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RSC, Number 5, Issue 2, May 2013, pp. 98-115.

## Using the method of observation in testing media advertising

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**Abstract:** *Traditional self-report measures are significantly influenced by cognitive and research bias. Therefore in a quest for alternative methodologies in measuring advertising affects “stopping power” was introduced and measured on 9 different locations. The results of the two hypotheses showed first that this method of measuring is reliable with Krippendorff’s alpha ( $\alpha$ ) larger than 90 % between the two evaluators. Thus less than 10 % of judgements could be a coincidence, which makes this method highly reliable. Secondly the suggested method was able to identify the differences between two ads with the same content printed in different techniques on all 9 locations.*

**Keywords:** advertising, research methodology, observation

## **INTRODUCTION**

Advertising expenditure is constantly increasing and the search for an efficient method of testing advertisements has never been as important as in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Till now we have had to agree with Poels and Dewitte (2006) that "... advertising literature is not straightforward on what instrument provides the most valid measurement" and a construct of how to measure advertising effectiveness has no "perfect" solution. Measuring advertising is getting more and more complicated as advertisers use increasing levels of emotional content. On this notion Young (2004) claims the issue is not "whether emotions in advertising matter, the problem is how to measure them."

This article aims to test an alternative method for measuring advertising effects, which is based on a stopping power. We first describe the limitations of traditional self-report measures. Then the tested method of observation is described in details. After identifying the research objective and research method we present the results of our study and a conclusion with further research suggestions.

### **Limitations of traditional self-report measures - reasons to use alternative methods**

As presented in Heath and Feldwick (2007) practitioners have adopted an empirical quantitative approach to the measurement of emotions relying mainly on self-reports. Verbal self-report measures are quick, inexpensive and usually do not require special expert knowledge. Typically many items,

like recall and cognitive associations (unipolar or bipolar), are used because of their simplicity and the ability to measure how consumers store product information in memory. Verbal self-report measures, however, do not always provide the understanding of consumer responses when advertising is not predominantly verbal in nature (Zambardino and Goodfellow, 2007; Shapiro, MacInnis and Heckler, 1998; Vakratsas and Ambler, 1999). The three major limitations are: first the respondent has to process information and describe the feeling; second the respondent is influenced by a researcher posing the questions and third it is difficult to measure long-term effects of advertising.

### **Cognitive bias**

A huge critic Hall (2001) showed evidence that with traditional verbal self-report survey “no matter how ingenious we are with projective techniques and semantic scales, cognitive bias is inevitable.” Hall (2004) also showed evidence that with traditional verbal self-report survey “until we can accurately measure the non-cognitive and emotional dimensions of advertising response, we are measuring very little of relevance.” Thus Zambardino and Goodfellow (2007) claim that part of the current increased popularity of non self-report techniques comes from the fact that they do not rely on our conscious verbal recollections as it is not necessary to be aware of advertising communication to have been influenced by it. Similarly Erevelles (1998) reveals another weakness of these methods, namely that both memory and cognitive activity are required to measure the affect. Thus the main reason in favour of an alternative measurement is

that no cognitive activity is required to measure affect, and consequently, there is less “bias”.

### **Research bias**

Braun and Zaltman (2006) recognized the important role of research bias in academic research. They claim that because participants are “aware that the researcher is interested in assessing their attitude changes based on the advertising exposure, some may overestimate the impact of advertising by indicating more favourable attitudes; others may do the reverse and underestimate, because they do not want to believe that the advertising had an impact on their beliefs.” In addition Braun’s and Zaltman’s research shows that respondents tend to give answers that appeal the interviewer.

### **Long-term effects in advertising**

If we define the goal of advertising as the creation of lasting memories it is important to be able to detect its long-term effects as well. Young suggests (Young, 2009): if an ad “does not leave some kind of lasting trace behind in the long-term memory of a consumer, it is difficult to argue that it had any kind of effect.” Also Hall (2004) points out that the limitations of the majority of copy-testing measures are that they tend to “focus on the least important part of advertising: short-term sales effects.”

### **Suggested method of observation**

To limit the above described limitations of traditional self-report measures we have tested a method of observation to measure advertising effects. Techniques based on observation are nothing new in advertising. As pointed out by Berg (1989) it is essential to assure as realistic as possible environment for measurement. Similarly Del Vecchio (1988) suggests method of observation as an addition to classical research methods and as a stand alone method when other methods fail to produce quality data. As suggested by Cradit, Tashchian and Hofacker (1994) the overall reliability of this method is improved by repeated measurements.

The method of observation is suggested by Walters (1988) who has used econometric studies and 361 daily observations to analyse the connection between promotion and purchase behaviour of consumers. Similarly Dickson and Sawyer (1990) watched consumers in shops and their behaviour. They combined these observations with the results of a survey questionnaire to prove that buyers buy products advertised as special price items quicker than other products with regular price. Observation combined with questionnaire was used also in Murphy and Venkatesh (2006) when analysing the behaviour of prostitutes. Lovato et al. (2007) used observation to analyse the price kids are willing to pay for cigarettes. Cohen et al. (2007) observed alcohol purchasing behaviour. Ahmed (2008) studied time, atmosphere and activity between shopping. Nairn (2008) observed children aged 7 - 15 (video tapes) when using internet and analysed the advertising effects on children. Similarly Elliott (2009) analysed children when buying food in stores. Emmerton (2008) observed purchases in pharmacies and Krugman, Cameron and White (1995) observed consumers watching television in their homes.

By using the method of observation we aim to achieve measurement without cognitive bias and research bias. When developing a research model we argue that a relevant measure of stopping power should be executed in an as much as possible realistic environment. Only in a realistic environment we can measure the combined effect of attention (conscious) and engagement (subconscious) without having to control other research factors. So we define attention and engagement together as advertising stopping power.

Stating the advantages above, on the other hand, we acknowledge the limitations of this measurement. First the method of observation cannot measure the impact of multiple or 'mixed' emotions and is impractical for many marketing measurement purposes. Secondly (similar to eye-tracking) this measure is limited to the measurement of attention only. Finally if advertisers want to achieve overall effective advertising they need to achieve engagement or attention that can be seen in existence of stopping power. In the respect of the overall effectiveness of advertising we acknowledge the stopping power as a necessary but not self-sufficient measure. As it is only important when it leads to other positive effects, for example a change of consumer attitude and purchase intention, we discuss the content strategies in the following section.

### **Research Objective**

The aim of the presented research is to demonstrate the usability of a method of observation for pre-testing. We plan to achieve this by analyzing

the differences in measuring stopping power for a 3D lenticular and standard printed ad. Thus we state the following hypothesis:

H1: stopping power measurement is a reliable measure (evaluators explain the same results in more than 90 % of cases and less than 10 % of similarities are due to coincidence).

H2 – the method of observation in attracting stopping power will provide valuable differences between two types of printed ads (printed in different techniques) for all locations although the content of the ad is the same.

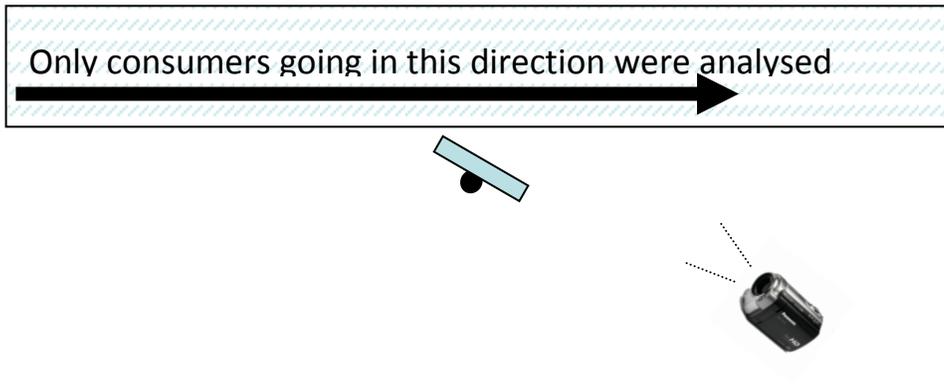
## **Research method**

In order to test the method of observation we conducted a study to analyze how many people look at a poster in a shopping environment for more than 500 ms (half of a second). Direct exposure (a look at a poster at a 1-5 degrees visual angle) as suggested by Josephson (2005) was thus the only dependent variable in this research. In other words the poster had to stop the walking consumer. The interval 500 milliseconds should be long enough for inputs of adaptive importance to be perceived, to influence behaviour, and to be represented in the next stage of retention, short-term memory, while inputs without significance can disappear. Implications of this research are that consumers have enough time to recognize the brand name and a short message of practically any visible poster. Even though exposure time is short, the emotional and cognitive processes are unstoppable. Only after an ad has already been evaluated memory filter is applied. Thus although this measuring method of stopping power relies

solely on short-term effects it is the exposure itself that with repetition creates new patterns in consumer brain contributing to long-term brand recognition. Anchors to visual stimuli are namely unconscious.

The main idea of this research was to observe consumers in a real-time environment without any interaction with the researcher to make this evaluation as objective as possible. In addition we aimed to analyse only the differences in printing techniques to avoid the potential differences in the content of ads. Thus we created two posters of the same size (1.07 m x 0.85 m) and motive but printed in different techniques (standard 2D and lenticular 3D) and placed them according to Figure 1. We switched between the two posters every hour to satisfy the condition for comparison analysis and recorded behaviour using HD surveillance camera. Consumers did not know they were observed as the camera was a part of a surveillance camera used in shopping centre and marked only on entrance doors to the centre.

Figure 1: The setting of the poster and the recording camera.



