Transit Ratings and Averaged Scores, 2008*

NIT Ratings	1998	1999	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Democracy Score	N/A	6.71								
National Democratic Governance	N/A	7.00								
Electoral Process	6.25	6.75	6.75	6.75	6.75	6.75	7.00	7.00	7.00	7.00
Civil Society	5.75	6.00	6.50	6.25	6.50	6.75	6.75	6.75	6.50	6.50
Independent Media	6.50	6.75	6.75	6.75	6.75	6.75	6.75	6.75	6.75	6.75
Local Democratic Governance	N/A	6.75								
Judicial Framework and Independence	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	6.75	6.75	6.75	6.75
Corruption	N/A	5.25	5.25	5.25	5.50	5.75	6.00	6.25	6.25	6.25

** For all 29 countries and administrative areas in Nations in Transit 2008, Freedom House, in consultation with the report authors and a panel of academic advisers, has provided numerical ratings in the seven categories listed above. The ratings are based on a scale of 1 to 7, with 1 representing the highest and 7 the lowest level of democratic progress.*

There are many historical, cultural, political and economic explanations of a ‘mysterious Belarusian soul’. The most important one is the ‘civilization's split’ or, according to Samuel Huntington’s theory, "civilizations' clash line" between Western European Catholic/Protestant and Eurasian Orthodox civilizations (as an old Russian saying stressed “What is good for German is death for Russian”) crossed Belarus, as well as Ukraine and Moldova, over the centuries.

Figure 1. "Civilization's split" in Belarus.

However, despite all controversies (from ethnic-cultural to geo-political) one cannot say that the modern values system of Belarusians is completely pre-determined by their historical heritage. They are changing. Thus, their Soviet-Communist heritage, largely, is not rooted in the Eurasian Orthodox civilization, and is gradually vanishing:

Table 2. Distribution of answers to the question: "Would you like restoration of the USSR?" %

Option	11'93	11'97	11'99	04'02	06'04	04'06	12'08
Yes	55.1	49.9	38.0	38.8	39.5	26.7	21.5
No	22.3	25.5	30.1	42.6	50.8	63.4	63.3
DA/NA*	22.6	24.6	31.9	18.6	9.7	9.9	15.2

* According to public opinion poll conducted by IISEPS. Here and after DA/NA means "Difficult to answer" and "No answer".

Obviously, the number of the restoration supporters during fifteen years of independence decreased by 2.5 times, while the number of their opponents increased almost tripled, and the number of uncertain responses also decreased significantly.

I will conduct a comparative analysis of public attitudes to the most important economic, political, and geo-political issues, among those Belarusians who believe their country should establish the closest relations with Russia, NIS or EU (which is an indicator of their pro-Russian, pro-Western, or intermediate geo-political attitudes):

Table 3. Public attitudes of respondents who believe Belarus should establish the closest relations with Russia, NIS or EU, % *

Public attitudes	Russia (58.6)	NIS (35.2)	EU (44.5)
In general, does situation in our country develop in a right or a wrong direction?			
In a right direction (57.8)	67.3	61.5	39.4
In a wrong direction (30.0)	20.8	27.3	47.2
Do you feel opposition should exist in Belarus?			
Yes (55.7)	49.2	55.8	72.8
No (29.6)	35.4	28.3	14.4
Do you feel yourself in opposition to the authorities?			
Yes (16.5)	10.0	12.3	26.8
No (72.5)	80.1	77.8	61.6
Should authorities start negotiations with the EU or with opposition as well?			
Yes, because only through negotiations our society could reach public accord (48.6)	43.9	48.7	56.5
No, because opposition represents nobody (21.5)	26.7	26.6	10.8
No, because authorities violate human rights and laws (17.9)	15.9	14.6	22.7
Whom did you vote for during the Presidential elections in 2006?			
For A. Lukashenko (50.0)	61.5	52.1	30.3
For A. Kozulin (6.4)	3.8	5.3	10.4
For A. Milinkevich (17.0)	12.5	17.5	29.1

