

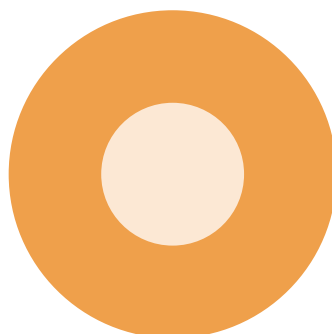
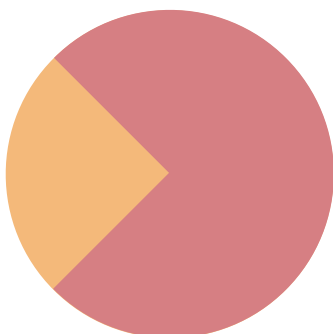
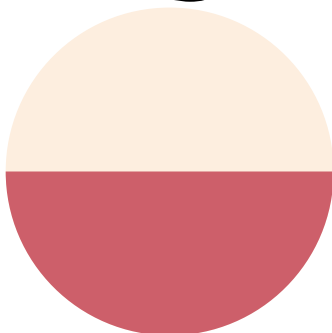
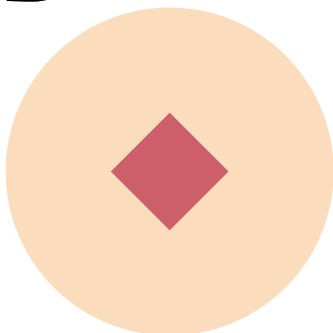
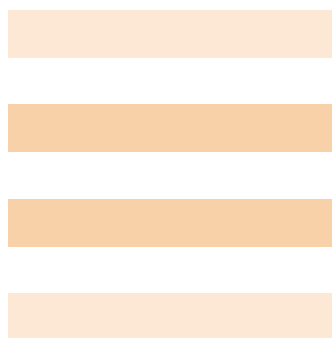
BELARUSIAN EMIGRATION IN POLAND

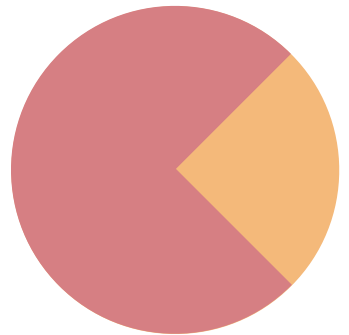
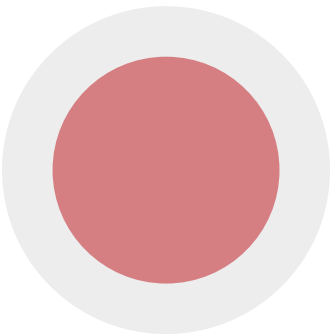
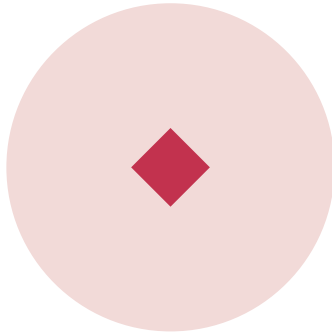
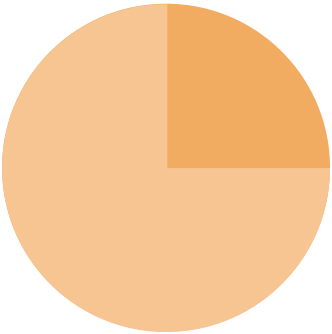
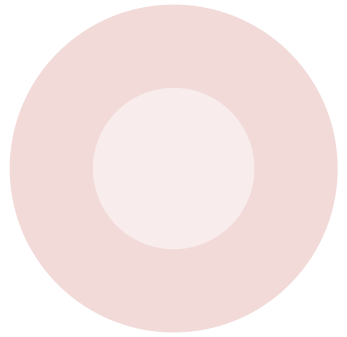
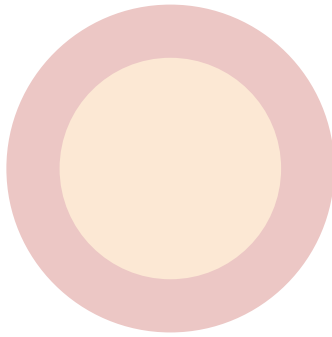
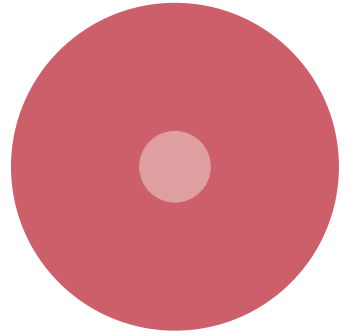
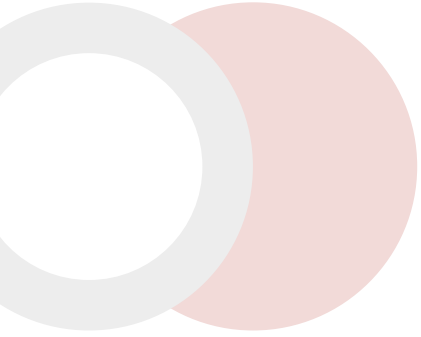


Warsaw 2023

Opinion poll report
for the Mieroszewski Centre

– OPINIONS,
ATTITUDES,
DILEMMAS

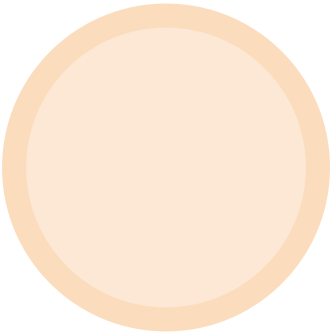






BELARUSIAN EMIGRATION IN POLAND – OPINIONS, ATTITUDES, DILEMMAS

Opinion poll report
for the Mieroszewski Centre



Public opinion poll

ARC Rynek i Opinia

Analysis and report

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English translation

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1. Introduction – background and objective of the study

The new Belarusian emigration to Poland is a less publicised and less explored topic compared to Ukrainian themes, which have been strongly present in the Polish news landscape for several months now. This is due to the different scale of the two phenomena (tens of thousands of Belarusians compared to several million Ukrainian citizens) and the fact that the Polish public opinion, quite understandably, has focused primarily on Ukrainians as direct victims of the ongoing war. However, the influx of Belarusians, which has been growing since August 2020, and intensifying with the increasing repressiveness of Alexander Lukashenko's regime, is an equally important component of the emerging new social landscape in Poland as a result of the events happening east of Poland's borders.

For Ukrainians, Poland is primarily one of the key destinations as they flee the war. In contrast, for the majority of Belarusians who come to Poland, our country becomes a shelter from the risk of political repression, a space of personal freedom and, particularly importantly, a place where they can articulate their own national and linguistic identity. Indeed, threats to that identity have recently become imminent and critical. The Belarusian entanglement in the Russian aggression against Ukraine, the country's balancing on the brink of losing its sovereignty to Russia, the great scale of repression against opponents of the Belarusian regime, the persecution of independent organisations and communities – all these factors make the Belarusian case particularly important and urgent.

Precisely this context and the nature of Belarusian emigration are reflected in the opinion poll commissioned by the Mioszowski Centre and conducted in May and June 2023 among Belarusians residing in Poland. This poll was complementary to the parallel survey carried out among Poles to explore opinions on Belarus and Belarusians: the findings of the latter survey have been presented and discussed in a separate report.

The objectives of the opinion poll discussed in this report were as follows:

- to identify the reasons why the respondents decided to come to Poland and stay here;
- to take stock of their experiences of living in Poland, to identify the problems and challenges they are facing;
- to explore the networking patterns of Belarusian migrants, the extent to which they establish relations with Poles versus networking mainly with

Belarusian emigres and/or emigres from other countries of the former USSR;

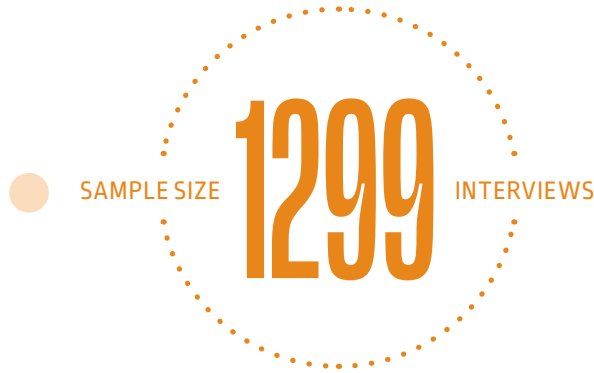
- to explore how the respondents perceive neighbouring countries and peoples in terms of their relations with Belarus and Belarusians and cultural distance/proximity;
- to identify the official, cultural and political traditions invoked by the Belarusian respondents to seek their identity;
- to investigate their attitudes to current events surrounding Russian aggression against Ukraine and the role of Belarus.

The Belarusian community living in Poland was contacted via a multitude of channels in order to obtain the broadest possible picture and to incorporate varied opinions. An online survey in three language versions (Belarusian, Russian and Polish) was distributed through Belarusian NGOs and youth organisations, as well as cultural and scholarly centres. The survey was also distributed via communication hubs and gathering places for the Belarusian community. Thanks to these efforts, a large effective sample was achieved (N=1,299). The data, subjected to detailed analysis and validation, proved to be consistent and yielded many interesting findings, as discussed in this report.

Together with the results of a survey conducted among the Polish public, this report provides an insight into the current state of public awareness in Polish-Belarusian relations, captured at a moment which is dramatic for Belarus and not easy for Poland, either. The knowledge of perceptions held by Belarusians residing in Poland seems particularly valuable for non-governmental organisations and governmental agencies that are planning to take measures addressed at this community.

2. About the study

Methodology



→ Method:

The study consisted in a quantitative measurement, based on a self-completion web survey accessed via an online link (a CAWI survey).

The respondents were given a choice of three language versions of the survey: Belarusian, Russian and Polish. Respondents' choices were distributed as follows:

- Belarusian version 50%
- Russian version 34%
- Polish version 16%

→ Timing:

The survey was carried out from 16 May till 01 June 2023.

→ Respondents and geography:

The survey was carried on a total sample of 1,299 adult Belarusian citizens currently residing in Poland.