Source: own research

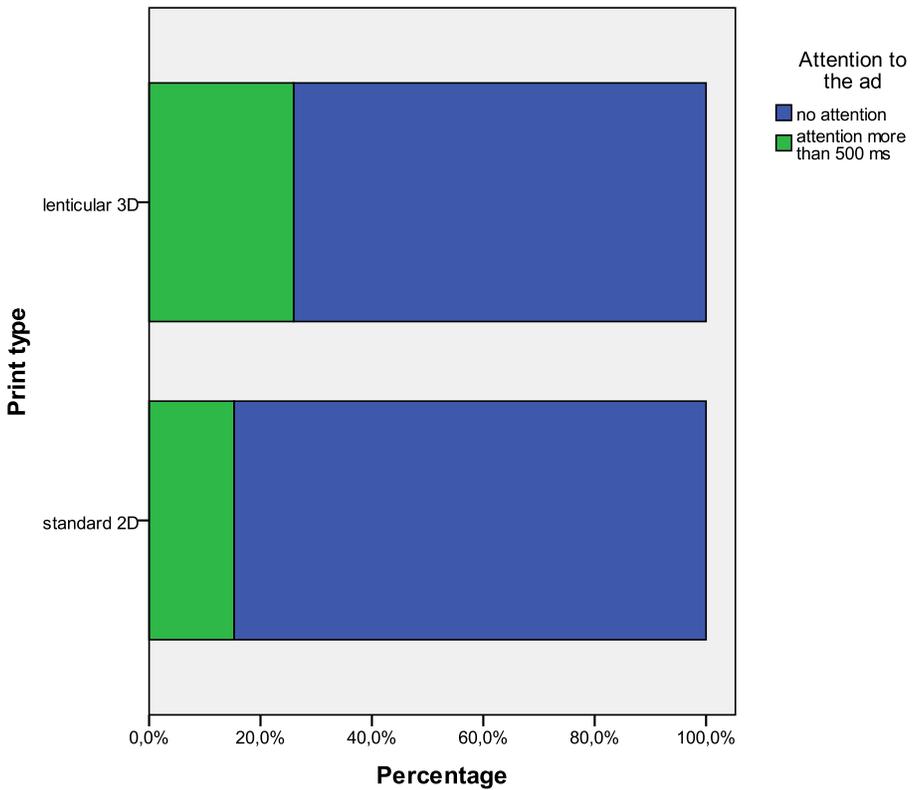
## Results

Following the training for the two evaluators, who evaluated the research and were rewarded for this task in money, a total of 5115 consumer reactions to the poster were analyzed. Among these there were 2198 males (43 %) and 2917 females (57 %). For 2D ad 47 % and for 3D lenticular ad 53 % consumer reactions were analysed. Results from this study show that on average for 15.2% of consumers standard 2D advertisement attracted more than 500 ms of stopping power (visual attention). When using 3D lenticular poster the half a second limit of stopping power (visual attention) was reported with an outstanding 25.9% of consumers.

To test the hypothesis H1 tapes were analyzed twice in order to calculate the inter-coder reliability Krippendorff's alpha ( $\alpha$ ). The sampling

distribution of the means was assumed to be normally distributed as well as the sampling distribution of the scores. Based on the SPSS analysis described in Hayes (2007), Krippendorff's alpha showed fairly high reliability for all pairs of analyzed evaluations of the same consumers  $\alpha = 0.935$ . Alpha 0.935 means that 93.5 % of the units tested by evaluators are perfectly reliable while only 6.5 % are the results of chance. Reliability calculations using Krippendorff's alpha showed alphas at more than 0.90 level for all nine locations. Krippendorff (2006; 2011) suggest, for example, to rely on evaluators with variables  $\alpha \geq 0.80$  although  $\alpha \geq .667$  can already suffice for drawing tentative conclusions. Calculated alphas above 0.90 make this method a reliable variable for further analysis. Thus we can accept H1 that this method can be used to reliably measure the stopping power of consumers.

Figure 2.: Stopping power in advertising using 2D (standard print) and 3D (lenticular print)



Source: own research

In order to test hypothesis H2 we tested the reliability to measure differences between two ads on 9 different locations. Locations 1 to 7 were urban, locations 8 and 9 were in rural environment. All locations are in Slovenia. Percentages were similar for all 9 locations. Pearson's chi-square was calculated for differences between 2D and 3D for every location (table 1).

Table 1: Results stopping power on different locations

	% of Stopping power standard 2D ad	% of Stopping power standard 3D ad
Location 1 (Interspar, Ljubljana): $\chi^2 (1) = 4.438, p = .035$ *)	18.0	26.1
Location 2 (Interspar, Maribor): $\chi^2 (1) = 8.877, p = .003$ *)	15.7	26.4
Location 3 (Planet Tuš, Novo Mesto): $\chi^2 (1) = 10.990, p = .001$ *)	13.8	25.1
Location 4 (Hofer, Kranj): $\chi^2 (1) = 2.181, p = .140$ )	15.9	20.4
Location 5 (Mercator, Nova Gorica): $\chi^2 (1) = 8.332, p = .004$ *)	14.8	23.6
Location 6 (Lidl, Koper): $\chi^2 (1) = 8.251, p = .004$ *)	16.0	25.0
Location 7 (Hofer, Domžale): $\chi^2 (1) = 29.475, p = .000$ *)	16.1	40.6
Location 8 (Mercator, Trzin): $\chi^2 (1) = 20.593, p = .000$ *)	14.3	30.6

Location 9 (Mercator, Ivančna Gorica): $\chi^2 (1) = 22.292, p = .000$ *	13.5	32.3
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From the analysis we conclude that the ads tested attracted substantial stopping power. In our research stopping power was between 13.5 % to 18 % for the 2D ad and between 20.4 % and 40.6 % for the 3D ad. The difference between the two techniques is significant for 8 out of 9 locations. As the purpose of this study was to demonstrate the extent to which this method can identify the differences we can accept the H2.

### **Conclusion and further research**

This research may serve as a starting point in the process of finding inexpensive, quick and efficient measurement tool in advertising. Additional research with similar methodology is however necessary to verify the results. Future research is especially recommended for new technologies that are seeking to find their way in advertising. With the introduction of 3D advertising (lenticular, holographic, 3D TV and other) the ability to stop the consumers will increase dramatically as we have seen when testing lenticular 3D where it almost doubled for the same motive of the poster (the difference was only the printing technique). In addition this methodology should be tested using different media.

Compared to traditional self-report measures this method is not influenced by cognitive bias. Moreover, due to no interference of researcher this

method provides a valuable realistic measurement tool that can be combined with other methods. Although it cannot measure complex emotions and fractionalises effects on different response categories it does include attention as well as engagement. It does not solve the problem of measuring long-term effects, however academic literature provides numerous links between exposure and long-term memory. This link is much stronger than traditional self-report measurement like recall or ad likeability. Finally this method gives instant feedback on how ads can stop the consumers and occupy their conscious or unconscious processing power.

Notes: This research was supported by the EU - Investing in your future – OPERATION PART FINANCED BY THE EUROPEAN UNION, EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND.

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RSC, Number 5, Issue 2, May 2013, pp. 116-149

**The perceptions of young Poles toward Russians, Ukrainians, and Belarusians: The results of focus group interviews.**

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**Abstract:** *Three focus group interviews were carried out among Polish students. Participants were asked to reveal their opinions toward several nations and their respective states – Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus. The results showed that the image of those states was shaped through their economic and political development, and was mainly associated with strikes, corruption, an oppressive political system, and poverty. The attitude toward the target nations was quite ambiguous. Participants revealed many positive and negative associations. Common personality traits between Poles and all of the nations under investigation were often mentioned. However,*

*participants did not feel close to them - Western European countries were closer to Poland than Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus.*

**Keywords:** association, attitude, Poles, Russians, Ukrainians, Belarusians

## **Introduction**

The human perception of “the others” is surely an important issue which influences the different spheres of people’s life. The attitude of any nation toward other nations and countries, especially neighboring ones, is very important for various reasons. It affects national identity, interpersonal contacts, international relations, political and economic interests, migration policy, and other important issues. The attitudes toward other nations may directly or indirectly influence the national minorities and migrants from those countries living abroad. It could also be a reason for discrimination, exclusion, and national conflicts.

The theory of social categorization (Tajfel, 1970) suggests the formation of bias against foreign groups according to perceived differences and similarities in regards to the in-group and the out-group members. The attitude toward the in-group tends to be loyal and favorable, while the attitude toward the out-group tends to be more antagonistic or even hostile. Categorization allows people to shape and confirm their own self-esteem by favoring their own group. The methods and criteria of distinguishing between “Us” and “Them” have a cultural character. They form complex traits of socio-cultural features which specify the group

definition, thereby setting boundaries and symbolic borders between their members and strangers. Allport (1958, pp. 17-18) said:

“Everywhere on the earth we find a condition of separateness among groups. People mate with their own kind. They eat, play, reside in homogeneous clusters. They visit their own kind, and prefer to worship together. Much of this automatic cohesion is due to nothing more than convenience. There is no need to turn to out-groups for companionship. With plenty of people at hand to choose from, why create for ourselves the trouble of adjusting to new languages, new food, new cultures, or to people of a different educational level?”

The attitudes toward the other nations are shaped as well by national stereotypes. The term “stereotype” was first introduced to social sciences by Lippmann in 1922. It was defined as the “pictures in our head” which come to mind when thinking about a particular social group (Lippmann, 1946). According to Lippmann, all people have “mental images” of the outside world, which attempt to simplify the ambiguous information that comes from the outside environment. In other words, Lippmann described stereotypes as the human tendency to perceive people or objects as having similar attributes based on their common characteristics. Allport (1958, p. 187) defined stereotypes as “primarily rationalizers”: “Whether favorable or unfavorable, a stereotype is an exaggerated belief associated with a category. Its function is to justify (rationalize) our conduct in relation to that category.”

National stereotypes are structures containing some conviction relating to the certain national group which may or may not reflect reality. This

system includes beliefs concerning those properties of human beings that may vary across nations, such as appearance, language, food, habits, psychological traits, attitudes, values, etc. Stereotypes of neighboring nations have their specificity compared to other stereotypes, as they are formed under the direct influence of geopolitical factors and have an ethnical and political nature. Due to the geographic proximity and possibility of contacts, there are often much more stereotypes about neighboring countries than about distant ones. The proximity of the countries raises the specter of conflict between them, which in turn reinforces stereotypes and prejudices towards the neighboring states and their respective ethnicities. The intensity of stereotypes is directly dependent on the state of balance - the more it is disturbed, the greater are the stereotypes and prejudices. (Lazari & Rogińska, 2006). The history of the coexistence of the East Slavic states provides a very solid example of it. The lack of political stability in historical relations between Poland and Russia, as well as the dominant role of the Russian Empire towards Poland, served as a basis for a generally negative perception of Russians. Similar attitudes spread also on onto the Belarusians and Ukrainians, putting them into the same national group. That play an important role in the formation and expression of national identity and political interests.