Public attitudes	Russia (58.6)	NIS (35.2)	EU (44.5)
What is your opinion on the imprisonment of former Presidential candidate A. Kozulin?			
He was sentenced fairly and should be punished	32.4	26.3	12.3
He was sentenced unfairly and should be released	27.5	36.2	53.0
Should Belarus initiate a process of integration with EU?			
Yes (45.8)	35.3	44.9	83.7
No (39.1)	48.5	40.4	8.7
Should Belarus become a member of EU?			
Yes (33.5)	23.1	23.4	61.1
No (49.3)	58.2	57.6	23.7
If you have to make a choice between integration with Russia or the EU, which would you prefer?			
Integration with Russia (46.9)	66.2	47.9	22.0
Integration with EU (34.4)	17.0	31.2	63.8
What variant of Belarus-Russia integration would you prefer?			
Relations between Belarus and Russia should be the same as with other countries (41.6)	26.6	49.8	58.7
Belarus and Russia should create a Union of independent states with close political and economic relations (43.5)	57.5	42.6	33.2
Belarus and Russia should integrate into one state (8.3)	12.2	4.4	3.9
In case of prices rise for Russian gas and oil seriously affect your family, would you accept Belarus incorporation into Russia?			
Yes (31.7)	44.9	27.2	22.1
No (56.9)	42.5	61.7	70.9
What definition of Europe associates with?			
Democracy (40.1)	35.6	45.3	52.7
Degradation (10.6)	12.8	11.3	4.4
On May 1, 2004 Poland, Lithuania and Latvia joined EU. In your opinion, how has the life of their citizens changed since then?			

Public attitudes	Russia (58.6)	NIS (35.2)	EU (44.5)
Improved (27.4)	18.9	25.5	44.1
Remains the same (33.3)	35.9	31.1	31.1
Deteriorated (18.0)	21.4	18.1	7.2
Do you support the OCSE democratization demands to Belarusian authorities (all four demands, June 1999)?			
Yes (46.9)	39.0	44.5	67.3
No (53.1)	61.0	55.5	32.7
Do you support the EU democratization demands to Belarusian authorities (all twelve demands, November 2006)?			
Yes (30.3)	21.4	29.6	49.9
No (69.7)	78.6	70.4	50.1

** According to public opinion poll conducted by IISEPS on May 5-15, 2007. Read by columns. DA/NA is eliminated for easy perception. Percentage of all respondents is in brackets.*

Obviously, those respondents who believe Belarus should establish the closest relations with the EU have much more pro-democratic values than those who choose NIS (Ukraine), and the latter have more pro-democratic values than those who choose Russia. It is also evident that so called ‘average attitudes’ in fact mask very different or even opposite ones. It confirms again that in the case of ‘civilization clash’ geo-political attitudes mean different systems of life values. It also demonstrates the very controversial character of Belarus neighborhood influence.

As I stressed at the beginning, despite national and geo-political identification, for millions of Belarusians is still incomplete and controversial, their system of values is gradually changing. Due to the global and regional processes of the last decade – such as ‘widening Europe Eastwards’ (including enlargement of both the EU and NATO) and Russia’s attempts to restore its role as a world super power – the role of a second fundamental factor of this shift, i.e. various influences from the outside, is growing significantly. Over fifteen years the major factor of resistance to influence from the West and reluctance to influence from Russia, was the authoritarian regime of President Lukashenko based mostly on the Eurasian/Orthodox civilization heritage rather than the European Catholic/Protestant one. That’s why ‘civilization clash’ in Belarus was resolved mostly in favour of the first than the second (as opposed to Ukraine and Moldova located on ‘the Huntington line’ as well, but where leadership and ruling elites were balancing

between them or even proclaimed a pro-Western geo-political choice). That is why the pro-European choice of Belarusian society during this period did not expand:

Table 4. Distribution of answers to the question: "If you have to choose between integration with Russia or EU, what would you prefer?" %

Option	09'03	06'04	03'05	04'06	12'07	06'08	03'09	x
Integration with Russia	47.6	47.7	51.9	56.1	47.5	50.3	42.4	49.0
Integration with EU	36.1	37.6	31.6	31.9	33.3	32.4	35.1	34.0
DA/NA	16.3	14.7	16.5	12.0	19.2	17.3	22.5	17.0