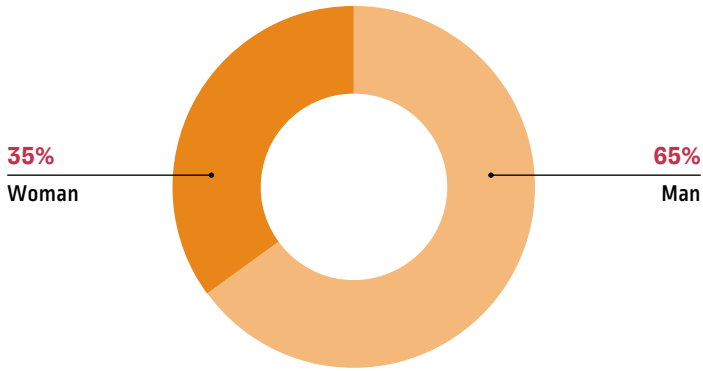
→ Additional information:

The numbers in some of the graphs do not add up to 100%. This saturation occurs in multiple-response questions. For single-choice questions, the minimum deviations from 100% are due to the rounded percentage values.

Sample structure – information about the respondents

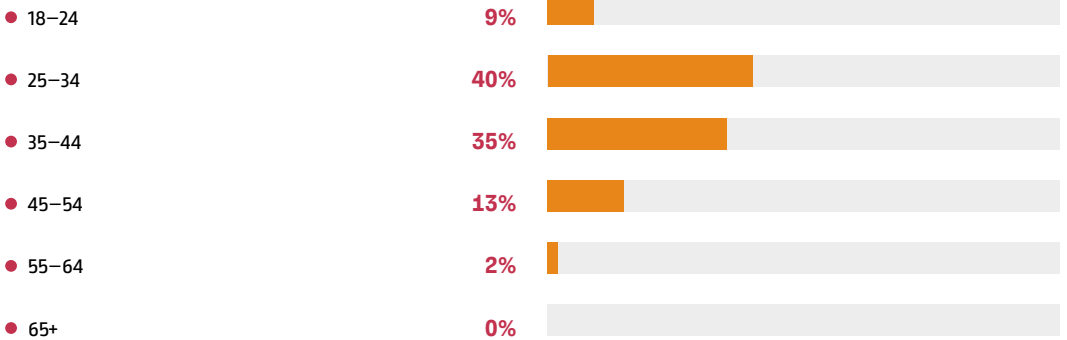
↓ FIGURE 1:

Gender



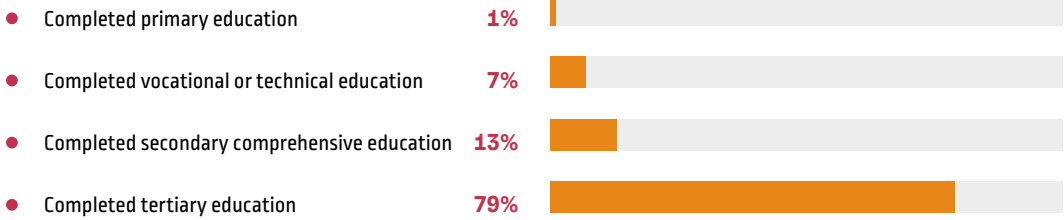
↓ FIGURE 2:

Age



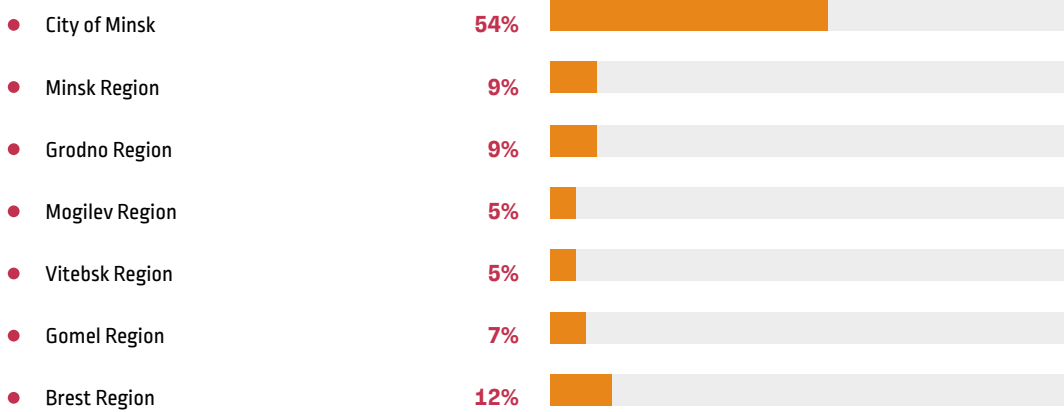
↓ FIGURE 3:

Education



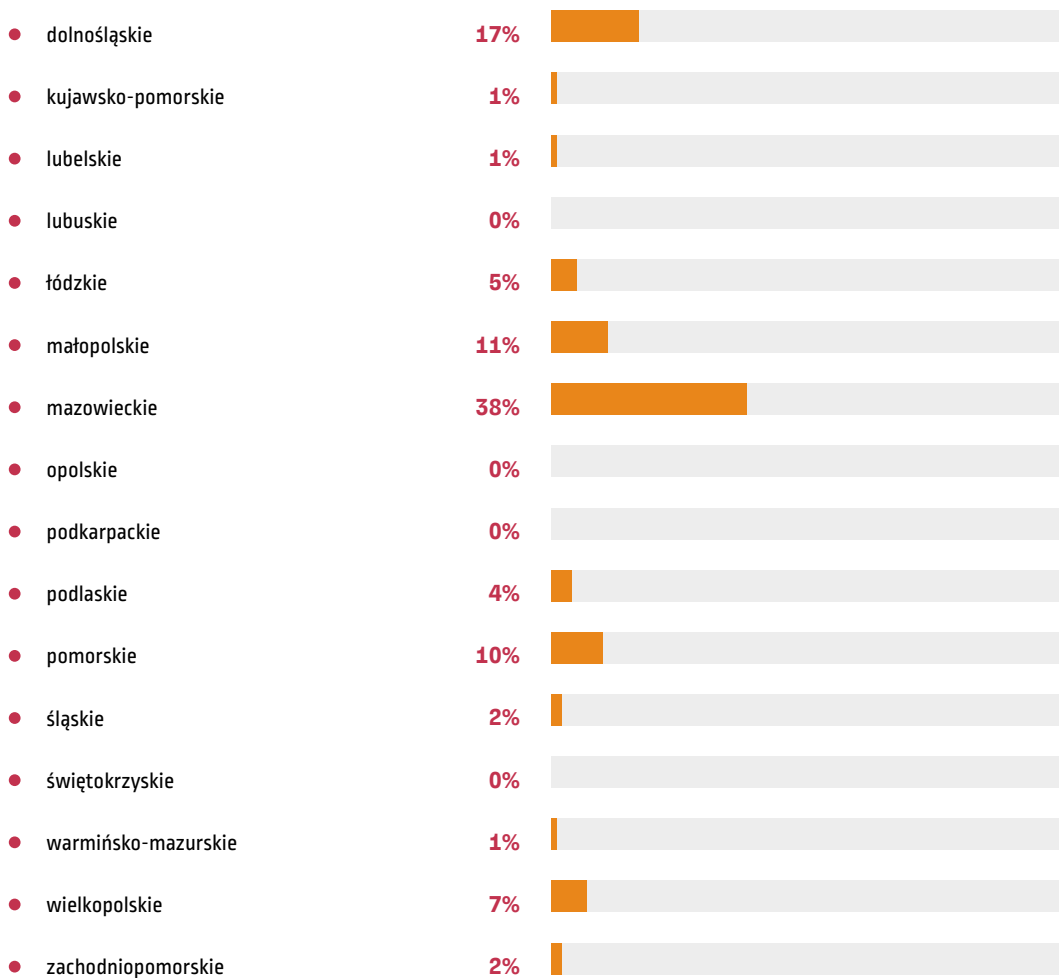
↓ FIGURE 4:

Place of origin – region in Belarus



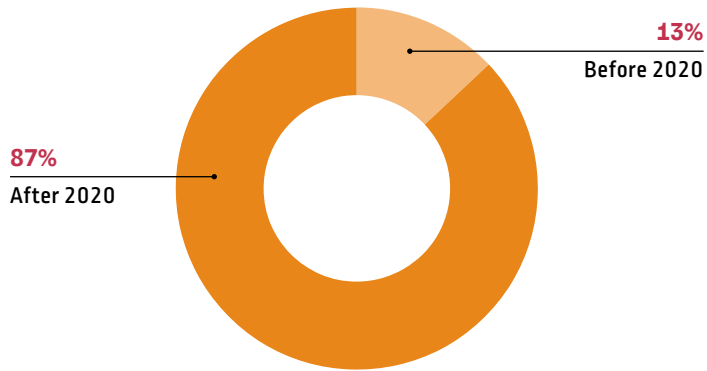
↓ FIGURE 5:

Residence in Poland – voivodeship



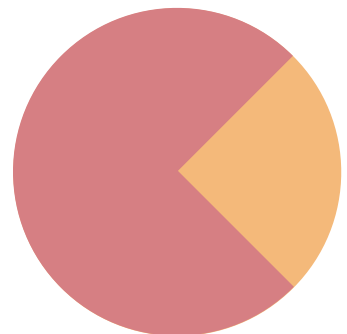
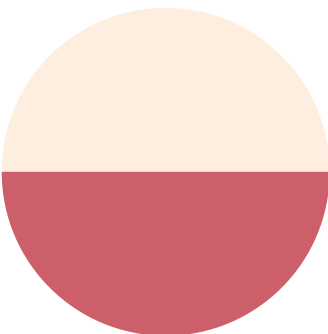
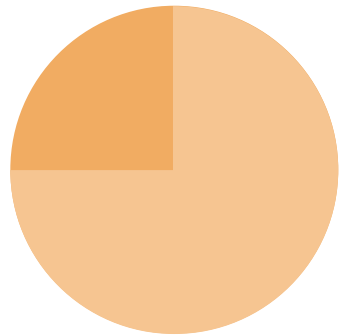
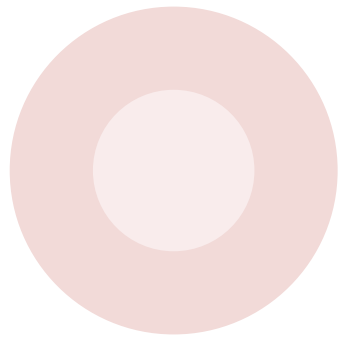
↓ FIGURE 6:

Date when current residence in Poland began





Stay in Poland



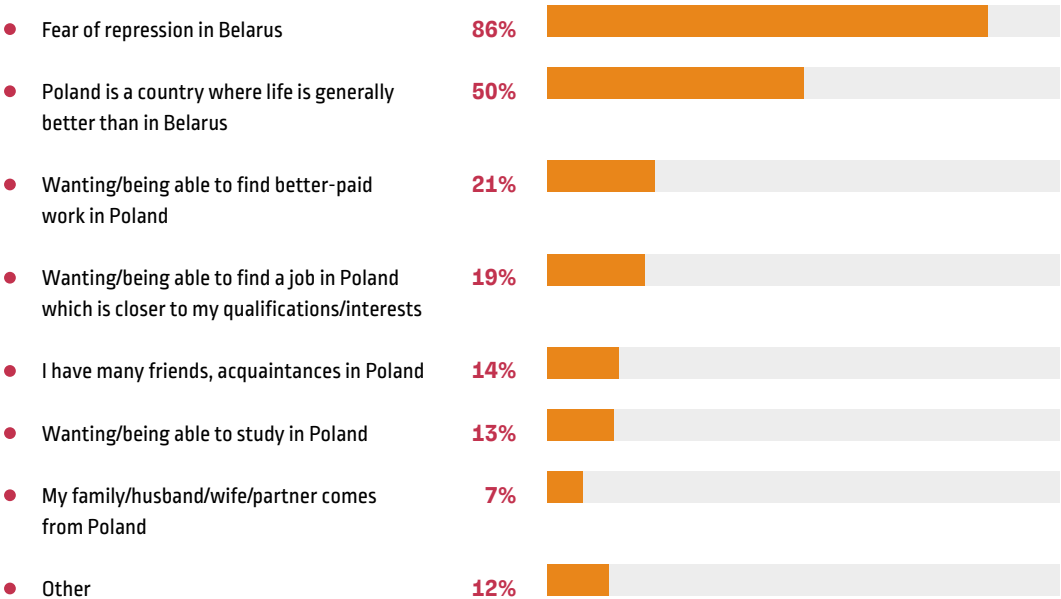
For the majority of Belarusians currently staying in Poland, the main reason to leave their country was the fear of repression in Belarus [86%].

There are also other reasons which the surveyed Belarusians mentioned, either separately or in parallel with the fear of repression. A half of the respondents think that

Poland is a country where life is generally better than in Belarus. For this reason, nearly one in five respondents mentioned better career opportunities through a better-paid job or a job which is more in line with their qualifications and interests. In turn, 13% of the respondents mentioned the opportunity to study in Poland. A total of 14% of the respondents said they had left Belarus because they had friends and acquaintances in Poland, while 7% justified their arrival by having Polish roots.

↓ FIGURE 7:

Reasons for leaving Belarus and coming to Poland



One other frequently mentioned reason for leaving Belarus, given in spontaneous comments under 'Other', was the war in Ukraine. In some of those comments, the respondents stressed their unwillingness to support this aggression even if by continuing to pay taxes in Belarus – a country that is Russia's ally. For some of the respondents, the war in Ukraine is an even more personal experience because they first fled to Ukraine from Belarus after the rigged elections, and then moved to Poland after the war broke out.

Other reasons spontaneously added by the respondents echo the trend of IT workers moving to Poland from Belarus. A considerable number of comments contained such information, clearly suggesting that they were written by IT professionals. Sometimes the respondents explicitly said, for instance, that an entire IT company, which previously executed many contracts for international companies, moved to Poland once those markets were cut off due to war-time sanctions.

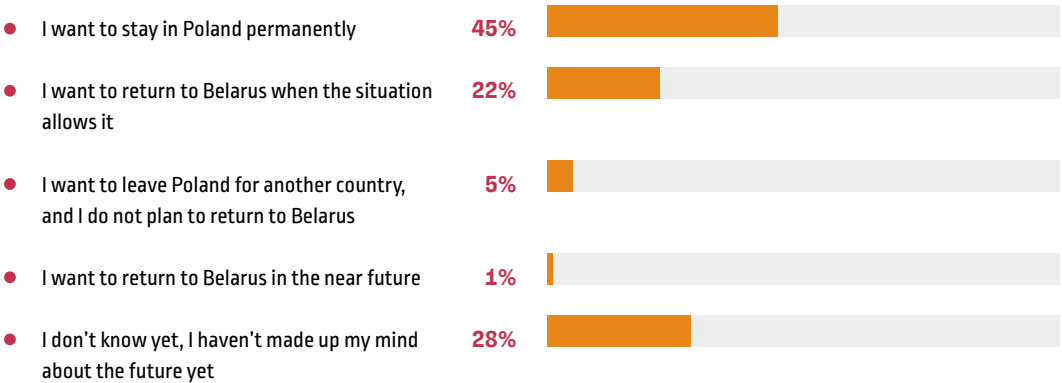


Nearly a half of the surveyed Belarusians declare that they do not want to return to Belarus, and **45%** of that number plan to stay in Poland permanently while **5%** of the respondents intend to leave for another country. One in five respondents

says they want to return to Belarus when the situation allows it, and only **1%** claim they want to return to Belarus in the near future.

↓ FIGURE 8:

Plans concerning further stay in Poland



“Poland, like Belarus, is a descendant of our Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, but Poland was much less disfigured by the Russian invaders and managed to preserve the culture of the Commonwealth better, so I feel more at home in Poland than in the Russified Belarus.”

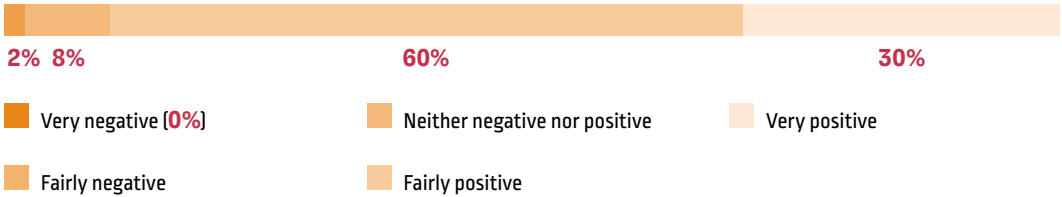
“Continued work in advocacy for Belarusian culture and human rights.”

Belarusians who are staying in Poland generally assess their stay in Poland as good, and one third of the respondents even

claim it is "very good". Only 2% of the respondents rate their stay negatively.

↓ FIGURE 9:

Assessment of the stay in Poland



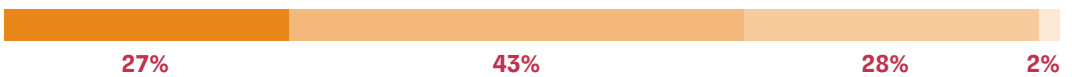
For the majority of the respondents, dealing with official matters was the biggest challenge related to their stay in Poland. Minor or major problems in this sphere were reported by 70% of the respondents. Establishing social contacts/making friends with Poles turned out to be another challenge for most migrants from Belarus (64%) and so was finding real

property to rent (60%). The aspects that turned out to be fairly unproblematic for most of the surveyed Belarusians included the possibility to learn the Polish language (56%) and access to information required for everyday life and efficient functioning in Poland (54%).

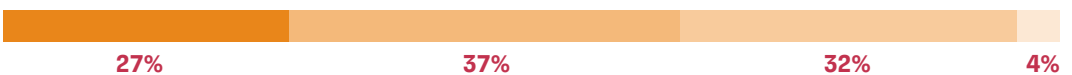
↓ FIGURE 10:

Problems associated with staying in Poland

- Dealing with official matters related to my stay in Poland



- Making social contacts/friends with Polish people



- Renting real property



- Finding an attractive/suitable job



- Accessing the information I need to live and function efficiently in Poland



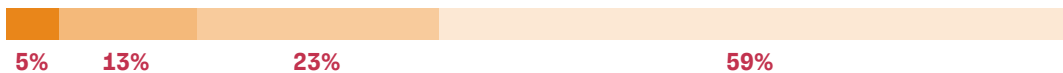
- Opportunity to learn the Polish language



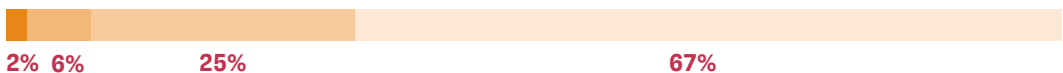
- Buying real property



- Finding a nursery/preschool/school/university for my loved ones



- Finding a school/university for myself



Faced major problems
 Faced minor problems
 Faced no problems
 Not applicable

Although the question discussed above contained pre-defined answer options (a closed question), it also enabled the respondents to add their own comments under 'Other issues'. Analysis of these spontaneous comments made by the respondents leads to even more interesting conclusions. Among other things, we have learnt that Belarusian citizens sometimes feel that they are treated less favourably or are even discriminated against in Poland. This perception seems to hold true in formal situations (dealing with bureaucratic matters) and in everyday situations as well as social contacts. For instance, the respondents complain about difficulties with opening a bank account after presenting a Belarusian passport. Belarusians also feel treated less favourably by Polish

officials than, for example, Ukrainians when handling various types of official matters. In this context, the very long waiting time before getting a residence card, sometimes taking up to two years, is the most acute problem.

Interestingly, the Belarusian respondents feel treated less favourably by Ukrainians residing in Poland, even more often than by Poles. In the respondents' view, Ukrainians do not show a friendly attitude towards them, and, moreover, Ukrainians are thought to enjoy many privileges in Poland which are not available to Belarusians.

Problems with the health care services are a relatively common theme in respondents' comments: they mention

problems with getting an appointment with a GP or a speciality doctor.

Many Belarusians living in Poland are forced to endure separation from their loved ones and relatives who are still living in Belarus. This is one of the many reasons why adaptation

to the life in Poland is sometimes difficult, both for the respondents themselves and for their children. All this generates the need for access to psychologists in addition to internists and speciality doctors. The respondents signalled problems in this sphere in their comments as well.

"Looking for a job, difficulties in learning the Polish language – courses and vacancies are available mainly for Ukrainians, while Belarusians have remained outside the system, without attention."

"My children's mental condition, their adaptation to living in Poland."

"A problem with accessing narrowly specialised doctors, very high taxes."

"I've been waiting for a [residence] permit to stay in Wrocław for two years now. I can never go to work or go on holiday, I cannot buy a flat or plan my life!"

"I cannot invite my parents to visit me here. Someone with a visa or a temporary residence permit has no right to write an invitation. At the same time, there is no other way to obtain a visa for my parents who have remained in Belarus."

"My wife has a Russian passport and there's no way she can find a job."

"Discrimination and disrespect."

"Belarusian a language is completely absent in descriptions or elsewhere: at least in museums, at least in shops/supermarkets."

"Difficulties with socialisation. Many Poles treat Belarusians and Ukrainians with contempt."

"Discrimination by Ukrainians after the outbreak of the war, aggression."

"I can't get used to it, Poles simply have a different mentality."

