

2020 Belarusian Studies in the 21st Century conference – call for papers

UCL School of Slavonic and East European Studies and the Ostrogorski Centre invite proposals from established academics and doctoral researchers for individual papers and panels discussing various aspects of contemporary Belarusian studies.

The conference will take place on **21–22 February 2020** at the School of Slavonic and East European Studies (SSEES) in London. The Annual London Lecture on Belarusian Studies will follow the main conference panels.

The Annual Lecture titled '**Litva and Other Lessons of Belarusian History**' will be delivered by **Professor Norman Davies** CMG FBA FRHistS, professor emeritus at University College London, a visiting professor at the Collège d'Europe, and an honorary fellow at St Antony's College, Oxford.

The conference serves as a multidisciplinary forum of Belarusian studies in the West and offers a rare networking opportunity for researchers of Belarus.

The organisers are interested in papers that discuss history, political science, political economy, literature, sociology and religious studies. Interdisciplinary studies and panel proposals are particularly encouraged. Selected papers will be peer-reviewed and published in [the Journal of Belarusian Studies](#) in 2020.

To submit a paper or panel proposal please complete the online form [linked here](#) no later than **15 November 2019**. The working language of the conference is English. Applicants will be notified about selection by **25 November 2019**.

The conference organising committee includes Peter Braga, Dr Stephen Hall, Dr Alena Marková, Prof Yarik Kryvoi (co-chair) and Prof Andrew Wilson (co-chair). The conference is supported by the **British Association for Slavonic & East European Studies**.

Please use hashtag **#BelStudies**.

For any questions relating to the conference, please email belauk2020@gmail.com.

Download this [call for papers \(pdf\)](#).

Previous conferences

- 4th Annual 'Belarusian Studies in the 21st Century' Conference & Annual London Lecture on Belarusian Studies (2019) Keynote speaker: **Dr Anais Marin**, United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Belarus ([programme](#); [audio](#))
- 3rd Annual 'Belarusian Studies in the 21st Century' Conference & Annual London Lecture on Belarusian Studies (2018). Keynote speaker: **Dr Alena Marková**, Assistant Professor at the Department of Historical Sociology, Faculty of Humanities, Charles University in Prague ([programme](#))
- 2nd Annual 'Belarusian Studies in the 21st Century' Conference & Annual London Lecture on Belarusian Studies (2017). Keynote speaker: **Dr Alexander Susha**, Deputy Director of the National Library of Belarus, Chairman of the International Association of Belarusian Language and Culture Specialists ([programme](#); [audio](#))
- Conference 'Belarusian Studies in the 21st Century' & Annual London Lecture on Belarusian Studies (2016). Keynote speaker: **Prof Andrew Wilson**, UCL

SSEES ([programme](#); [audio](#))

- The Annual London Lecture on Belarusian Studies, **Dr Per Anders Rudling**, Visiting Professor, University of Vienna & Associate Professor, Lund University (2015) ([programme](#); [audio](#))
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Podcasts of the 2016 London conference ‘Belarusian Studies in the 21st Century’

Audio podcasts from the conference ‘Belarusian Studies in the 21st Century’ held in London in March 2016 became available online.

The conference served as a multidisciplinary forum of Belarusian studies for researchers of Belarus in the West covering a wide range of topics – from history and foreign policy of Belarus to public art and digital engagement.

The Ostrogorski Centre and the UCL School of Slavonic and East European Studies organised the conference in partnership with Francis Skaryna Belarusian Library and Museum, Anglo-Belarusian Society, and the Journal of Belarusian Studies.

The conference [gathered around 20 speakers](#) and moderators from the United Kingdom, Germany, United States, Canada, Poland and France. The conference panels focused on Belarusian history, politics, foreign policy and political science. Selected papers will appear in the new issue of the The Journal of Belarusian Studies.

Several presentations from the conference are available below as podcasts.

The Annual London Lecture on Belarusian Studies, Professor Andrew Wilson, UCL SSEES. **Explaining Lukashenka's Survival.**

Aliaksandr Herasimenka, CAMRI, University of Westminster, United Kingdom. **Comparing digital engagement and mobilisation in Belarus and Ukraine.**

Yuliya Brel, School of Public Policy and Administration, University of Delaware, United States. **Belarus – a modern dictatorship.**

Ina Shakhrai, Humboldt University Berlin, Germany. **When autocracies have no respect for the Nobel Prize.**

Stephen Hall, School of Slavonic and East European Studies, UCL, United Kingdom. **The lessons given by the bison to the bear: Belarus teaching Russia authoritarianism.**

Peter Braga, School of Slavonic and East European Studies, UCL, United Kingdom. **In search of a third wing? Belarus–China relations and balancing amid the Russia–Ukraine conflict.**

Siarhei Bohdan, Freie Universität Berlin and Ostrogorski Centre. **To survive in the shadow of Big Brother: increasing elements of neutrality in Belarusian foreign and security policies in the 2010s.**

Paul Hansbury, St Antony's College, University of Oxford, United Kingdom. **An awkward partner of Moscow: some thoughts on Belarus-Russia foreign relations.**