** According to public opinion poll conducted by IISEPS.*

However, in the recent years the geo-political situation began to change dramatically. Growing Russia's ambitions (mostly based on oil and gas wealth) manifested in 'energy pressure' on Europe (including local 'gas and oil wars' with Belarus and Ukraine), and war with Georgia in August 2008 (resulting in actual annexation of almost one third of its territory) led to serious growing concerns in the West. In 2009, this concern transformed into a new EU initiative, the Eastern Partnership intended to strengthen ties with six CIS countries: Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan (prevailing concerns about authoritarian regimes and political turmoil in some of them). Despite formal Brussels' statements that "it is not oriented against any country", everyone understood its real intention – to reduce Russian influence and to strengthen Western influence in the region. Thus, just days before Eastern Partnership summit in Prague on May 7, 2009 the deputy Prime-Minister of the Czech Republic, Alexander Vondra, on behalf of the EU Presidency, stated that the Eastern Partnership should fill 'the vacuum' between the EU and Russia" while Sergey Lebedev, the Executive Secretary of CIS (former Director of the Russian External Intelligence), commenting on Eastern Partnership, stressed that "former USSR countries should make a serious choice between the CIS and EU, i.e. participation in this initiative". Vladimir Putin, Russian Prime-Minister, unequivocally disclosed the consequences for members of the Eastern Partnership: "For 15 years Russia came towards its partners – former USSR Republics, and was selling them energy at prices some times lower than the world ones. Thus, we subsidized economies of these countries by billions of dollars. We believe that this period is over. We should move to market relations".

President Lukashenko could not ignore these developments because Russia's hard line potentially threatened his regime and his personal power, and so he accepted membership in the new EU initiative. In his interview with Reuters on the eve of the Prague summit, he stated, "If Belarus is located between the East and the West, on the cross-roads, we have to conduct a multi-vectorial foreign policy. Moreover, if this is balancing, it is not

too bad. Without this balance there will be no success in economics, politics, or public policy”. On the other hand, to avoid irritating the Kremlin, he did not come to Prague in person. The Belarusian delegation was led by the First Deputy Prime-Minister, and demonstratively received the Russian Ambassador and “had a warm discussion about Belarus-Russia relations” on the day of the summit.

Despite various complications and uncertainties, there is no doubt that this geo-political shift gives new perspectives for a future ‘civilization clash’ in this region. If the ground for pro-European choice existed in Belarus for centuries, (today it is supported by one third of the population) it will be combined with effective outside influence – this ‘clash’ could be finally resolved in favour of Europe. On the other hand, the grounds for pro-Russian choice in Belarus is still stronger (supported today by almost half of the population), and the ‘clash’ could be finally resolved in Russia’s favour. How long Belarus (as well as other countries on the Huntington line) will succeed in balancing between two major geo-political and civilization players, nobody knows or can predict. However, bearing in mind global and regional developments of the last decade (end of the Cold War, the EU and NATO enlargement, Iraq and Afghanistan wars, the current financial crisis) we could – at least expect if not predict – that ‘civilization clashes’ or conflicts will be resolved most probably by ‘soft’ rather than ‘hard’ power. Effectively organized information influence based on communication theory and new technology achievements, as well as local peculiarities could contribute to use of this power rather than such traditional tools as diplomacy, trade, investments, culture, education, or public policy.

Philip Hanson: Thank you very much, Oleg! We have spent a lot of time talking about economic institutions and policies, but Oleg has introduced the theme, the new approach, particularly the role of popular attitudes and what makes those attitudes change over time, and controversial notion of civilization and conflict civilizations. There is plenty to talk about there.

Silvana Malle: I will make a few points. Certainly, Russia has extended its influence in Belarus, and you also said that there is a consensus for that in the country - not a minor point. At the same time, I have the impression that Lukashenko is very skilfully playing Russia and the European Union, and somehow the EU is also playing. So there are different forces, and it does not seem certain to me that in this sort of interplay Russia would have an easy time integrating these countries. The other point to make, coming back to economics: you mentioned the decision made by Russia, on 9th June this year, to form a close union with Belarus and Kazakhstan, and therefore defer their entry into the WTO. That was a major event and happened after Obama had visited Moscow where he talked to Medvedev and Putin, and said he would do his best to make it easier for Belarus to enter the WTO. As soon as Obama said that, Putin said, no, we do not care about the WTO; we want to form our Union. Interestingly, Medvedev was not party to this decision. So on 9th June Putin the Prime Minister said something very important, and the President was not even informed. The question is, whether Russia has the capacity to integrate these countries – forget what the people think, here we are talking economics and business?