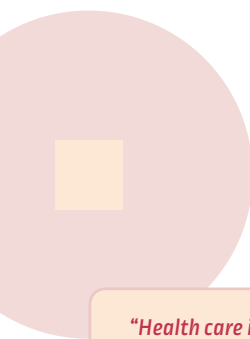
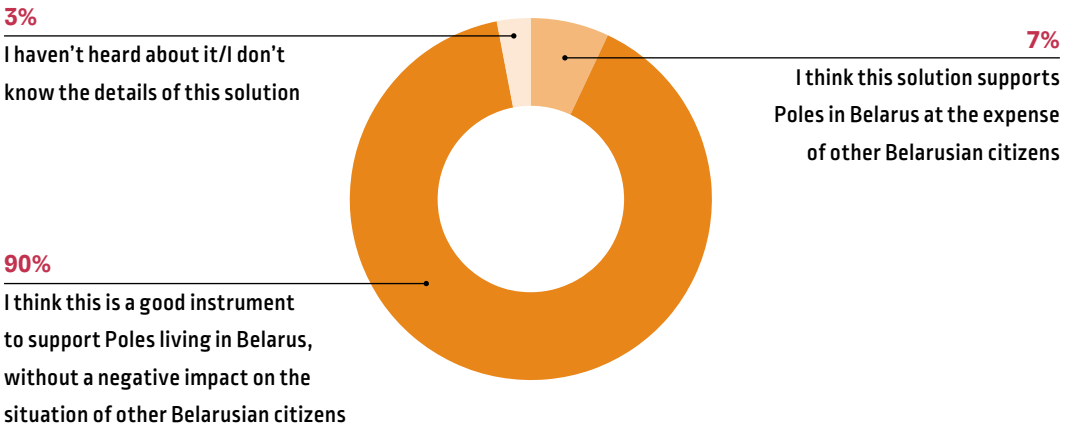
"Negative attitude among Ukrainians, it's very difficult to make friends and meet new people in general."

For more than ten years now, Poland has been issuing the so-called 'Polish Card' [*Karta Polaka*] to citizens of other countries, such as Belarus, who declare their affiliation with the Polish nation. A total of 90% of the surveyed Belarusians believe this is a good tool that offers support to Poles living in

Belarus, without negatively influencing the situation of other Belarusian citizens. Only 7% of the respondents believe that support through this solution occurs at the expense of other Belarusian citizens.

↓ FIGURE 11:

Opinions on the 'Polish Card'



"Difficulty in finding psychological support."

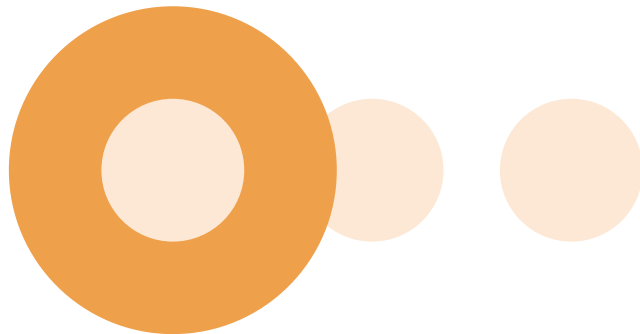
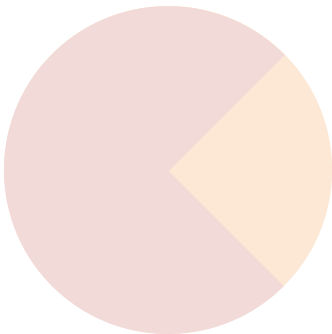
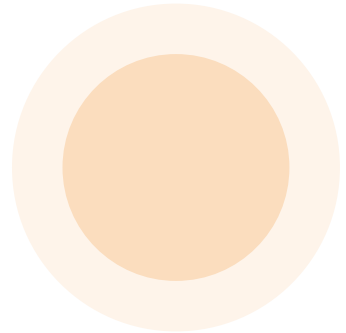
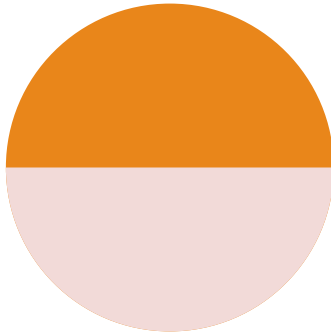
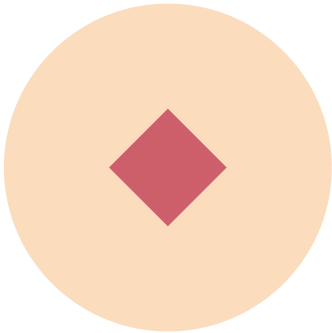
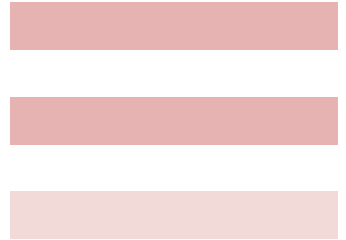
"Health care in Poland is a problem."

"Personal life. I'm depressed, I'm lonely."

"Continuing the activities of the civil society organisation which has relocated from Belarus to Poland – no sufficient funds for institutional existence, administrative costs, hiring staff."



Adaptation in Poland



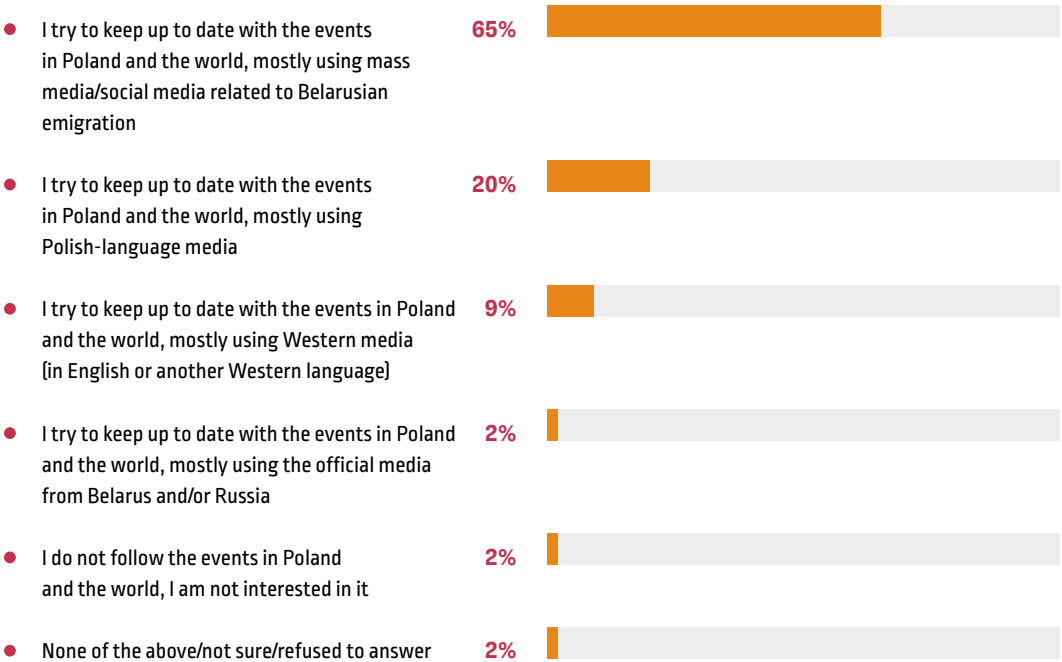
Only 2% of the Belarusian respondents declare that they are not interested in current events in Poland and the world. The vast majority [96%] try to keep up to date with current developments.

The largest percentage of the respondents [65%] mainly use mass media/social media related to Belarusian emigration.

In turn, one in five respondents mainly uses Polish-language media for this purpose, while one in ten mainly checks the Western media (in English or another Western language). Official Belarusian and/or Russian media are least popular of all: they are used by only 2% of the surveyed Belarusians for keeping up to date with current events.

↓ FIGURE 12:

Channels of news on current events in Poland and the world

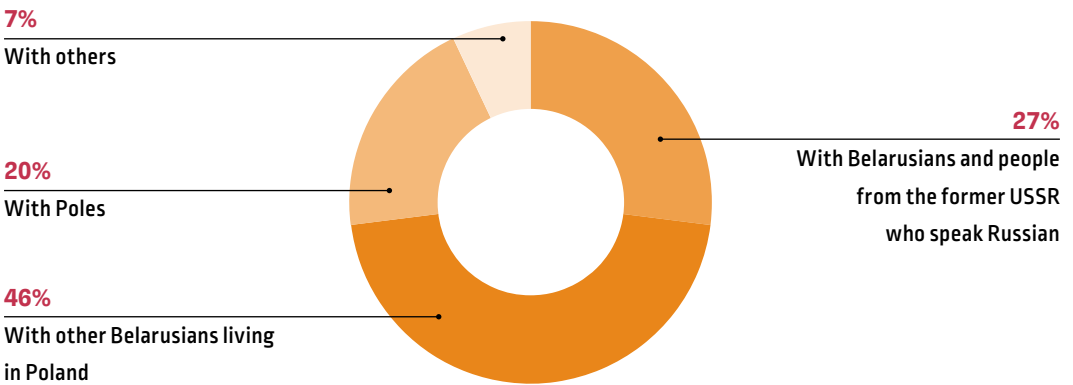


The majority of Belarusians living in Poland [73%] declare that they spend most of their out-of-home time with other Belarusians, of which 45% spend it with Belarusians living in Poland while 27% socialise with Belarusians and members of other nations of the former Soviet Union. Those respondents who say they spend most of their out-of-home time with Poles

are significantly less numerous, i.e. 20% of those surveyed. The language barrier seems to be the main underlying reason. Since Russian is the commonly spoken language in Belarus, the respondents declared that they spend time mainly with Belarusians and/or other Russian speakers.

↓ FIGURE 13:

When not at home, who do Belarusians living in Poland spend most time with?

