Belarusian and foreign analysts examine Belarus' peace efforts, the role of oil in the Eurasian Economic Union, challenges of post-Soviet education and other topics.

**Belarus and the Eurasian Economic Union: Only about Oil?** – The German Economic Team Belarus (GET Belarus) analyses the benefits of Belarus' participation in the Eurasian Economic Union in its first English-language newsletter.

The experts believe that the main benefit for Belarus is related to the oil trade with Russia, which is of high importance to the country. In 2015, Belarus will be able to keep half of the export duties on oil products in the country (USD 1.5 bn, or 2% of GDP). In the past, Russia received the entire amount.

**Belarus’ Peace Effort and a Likely Response of the West** – Grigori Ioffe breaks down positive and negative implications of the August 26th Minsk summit devoted to the crisis in Ukraine. The summit signifies Minsk's slow but steady progress in its relations with Europe, according to the author. He argues that current geopolitical situation will allow Belarus to achieve a true breakthrough.

**Lukashenko and Poroshenko: Friends of Convenience?** The BELL No. 3(45) – Authors of the latest issue of The BELL analyse the implications of the new developments in Belarus-Ukraine relationship. In the first article, Yauhen Krasulin argues that these relations are based on self-interest and were to be
expected, countering the popular notion that the rapport between Lukashenko and Maidan-promoted leaders signals a change of course by Minsk. In the second article, Aliaksandr Aleshka reviews the benefits of Belarus-Ukraine strategic cooperation.

**Belarusians and Solidarity: Potential is There, but That's Nothing to Do with Me** – Belarusian Journal examines whether Belarusians are a cohesive nation; how to raise the level of solidarity in the Belarusian society; whether international solidarity is important for civil society in Belarus. The article was written to support the civil society and political prisoners in Belarus.

**Belarusians try out a new language: their own**. – Christian Science Monitor analyses signs of revival of the Belarusian language. After the years of being overshadowed by Russia and the Russian language, Belarusians are keen on learning their native language to assert their country's identity and culture apart from neighbouring Russia. For many young people speaking Belarusian became cool. Lukashenko himself raised eyebrows when he gave a rare speech in Belarusian in July, close to the date of Belarus’ Independence Day, which some analysts felt was a political signal.

**If you want to be a millionaire, go to Belarus.** Opendemocracy.org offers a grim overview of life in Belarus. According to the article, if you want to return to the Soviet Union – just go to Belarus. Service is terrible, living standards low, internet access restricted, civil society non-existent – but there is an incomparable feeling of safety and serene calm; and lots of excellent vodka and good tasty food to go with it. What more could anyone want?

**Twenty Years in the Making. Understanding the Difficulty for Change in Belarus.** The article of Tatsiana Kulakevich in East European Politics & Societies analyzes the dynamic of pro-democracy protests in Belarus through the prism of social
movements literature and such concepts as framing, political opportunity, and mobilising structures. It argues that weakness of the mobilising structures and framing processes at times when political opportunities presented themselves in Belarus resulted in an absence of large-scale protests and a failure to sustain the development of social movements in the country. At the same time, Belarus cannot be considered as being in a static or retrogressive state since transnational flows characteristic of a globalising world have exposed people to wider flows of information, providing them with counterframes and resulting in a modest growth in the numbers of protesters and a change in the preferences of the Belarusian population.

The modern university as an imagined community: European dreams and Belarusian realities. The article of Mark Johnson and Pavel Tereshkovitch explores various aspects of modern Belarusian national identity through an analysis of two connected case studies, the development of the flagship national university, Belarusian State University (BSU) in Minsk and of the European Humanities University (EHU), a private institution founded in Minsk in 1992 with international funding. EHU was then forced into exile by the Belarusian regime in 2004, and has operated since that time in nearby Vilnius, Lithuania. It highlights various dimensions of Belarusian national identity, from a neo-Soviet and authoritarian populism, to a more primordial or organic conception of nationalism, to a more European and cosmopolitan ethos of liberal education.

Freedom of associations and status of non-commercial organisations in Belarus for the second quarter of 2014 is released by the NGO Assembly and Lawtrend. Authors argue that legislative changes pertaining to registration of NGOs could have become the main factor of positive trends. They conclude, however, that the actual conditions for new organisations' registration did not change substantially. Monitoring includes
the list of new registered organisations, among which sports non-profits are still the majority.

80% of Belarusians Do not Know How the State Budget is Made and Spent – BIPART project concluded based on the results of the latest IISEPS poll conducted in June 2014. Regionally, the highest awareness is represented by the residents of Mogilev (27%) and Gomel (31.2%). Only 10.2% of Minsk residents said they knew how the Belarusian budget is used. According to the poll, this information is either unavailable, unclear, or just uninteresting for Belarusian citizens.