Oleg Manaev: Thank you for your question. Let me start with the second one, about economics and Russian economic influence on the neighbouring countries. According to Belarusian economists, Russia directly or indirectly subsidized Belarus with up to 5 billion dollars annually – 50 billion dollars over the last decade. In terms of preferences, mostly cheap prices for gas and oil exports, and after refining them Lukashenko then sold them to the EU at world prices. The point is that Russia can, and really tries to, establish these dependencies and common interests. This is not only through formal treaties and agreements, like that declared by Russia in June: how the three of them will enter the WTO. There are various agreements treaties: social, economic, partly economic, partly political unions for tax policy between Russia and Belarus and some other countries in the post-Soviet zone. Sometimes these treaties were more important, sometimes less, but the fact is that Russia directly or indirectly subsidizes these economies, and of course they expect some political loyalty in return. It should be emphasized that if you cross this invisible line you will be punished somehow – be expelled from university, lose your job, be arrested. If you take this path, you will receive privileges, good university credits, privileges when seeking work later and more. They know that. Finally, through these authoritarian policies in Russia, Belarus, in Kazakhstan and many other regimes, these rulers succeed in cultivating the new generation. We call it *‘pozhyliye malchiki i devochki’* – ‘retired boys and girls’, ‘elderly boys and girls’. The definition’s meaning is that the existing system absorbed them much faster than they could fight against the system. It changed them faster than they could change it. I am not talking about the entire new generation, but the majority of the young who try to follow these rules. The problem, again, is how to change these institutions. The example of Russia is even more indicative than that of Belarus, with various youth groups such as *Nashi*. This new generation is fluent in foreign languages and very skilful when dealing with high-tech technology, but they try to use all this knowledge and their abilities to strengthen the system.

Philip Hanson: In one of the *Nashi* big camp festival events at least there was actually a stall for assisting you in getting into a foreign university, which seemed completely perverse from that point of view. It was a privilege.

Matej Kovac: It is the issue of smart dictators and also the issue of granting the privilege of studying in the West. Professor Winiecki mentioned that these elites, when they are stealing, do not want to be patronized by big brother. Although they are Russian, it triggered an association with the Tito regime in Yugoslavia, where it was much the same. It was based on stark control of indoctrination such as the education and media. It was based on strategic importance, which enabled them to get some cash inflows from the West. It enabled privileged people to have access to Western standards by studying abroad. In the former Yugoslavia, people were allowed to leave the Communist Party for a while so they could study in the United States. The modes of control are very much the same, and perhaps the same sources of instability of this regime. The first is that when they start tempering with their elites, it is very difficult for them to draw a boundary between who is in and who is out; to control freedom of movement and information. This particularly threatens those countries close to more developed countries, threatens this monolithic control over people’s life because of the benchmark – living standards and professional standards across the border. I have a feeling that perhaps for countries like

Belarus and Ukraine, Poland and Hungary will become what Austria and Italy were for us thirty years ago. This in a way, weakens the strength of the regime. The second source of instability is a succession issue and each authoritarian regime has one. Of course, some countries are less lucky and they never had dictators, some countries are less lucky and the dictators are older, so this may be the source. The third source of instability is the complete loss of strategic importance. Once the West has forgotten you as an important ruler who had something to offer Western interests, soft loans or even privileges as studying abroad are ended, and then you have this contempt among the elites.

