



Satisfaction with the situation at the country level and with personal circumstances

Only 9 and 20 per cent of respondents, respectively, believe that the economic and political situation in Belarus was better in 2016 than four years prior to the survey. These figures are lower than the corresponding averages for the transition region, but above the Italian ones. Moreover, 19 per cent of those surveyed think that there was less corruption in 2016 than in the four years before the survey.

Only one in five respondents believe that their households live better in 2016 than they did four years prior to the survey. In addition, a mere 17 per cent of respondents report being satisfied with their current personal financial situation, one of the lowest figures in the transition region and a value significantly below the transition region average of 31 per cent.

Life satisfaction has dropped by 10 percentage points since the last survey, from 51 per cent in 2010 to 41 per cent in 2016, and is now 2 percentage points below the transition region average. The decline in life satisfaction was registered across all demographic groups. As in many other countries, there is a positive correlation between income and life satisfaction.

There has been a significant drop in optimism about the future. About 62 per cent of Belarusian respondents in 2010 believed that future generations would have a better life than themselves; this has now fallen to 54 per cent, a figure that is nevertheless still above the transition region average and the corresponding values for Germany and Italy (50, 46 and 22 per cent, respectively).

Attitudes towards democracy and the market economy

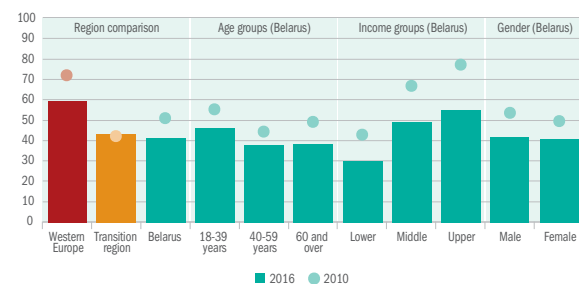
Support for democracy and the market economy have weakened since the last survey, from 59 and 53 per cent in 2010 to 36 and 35 per cent in 2016, respectively. 35 per cent of respondents express indifference as to the type of economic or political system that should prevail in the country, while almost one in three respondents would favour, under some circumstances, an authoritarian system or a planned economy.

When asked which democratic institutions exist in Belarus, 61 per cent of respondents mentioned gender equality and peace and stability, followed by law and order at 50 per cent. Only a minority of Belarusians believe that other democratic institutions are in place. For instance, 34 and 33 per cent of those surveyed think that free elections and a fair court system exist in Belarus, respectively, while less than one in four respondents believe that Belarus has freedom of speech, an independent press and a strong political opposition.

Priorities for government spending

Of Belarusian respondents, 26 per cent think health care should be the first priority for government spending. In addition, 21 per cent of the population believe that the government should prioritise additional investments in education, while 17 per cent see extra expenditure on housing as the top priority. Additional results show that around 44 and 33 per cent of those surveyed would be willing to pay more taxes to improve the quality of the public health system and public education, respectively.

CHART 1. Life satisfaction: percentage of respondents who are satisfied with life, all things considered



Sources of information

The main daily sources of information for Belarusians are discussions with family, friends or colleagues, mentioned by 53 per cent of respondents; internet and the social media, used by 33 per cent those surveyed; and television and radio, used each day by 32 per cent of the population, the lowest value in the transition region. Additional statistical analysis of the LiTS III data shows that younger generations are three times more likely than older cohorts to utilise internet and social media as their primary source of information on a daily basis. Newspapers and magazines are read on a daily basis by approximately 5 per cent of respondents, below the corresponding figures for the transition region, Germany and Italy, but in line with the EEC average.

Self-assessed health

Only 38 per cent of Belarusian respondents consider their health to be “good” or “very good”, which is the third lowest figure in LiTS III and in contrast to an average of 54 per cent across the transition region. Health is positively correlated with income levels and strongly negatively associated with age: only 6 per cent of respondents aged 60 or over report a positive health self-assessment. There are relatively small differences when it comes to gender and urban/rural status.