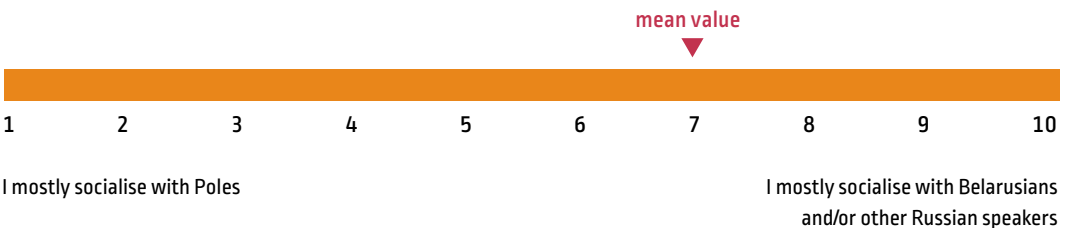


This finding is confirmed by the results obtained from the next question. It turns out that the respondents are more likely,

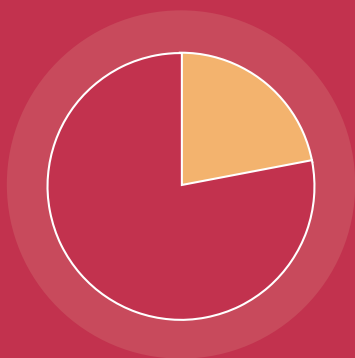
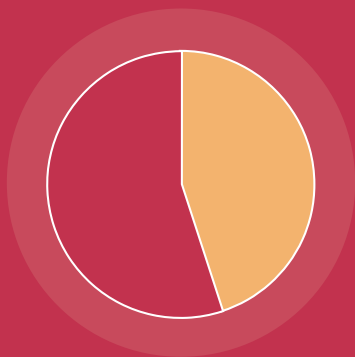
and more willing, to socialise with their compatriots or other people who speak Russian.

↓ FIGURE 14:

Who do Belarusians living in Poland mostly socialise with?



Plans concerning further
stay in Poland



*I want to stay in Poland
permanently*

45%

*I want to return
to Belarus when
the situation allows it*

22%



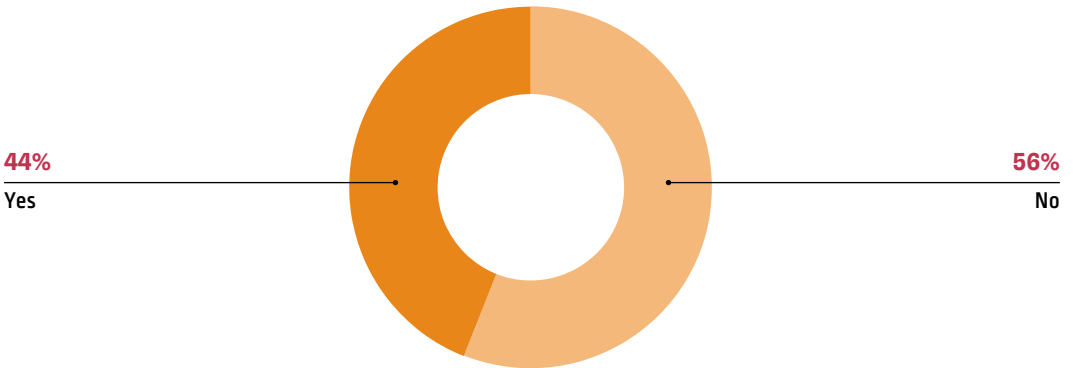
Slightly over a half of respondents (56%) do not have any contact with Belarusian associations that operating in Poland.

This means that nearly a half have such contacts, which may explain some of their adaptation problems. When asked

about issues faced in connection with their stay in Poland, some respondents mentioned lack of access to information in Belarusian or Russian. Belarusian associations can naturally fill this gap, and certainly do so to a large extent. The scale of Belarusian emigration also raises expectations towards Polish NGOs, where immigrants from Belarus could find the much-expected assistance.

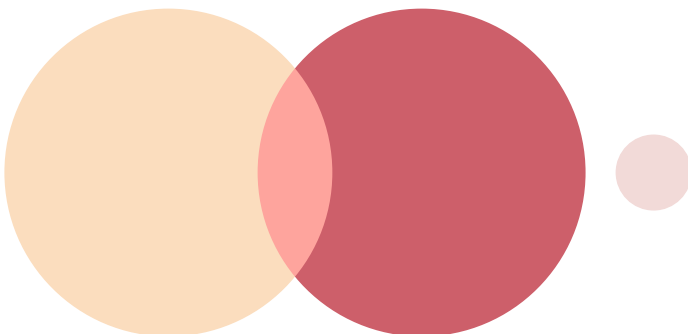
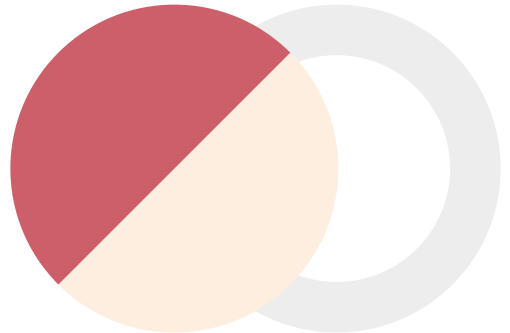
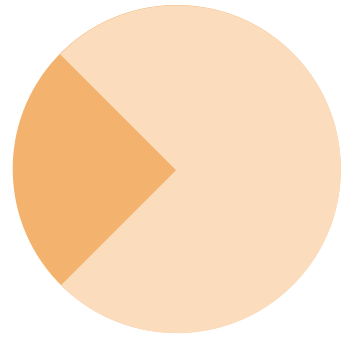
↓ FIGURE 15:

Contact with Belarusian associations operating in Poland





Language issues



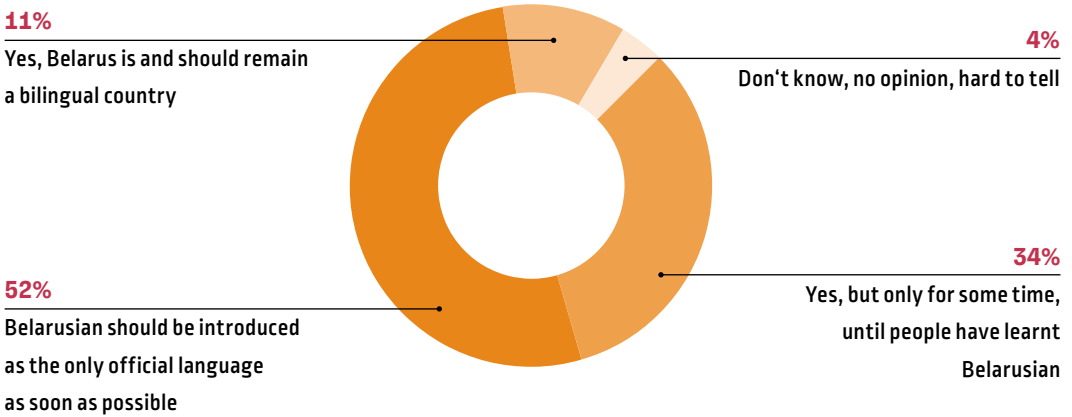
The majority of the surveyed Belarusians believe that Belarusian should ultimately become the only official language in Belarus.

wait until people have learnt to speak Belarusian. Only a minority believe that Belarus should remain a bilingual country.

More than a half [52%] claim that this transition should be made as soon as possible, while 34% think it is necessary to

↓ FIGURE 16:

Opinions on Russian as an official language in Belarus



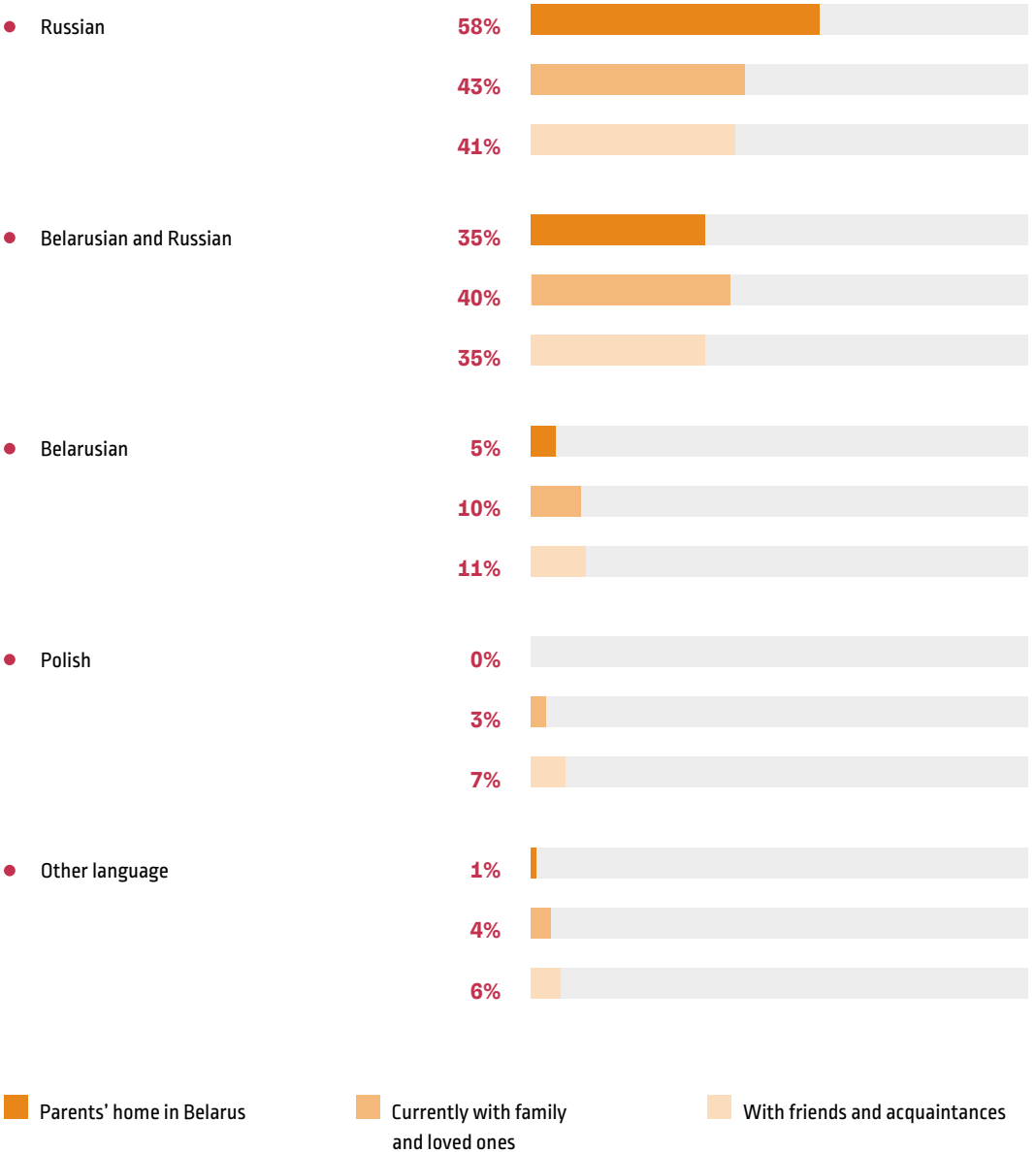
Despite these responses, the Russian language appears to be most actively used by Belarusians. Most respondents declare that they use Russian at home and in conversations with relatives and loved ones [58% and 43% respectively] or that they use Belarusian and Russian in those two contexts [35% and

40% respectively]. At the same time, the respondents were far less likely to declare using only Belarusian in those situations: 5% do so at home in Belarus and 10% do so currently in conversations with relatives and loved ones.