Present research is decided to the attitudes of Poles toward their three eastern neighboring nations: Russians, Ukrainians, and Belarusians. "Attitude" was explained by Jung (1971) as the "readiness of the psyche to act or react in a certain way". In present research "attitude" is understand as an expression of favor or disfavor toward a person. Attitudes are generally characterized by a relative stability over time.

The target nations - Russians, Ukrainians, and Belarusians - were chosen for different reasons. All of them, and especially Russians, have had rich historical contacts with Poland, during which conflict often occurred. Historically, those countries were part of the same political entities as Poland, either in part or in entirety. Sometimes their territories belonged to the Polish Republic, other times to the Russian Empire, or after World War II, to the same political bloc. Nowadays, Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus are three different countries, but are often seen as very similar to each other (if not identical). Poland has quite a long border with Ukraine and Belarus on the east, and a bit shorter one with Russia on the north (Kaliningrad region). However, one can still find instances in the media, or hear from other people, that Poland has a border with Russia on the east, which are in fact is the border with Ukraine and Belarus nowadays - the former border with the Soviet Union. A large number of inhabitants from those countries live in Poland today. Another reason is their relative cultural and linguistic similarity with Poland, yet different political interests. The field of interest in the present research includes the generalized attitude toward representatives of three separated nations: Russian, Ukrainian, and Belarusian. The idea is to test if those nations are still seen as very similar to each other after more than twenty years of dissolution of the Soviet Union.

Systematic research conducted by public opinion research center in Poland shows that attitudes toward Eastern Europeans in Poland are, generally, rather negative, and worse than those regarding many other nations (CBOS, 2013)\*. Among the nations most liked by Poles in 2013 were Czechs (51%), Slovaks, (48%), English (47%), and Italians (46% of respondents

declared their sympathy toward them). Russians, Ukrainians, and Belarusians were among the least liked nations in the list. Thus, 31 % of Poles declared their sympathy toward Russians and Ukrainians, and 30% toward Belarusians, which is only more than the sympathy expressed toward Egyptians, Jews (both 28%), Serbs, Chinese (both 27%), Vietnamese (25%), Palestinians, Turkish (both 24%), Romanian (21%), and Roma people (20%). However, in the perspective of the last twenty years, the attitude of Poles toward the majority of the nations under investigation has been changed toward a more positive meaning.

Invariably during the last two decades, Poles declared sympathy to those nations which provided them with a positive reference group, determined the level of their aspirations and ambitions, and represented the world to which Poles would like to belong. The friendly feeling of Poles rose to those countries whose level of economic and social development is higher than that of Poland. Additional factors include cultural proximity, historical and current events, the socio-political situation, and personal experience through the vacations and migratory work of Poles. The rich Western world comprised the group of nations which were viewed most favorably by Poles. However, several nations which had experienced communist regimes in the past also belong to this group – Czechs, Slovaks, Hungarians, and Croatians (CBOS, 2013). Greeks and Germans are in the middle of the attitude scale, which is probably the outcome of some economic problems (in case of Greece) and difficult historical background (in case of Germany). On the other hand, there are nations which are not as favorably viewed by Poles. They are generally characterized by lower socioeconomic

development than that in Poland. The majority of nations in this group belongs to post-communist states and/or is situated outside of Europe.

Regardless of the relative cultural and linguistic similarities between Poland and the target states, those nations are mostly portrayed in a negative light. They are associated with historical conflicts, the unwanted past of having belonged to the USSR, low socioeconomic development, low status labor migrants arriving from those countries to Poland, violation of democracy and human rights, and other similar characteristics from which Poles want to differentiate and separate themselves. The qualitative research has shown that Russians, Ukrainians, and Belarusians are mainly associated with being similar to each other in the following characteristics: lazy, poor, improvident, undisciplined, messy, with a lack of manners, uneducated, alcohol abusing, backward, dirty, and conservative (Błuszkowski, 2005).

Among the nations of focus in this study, a much more significant role in the Polish historical discourse belongs to the Russians than to the other two nations. While Russians were a well-known nation to Poles for centuries, Ukrainians and Belarusians appeared much later as separate national groups. However, due to their common origin, their belonging to the USSR, the usage of the same language and alphabet, cultural similarities, and other factors, they were mostly seen as “Russians” or “Soviet” people throughout the time of Soviet history and later. There were a lot of examples of such “generalizations” of the eastern neighbors of Poland in the past, and even nowadays there is a tendency to see Russians, Ukrainians, and Belarusians as similar or even the same nations. A major

difficulty in this study is the fact that a large number of Poles find these people indistinguishable and identify all of the inhabitants of the former USSR with Russians. Expressing opinions about Russians, many Poles really mean the inhabitants of the former USSR, especially those which are similar culturally and linguistically.

Demographical variables also influence people's attitudes toward the other nations. Thus, quite typically, in Poland the level of education of the respondents, as well as their income level, positively correlated with the level of sympathy declared toward the other nations. Men declared their antipathy toward the other nations slightly more often than women. Inhabitants of the rural areas less often declared sympathy toward the other nations, however their level of antipathy is similar to the average. Delving deeper, the research also showed an interesting correlation between the level of religious piety and the phenomenon of interest. Thus, those people who participate in religious practices several times per week, as well as those who do not participate at all, have a more favorable attitude toward foreigners than those who participate once per week. In the case of political orientation, a positive attitude is more often expressed by people identified with leftist parties, and less often by people who are politically indifferent. The perception of the other nations by different generations of Poles also varies. People under 65 years old more often declared their sympathy, as well as antipathy, toward the other nations (CBOS, 2013).

The attitude of Poles toward their eastern neighboring nations is of higher importance due to political and economic reasons. Poland's government

invests much effort in its relations with its eastern neighbors; the Polish mass media pays attention to the various kinds of interactions between those states and Poland. However, there is still some tension in terms of Poland's relations with each of the aforementioned states. Due to this fact, the research into the contemporary attitudes of Poles toward Russians, Ukrainians, and Belarusians is an issue of considerable sociological and crucial political significance.

### **Research questions:**

- 1) What are the main associations with Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus and their nations?
- 2) What is the general attitude toward Russians, Ukrainians, and Belarusians?
- 3) Are there any differences (and, if yes, what) in the perception of Russians, Ukrainians, and Belarusians?

### **Methods**

Focus group interviews were chosen as a research technique to obtain information about the basic opinions and attitudes of Polish students toward Russians, Ukrainians, and Belarusians. This method was first used in the 1940s by Merton and Kendall (1946) and was originally called "focused" interviews. Nowadays, focus group interviews are widely used in sociology, psychology, and other social sciences. A focus group is a technique of qualitative research in which a group of people are asked about their feelings, opinions, beliefs, impressions about some product, event, person, etc. The participants within the same group should have

some information about the topic of the interview, have similar socioeconomic characteristics, be in the similar age group, and feel comfortable about the topic of the interview. The advantage of focus groups is the fact that it provides rich and detailed information about the chosen issue in the participants' own words. Respondents may also bring up any other topics on their own volition, should they find it relevant toward the question at hand. The group dynamic and social interaction between the group members often allowed deeper and richer information than those obtained from one-to-one interviews (Thomas, et al, 1995). Focus group interviews were chosen as the method for the present research as they can produce a large set of rich and detailed data in a relatively short time, while findings may be applied in the design of further quantitative research. However, the results of focus group interviews are limited in terms of their generalization to a larger population.

### **Participants**

In total, 19 participants, among whom were 9 female and 10 male students, took part in three focus group interviews. All participants were aged from 18 to 26 years old at the moment of research. Such an age limit enables one to obtain the opinions of the young generation of Poles who were raised in the post-communist context and do not have their own memories about World War II, the Soviet period in Poland, and other historical events which may influence attitudes regarding Russians, Ukrainians, and Belarusians in a negative way. Participants were recruited among Polish students studying at various universities in Warsaw. Participants were recruited from different fields of study, as it was supposed that all Polish

students, regardless of their field of study and interests, have some knowledge and opinions about their neighboring countries due to the geographical proximity of those countries, common history, mass media discussions dedicated to this topic, etc. In total, the interviews encompassed 9 students of the social and human sciences : philology (3 students), history (3 students), pedagogy (2 students), journalism (1 student); and 10 students of non-human or social sciences : biotechnology (3 students), physiotherapy (2 students), chemistry (2 students), computer graphic (1 student), logistic (1 student), informatics (1 student). It was supposed that the attitudes and opinions about Russians, Ukrainians, and Belarusians could differ between students of humanities and social sciences, and those of non-human or social science students (i.e. the exact sciences, medicine, etc.).

### **Procedure**

Three focus group interviews were conducted from December 2012 through February 2013. Each group was composed of 4 to 8 individuals. In total, 19 participants took part in the focus interviews. The interviews were conducted in a special room equipped with an audio recorder. The moderator of the focus interviews was a Polish native speaker. The researcher (non-Polish native speaker) did not wish to influence the responses and discourse via nonverbal signals and was a facilitator of the moderator and observed the process. The information concerning the age, gender, and field of study was collected from the participants. Questions were asked from more general to more specific ones, and were ordered by their importance in the agenda of the research. The questions were

relatively open, such that participants could refer to any aspect of the asked issue. In total, 10 questions were asked (the list of the questions is available in Appendix I). The interviews were audio recorded and entirely transcribed. Transcriptions were supplemented with additional observational data obtained during the interview. All of the participants agreed to participate in the interviews voluntarily. Most engaged in the interview with interest. Some of them demonstrated their general interest in the interview topic and gave detailed answers; however, others were not so interested and gave either short answers or had no opinion about the questions posed. Respondents were not emotionally engaged in the topic of interview, and they remained rather calm during the whole procedure of interviewing.

## **Results**

The majority of questions were related to the people, not to their given states. However, the participants mostly directed their answers to the states represented by those nations. For example, answering the question: "Which associations do you have with Ukrainians?" respondents answered: "I associate Ukraine with...", etc. That shows that the image of different nations is strongly connected and shaped by the image of their states.