Quality of public services

The majority of Belarusians are satisfied with the general quality of public services in their country, with the only exceptions being local roads, which cause dissatisfaction to 62 per cent of those surveyed. The remaining figures range from an 88 per cent satisfaction rate for the quality of electricity and the provision of pipeline gas, to a 66 per cent satisfaction rate for the quality of postal services.

Social and economic mobility

When respondents were asked from a list of options what were the most important factors for success in life in their country, 45 per cent chose “effort and hard work”, 36 per cent opted for “intelligence and skills” and 15 per cent answered “political contacts”.

Attitudes towards women

68 per cent of Belarusian respondents think it is important for their daughter to achieve a university education, while 80 and 57 per cent of female and male respondents, respectively, believe that women are as competent as men to be business executives. In addition, 57 of surveyed women and 72 per cent of surveyed men think that men make better political leaders than women. Around 85 per cent of respondents of either gender think that a woman should do the household chores, even if her husband is not working, one of the highest figures in transition region, and around 68 per cent favour a traditional family arrangement where the man works and the woman takes care of the house and children.

CHART 2. Optimism: percentage of respondents who are optimistic about the future of the younger generation

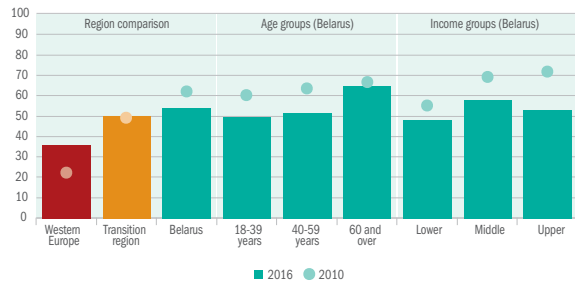


CHART 3. Market economy and democracy: percentage of respondents who prefer a market over a planned economy and democracy over an authoritarian government

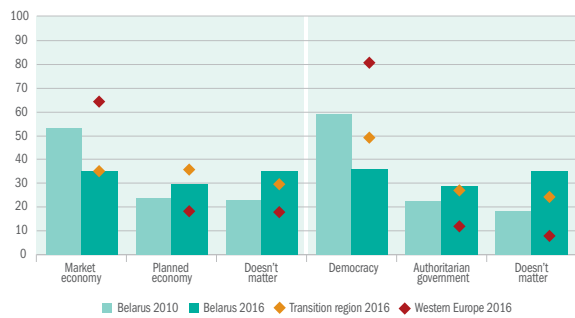


CHART 4. Basic democratic institutions: percentage of respondents who agree that the country has these basic democratic institutions

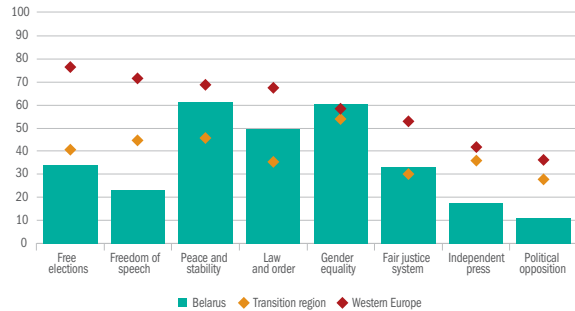
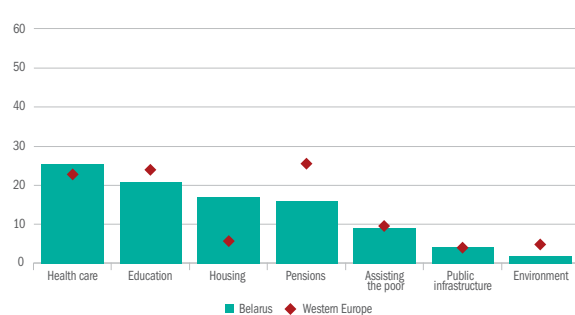