Oleg Manaev: Thank you. I agree with all points. Despite these negative developments, gradually, perhaps not as fast as we would like, some new people introduce new approaches and new structures regardless of their political affiliations. So the process is underway, but, as Jan mentioned, it takes much longer than we would like it to. Anyway, we should not think that generation change is the major factor in changes. As for the succession issue, it is very interesting, very sensitive, and in the case of Belarus and some other authoritarian regimes, it is just fun. Lukashenko has two sons. One is a 35-year-old colonel, responsible for the security, police and so on; the other son is around 30. But he also has a third child, an illegitimate son Nicolas who is now 5. He lives with his father and, sadly, his mother is not allowed to see him. Lukashenko takes him to official ceremonies; for example, when Lukashenko visited the Pope in April, he took the little boy with him, and also visited the Armenian president this spring. This 5-year-old boy was even taken to some military exercises and, wearing a special uniform, received the Minister of Defence's military report together with his father. When domestic and international journalists asked Lukashenko about the succession, he said that he was still young (he is 55) and he was not going to die soon. As for the future, he was not going to transfer office to the older son but rather to the little one. It is funny, but there are similar cases in other countries too – for instance in Azerbaijan, to a lesser extent. There are other countries, like Kazakhstan, which are ruled by very narrow family circles. So I would not exclude that this new practice, used in ancient empires will be restored again.

Philip Hanson: There are still two interventions from Andrzej and Jan Winiecki.

Andrzej Brzeski: I have found Oleg's talk most fascinating and since I am a pessimist I was not surprised that things are even worse than I thought. Since we have been talking about long hard future prospects, I wonder what the effect might be of an inevitable demographic change and the influx of non-Russians into Russia. It would have to be significant in order for the Russian economy to continue even, let alone, expand. What happens if you get all those immigrants?

Jan Winiecki: I have one short comment and one question. The short comment is on the use of privilege. For me it looks like buying people, which does not augur well for loyalty. My question is about this kind of shorter migration to work in the West and Belarusians who travel to the West to trade and so on. How do these affect their views?

Oleg Manaev: As for the potential role of immigrants, as far as I know, most of the immigrants in Russia are either from Russia's other regions such as the Caucasus or the

Middle Asia Republics and China. So, why do I stress that? They are just not some other people; they are people from different cultures to the Russians, because Russians are Slavs, Orthodox and so on. This leads, as Andrei Illarianov mentioned yesterday, to a very particular collision that motivates, stimulates and strengthens the rise of Russian neo-conservatism, neo-fascism. Many right wing politicians in Russia try to use the dissatisfaction of Chinese, Georgians or whoever, who have started their business or pretend doing so to obtain some subsidies from the local authorities. So, this means that if more immigrants come to Russia – keep in mind that Russia is not the US- it can lead to the worsening of the political situation and strengthening of the right wing. This is my brief response to Andrzej's question.

As for those who have already had experience of being abroad for trade or education (we conducted such a poll), of course you are right in that most of the people who experience living abroad, return with new ideas and values. However, we cannot rely on their return. This is not a great issue for Belarus, but it is for Ukraine. There are three or four million Ukrainians seeking jobs in Spain, Poland and so on. In the case of Moldova it is nearly one third of the population, whereas in Belarus or Russia emigration is not such a massive phenomenon. If we take all Belarussians, 100 per cent of those who travel abroad, go to Russia, because Russia is more available. They do not have language problems, and the standard of life in big cities are much higher. For example, if they earn 300 dollars per month in Belarus, they can easily earn at least 1000 or 1500 dollars in Moscow. So the situation with immigrants in Belarus is a very particular one.

Philip Hanson: We have just one very last question.

Andrzej Brzeski: I came to the States 50 years ago. It is now a different country and, as I see it, one of the reasons of why it is so different is immigration.

Philip Hanson: People like you are going.

Andrzej Brzeski: It was another kind of immigration because it was massive.

Oleg Manaev: I know and that is why I stress that we cannot make comparisons between problems of immigration in United States and Russia.

Philip Hanson: Oleg, thank you very much. I would like to thank everyone for the fascinating discussion.

Appendix
Lisbon's constitutional revolution by stealth
by ANTHONY COUGHLAN (Dublin)

With the coming into force of the Lisbon Treaty on Tuesday 1 December, members of the European Parliament, who up to now have been "representatives of the peoples of the States brought together in the Community"(Art.189 TEC), become "representatives of the Union's citizens" (Art.14 TEU).