Participants were able to list the majority of the nations of the former USSR. Participants mostly mentioned Russians as the first nation on the list and underline its importance in the Soviet Union. The most common answers were as follows:

*"I mainly associate Russians with the former Soviet Union. They were the ones... generally speaking, most of the great Soviet scientists were the Russians. The Russian language was compulsory..."*

After Russians, the most often listed were Ukrainians, Belarusians, Lithuanians, Latvians, Estonians, and Kazakhs. The first four countries are geographically close to Poland, while Kazakhstan is known for Poles as a destination for Poles deported during the Soviet times. However, some of the students of the exact sciences doubt the fact that Lithuania and Belarus both belonged to the former Soviet Union. Uzbeks, Tajiks, Georgians, Armenians, Azeri, Moldavians, Kirghiz, and Turkmen people were less often mentioned. Those nations are further geographically and were less known to the respondents. Participants also mentioned some nations which did not have a national state during the Soviet period, such as the Dagestani, Karabachos, Chechen, and Ossetian people, as well as the indigenous tribes living in the Far East. Some participants also associate with former Soviet Union Turks, Mongolians, Croatians, Czechs, and Slovaks – nations which respective countries did not belong to the USSR member states. Some of their represented countries were under Soviet influence, which may have blurred the differences between those countries and actual member states of the USSR. None of the participants associated Poles with the Soviet Union. Speaking about the Central Asian nations, respondents often mentioned one of the countries of the region and then said: "...and all other "stans". One of the group respondents had difficulty creating an adjective for the Uzbek nationality in the Polish language. That shows that Central Asian nations are not well known for them, and do not arouse much interest.

The opinions of respondents were quite diverse when it came to the similarities and differences between the former USSR member states. The majority of the respondents agreed that those nations were similar to one another. They believed that before entering the Soviet Union, those nations were different, but after they became member states, they unified a lot in terms of their political and social systems, religion, common officially used language, and propaganda. One of the participants said:

*“So, the Soviet Union was diverse, but became unified. To the extent that I think that at the end of its existence, the nations were unified.”*

Some of the respondents underlined that especially for the older generation of Poles, the member states of the former Soviet nations were seen as very similar to each other, which was not exactly the truth:

*“The generation of our parents believes that it is all very similar, so I've heard the opinion that “Russian” and “Soviet” people means the same, but, in practice, it looked a little different.”*

Some of the respondents did not have an opinion about this issue, motivated by the fact that they did not live through that time and could not freely generalize about the past based on what they heard about it only recently. Nowadays, some of the former Soviet Union nations are still seen as similar to each other, however, to a much less extent than before. The majority also said that Slavic nations of the former Soviet Union are definitely different from the non-Slavic ones. The main factors behind perceived similarity between nations appeared to be geographical proximity as well as cultural and religious similarities. According to the

participants, the Eastern European countries of Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus seem to be especially similar to each other not only during the time of the Soviet Union, but today as well.

*“For me, Belarusians, Ukrainians, and Russians are very similar to one another. For me, they are actually one nation.”*

Ukraine and Belarus were strongly associated with Russia, which was seen as the dominant power in the region. Here are the most often repeated answers of the participants:

*“Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus... actually Russia is the main force there, and Ukraine and Belarus are still dependent to some extent on Russia. And the rest of the former Soviet states stay as if completely separated.”*

Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus are also mentioned as an Eastern bloc:

*“I think it was more similar to each other before, well, now it also seems as Belarus, Russia and Ukraine are under Russia, and the rest is definitely different. As before, it was the Soviet Union, well, most of the countries were similar to each other in those days. It is a little different now, times are changing, people are also changing for sure ... But Russia, Ukraine and Belarus, I think they are still like that in the Eastern bloc.”* (smiling ironically)

The Baltic States are seen as similar to Scandinavia, while the Caucasus region countries are similar to one another. Following are the most typical responses by the participants:

*"I know that similar are... Ukraine and Russia are similar ... and other countries like, I do not know - maybe Latvia and Lithuania, because they are next to each, these countries. Certainly Uzbekistan and Tajikistan are similar, and Armenia and Azerbaijan, because it is also next to each other, bordering countries". "All these "stans" ... all these Caucasus states, they are all Muslims and are associated for me with Arabs."*

Quite frequently respondents did not speak about separate countries, but united them into regions and spoke about the region as a whole, which is especially visible in the case of the Caucasus region countries. Most probably this is connected with low knowledge about those countries and, as a consequence, a low ability to distinguish those nationalities from one another.

Further respondents were asked about their associations with each of the countries and their nation: Belarus, Ukraine, and Russia. In order to avoid the dominant "Russian" stereotype influence, the nationalities were presented starting from those less known to Poles (Belarusians), followed by the more known (Ukrainians), and then by the most well-known to Poles (Russians). The majority of the participants described the above mentioned nations one by one and prescribed them distinctive (even though similar) characteristics. However, some of them spoke about those nations as a whole and described all using common characteristics. Detailed analyses of the obtained materials allowed one to differentiate several groups of the main associations of Polish students with Russians, Ukrainians, and Belarusians. Those groups were the following: historical events/figures, contemporary political situation/figures, current affairs,

economics, characteristics of people, and others (detailed list of provided associations with Russians, Ukrainians, and Belarusians is available in Appendix II).

In the historical events category, Russia was associated with the Soviet period: "World War II and Stalin's attack on Poland in 1939", "Stalin's cult of personality", "Russians as perpetrators and victims of the Soviet regime." No historical events from the previous epochs were mentioned. Russia was also associated with its present political and economic situation: "superpower", "censorship", "strong division between social classes". Both positive and negative characteristics were attributed to Russians. They are seen as "sympathetic", "very nice and friendly", "alcohol-abusing", "lazy", "having a tendency to steal", "similar to Poles". Not only did participants see similarities between Belarusians, Ukrainians, and Russians, but they also saw similarities between Poles and Russians:

*"The whole Russian mentality I like and dislike at the same time... But there are certain similarities between us and Russians."*

Ukraine was associated with historical figures and events: "Bohdan Khmelnytsky", "Polish roots in Western Ukraine, especially in Lvov", "problems with Ukrainians in Volhyn and Eastern Galicia after World War II", "Ukraine in the USSR", and others. However, those historical events did not result in negative attitudes toward the Ukrainians nowadays. They are seen rather from the perspective of past events while, for present relations, economic and political cooperation is more important:

*“Ukraine first of all reminds me of Bohdan Khmelnytsky. This is the first thought, I don't know why... And, as the previous speaker said, Lvov, there are strong Polish roots there. We are close to this nation. Well, we had some problems with them, generally speaking, especially after World War II, but somehow the Euro [Football Championship] brought us closer now”. “...I think that cooperation with Ukraine is going in the right direction...”*

Ukraine was also associated with its present political and economic situation, which is less developed in comparison with Western Europe: “economically and mentally less developed than Western countries”, “do not have such possibilities as Russia”, “a little better than in Belarus”, “political repressions”, “political division of Ukraine between West and East”, “difficult to obtain Polish visa”, “working migration to Poland”. Ukrainians were oftenly described in terms of their connection with Poland in the past: “they have a lot of Polish heritage, but are not always friendly to Poles, especially those from Western Ukraine”, “similar to Poles”, “under Polish influence”. Ukrainians didn't gain many characteristics of their own personality, just “more talkative than Russians”, “physically very strong people”, “they can drink a lot”.

Belarus was not associated with any historical events or figures. It was most of all associated with its present political situation, which was described in such terms as “censorship”, “propaganda”, “political game”, “political repressions”, “autocracy”, “lack of freedom of speech”, “difficulties in obtaining a Polish visa” as well as “very poor”. The following personality traits were prescribed to Belarusians: “have personal characteristics similar to Poles”, “ready to persevere throughout political

and economic difficulties”, “family-oriented”, “calm”, “stuck to each other, do not integrate with Poles much”, “want to escape to the West”, “they make an impression that they are absent”. One of the participants said:

*“But in general there are no major problems with them [Belarusians]. It is rather Poles who drink, fuss, while Belarusians ... you will not even notice them. These men do not actually interact more with the Poles, they are talking among themselves, and Belarusian girls, normally work and do not have much free time.”*

However, some participants were not able to provide distinctive characteristics to each of the mentioned nations, but instead prescribed them some common features in general: “strikes”, “poverty”, “corruption”, “migration to more developed countries for work”, “Orthodox or atheist”, “definitely have a different mentality than the West”.

Further respondents were asked if they see any differences between Russians, Ukrainians, and Belarusians, and whether it would be possible for participants to distinguish them from one another. The majority of respondents agreed that they will not be able to recognize representatives of those nations if they met them on the street. As well, they believe that Poles in general would rather not be able to recognize who is Russian, Ukrainian, or Belarusian solely from their physical characteristics or way of behaving. Here are some answers:

*“When I think about the East, I do not think about separate countries – I think just about the East as a whole. I don’t have any distinctions between them.”*

*“These nations are definitely a blur for me. They are associated with the same things.”*

About their physical appearance, Russians, Ukrainians, and Belarusians were seen as similar to each other, as well as to Poles, as they are all Slavs and live in a similar climate zone. In regards to their psychological characteristics, they also seem to be similar to each other, as well as to Poles, and share certain common characteristics, yet have some different personality traits:

*“Russians are dodgers, while Belarusians are ready to endure all the difficulties.”*

*“From my experience, Ukrainians are more open and talkative people. They identify themselves with Poles more than others... But, Russians, they are open too, but in another way.”*

Furthermore, participants had a tendency to compare the target nations with Western European ones and to emphasize differences in economic and mental development. Thus, Russians, Ukrainians, and Belarusians were seen as inferior in terms of their development when compared with the Western states.