Similar results were obtained with regard to communication with friends/acquaintances. In this group of interlocutors, the respondents most commonly use Belarusian and Russian [41%] or only Russian [35%].

↓ FIGURE 17:

Languages used in various circumstances and relationships

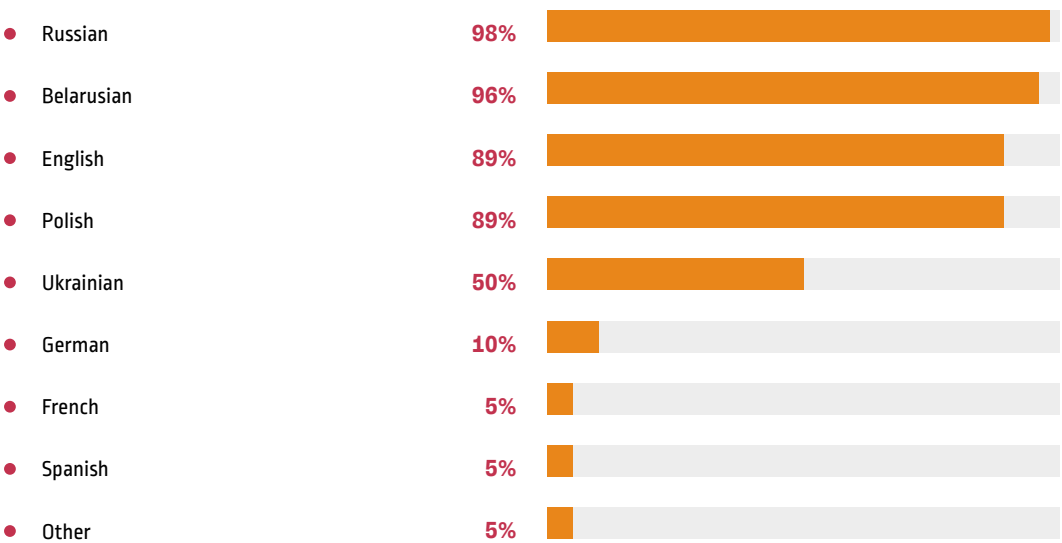


Belarusian respondents most commonly declare the command of the following languages: Russian [98%], Belarusian [96%], English [89%] and Polish [89%]. Language issues were also mentioned in the context of problems faced by the respondents in Poland. The respondents complained, among others,

about poor language skills among Polish officials and uniformed officers. Moreover, the vast majority of the respondents would be able to communicate in English (if Russian is not available) because the knowledge of this language is very common in the surveyed group.

↓ FIGURE 18:

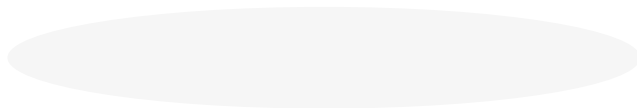
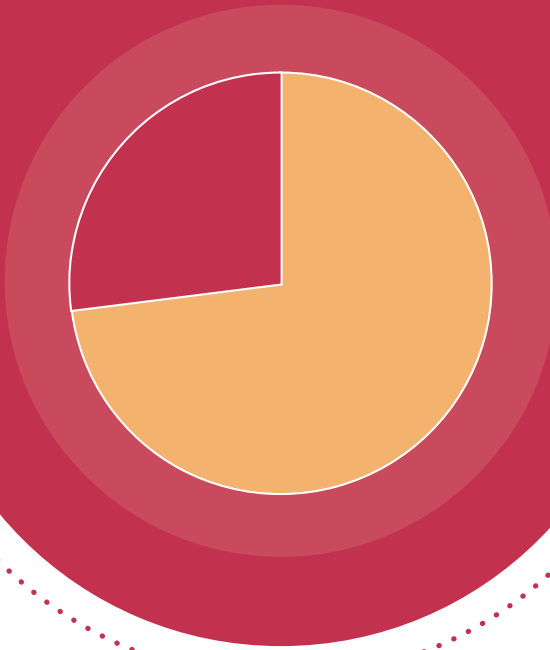
Knowledge of languages (at least elementary level)



Opinions on Russia and Russians

By making its territory available to the armed forces of the Russian Federation, Belarus entered the war against Ukraine on Russia's side

73%



The majority of the respondents who declare some command of the Polish language claim to know it poorly (40%) and can only use it to communicate in simple everyday matters. Slightly fewer respondents (34%) claim to know Polish fairly

well, which means that they understand almost everything and communicate in Polish. One in five respondents (21%) believes they speak Polish fluently: they can read and speak Polish freely.

↓ FIGURE 19:

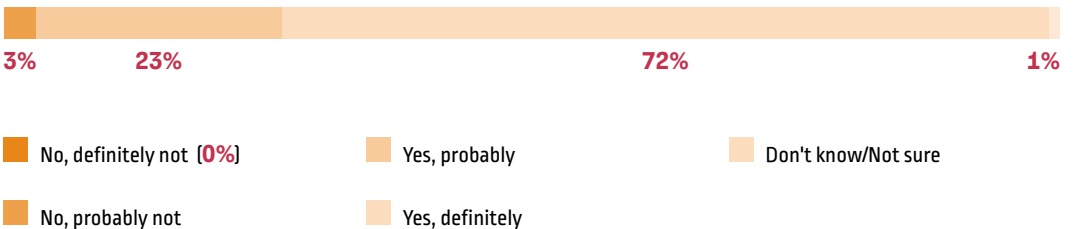
Self-assessment of Polish language skills



The vast majority of those who do not speak Polish or speak it poorly (95%) express a need to learn this language.

↓ FIGURE 20:

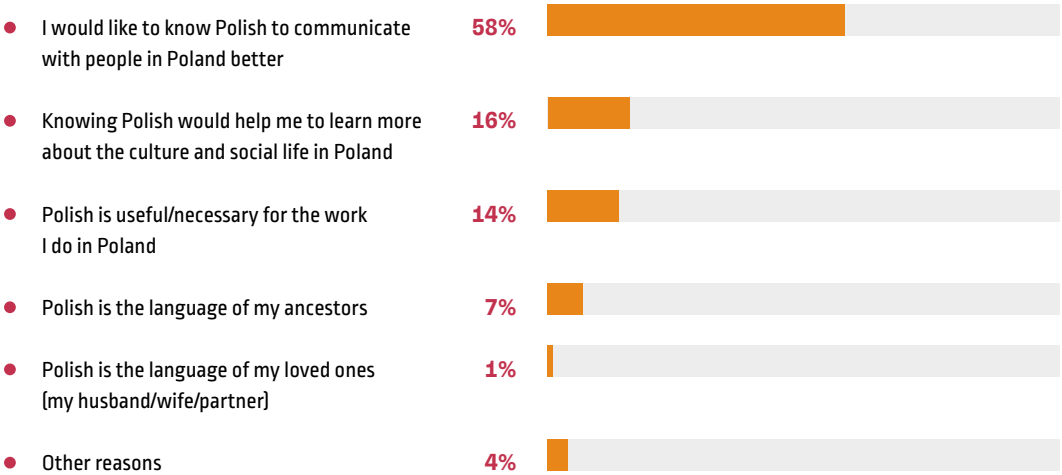
Perceived need to learn Polish



The main reason for wanting to learn Polish is the desire to communicate more freely with Poles, but also the willingness to participate more fully in the cultural and social life in Poland.

↓ FIGURE 21:

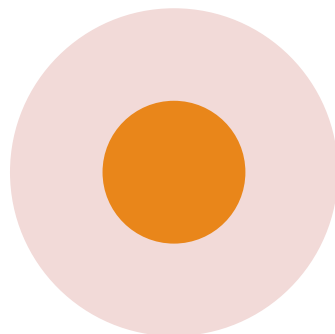
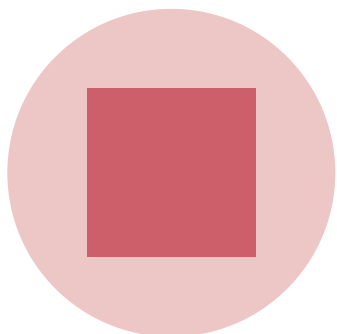
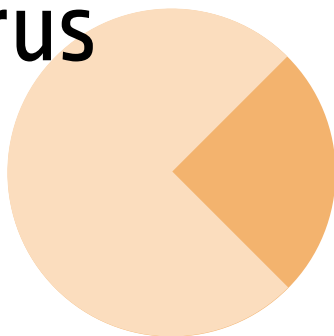
Reasons for wanting to learn Polish



6



Perceived attitudes of neighbouring countries towards Belarus



The respondents were asked to use a five-point scale (from 'definitely unfriendly' to 'definitely friendly') to assess the attitudes towards Belarus as a country and Belarusian citizens among the authorities of neighbouring countries and among the citizens of those countries.

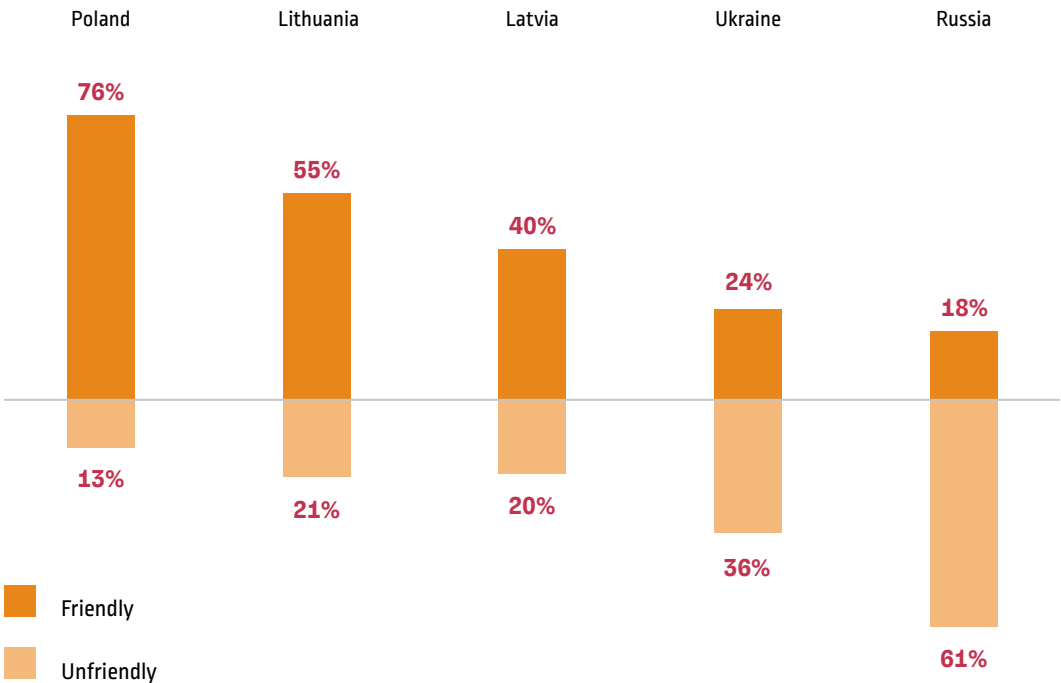
Despite Belarus' involvement in Russia's aggression against Ukraine, the majority of the respondents believe that Poland maintains a friendly attitude towards Belarus.