Dzmitry Suslau, School of Slavonic and East European Studies, UCL, United Kingdom. **Constructing urban narratives: contemporary public art in Minsk.**

Lena Borise, Harvard University, United States. **Pretonic Prominence in the Aŭciuki Dialect of Belarusian**

Vitali Shchutski, University Paris 8, France. **The changing value of the Belarusian avant-garde painting: case study of three private collections.**

Air Base Suspended, Seeking Support in Asia and Africa, Belarusian Studies – Ostrogorski Centre Digest

In December and January the Ostrogorski Centre analysts are busy analysing Minsk's complicated games in foreign policy and security affairs, finalising the most recent issue of the Journal of Belarusian Studies and organising a conference on Belarusian studies.

It appears that Belarus continues to cooperate with Ukraine on the issues where Belarus can gain financially and technologically, while keeping its distance from aggressive Russian foreign policy. Minsk has also managed to win the standoff over a Russian air base in Belarus.

Siarhei Bohdan argues that Minsk [consistently avoids](#) supporting Moscow in Ukraine and Syria. Belarus is continuing its active collaboration with Kyiv, aimed not only at business deals but also at acquiring the military technology which Russia has failed to provide it with. At the same time, Minsk [seems to be winning](#) the ongoing game over a Russian air base. A base will, it seems, not appear in Belarus in the near future, and on top of that Belarus will soon have Russian warplanes at its disposal.

Igar Gubarevich in his foreign policy overview [shows](#) that despite his renewed right to travel to Europe, Lukashenka's "social circle" has so far remained limited to authoritarian countries. While visiting and hosting Asian and African colleagues, the Belarusian leader had to postpone his most important foreign trip to Moscow because of disagreements over relations with Turkey and the Russian air base in Belarus.

Ryhor Astapenia analyses the performance of Belarusian industry in 2015. While many enterprises, such as [Kamvol](#), are poised on the verge of bankruptcy, others like potash exporter [Belaruskali](#) have saved the Belarusian economy, allowing inefficient industries to be subsidised.

Comments in the media

Siarhei Bohdan in an interview with the [Belarusian service of Radio Liberty](#) comments on the normalisation of Belarus-EU relations and their future in 2016. According to Bohdan, Belarus is trying to pursue a neutrality policy in a quiet manner and is seeking to boost trade cooperation with the EU. However, warming of relations will not change domestic politics significantly, as it will be dominated by Russian and Ukrainian factors.

[Aljazeera](#) quoted director of the Ostrogorski Centre — Yarik Kryvoi, who analysed the reasons why the Belarusian authorities refrain from large-scale privatisation and its associated social costs. The Aljazeera piece also cited Ostrogorski Centre associate analyst Alieś Aliachnovič's article on BelarusDigest dedicated to the role of Russia's subsidies in the Belarusian economy.

Ryhor Astapenia together with several well-known experts summed up the year 2015 on [Radio France Internationale](#). Among the most important events of the year Ryhor mentioned was Svetlana Alexievich's Nobel Prize, which put Belarus in the focus of world media, and the October presidential election, which demonstrated people's disappointment with politics and the economic crisis in the first years of Lukashenka's new term in power.

According to the experts, the European Union should increase its presence in Belarus to be able to influence the situation from the inside

Siarhei Bohdan discussed with the [Belarusian Programme of Polish Radio](#) current trends in the development of the Belarusian Armed Forces. Despite the declared military union with Russia, the Belarusian army is seeking more autonomy and hampering major bilateral military projects.

Yarik Kryvoi and the Ostrogorski Centre's senior analyst Siarhei Bohdan commented on the role of sanctions in Belarus' relations with the west for [WorldECR](#), the Journal of Export Controls and Sanctions. According to the experts, the European Union should increase its presence in Belarus to be able to influence the situation from the inside. Patient critical engagement and economic modernisation can ultimately strengthen Belarusian statehood and improve the human rights and democracy situation.

Vadzim Smok took part in a discussion titled In What Ways Can We Talk about the Nation and Nationalism Today?, organised in Minsk as a part of the [Debates on Europe](#) programme and supported by the German Federal Foreign Office. The experts exchanged ideas on various models of nation-building in today's Belarus and the role of nationalism in this process.

The Belarusian government allows the existence of a sizeable shadow economy because its main revenue comes from outside the country

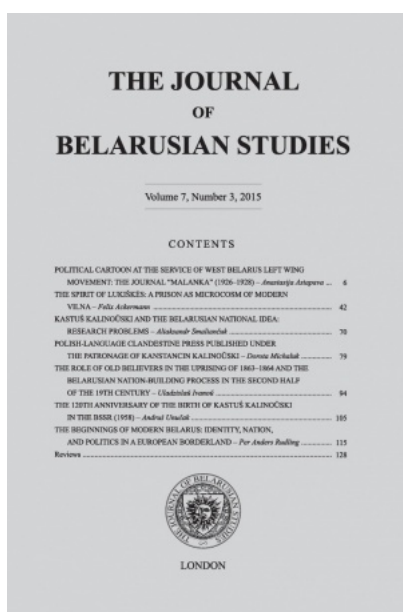
Siarhei Bohdan discussed with [Radio Racyja](#) the problem of the shadow economy in Belarus. The Belarusian government allows the existence of a sizeable shadow economy because its main revenue comes from outside the country, mainly from Russian hydrocarbons. Many businesses operate via illegal schemes, and the authorities turn a blind eye to them in exchange for political loyalty.