Language was mentioned as a distinctive feature of each of those nations. However, participants said that the Russian, Ukrainian, and Belarusian languages have a common root and sound so similar to each other that it is hard to distinguish or recognize them. The majority of the participants agreed that they themselves, as well as Poles in general, will not be able to

distinguish between those languages unless they know some of them or have a linguistic talent. One of the students said:

*"For me the languages are all the same. When I hear these languages, I always think it is Russian."*

The opinions of respondents were quite diverse when it came to the feeling of being close or distant to those nations. Even though the majority of the participants mentioned similar personality traits between the target nations and Poles, only some of them feel close to Russians, Ukrainians, and Belarusians; most did not want to be associated with them. Regardless of the fact of relative cultural and linguistic similarity between Poles and Eastern Europeans, rich Western European nations with high economic and social development were definitely seen as closer to Poles. Answering the question: "Do you feel close or distant to those nations?" one of the participants said:

*"No, I don't really feel close to them. I feel more close in relation to the West. Because I do not think in such terms that once we were very involved with Russia and so on, but I think in terms of what is happening now. We are in the Union [European Union], I actually feel European rather than Polish, and so on. I rather do not identify myself with Russians, Belarusians, and Ukrainians, and they are not particularly close. In the West, it is more fun."*

However, the majority of participants feel closer to Ukrainians than to the other two nations and if they could choose a neighbor from among those three nations, they would rather choose a Ukrainian. They are motivated by geographical proximity, personal contacts with Ukrainians, and political

cooperation between the two states which is going in the right direction. Probably the fact that Ukraine has more potential than the other two countries as a candidate for European Union membership influenced the participants' decision. One of them said:

*"I think, Ukraine, we are all close to each other, but to tell you the truth, Ukraine is probably our best neighbor... Ukraine is the closest country to the place from where I came from, and I also met Ukrainians. I never met Belarusians in Poland. I haven't often met Russians, just some tourists."*

Confirming expectations, personal experience is very important in the process of the evaluation of the other nations. During the answers, respondents often referred to their personal contacts and experience. The majority of participants had met Ukrainian students in Poland or even lived with them in the same apartment communities. Several participants met Russian students or Russian tourists in Poland. Only some of the participants had met Belarusian students. Experience with the target countries by participants was limited. None of the participants mentioned that he/she visited one of these countries. In contrast with the European Union states which can be visited easily, Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus are not popular destinations for traveling, especially for young people. One of the reasons is the less attractive job market, as well as visa requirements for some of those states. However, the respondents would generally like to know some people from there and try to be open toward these "neighbors" despite the difficulties connected with the historical background:

*"However, among these nations, I do not know anyone personally and it's hard to decide. I can say that I'm trying to adjust and to be open to each*

*nation. But the history, and culture, and all that... after all is very deep-rooted. And even if I would like to be completely open, I cannot. If I would meet those people personally, and know them better, then I will become a friend. And then I will know at least how the real situation is in those countries, and not that which is described by the media."*

The main sources of knowledge about the target countries were media, history classes, and personal contacts:

*"...from the experience of the apartment community, or... at school we had a bit of history, and we know what we had more or less in the past, and the rest from television. And from these the stereotypes arise and we know the stereotypes, we learn those stereotypes. And it seems to me that TV is a place where most of the things are learned about others".*

As the conclusion, respondents were asked about common opinions, beliefs, or funny stories about the target nations. The majority of them did not provide any answer to this question. A few funny stories about Russians were mentioned. They were about the tension and rivalry between Poland and Soviet Russia, and portray Poles as brave fighters for their nation. Some other stories described Russians as people who have a tendency to steal. As a common belief, Ukrainians were seen as a very physically strong people. There were no funny stories about Belarusians. This nation is still less known for Poles, and is less shaped in terms of its national character.

Naturally, the students of the human and social science disciplines (such as history, journalism, pedagogy, etc.) were more easy and confident in

answering the questions and provided more detailed answers than those in more technical or scientific fields. However, there were no significant differences between those two groups of students in their attitude toward Russians, Ukrainians, and Belarusians.

## **Discussion**

The results obtained from the focus group interviews revealed participants' opinions, ideas, and attitudes toward the states of Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus and their people. The aggregated associations in connection with each of these were not so large, which suggests a rather low level of interest and knowledge of the participants. Definitely, there were many more associations with the countries than with their respective people. The image of Russians, Ukrainians, and Belarusians was shaped through characteristics linked to their respective countries, especially the current economic and political situations therein. Those countries in general were seen as less developed than Poland, and were mainly associated with strikes, corruption, an oppressive political system, and poverty. Russians were seen as the dominant country in the region in terms of politics and economy, not only during the USSR period, but also nowadays. Ukraine and Belarus are also very strongly associated with the former Soviet Union. None of the participants associated Poland with the former Soviet Union. However, the interviewed students seemed to be quite free of the old national stereotypes which were so deeply rooted in Polish national history, especially regarding Russians. Some events concerning Polish-Russian and Polish-Ukrainian history were mentioned. Nevertheless, the participants did not have a tendency to perceive the

target nations through the prism of the historical events that happened between those nations and Poles in the past. In spite of the rich historical contacts of Poles with all of the nations under investigation, young Poles are rather thinking in terms of the future. There were no adjectives portraying Russians as aggressors, occupiers, rude, hostile, etc. Even though Ukrainians, especially those from the Western part of the country, were mentioned as not always friendly to Poles, they didn't gain any negative personal characteristics. No one nation under investigation was characterized as nationalistic or dangerous for Poland and Poles. This is probably the result of the national and international identification of young people. In the interviews, several participants mentioned that they identify themselves as Europeans rather than as Poles. They try to be open and friendly toward other groups, while historical memory and conflicts seem to be of secondary importance. The participants displayed significantly fewer associations with current events, society, and culture; the majority of their associations concern economic and political development.

The general attitude toward the target nations is not clear. Participants revealed many positive and negative associations. Russians were mostly seen as nice, sympathetic people who are able to drink a lot; Ukrainians – talkative, not always friendly toward Poles, and able to drink a lot; Belarusians – ready to persevere through political and economic difficulties. Common personality traits between Poles and all of the nations under investigation were often mentioned. However, participants rather did not feel close to them – Western European countries are closer to Poland than Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus. Respondents very often mentioned their personal experience with the people as the important

factor which creates their opinions about other nations. Personal experience enables direct communication and the obtaining of information about the country and people from a primary source. According to the participants, personal contacts seem to be a more influential source of information than mass media, history books, and other sources. Moreover, the majority of participants said that they did not have much experience with the nations under investigation.

The other tendency is that countries with more developed economic and political systems are seen in more of a positive light than less developed ones. Economic development seems to surpass cultural similarity as a factor influencing the formation of attitudes toward the other nations. The nations under investigation are characterized by economic and social achievements lower than those in Poland. Such a distribution of sympathy and antipathy is connected with an image of a rich and developed "West" contrasted with the poor, less developed "East". While the term "West" suggests distinctive countries and nations with a high level of political, economic, and cultural achievements, the term "East" is often used as a general definition of the countries which are less developed politically, economically, and culturally, and which also display relative decreases in democracy and human rights. The differences between them are blurred, as well as their geographical borders.

According to the participants, there are many more things that unite Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus than those which separately distinguish them. Some respondents said they see no differences between Russians, Ukrainians, and Belarusians at all, and think about them as a single entity in

general. However, there were some distinctive features prescribed to each of the nations. Russians abuse alcohol, but are nice and friendly people. Ukrainians are mostly associated with Polish heritage, and with the fact that they do not always have a positive attitude toward Poles. Belarusians were mostly described in terms of their relations to their political system - calm, loyal, persevering. However, Ukrainians were chosen by the majority of participants as the people with whom they would prefer to live next to. Ukrainians and Russians are definitely more known for Poles than Belarusians. In Polish history, Belarusians have appeared as a separate national group much later than Russians or Ukrainians. The image of Belarusians is still not well-shaped in terms of their national characteristics. In general, the differences between the target nations are blurred. The reason can again be attributed in part to the low level of interest in those countries in comparison with the European Union states. Additionally, Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus are not popular destinations for traveling, especially for young people. One of the reasons is a less attractive job market, as well as the visa requirements in some cases. As a result, these states lie beyond the primary interests of the majority of the participants in this research. The exception can be Ukraine, which is mentioned as a good partner for Poland in the future.

### **Remarks**

\* Results of the research report „Contemporary Attitudes of Poles toward Other Nations”, conducted by the Public Opinion Research Center (Centrum Badania Opinii Społecznej, CBOS) in 2013 on a representative random sample of adult Poles. The survey encompassed Polish attitudes toward

the following nationalities: Czechs, Slovaks, Italians, English, Spanish, French, Norwegians, Swiss, Hungarians, Swedes, Americans, Dutch, Austrians, Danes, Belgians, Irish, Japanese, Finns, Croats, Germans, Greeks, Lithuanians, Bulgarians, Georgians, Russians, Belarusians, Jews, Armenians, Chinese, Ukrainians, Egyptians, Serbs, Vietnamese, Turks, Libyans, Romanians, Roma, and Arabs.

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## Appendices

### Appendix I. Focus group interview questions

- 1) Which nations do you associate with the former Soviet Union?
- 2) Were the nations of the former Soviet Union similar to each other or even the same? In which sense, and to what extent?
- 3) Are they similar to each other nowadays? All of them, or only some of them? Do the Slavic nations of former Soviet Union differ from the non-Slavic ones (eg. Uzbeks, Armenians, Georgians, Estonians, and other non-Slavic)?
- 4) Which associations do you have with Belarus, Ukraine, and Russia? What are the personal features of Belarusians, Ukrainians, and Russians?
- 5) If you would meet them on the street, do you think it would be difficult or easy to differentiate Belarusians, Ukrainians, and Russians?
- 6) What are the differences between Belarusians, Ukrainians, and Russians?
- 7) According to you, how different are their languages? Could you recognize them?

- 8) Do you feel close or distant to those nations? If you could choose your neighbor among those three nations, whom would you choose, and whom would you not?
- 9) What are your sources of knowledge about Belarusians, Ukrainians, and Russians?
- 10) Is there anything else you would like to add about those nations – funny stories, beliefs, etc. about Belarusians, Ukrainians, and Russians?