In contrast, Russia is believed to be the most unfriendly country towards Belarus. This is despite the actual cooperation between the authorities of both countries. It turns out that the respondents have no illusions and realise that there are no positive intentions behind the actual cooperation and officially declared friendship.

Moreover, Poland is perceived as the most friendly country towards Belarus among all five neighbours of that country.

↓ FIGURE 22:

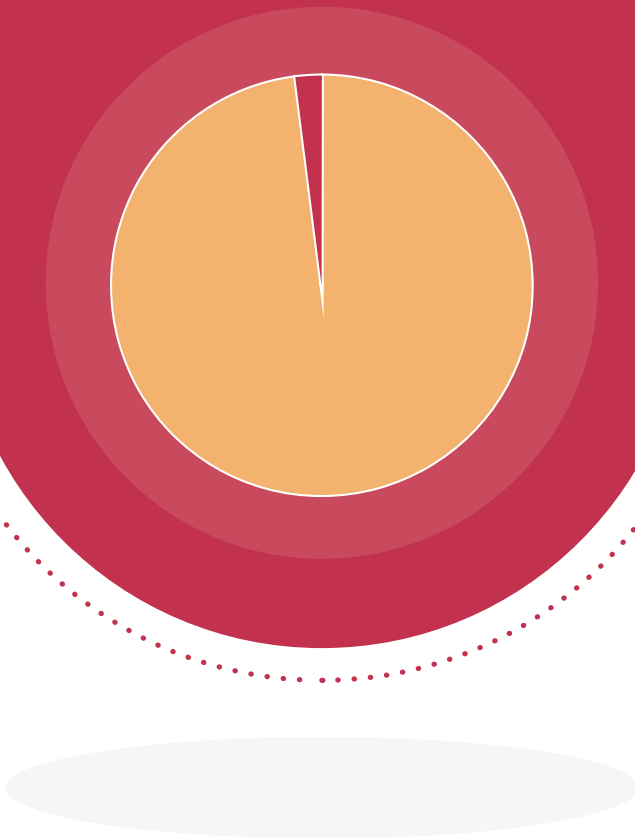
Opinions regarding the attitude of the authorities of neighbouring countries towards Belarus



Opinions on Russia and Russians

*Ukraine has fallen victim
to armed aggression
by the Russian Federation*

98%



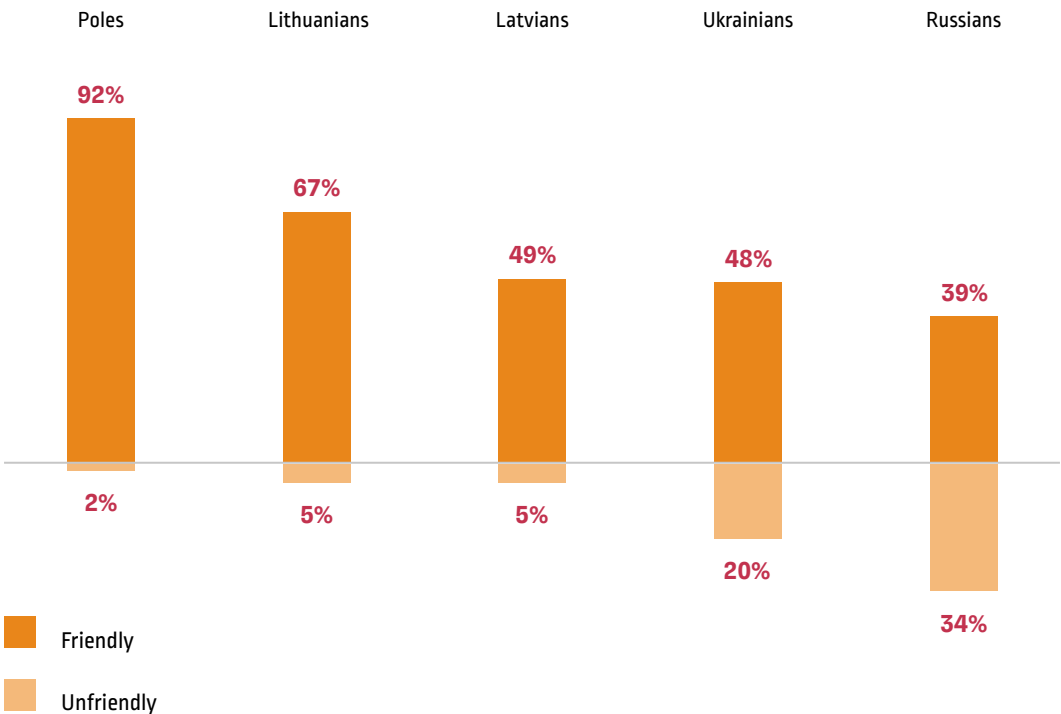
There are significant differences in how the respondents assess the attitudes displayed by the authorities of individual countries and by their peoples. When assessing the attitudes of the neighbouring peoples towards Belarusians, friendly attitudes were thought to prevail in each case. The prevalence of friendliness was relatively low in the case of Russians (39% vs. 34%).

In the respondents' view, Poles are by far the most friendly nation towards Belarusians: only 2% of those surveyed expressed the opposite view.

In the case of Ukrainians, the perceived attitude towards Belarusians is not as unambiguous. The largest group of the respondents, i.e. 48%, believe that Ukrainians are friendly towards Belarusians, but as many as 20% hold the opposite view.

↓ FIGURE 23:

Opinions regarding attitudes of various nations towards Belarusians



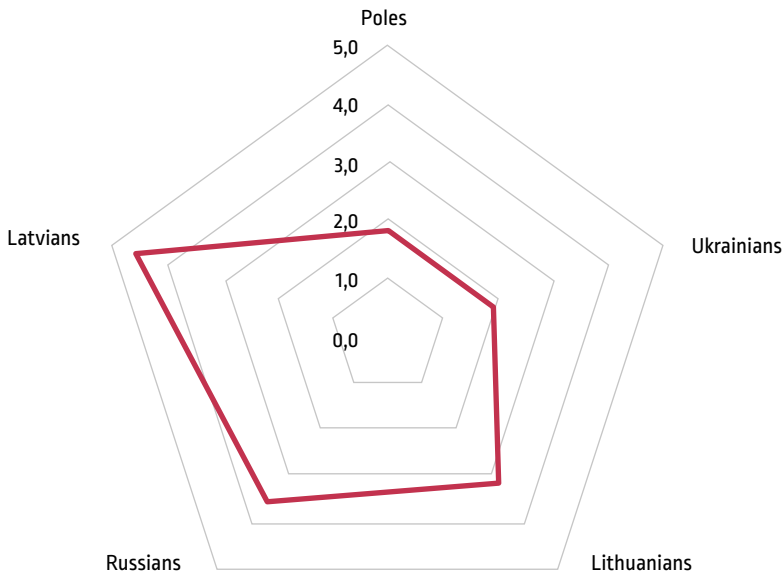
On the other hand, the respondents perceive the cultural proximity between the nations differently. In this case, the respondents have hardly any doubts that Ukrainians are very close to them. Ukrainians and Poles received nearly identical values in the ranking of cultural proximity between the

nations: in the respondents' view, these two nations are definitely closest to Belarusians in terms of culture.

In turn, Belarusians feel the weakest cultural connection with Latvians and Russians.

↓ FIGURE 24:

Which nation is closest to Belarusians?

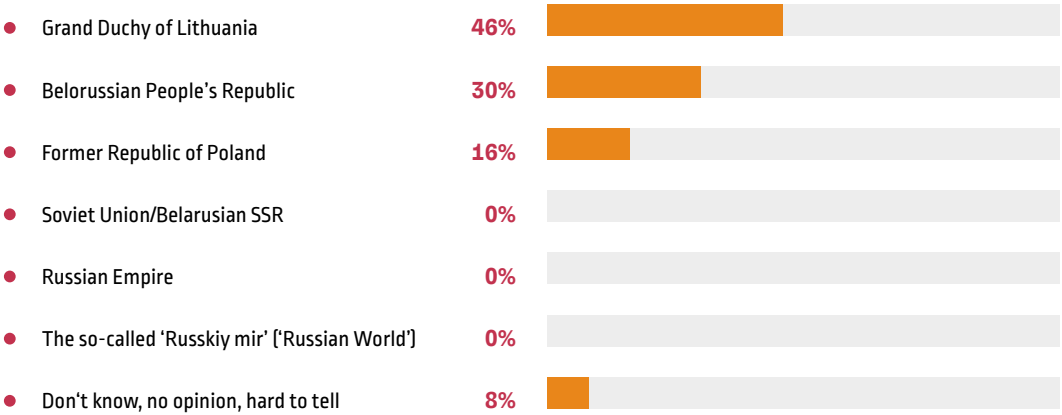


The Belarusian respondents were asked about the historical and state-related traditions that the contemporary Belarus and the Belarusians should mostly rely on. The largest group (46%) opted for the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, and 16% of the

respondents additionally indicated the historical Republic of Poland [Rzeczpospolita] in this context. One third felt that such inspirations should be sought in more recent history and mentioned the Belarusian People's Republic in this context.