This change in the status of MEPs is but one illustration of the constitutional revolution being brought about by the Lisbon Treaty.

For Lisbon, like the EU Constitution before it, establishes for the first time a European Union which is constitutionally separate from and superior to its Member States, just as the USA is separate from and superior to its 50 constituent states or as Federal Germany is in relation to its Länder.

The 27 EU members thereby lose their character as true sovereign States. Constitutionally, they become more like regional states in a multinational Federation, although they still retain some of the trappings of their former sovereignty. Simultaneously, 500 million Europeans becomes real citizens of the constitutionally new post-Lisbon European Union, with real citizens' rights and duties with regard to this EU, as compared with the merely notional or symbolical EU citizenship they are assumed to have possessed up to now.

Most Europeans are unaware of these astonishing changes, for two reasons. One is that, with the exception of the Irish, they have been denied any chance of learning about and debating them in national referendums. The other is that the terms "European Union", "EU citizen" and "EU citizenship" remain the same before and after Lisbon, although Lisbon changes their constitutional content fundamentally.

The Lisbon Treaty therefore is a constitutional revolution by stealth.

A constitutionally new European Union

The EU Constitution, which the peoples of France and Holland rejected in 2005, sought to establish a new European Union in the constitutional form of a Federation directly. Its first article stated: "This Constitution establishes the European Union". That would clearly have been a European Union with a different constitutional basis from the EU that had been set up by the Maastricht Treaty 13 years before.

Lisbon brings a constitutionally new Union into being indirectly rather than directly, by amending the two existing European Treaties instead of replacing them entirely, as the earlier Constitutional Treaty had sought to do. Thus Lisbon states: "The Union shall be founded on the present Treaty" - viz. the Treaty on European Union (TEU) - "and on the

Treaty on the Functioning of the Union." These two Treaties together then become the Constitution of the post-Lisbon European Union. A new Union is in effect being "constituted", although the word "Constitution" is not used.

What we called the "European Union" pre-Lisbon is the descriptive term for the totality of legal relations between its 27 Member States and their peoples. This encompassed the European Community, which had legal personality, made supranational European laws and had various State-like features, as well as the Member States cooperating together on the basis of retained sovereignty in foreign policy and defence and in crime and justice matters.

Lisbon changes this situation fundamentally by giving the post-Lisbon Union the constitutional form of a true supranational Federation, in other words a State. The EU would still lack some powers of a fully developed Federation, the most obvious one being the power to force its Member States to go to war against their will. It would possess most of the powers of a State however, although it has nothing like the tax and spending levels of its constituent Member States.

Three steps to a federal-style Constitution

Lisbon's constitutional revolution takes place in three interconnected steps:

Firstly, the Treaty establishes a European Union with legal personality and a fully independent corporate existence in all Union areas for the first time (Arts.1 and 47 TEU). This enables the post-Lisbon Union to function as a State vis-a-vis other States externally, and in relation to its own citizens internally

Secondly, Lisbon abolishes the European Community which goes back to the Treaty of Rome and which makes European laws at present, and transfers the Community's powers and institutions to the new Union, so that it is the post-Lisbon Union, not the Community, which will make supranational European laws henceforth (Art.1 TEU). Lisbon also transfers to the EU the "intergovernmental" powers over crime, justice and home affairs, as well as foreign policy and security, which at present are not covered by European law-making, leaving only aspects of the Common Foreign, Security and Defence Policy outside the scope of its supranational powers. The Treaty thereby give a unified constitutional structure to the post-Lisbon Union.

Thirdly, Lisbon then makes 500 million Europeans into real citizens of the new Federal-style Union which the Treaty establishes (Arts.9 TEU and 20 TFEU). Instead of EU citizenship "complementing" national citizenship, as under the present Maastricht Treaty-based EU (Art.17 TEC), which makes such citizenship essentially symbolical, Lisbon provides that EU citizenship shall be "additional to" national citizenship.