**Appendix II . Which associations do you have with Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus and their people?**

Groups of associations	Russia	Ukraine	Belarus
Historical events/ figures	World War II and Stalin’s attack on Poland in 1939 Stalin’s cult of personality Russians were both perpetrators and victims of the Soviet regime	Bohdan Khmelnytsky Polish historical roots in Lvov Has a lot of Polish heritage Conflicts after World War II Belonging to the	Polish minority living in Belarus

		USSR	
Present political situation/ figures	<p>Censorship</p> <p>Propaganda</p> <p>Corruption</p> <p>Difficulties in obtaining Polish visa</p> <p>Geographically the largest country</p> <p>Plots, political intrigues</p> <p>Personification of Russia by Putin</p> <p>Big opposition groups in Russia</p> <p>Oppression of journalists</p>	<p>Censorship</p> <p>Political repressions</p> <p>Political division of the country between West and East</p> <p>Cooperation with Ukraine moving in the right direction</p>	<p>Censorship</p> <p>Propaganda</p> <p>Corruption</p> <p>Difficulties in obtaining Polish visa</p> <p>Political game</p> <p>Autocracy</p> <p>Death penalty is official</p> <p>Political repressions</p> <p>Oppression of journalists</p>
Other contemporary events	<p>Russian tourists come to Poland</p> <p>Arrest of punk group "Pussy Riot"</p>	<p>Euro Football Championship</p>	
Economic situation	<p>Huge possibilities</p> <p>Technical power</p> <p>Strong division</p>	<p>A little better than in Belarus</p> <p>Economically and</p>	<p>Poverty</p>

	<p>between social groups – one is either very rich or very poor</p> <p>Poor</p> <p>Rich</p>	<p>intellectually less developed than Western countries</p> <p>Doesn't have such possibilities as Russia does</p>	
<p>Characteristics of people</p>	<p>Want to live in Russia</p> <p>Drinking alcohol</p> <p>Russian mentality is similar to Polish one</p> <p>The whole Russian mentality is nice and not nice at the same time</p> <p>Nice people, but do not discuss politics much</p> <p>Very nice and friendly</p> <p>Lazy</p> <p>Having a tendency</p>	<p>Population is under Polish influence</p> <p>Western Ukrainians are not always positive toward Poland</p> <p>Physically very strong people</p> <p>Can drink a lot</p> <p>Leave their children and go for work abroad</p> <p>Talkative</p> <p>Don't know what to choose - the European Union or Russia</p>	<p>Loyalty to their government</p> <p>Stuck to each other, do not integrate with Poles much</p> <p>Rather not like Poles</p> <p>Want to escape to the West</p> <p>Have similar personality traits to Poles</p> <p>Ready to persevere throughout political and economic difficulties</p>

	<p>to steal</p> <p>Russians are closer to Ukrainians, but there are certain characteristics between Poles and Russians</p>		<p>Calm</p> <p>Make the impression that they are absent</p> <p>Have very light hair</p>
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RSC, Number 5, Issue 2, May 2013, pp. 150-185.

**Professional Plans of Ukrainian Students and Factors of Impact (By the Example of Kiev National Taras Shevchenko University)**

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**Abstract:** *This paper examines such important scientific problems as shaping of professional identity, formation of professional plans of students and impact factors that determine students' professional life-course strategies in conditions of fundamental changes that happen while shifting from education to occupational status. The research paper analyses the ways youth choose to construct an occupational identity within a particular social context with a focus on professional orientations, which appear to be one of the crucial elements of the individual life course strategy. Specifically, the paper explores professional plans of Ukrainian students with an emphasis on the following: student's life chances, professional plans, attitudes and values; orientations that shape the decision of getting the second higher education or*

*another degree. It concludes with presentations of: students' self-estimations of their own life chances, particularly occupational chances; perceived difficulties in getting their first jobs; main factors that predefine student's work place choice.*

**Keywords:** life course, professional identity, professional plans, socio-occupational status, life chance, Ukraine, students.

## **Introduction**

Study of professional orientations of the youth is one of the traditional areas of sociological research. Sociologists have paid much attention to the issue of professional self-determination of school and student youth, the prestige and attractiveness of the occupation among students of the Ukrainian population. A lot of researches are devoted to the problem of transition from education to the labour market, the problems of employment; factors that affect the professional orientation. However, the study of youth's professional plans after the graduation as well as the determination of the impact factors has not been given enough attention. This is still an actual scientific problem, as the situation on the labour market and the market of educational services is constantly changing. During the last decades the interrelation between education and occupational status has changed fundamentally. Today the main characteristics of a career include: fragmentation and fluctuation; which are determined by unstable and permanently changeable situation on labour and education markets. The conducted research supports the idea

that lineal occupational course (getting professional education – work – retirement) has become indistinctive and has modified into cyclic one (getting education – work – unemployment – re-skilling – work – retirement). Occupational plans are specified through the whole labour career: beginning from getting school education then higher education and then during person's occupational life. The situation on labour market and educational services changes, that's why the problem of professional identity shaping, formation of professional plans of graduate students and impact factors is currently central scientific problem within research on modern society. In this paper I'd like to draw attention to the process of how occupational choice by youth is actually happening influenced by contemporary transition conditions of the Ukrainian society: essential economic and political changes, transformation of professional structure, dynamic shifts in value orientations, changes in occupational prestige, globalization processes on labour and education market. There is a tendency that person's occupational choice isn't final for all life. The situation on labour market changes all the time and to be able to compete person should always study, improve knowledge and skills, and be ready for professional mobility.

In the frame of the above mentioned problematic I aim in this paper to cover the following:

- Analyze professional plans of Ukrainian students with an emphasis on the main life strategies young people choose to follow.

- Make a representative picture of student's life chances, professional plans, attitudes and values; orientations that concern getting the second higher education or another degree.
- Identify the impact factors that influence the formation of occupational identity (factors that I study are gender, age, place of residence, parent's socio-professional, educational and economic status).

### **Youth's Professional Plans and Orientations: Life Course Perspective**

There are a number of debates within the field of youth studies, i.e. a question of fragmented transitions, the relevance of a generation's theory and/ or the impact of 'choice biographies' that are relevant for my research. At the centre of all these approaches is a concept of life course. As a concept, a life course is defined as "a sequence of socially defined events and roles that the individual enacts over time" (Elder 1998: 22). These events and roles do not necessarily proceed in a given sequence, but rather constitute the sum total of the person's actual experience. Thus the concept of life course implies age-differentiated social phenomena distinct from uniform life-cycle stages and the life span. Life span refers to duration of life and characteristics that are closely related to age but that vary little across time and place. Life course perspective refers to a multidisciplinary paradigm for the study of people's lives, structural contexts, and social change. In particular, it directs attention to the powerful connection between individual lives and the historical and socioeconomic context in which these lives unfold. However we should mention that the boundaries

of childhood, youth and adulthood are indistinct and changing in modern society. There is a trend towards the de-standardization of the life course. Moreover, nowadays Institutions such as the family, community and employment become more fragmented, personal life comes to appear less predictable. Traditional boundaries around the biography break down and are replaced by a multiplication of social rules and guidelines that are very changeable and inconsistent. In modern societies we more often could face an issue of choice biography. Normal biographies (predictable and linear move from youth to adulthood, which is marked by engagement in paid work, education and household formation) are replaced by choice biography (this type of biography is constructed personally, such biography is more open to "choice"). In this case it is important to know how young people make choices about their future, make sense of their experience and shape their identity in the face of more complex and protracted transitions to adulthood and in an "subcultural" and individualized world. Under the concept of life course I analyze professional orientations of students. Occupational choice is one of the most important and determinative stages in human's life course. At this point, becomes a problem of professional self-determination. Choices determine the location of the individual in the social division of labour, the extent to which this type of work will ensure the satisfaction of material and spiritual needs of individuals, and the use of his abilities and inclinations. Furthermore, professional choice is crucial to the belonging of the individual with a particular social group that correlates with certain class within class structure of the society. For example, in one way or another socio-professional group defines particular socio-economic status

of a person and shapes his/her specific life-style typical for other group members. The occupational choice plays also a significant role in human life. In the way of professional self identity, individual makes a lot of choices: select the types of education and work, specific jobs, etc. Nature of their involvement in a particular situation is usually very individual and in many ways depends on the maturity of the individual as a subject of choice. It's important to mention that occupational choice is not only an individual but social problem and that is the reason why it is important factor of social adulthood of the individual. Career selection turns to be one out of many important choices students are making in determining future plans. This decision undoubtedly impacts and leads them throughout their lives. The essence of who students are will revolve around what students want to do with their life-long work.

Supportive to these ideas is O. Ivashenko research dedicated to the analysis of interrelation between professional education and employment. Data from this study has driven to the assumption of the wide-spread inconsistency between the educational degree and the occupation and sector of employment among currently employed graduates. In 2002 only 30% of respondents demonstrated complete consistency between their degree and the current employment. In 2006 the number of such respondents has slightly declined and reached 28,2%, while the share of those working not according to their degree was reasonably increasing and has reached 32,3% in 2005, compared to the share of 30% in 2002. At the same time one third of the interviewed employees in general were not able to define their work according to the degree of the obtained education. The trend of inconsistency between educational degree and the occupation and

sector of employment among currently employed graduates has revealed gradually upward tendency (Ivashenko 2006: 54).

Another research that worth mentioning and clearly matters for my study is Sokurianska's research. This research was conducted in the 1996-1997 and 1999-2000 among students. This fundamental study looked at the following: (1) the dynamics of the professional values of the Ukrainian students in the time of the independence of Ukraine; (2) students' opinion about qualities that are necessary to a professional; (3) attitudes of students to the chosen degree and specialty; (4) the intentions of the youth in relation to the activity after the graduation of high school; (5) activities in which the students are going to work after graduating from high school; students opinion of employment prospects after graduating from the university. Analyzing the problems of the professional development of future workers, researchers are pointing to such an important factor of students professional self-determination as the choice of areas of future activity. It touches the issues on the efficiency of higher education system in Ukraine and its ability to create and shape professional orientation of future workers (Sokurianska 2006: 373-394).

### **Methods and Data**

The data for this paper are drawn from quantitative research conducted by the research laboratory of Sociology Department at Kiev National Taras Shevchenko University in Ukraine since 2008. These researches are devoted to study value orientations, life style and student's different life

spheres. Specifically my research was built on the body of data received in autumn 2010 year. Aim of this research was to study student's opinion about training process at the university and student's extra-curricular activities. General totality are 19548 students. The sample is multistage. The sample was composed out of 1274 students. In the sample are students of 1-4 academic curriculum and graduate students. In this research was used questionnaire survey.

In an attempt to understand how the professional plans of students are constructed I examined a set of variables to explore the sphere of future activity, estimate student's own life chances that concern their future employment, imagination about channels of searching a work after graduation, estimate factors, that determinative in job search, potential demands of employer that can influence the chances to get a job, orientations that concern getting the second higher education or another degree.

## **Main Findings**

I'd like to present the socio-demographic portrait of the respondents. Among the respondents, female - 61.8% and male students - 38.2%; 75.8% are studying for state budget and 24.2%, are paying the contract for their studying. For the course of study respondents were grouped in two categories: junior students (the first, second and third year students) and graduates (the fourth and fifth year students; students doing master's degrees). Preliminary analysis showed that those representatives of these

groups have similar views regarding their professional plans. Among surveyed respondents, these groups are distributed as follows: representatives of the junior students group comprised 59.1% and graduates – 40.9%.