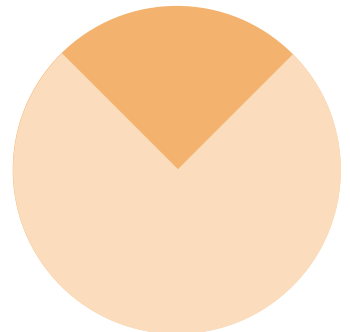
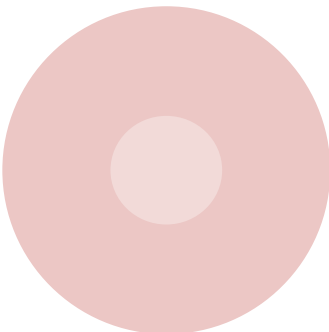
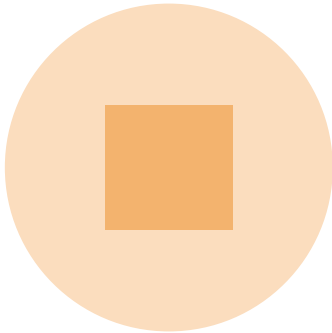
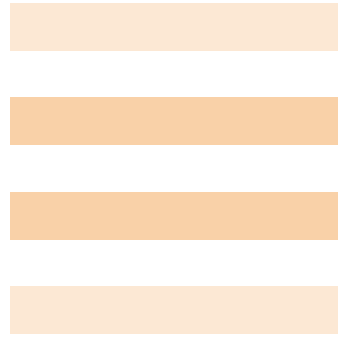
↓ FIGURE 25:

Which historical and state-related tradition should modern Belarus and Belarusians draw mostly from?





Russia and Russians



The vast majority of Belarusians negatively view the relations between Belarus and Russia.

A total of 82% of those surveyed disagree with the statement that Belarusians and Russians are the two closest nations,

while four out of five respondents believe that Belarusians are culturally much closer to Lithuanians and Poles than to Russians.

The respondents are also critical about Russia’s military action against Ukraine. In the opinion of 98% of those surveyed, Ukraine is a victim of this conflict. Additionally, the vast majority (96%) disagree with the statement that Russia

is entitled to the land it is fighting over because it was once part of the Russian state.

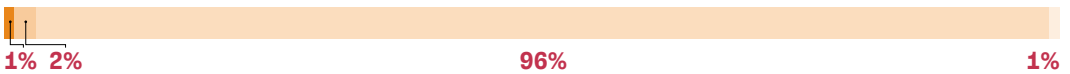
In the context of the Russian aggression against Ukraine, the respondents are critical not only of the Russian authorities but also of Russians themselves. More than a half of those surveyed (53%) disagree with the statement that ordinary Russians have no influence over the actions of their authorities and, consequently, cannot be blamed for the crimes of the Putin’s regime. Moreover, as many as 70% of the respondents make an explicit claim: since most Russians support Putin, they are also responsible for his policies.

The Belarusian respondents are similarly critical towards their own country: the majority of the respondents (73%) believe that by making its territory available to Russia’s armed forces, Belarus has effectively joined the war against Ukraine.

↓ FIGURE 26:

Opinions on Russia and Russians

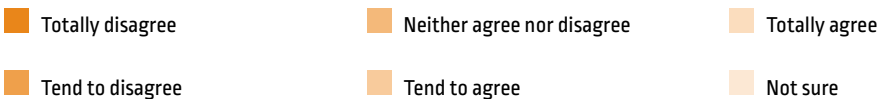
- Ukraine has fallen victim to armed aggression by the Russian



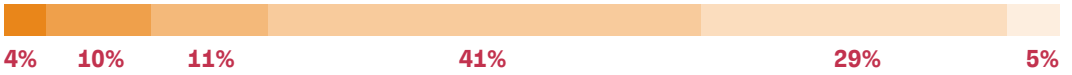
- Belarusians are culturally much closer to Lithuanians and Poles than to Russians



- By making its territory available to the armed forces of the Russian Federation, Belarus entered the war against Ukraine on Russia’s side



- Since most Russians support Vladimir Putin's regime, they are also co-responsible for his crimes



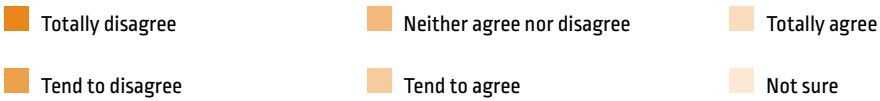
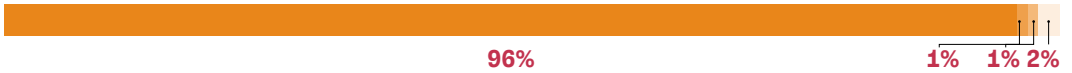
- Ordinary Russians have no influence over the actions of their authorities, so they cannot be blamed for the crimes of Putin's regime



- Belarusians and Russians are two nations which are closest to each other



- One can understand Russia's desire to regain land that had belonged to it for centuries



Reasons for leaving Belarus
and coming to Poland

*Fear of repression
in Belarus*

86%



8. Summary

The community of Belarusians who came to Poland in recent years turns out to be very coherent and integral in their views on issues related to politics, nation and language, history and culture. This group is not a cross-section of the whole Belarusian society, or 'miniature Belarus', but, instead, a community of emigrants with distinct and quite unambiguous views, for whom there is no place in today's Belarus.

This elementary and somewhat obvious conclusion should be emphasised here to avoid viewing the survey results as representative for all Belarusian citizens at large. At the same time, the landscape of views and experiences emerging from the analysis of this survey tells a powerful story of the consciousness of this particular section of Belarusian society: these are young or adult people, most of them with university degrees, keenly interested in current events, who are opposed to Alexander Lukashenko's regime.

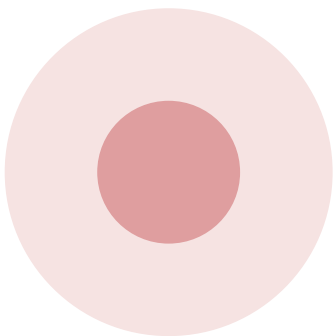
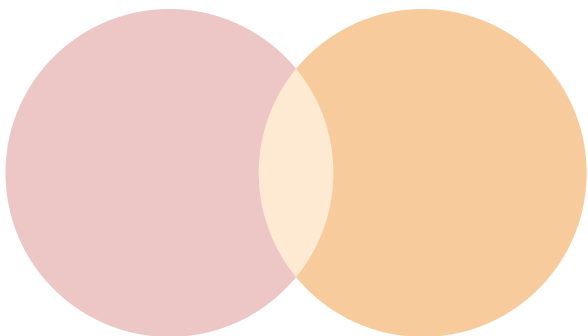
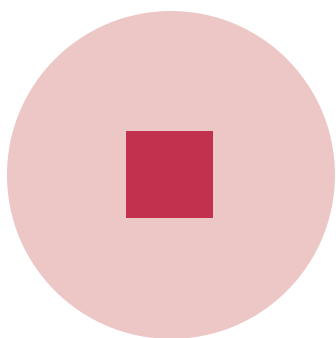
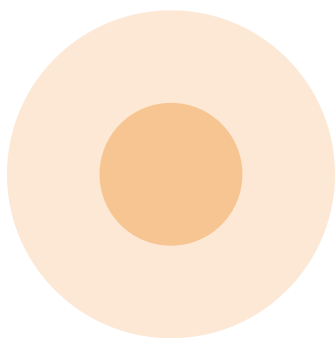
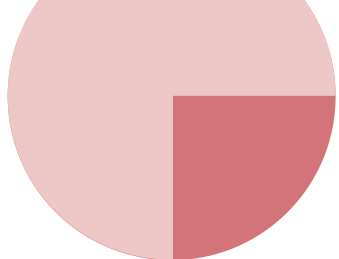
Their main motivation for coming to Poland is the fear of political repression, whether already experienced or expected in the future. For the Belarusian migrants, Poland is a natural choice, a place of refuge, a new space to live in.

Sometimes this choice coincides with work-related reasons (especially in the context of sanctions that have restricted certain industries, notably the IT sector). However, one cannot but observe that there is more to it than a simple economic motivation. Indeed, the search for a 'better life' is strongly embedded in the context of civilisation and culture. As it stands now, Belarus is not a place where the respondents of this survey can endure living any longer. Russia's aggression against Ukraine and Belarus' involvement is a factor that accelerated the decision to leave for many Belarusians.

The respondents' views could be most briefly described as clearly anti-Soviet and strongly anti-Russian, in the spirit of the legacy of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Those respondents certainly do not want to be part of any version of the 'Russkiy mir' ('Russian World') and do not want to draw inspiration from it. Instead, they have a clearly formed Belarusian national and linguistic identity, noticing strong cultural and historical links with Poland.

Their stay in Poland, although assessed positively and planned for a long term time, is not free of problems. These include difficulties in accessing health care services, including psychological assistance, as well as problems with bureaucratic barriers. Another issue worth noting, echoed in some comments, could be described as a 'need for more attention'. On the one hand, this refers to practical issues (e.g. the absence of the Belarusian language in public spaces) as well as the overall attitude of Polish authorities and institutions towards immigrants from Belarus. In the background, there is also some tension vis-à-vis refugees from Ukraine, perceived by some respondents as ones who get more favourable treatment, more attention and friendliness. This situation is all the more difficult since opposition towards Russia's aggression against Ukraine unites the Belarusian emigres and was, for many respondents, one of the reasons why they decided to leave their homeland. The potential tensions which have been identified certainly call for the attention of Polish institutions and organisations.

Despite these problems, the vast majority of the Belarusian respondents imagine their immediate future in Poland and view their stay in Poland favourably. The data collected in this study reveal considerable social capital that the community of new Belarusian emigration can contribute to Poland. The coherence of the views held by those individuals, their affinity to the Polish vision of shaping relations with the nations of Eastern Europe, the declared cultural and emotional proximity create a strong foundation for this.









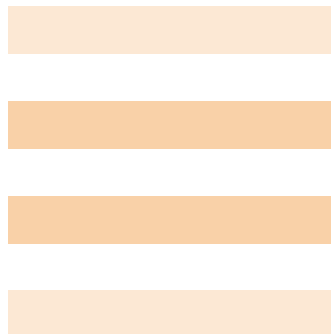
The new Belarusian emigration to Poland is a less publicised and less explored topic compared to Ukrainian themes, which have been strongly present in the Polish news landscape for several months now. This is due to the different scale of the two phenomena (tens of thousands of Belarusians compared to several million Ukrainian citizens) and the fact that the Polish public opinion, quite understandably, has focused primarily on Ukrainians as direct victims of the ongoing war. However, the influx of Belarusians, which has been growing since August 2020, and intensifying with the increasing repressiveness of Alexander Lukashenko's regime, is an equally important component of the emerging new social landscape in Poland as a result of the events happening east of Poland's borders.



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The Mieroszewski Centre is a Polish state institution established by the Polish Parliament and supervised by the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage. Our mission is to run and support projects aimed at building dialogue between Poles and the nations of eastern Europe. The Centre is named after Juliusz Mieroszewski, one of the most prominent Polish political writers of the 20th century. He championed cooperation between Poles and other nations suffering under Russian and Soviet imperialism.