CHART 5. Priorities for government spending

Panel A: Percentage of respondents who identify a given area as a priority in terms of government spending



Panel B: Breakdown of preferences for the top priority (health care)

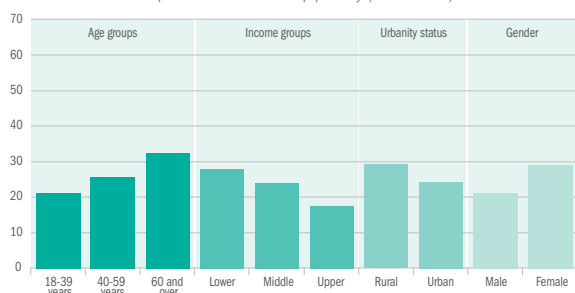


CHART 6. Sources of information: percentage of respondents who use these different sources of information

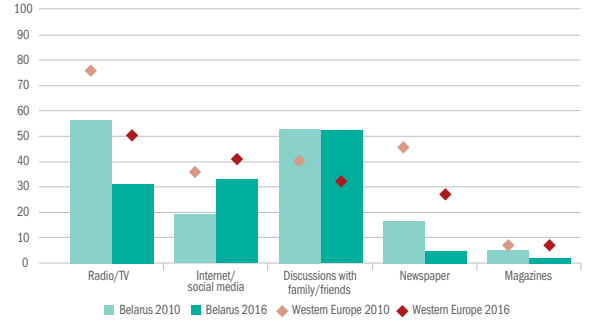


CHART 7. Health assessment: percentage of respondents who report themselves to be in good health (self-assessed)

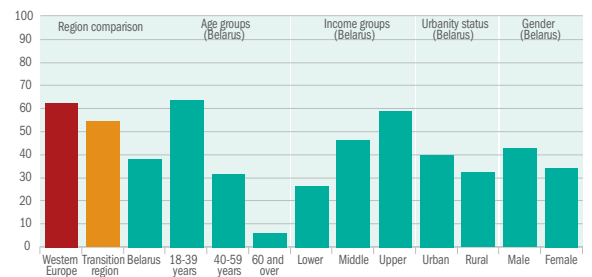


CHART 8. Quality of services: percentage of respondents who are satisfied with the quality of public services, by category

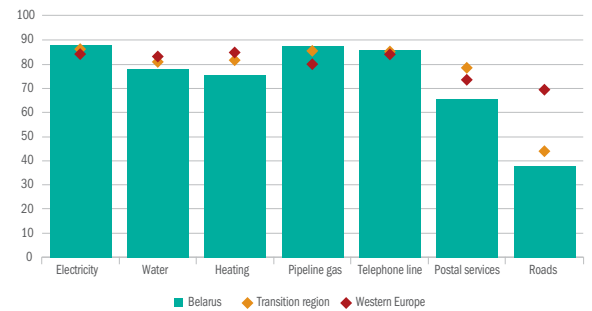


CHART 9. Factors for success: percentage of respondents who identify the given factor as the most important for success, by income level

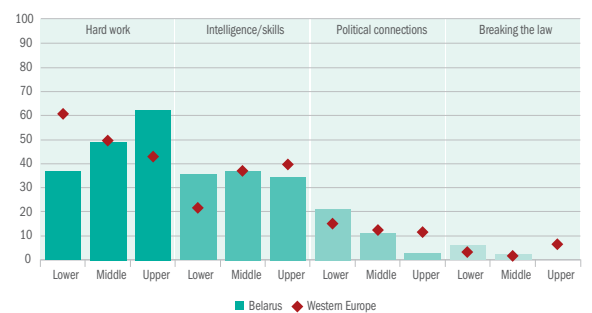


CHART 10. Attitudes towards women: percentage of respondents who agree with the statements below