Analyzing student's professional self-determination we should refer to such a factor as the choice of future employment. I can conclude that among the most attractive for students employment spheres after graduation appear to be the private economy sector (83.4%): students chose the position of opening their own business and working in commercial organization and continue with studies (select position-traveling abroad for the purpose of studying or employment and continue postgraduate study). This strategy was preferred by 71.7% of students. Less attractive for students looked the opportunity of employment in state organizations (26.7%) and get an education in other specialization (23.3%). Desire to work in the scientific and research institution expressed 14.9% of respondents and not working according to the obtained degree - 14.4% of respondents (Table 1 to be placed about here).

Furthermore, research findings revealed students' thoughts and perhaps stereotypes about possible difficulties on the way of finding a job. Half of the respondents (50.8%) imply that they will have difficulties finding work. Perhaps this is connected with the current situation on the labour market with regard to their specialization; for the reason that an employer wants to hire a qualified worker with a certain experience. 29.1% of the students are more optimistic about their future employment, they think they will not

have serious difficulties while looking for a job (Table 2 to be placed about here).

Analysis of the way youth imagine channels that they could use looking for a job and employment shows that the majority of youth will rely on their social networks to find a good workplace. Among the most effective channels students mentioned: help of friends and relatives (66.0%) and Internet (58.0%). The plans to use advertisements in the media and services of employment agency demonstrate 32.8% and 26.8% students respectively. The least attractive for students is the state channel: planning looking for a job through the exchange of labor - 17.6% of respondents have chosen this strategy (Table 3 to be placed about here).

Among the factors that can affect the choice of place of employment, respondents point the possibility of career growth (60.5%), salary (46.4%) and stable remuneration of labor (44.0%). To a lesser extent while looking for work students will pay attention to the international ties of the organization and the prestige of the organization (29.2% and 22.1% respectively). The same thoughts respondents have about the influence on their choice of such factors as the availability of social package and flexible work schedule (12.3% and 12.2% accordingly) (Table 4 to be placed about here).

While estimating their own chances of getting a job, students believe that employer's most important requirements will be the knowledge of foreign languages (69.8%); the level of knowledge (63.3%); the prestige of the University you have graduated from (60.7%); the previous work experience (59.0%) and the personal qualities of the individual (54.5%).

Success in studying and informal contacts to a lesser extent may affect future employment (29.0% and 14.5%) (Table 5 to be placed about here). More than one third of respondents plan to obtain a second higher education. Among the potential barriers on the way on getting the second higher education students pointed out the lack of free time (41.0%) and the lack of necessary funds (30.9%). 32.8% of students believe that there is no reason that could prevent them from getting the second higher education (Table 6/Table 7 to be placed about here).

For my study it's important to consider the role of objective factors in the formation of the students' professional plans including residence, form and course of study, socio-professional and material status of the parents. The professional plans depending on the number of the above-mentioned variables are revealing the following trends.

(1) Professional plans for women and men for most of the areas are similar. But to get an education in other specialization for women is larger than the similar intentions of male students (27.3% and 16.8%). The desire to go abroad to study or work also often is mentioned by women (42.5%) than men (34.0%).

(2) Junior and graduate groups of respondents are pretty close in their professional plans. However, graduates often focused on working in commercial organization (44.8% and 35.5%). This can be related to a positive experience of their friends in the private sector, higher salaries, and the opportunity of career growth, compared to well-known experiences at state organizations. In contrast, the desire to go abroad with a purpose of study or work, most often is mentioned by junior students

group (45.0%; 31.3%). Thoughts about working not according to the obtained university degree also differ among graduate and junior students' groups: graduate students more often than younger students have such intention (20.9% and 10.0%), that might indicate the frustration of graduate students in their occupation.

As one of my supposal was that such factor as a place of residence influence on students' professional plans, I will set the focus on the difference between students' professional plans depending on the place of residence. Students who originally came not from Kyiv are more focused on continuing education, education for another of degree. Students – from Kyiv are more confident in the fact that there is no reason that could prevent them from getting the second higher education (37.0% 29.0%).

Depending on the form of the study, professional plans are following: students learning on the budget are more oriented on education and research career (continue postgraduate study (36.0% and 21.0%), traveling abroad for the purpose of study or employment (41.0% and 34.0%), work in scientific-research institution (17.7% and 6.0%). At the same time, about two-thirds of the students – contracted (paid education) are focused on starting their own business (Table 8 to be placed about here).

Based on the analysis of students' professional plans depending on the education of parents and socio-professional status, it was found that students from less-educated families - representatives of the working class and children of unemployed are more focused on research activities (18.7% and 13.0%). At the same time, respondents who belong to the

middle class and children, whose parents have higher education, are more focused on starting their own business (47.2% and 38.0% accordingly).

The financial capital of the family plays a significant role in shaping the expectations of young people, their professional plans. Depending on the financial status of the families I can mark some significant differences. It is interesting that students, who come from families with socio-economic status which is below the average, are more focused on research activities (doing PhD is often included in their plans) in comparison with student's with socio-economic status which is average (40.0% and 29.0%) and working in scientific-research organizations (19.0% and 13.0%). Almost half of the respondents, who come from families that have mean - reasonable income are going to start their own business (Table 9 to be placed about here).

## **Conclusion**

Today impossible for individual once and for all take position on the labour market and in the social structure. In contemporary society, which can be defined as "risk society" (Beck, Burd'e, Bauman) "everyday social and economic conditions are characterized by instability and uncertainty, and therefore living standarts, social position, acknowledgement of profitableness and right to dignity may disappear and without warnings" (Bauman 2002: 107). Today the main characteristics of a career include fragmentation and fluctuation, which are determined by unstable and permanently changeable situation on labour and education markets. There

is a tendency that person's occupational choice isn't final for all life. Occupational plans are shaped through all labour career: starting with getting school education than work or higher education and than during person's occupational life. The situation on labour market is all the time changing and to be able to compete a person should always study, improve knowledge and skills, be ready for professional mobility. People who are able quickly adapt to permanently social and professional conditions are perceived as examples of success in achieving the desired social status.

It's important for the individual a constant creativity of his work biographies: the risk of changes in the work place and even radical changes in the profession. Modeling life prospects should not include plans for a linear career (receiving the diploma of education, stable employment in the same job for all the life), but the employment strategy of cyclic career (education - work - unemployment - re-skilling - work - and so on). "Paradoxically situation of postmodern is that it transforms ideal adaptation in lack" (Bauman 2002: 173). In a winning situation today the one who is not looking for a stable position and prospects, but those, who is ready for a permanent uncertainty and instability of the social and economic position, take both the natural environment of existence (Simonchuk 2003: 24).

This study has revealed the following trends. The most attractive for Ukrainian students are two strategies. First - employment in private sector. This strategy have chosen 83.0% of respondents. It is maybe, in opinion of the students, the private sphere of economics can ensure worthy payment of work and career perspectives. Another strategy - the continuation of

study. This strategy chose 72.0% students, motivation which, maybe, is connecting with understanding necessities of continuous study to be competitive on labor-market in modern society. Less attractive appears to be work for state institution, in research institution, the education behind another degree and work not behind profession. Such orientations have 15.0% - 25.0% respondents. Analyzing the concept of students concerning possible difficulties of employment it can be stated that half of respondents envisage, that would have difficulties with the work search. Two of the one third of students are expecting on assistance of familiar and relatives and plan to use the Internet searching for a job. Less popular are such channels, as advertisement in mass-media, recruiting agencies and services of employment. Among the factors that can affect the student's choice of employment, respondents point the possibility of career growth (60.5%), rate of wages (46.4%) and stable remuneration of labor (44.0%). Lesser extent, choosing the work, students will pay attention to the international ties of the organization and the prestige of the occupation (29.2% and 22.1%). The same thoughts have respondents about the influence on their choice of such factors as the availability of social package and flexible work schedule (12.3% and 12.2%). Estimating chances of getting a job, students believe that the most important requirements of future employer will be knowledge of foreign languages; the level of knowledge, the prestige of the University, previous work experience and the personal qualities of the individual. To obtain a second higher education focused more than a third of respondents. Among the potential barriers on the way to getting the second higher education, students mark the lack of free time and the lack of necessary funds. At the same time one-third of students believe that there

is no reason that could prevent them from getting the second higher education.

Under this research the impact on students' professional plans of such factors as gender, course, place of residence, socio-professional and material status of their parents were analyzed. There is no significant gender difference in views concerning employment, male and female for many of the items are quite similar. However, I should note that significantly more women than men, intends to go abroad for the purpose of study and employment (34.0% and 43.0%) get an education for the another of the specialty (27.0% and 17.0%).

Professional plans of junior and graduate students have a great difference. Graduates are more likely than members of the junior courses think that will have difficulties finding a work, which would really correspond their needs. It should be noted that twice as many graduate students are not going to work on their specialty, that talks about a possible disappointment in chosen specialty. About two-thirds of graduates, one of the main requirements from employer point out previous work experience, and about the same number of respondents of junior courses, one of the following requirements denote the prestige of the finished University. This difference in my opinion may be connected with the current experience of a job search by students of graduate courses, and the junior courses – its lack of. Analyzing students professional plans depending on the education of parents and socio-professional status, like it was expected, respondents who belong to the middle class and children, who's parents have higher education, focused more on opening their own

business and students from less-educated families, representatives of the working class and children of unemployed more focused on research activities. In fact students professional plans depend on parent's social and class background, particularly education, occupation and economic status. The problem of youth's construction an occupational identity within a particular social context, professional plans is especially relevant for today, as the formation of occupational identity appears to be one of those crucial phases in person's life course, which includes final choice of the occupation and professional orientations specification. Such choice determines the place of a young professional in socio-occupational structure.