This is a real dual citizenship - not of two different States, but of two different levels of one State. One can only be a citizen of a State and all States must have citizens. Dual citizenship like that provided for in Lisbon is normal in classical Federations which have

been established from the bottom up by constituent states surrendering their sovereignty to a superior federal entity, in contrast to federations that have come into being "top-down", as it were, as a result of unitary states adopting federal form. Examples of the former are the USA, 19th Century Germany, Switzerland, Canada, Australia. Lisbon would confer a threefold citizenship on citizens of Federal Germany's Länder.

Being a citizen means that one must obey the law and give loyalty to the authority of the State one is a citizen of - in the case of classical Federations, of the two state levels, the federal and the regional or provincial. In the post-Lisbon EU the rights and duties attaching to citizenship of the Union will be superior to those attaching to one's national citizenship in any case of conflict between the two, because of the superiority of Union law over national law and Constitutions (Declaration No 17 concerning Primacy).

The EU will be constitutionally superior even though the powers of the new Union come from its Member States in accordance with the "principle of conferral" (Art.5 TEU). Where else after all could it get its powers from? This is so even though the Member States retain their national Constitutions and their citizens keep their national citizenships. The local states of the USA retain their different state Constitutions and citizenships, even though both are subordinate to America's Federal Constitution in any case of conflict between the two. The tenth amendment to the US Constitution alludes to the principle of conferral when it lays down that powers not delegated to the US Federation "are reserved to the states respectively, or to the people".

Likewise, it is not unusual for the Constitutions of classical Federations to provide for a right of withdrawal for their constituent states, just as the Lisbon Treaty does (Art.50 TEU). The existence of these features in the Constitution of the post-Lisbon European Union does not take away from its federal character.

An alternative source of democratic legitimacy to the Nation State

Under Lisbon population size will in turn become the primary basis for EU law-making, as in any State with a common citizenry. This will happen after 2014, when the Treaty provision comes into force that EU laws will be made by 55% of Member States as long as they represent 65% of the total population of the Union.

Lisbon provides an alternative source of democratic legitimacy which challenges the right of national governments to be the representatives of their electorates in the EU. The amended Treaty provides: "The functioning of the Union shall be founded on representative democracy. Citizens are directly represented at Union level in the European Parliament. Member States are represented in the European Council by their Heads of State or Government and in the Council by their governments..." (Art.10 TEU). Contrast this with what is stated to be the foundation of the present Maastricht Treaty-based EU (Art.6 TEU): "The Union is founded on the principles of liberty, democracy, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and the rule of law, principles which are common to the Member States."

The constitutional structure of the post-Lisbon EU is completed by the provision which turns the European Council of Prime Ministers and Presidents into an "institution" of the new Union (Art.13 TEU), so that its acts or its failing to act would, like those of the other Union institutions, be subject to legal review by the EU Court of Justice.

Constitutionally speaking, the summit meetings of the European Council will henceforth no longer be "intergovernmental" gatherings outside supranational European structures, as they have been up to now. The European Council will in effect be the Cabinet Government of the post-Lisbon Union. Its individual members will be constitutionally obliged to represent the Union to their Member States as well as their Member States to the Union, with the former function imposing primacy of obligation in any case of conflict or tension between the two.

One doubts if all the Heads of State or Government who make up the European Council themselves appreciate this!

As regards the State authority of the post-Lisbon Union, this will be embodied in the Union's own executive, legislative and judicial institutions: the European Council, Council of Ministers, Commission, Parliament and Court of Justice. It will be embodied also in the Member States and their authorities as they implement and apply EU law and interpret and apply national law in conformity with Union law. Member States will be constitutionally required to do this under the Lisbon Treaty. Thus EU "State authorities" as represented for example by EU soldiers and policemen patrolling our streets in EU uniforms, will not be needed as such.

Although the Lisbon Treaty has given the EU a Federal-style Constitution without most people noticing, they are bound to find out in time and react against what is being done. There is no European people or demos which could give democratic legitimacy to the institutions the Lisbon Treaty establishes and make people identify with these as they do with the institutions of their home countries. This is the core problem of the EU integration project. Lisbon in effect has made the EU's democratic deficit much worse.

It is hard to imagine that this EU Constitution by stealth will not make struggles to reestablish national independence and democracy and to repatriate supranational powers back to the Member States the central issue of EU politics in the years and decades ahead.

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