

# Why the Young Do Not Join the Opposition – Digest of Belarusian Analytics

Belarusian analysts focus on the role and strategy of the Belarusian opposition, the balance of powers before the parliamentary elections, sources of legitimacy of Alexander Lukashenka and Schengen visas for Belarusians.

[Lukashenka and his Opponents Preserved in a Crystal Vessel](#) – Alexander Klaskovsky analyses the age structure of the Belarusian opposition and identifies the lack of the influx of young forces there. As a result almost 18 years of continuous pressure the opposition in Belarus is now assigned a role of whipping boys. Most of the opposition leadership is old and has been there since early 1990s.

The costs of being in the opposition are significant – beatings, arrests, prison sentences, constant pressure by security services and difficulties with earning a living. The benefits of being an opposition activist are very limited because the opposition is not getting any political appointments and is generally excluded from political decision-making in the country. As a result, young people are not interested in joining the opposition which makes it an even less attractive and less competitive force in Belarusian society. The journalist concludes that the opposition naturally degrades along with the formal political system: “Under these conditions, the country simply is rolling down to the level of third world countries and is becoming a de facto colony of the Kremlin”.

[The Balance of Power inside the Opposition Before Parliamentary Elections 2012](#) – Analytical Belarusian Centre published its review dedicated to the upcoming parliamentary

elections. The experts address issues such as the formation of the Belarusian opposition in several streams with a different vision for the transformation of the Belarusian regime and collaboration with existing elites, as well as the participation of the opposition in the last parliamentary campaigns and the issue of the Eastern vector of foreign policy of Belarus.

[The Unity of the Opposition is a Myth, Fetish, Created by Analysts and Journalists](#) – political experts Alexander Feduta, Denis Melyantsou and Yevgeniy Preygerman answer the questions of the ERB and explain what will be the end of the September parliamentary elections, why there is no unity, and how much the boycott costs. The participants generally agree that the opposition should take the opportunity of elections to strengthen their membership base and conduct an effective information campaign. This is one of very few opportunities to do it legally in Belarus.

[How Stable are the Belarusian CSOs?](#) – Vladimir Korzh, chief executive of NGO "ACT" and one of the authors of the annual CSO Sustainability Index in Belarus, speaks in his interview to AMPby.org about the Index's methodology and the results of the assessment of the stability of Belarusian CSOs in 2011. In particular, the expert states that there is some stability and even trends towards improvement in the Belarusian third sector – the last three years consistently Belarus receives 5.9 out of 7 points.

["Third Way" for Belarus](#) – Alexander Avtushko-Sikorski (BISS) analyzes Alexander Lukashenka appeal at the ceremony to celebrate Belarus' Independence Day. The expert notes that the speech keeps a set of "classical" semantic blocks. The main difference of this year is changing in the foreign policy rhetoric, which practically does not affect relations with the West and Russia, and includes a new topic of integration as a special path of development for Belarus.

[The Dilemma of the Fourth Term](#) – Alexei Medvetsky (Agency for Political Studies) discusses the sources of legitimacy of the fourth term of president Lukashenka. Based on the recent events, the expert concludes that the Belarusian president is inclined to opt for the familiar popular support. However, the nomenclature and the power elite are definitely not interested in letting him go "to the people", so they will continue their passive and active fight to the detriment of his credibility.

[Weekly election monitoring report: June 18 – 24](#). The campaign "Human Rights Defenders for Free Elections" released the #1 issue of the weekly analytical report on monitoring results. In particular, the authors note that "the election campaign begins in unfavourable environment, on the background of political repression, in conditions of the pressure on the opposition forces and the civic society."

[Review-Chronicle of Human Rights Violations in Belarus in June 2012](#) (in English) – Human Rights Centre *Viasna* released its monthly review of human rights violations. In particular, the experts see that events in June clearly demonstrated that the Belarusian authorities consider human rights issues only in the dimension of political relations with the EU and other countries of Europe. The focus of these relations was still on the problem of political prisoners.

[Belarusian Yearbook-2011](#). BISS and website of the Belarusian expert community «Nashe Mnenie» ("Our Opinion") published the Belarusian 2011 Yearbook. The book was presented in Minsk's "Ź" Gallery on June 26. Each edition of Belarusian Yearbook (this year has seen its eighth version) is more than just a collection of analytics – it is a chronicle of the country's contemporary history written by impartial unbiased researchers and analysts.

[Analysis of consular statistics of the Schengen countries in 2007-2011](#) – Andrei Eliseev (BISS) explores the dynamics of the Schengen visa issuing in 2007-2011. The expert concludes that

Schengen countries are more open to citizens of Belarus, than for residents of other countries of the Eastern Partnership (EP). In comparison with the countries of EP and Russia, Belarus leads on the following parameters in the ratio of per capita: the total amount of short-term Schengen visas; multiple Schengen visas, and the number of national long-term visas (Category D).

[Recommendations for Privatisation in Belarus](#) – the recommendation report is based on discussion and presentations delivered at the conference “privatisation and private entrepreneurship in Belarus – scope for international assistance” on April 16-17, 2012 in Warsaw. The conference was a part of a new initiative of the European Union towards Belarus “The European dialogue on modernization with Belarusian Society”.

*Belarus Digest prepared this overview on the basis of materials provided by Pact. This digest attempts to give a richer picture of the recent political and civil society events in Belarus. It often goes beyond the hot stories already available in English-language media.*