**Table 1****Professional plans of students after graduating**

(% respondents chose a particular position on each line)

<i>Professional plans</i>	
To open own business	44,1
To go abroad for studying or work	39,4
Occupational work in commercial organization	39,3
To continue study	32,3
Occupational work in state institution	26,7
Get an education in other specialization	23,3
Occupational work in scientific-research institution	14,9
Work, but not with a degree in that specialization	14,4
I'm not thinking about that	5,8
Another	2,1

**Table 2****Estimation of students' prospects for finding a job after graduation**

(% respondents chose a particular position on each line)

<i>Estimation of the prospects for their own</i>	
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I'm going to have difficulties finding work, which would really feet in with my needs	37,4
I'll have a little trouble finding work	29,1
I don't know	20,1
I'm going to have trouble finding work, which would really fit in with my education	9,1
I will have significant difficulties finding work	4,3

**Table 3**

**Channels of finding a job after graduation**

(% respondents chose a particular position on each line)

<i>Channels of finding a job</i>	
With the help of friends, family	66,0
Using the Internet database	58,0
By using the advertisement in the media	32,8
With the employment agency	26,8
Through the labor exchange	17,6
Another	8,8

**Table 4**

**Factors that can affect student's choice of place of work after graduation**

(no more than three variants of answers), %

<i>Factors</i>	
The possibility of career growth	60,5
The size of the salary	46,4
Stable remuneration of labor	44,0
International ties of the organization	29,2
The prestige of the organization	22,1
The prestige of the occupation	16,4
Social package (benefits and pensions, paid vacation, etc)	12,3
A flexible work schedule/part-time work	12,2
Working in the team	8,0
Official figuration to the state of employees	7,6
The official payroll management	6,8
Target focus	6,6
Ability to work independently of the collective	5,9
Close location to the place of residence	5,1

Work in the office	4,3
Offer a long-term contract	3,2
The presence of relatives, friends that are already working in this institution	2,6
The opportunity to work at home	2,5
Family and acquaintance's suggestions	2,3
Another	2,3

**Table 5**

**Possible requirements on the part of the employer that will affect the chances of getting students a work**

(% respondents chose a particular position on each line)

<i>The possible requirements of employers</i>	
Knowledge of foreign languages	69,8
Level of knowledge on a speciality	63,3
The prestige of the University you have finished	60,7
Previous work experience	59,0
Your personal qualities	54,5

Success in study	29,0
Informal contacts	14,5
Another	1,7

**Table 6****Students plans about getting a second higher education**

(% respondents chose a particular position on each line)

<i>Plans for a second higher education</i>	
Yes	45,2
No	27,2
I have been getting the second higher education	3,9
I don't know	23,7

**Table 7****Estimation of barriers about getting a second higher education**

(You can choose no more than three variants of answers),%

<i>The expected interference</i>	
The lack of free time	41,0
There is no reason that can prevent you from getting the second higher education	32,8
The lack of necessary funds	30,9
Difficult to answer	10,0
Another	4,0
There is no University in your city where you would like to get a second higher education	2,3

### Variables in data file

<b>The name of variable</b>	<b>Formulation of the question in questionnaire</b>
<i>Field of future work</i>	<p><b>What are you going to do after graduation? (choose no more than three variants of answers)</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Continue training in postgraduate study</li> <li>2. Work in the state organization</li> <li>3. Work in scientific-research institution</li> <li>4. Work in the commercial organization</li> <li>5. Work, but not by specialty</li> <li>6. Open your own business</li> </ol>

	<p>7. Get an education by another specialty</p> <p>8. Go abroad for studying or work</p> <p>9. I do not think so far about this</p> <p>10. Another _____</p>
<p><i>Estimation of student ' prospects for finding a job after graduation</i></p>	<p><b>Which of the following statements best suits your own prospects of finding a job after graduation?</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I'll have a little difficulties finding work</li> <li>2. I'm going to have difficulties finding work, which would really feet in with my needs</li> <li>3. I'm going to have trouble finding work, which would really fit in with my education</li> <li>4. I will have significant difficulties finding work</li> <li>5. I don't know</li> </ol>
<p><i>Channels of finding a job after graduation</i></p>	<p><b>How do you plan to find a job after graduation?</b> (choose all the options that suit your plans)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Through the exchange of labour</li> <li>4. Using the Internet database</li> <li>2. With the employment agency</li> <li>5. By using the advertisement in the media</li> <li>3. With the help of friends, family</li> <li>6. Another</li> </ol>

<p><i>Evaluation of students demands on the part of the employer that can affect their chances of getting a job</i></p>	<p><b>What factors most affect your choice of place of work after graduation?</b> (choose no more than three variants of answers)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. The possibility of career growth</li><li>2. Stable remuneration of labor</li><li>3. Social package (benefits and pensions, paid vacation, etc)</li><li>4. A flexible work schedule/part-time work</li><li>5. Work in the office</li><li>6. The prestige of the organization</li><li>7. Ability to work independently of the collective</li><li>8. Working in the team</li><li>9. The prestige of the occupation</li><li>10. Offer a long-term contract</li><li>11. Official figuration to the state of employees</li><li>12. Close location to the place of residence</li><li>13. The presence of relatives, friends that are already working in this institution</li><li>14. The official payroll management</li><li>15. International ties of the organization</li></ol>
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	<p>16. The size of the salary</p> <p>17. Family and acquaintance's suggestions</p> <p>18. Target focus</p> <p>19. The opportunity to work at home</p> <p>20. Another_____</p>
<p><i>Possible requirements on the part of the employer that will affect the chances of getting students a work</i></p>	<p><b>In your opinion, what are the requirements on the part of the employer will affect your chances of getting a job?</b> (choose all possible variants)</p> <p>1. The prestige of the University you have finished</p> <p>2. Success in study</p> <p>3. Previous work experience</p> <p>4. Level of knowledge on a specialty</p> <p>5. Informal contacts</p> <p>6. Your personal qualities</p> <p>7. Knowledge of foreign languages</p> <p>8. Another_____</p>
<p><i>Students plans about getting a second higher education</i></p>	<p><b>Tell me, please, are you planning get the second higher education?</b></p> <p>1. Yes</p> <p>2. No</p> <p>3. I have been getting the second higher education</p> <p>4. I don't know</p>

<p><i>Estimation of barriers about getting a second higher education</i></p>	<p><b>What barriers do you see on your way on getting the second higher education?</b> (choose no more than three variants of answers)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. There is no reason that can prevent you from getting the second higher education</li><li>2. The lack of necessary funds</li><li>3. The lack of free time</li><li>4. Bad attitude to the idea of getting second higher education from the sight of relatives and friends</li><li>5. There is no University in your city where you would like to get a second higher education</li><li>6. Another _____</li><li>7. Difficult to answer</li></ol>
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**Table 8****Students professional plans after graduating, depending on gender, place of residence, forms of education**

( % respondents chose a particular position on each line)

Professional plans	Gender		Course		Place of residence		Forms of education	
	Male	Female	Junior courses	Graduate courses	Kiev and Kiev region	Other regions Of Ukraine Autonomous Republic of Crimea and Sevastopol	Budget	Contract
To open his own business	32,4	32,2	30,6	34,8	28,5	36,6	35,7	21,2
To go abroad to study or	26,3	26,9	27,0	26,2	25,6	27,2	25,6	29,8

work								
Occupational work in commercial organization	16,6	13,8	16,3	13,1	11,6	17,7	17,7	5,9
To continue training in postgraduate study	40,0	38,8	35,5	44,8	39,9	38,5	38,7	41,3
Occupational work in state institution	17,5	12,6	10,0	20,9	15,5	13,5	14,9	13,5
Get an education in other specialization	46,7	42,4	44,0	44,2	45,1	43,8	40,2	56,1
Occupational work in scientific-	16,8	27,3	24,3	21,9	20,5	26,7	24,1	20,8

research institution								
Work, but not with a degree in that specialization	34,4	42,5	45,0	31,3	38,7	40,9	41,0	34,0
I'm not thinking about that	8,3	4,3	7,5	3,3	6,4	5,0	6,3	4,2
Another	2,4	1,8	2,3	1,8	2,0	2,2	2,1	2,1
<b>Number of respondents</b>	<b>457</b>	<b>739</b>	<b>707</b>	<b>489</b>	<b>577</b>	<b>594</b>	<b>902</b>	<b>288</b>

**Table 9**

**Professional plans of students after graduating, depending on the socio-professional and financial status of parents**

(% respondents chose a particular position on each line)

	Parent's education				Parent's financial status		Parent's employment patterns							
	Father		Mother		Lower middle classes	Middle classes	Father				Mother			
	Not higher education	Higher education	Not higher education	Higher education			Business Classes	Middle Classes	Labour Classes	Unemployed	Business Classes	Middle Classes	Labour Classes	Unemployed
Continue training (doing PhD)	32, 2	32, 4	33, 8	31, 9	39, 8	28, 8	26, 6	29, 8	45, 1	43, 1	30, 2	32, 3	33, 9	34, 2
Occupational work in	28, 0	26, 1	29, 0	26, 0	29, 0	25, 7	25, 5	26, 0	27, 7	28, 8	26, 1	25, 2	26, 3	29, 2

state instituti on														
Occupati onal work in scientific -research instituti on	18, 7	13, 0	16, 6	14, 3	19, 4	13, 7	11, 6	14, 1	20, 6	28, 8	10, 5	13, 3	19, 4	20, 1
Occupati onal work in commerc ial organizat ion	41, 7	39, 0	37, 6	40, 2	39, 4	40, 9	37, 2	41, 3	37, 6	43, 1	37, 7	42, 4	40, 3	36, 7
Work, but not with a degree in	17, 2	13, 4	17, 2	13, 5	16, 0	13, 7	13, 0	15, 7	16, 9	10, 2	12, 6	13, 7	16, 1	13, 0

that specializ ation														
To open own business	38, 0	47, 2	41, 1	45, 1	35, 1	47, 6	54, 9	42, 1	36, 2	38, 4	46, 3	43, 8	43, 0	40, 5
ion for other ties	26, 8	21, 7	29, 3	23, 2	25, 0	23, 1	21, 4	22, 5	26, 2	27, 6	24, 6	25, 3	20, 4	20, 5
To go abroad to study or work	37, 3	40, 9	36, 6	40, 5	35, 3	40, 2	38, 8	42, 9	36, 9	39, 7	36, 2	41, 4	40, 9	37, 0
I'm not thinking about	6,6	5,4	6,7	5,6	3,7	5,5	4,4	5,2	4,3	5,2	3,0	6,4	5,9	4,3

that														
Another	1,5	2,1	1,6	2,1	3,4	1,4	1,4	2,0	4,2	1,7	1,0	2,0	2,7	3,2
<b>Number of respondents</b>	<b>332</b>	<b>816</b>	<b>314</b>	<b>874</b>	<b>268</b>	<b>798</b>	<b>294</b>	<b>503</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>502</b>	<b>186</b>	<b>185</b>

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