Belarusian Studies in the 21st century conference

The Ostrogorski Centre and the UCL's School of Slavonic and East European Studies (SSEES) invite proposals from established academics and doctoral researchers for individual papers and panels to discuss various aspects of contemporary Belarusian studies.

The conference will take place on 23-24 March 2016 at the SSEES in London. The Annual Lecture on Belarusian Studies will follow the main conference panels. The conference will serve as a multidisciplinary forum of Belarusian studies in the West and offer a rare networking opportunity for researchers of Belarus. The conference call for papers is available [here](#) and the deadline is 15 February 2016.

The 2015 issue of the Journal of Belarusian Studies



The Ostrogorski Centre presents the [2015 issue](#) of the Journal of Belarusian Studies. The new issue of the journal focuses on the Belarusian-Polish-Lithuanian borderland and the period stretching from the uprising of 1863 to the inter-war period of the 20th century when the territory of today's Belarus was split between the Soviet Union and Poland.

Two longer articles are followed by several essays which

resulted from a conference held by the Anglo-Belarusian Society and other London-based organisations at University College London in March 2014.

This issue also includes the transcript of the first Annual London Lecture on Belarusian Studies, and two book reviews – one by Stephen Hall examining the meaning of Europe for the Belarusian and Ukrainian authorities, and the other by Siarhej Bohdan looking at relations between various ethnic groups in Eastern Poland in the inter-war period, which is now Western Belarus.

The issue features authors from Estonia, Lithuania, United Kingdom, Belarus and Sweden.

Belarus Profile

The BelarusProfile.com database now includes the following personalities: [Aliena Arciomienka](#), [Andrej Parotnikaŭ](#), [Uladzimir Kaltovič](#), [Dzmitryj Markušeŭski](#), [Juryj Caryk](#), [Kiryl Koktyš](#), [Aliaksandr Aŭtuška-Sikorski](#), [Andrej Rusakovič](#), [Siarhej Vazniak](#), [Uladzimir Kavalkin](#).

We have also updated the profiles of [Stanislaŭ Kniazieŭ](#), [Anton Kudasaŭ](#), [Valiery Kulakoŭski](#), [Aliaksandr Lahviniec](#), [Dzmitry Lazoŭski](#), [Žana Litvina](#), [Anatoł Lis](#), [Ihar Laciankou](#), [Alieh Latyšonak](#), [Paviel Latuška](#), [Viktar Lukašenka](#), [Anatoł Liabiedźka](#), [Anatoł Marazievič](#), [Viktar Marcinovič](#), [Siarhiej Maskievič](#), [Andrej Šorac](#), [Andrej Hajeŭ](#), [Uladzimir Amaryn](#), [Maksim Jermalovič](#), [Dzmitry Charytončyk](#).

Belarus Policy

The Ostrogorski Centre continues to update the database of policy papers on BelarusPolicy.com. The papers of partner institutions added this month include:

- Ina Ramašeŭskaja, Natallia Rabava. [What motivates public servants in Belarus: money not important.](#) BIPART, 2015.
- Uladzimir Kavalkin. [Public procurement: increasing transparency and accountability.](#) BIPART, 2014.
- Ina Ramašeŭskaja, Tacciana Čulickaja. [Do government agencies operate effectively? Modern challenges and responses.](#) BIPART, 2014.
- Kaciaryna Korzun. [Public-private partnership in Belarus: what is after the law?](#) BIPART, 2014.
- Dzmitry Markušeŭski. [On the way to e-government in Belarus.](#) BIPART, 2013.
- Anastasija Luzhina. [Pension benefits as a component of the social security system.](#) BEROC, 2015.
- Katsiaryna Barnukova. [Support of maternity in Belarus.](#) BEROC, 2015.
- Katsiaryna Barnukova, Anastasiya Luzhina, Katsiaryna Lisiankova . [Pension system of belarus: current state and necessity for reforms.](#) BEROC, 2015.
- Alieh Mazol. [Local government in the Republic of Belarus.](#) BEROC, 2015.
- Dzmitry Kruk, Katsiaryna Barnukova. [Decomposition of economic growth in Belarus.](#) BEROC, 2014.

Any partner organisation of BelarusPolicy.com can submit its research for inclusion onto the database by completing this [form](#).

The Ostrogorski Centre is a private, non-profit organisation dedicated to analysis and policy advocacy on problems which Belarus faces in its transition to market economy and the rule of law. Its projects include Belarus Digest, the [Journal of Belarusian Studies](#), [BelarusPolicy.com](#) and [BelarusProfile.com](#). Follow all the news from the Ostrogorski Centre on [Facebook](#). □