

Annual Report 2013/14

Ostrogorski
Centre

About the Ostrogorski Centre



The Ostrogorski Centre is a private, non-profit organisation dedicated to analysis and policy advocacy on problems which Belarus faces in its transition to market economy and the rule of law. Its work is non-partisan and dedicated to achieving practical results.

The Centre is pioneering the first think tank established by Western-educated Belarusians based in Belarus and the European Union. Its analysts working in Minsk, London, Warsaw and Berlin understand the challenges of transition in the region because they have lived through it. Educated at the world's leading universities, the centre's experts have cultivated the culture and technical skills required to deliver Western-style analysis.

Our deep roots and knowledge of the language and culture required to address various analytical and training tasks. And our culture of openness and broad scope of expertise enable us to navigate complexity across issues, topics and borders with ease.

The mission of the Ostrogorski Centre is to contribute to better understanding of transition processes in Belarus and learn from experience of other countries. We conduct research which requires multinational outlook and engage in areas where demand cannot be fully met by the domestically trained specialists.

The Centre aims to promote reforms and thinking which helps the economy become more competitive, governance more efficient and integrate Belarusian scholars and analysts in pan-European and global media and networks of scholars.

Areas of our work:

- Regular digests of Belarusian economy, civil, society activities, foreign policy and security
- Analytical articles and papers on Belarus domestic politics and foreign affairs, particularly relations with Russia and the EU
- Searchable database of the most influential individuals in Belarus.



The Ostrogorski Centre is more than a think tank focused on Belarus. Ever since we were conceived in 2008, our work has been taking shape not only in the form of short analytical and academic articles, but also longer analytical papers and digests on various topics related to Belarus. It also includes translated video digests, a Who is Who directory called Belarus Profile and, looking forward, plans to have a strong educational component to our work as well.

This year we decided to rename our organization, formerly known as the Centre for Transition Studies, to the Ostrogorski Centre. Moisei Ostrogorski (1854-1921) was a prominent Belarusian political scientist, politician and historian who made serious contributions to the study of politics and law in transition states. Almost unknown in Belarus, he is widely regarded as one of the founders of political sociology, alongside Max Weber and Robert Michels, and also known as a 'pioneer of generalisations in comparative government'.

Our Team

The Ostrogorski Centre is unique cooperative project of predominantly young Belarusian scholars working transnationally on a daily basis from inside the country as well as from the United Kingdom, Poland, Germany and Ukraine.

This year our team has been strengthened

by arrival of a new senior analyst Igor Gubarevich, who served in senior positions at the Belarusian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and has a very good understanding of what really shapes and determines Belarusian foreign policy. His regular writing for our Belarus foreign policy digest has drawn significant readership who seek to better understand the internal workings of the Belarusian government.

Over the past several years, several of our analysts have embarked on studying in PhD programmes with leading universities in Europe and the United States and are regularly invited to speak on Belarus-related matters and are cited in press and academic periodicals.

Our New Partners

In addition to our successful cooperation agreements with the Belarus Research and Outreach Centre and Belarus Security Blog this year we secured a cooperation agreement with the Guardian. According to this new agreement, the Guardian will regularly reprint articles from Belarus Digest, providing us with the opportunity to reach an even broader audience.

We have also signed a cooperation agreement with the European Humanities University, also known as the Belarusian university in exile, to strengthen their Belarus-related activities.

Our Projects

The 2014 Belarus Digest readers survey showed that our readers appreciate the balanced view which our authors offer. They particularly like articles on Belarusian politics and our analytical paper series that we launched last year.

Our analytical paper series currently includes four papers: Who Rules Belarus, Optimising EHU's Effect on Belarus, the Impact of Lukashenka's Rule on Belarusian Identity and the Belarusian Army: Capacity and Role in the Region. Over the past year, we have also launched three new series that includes the Belarus State TV Digest, Belarus Video Digest and the Belarus Security Digest. In response to our readers' requests we also launched the Belarus Photo Digest that aims to portray various aspects of everyday living in Belarus.

Belarus remains one of the least known countries in Europe due to its political regime and largely unreformed economy that continues to be unable to attract foreign investment. Belarus Profile, which was launched in 2013, is an attempt to make Belarus more accessible to the global community and provides a searchable online directory of Belarus' most influential people in Belarusian, Russian and English.

The latest issue of the Journal of Belarusian Studies successfully brought together academics from Belarus, Germany, Sweden, Poland and Canada. The journal is regaining its reputation of not only being the first, but also the most respected academic journal on Belarusian studies in the English language.

Our Plans

In cooperation with the Belarus Research Council we plan to enrich the Belarus Profile database with information about academics and experts working on Belarus as well as analytical centres. We are also going to upload the complete texts of our papers and improve our search mechanism to enable everyone to access Belarus-related research by mean of a user-friendly search engine.

By building on our connections with academics working on Belarus inside the country and abroad we plan to develop a series of online audio lectures on topics important for strengthening the national and civic identify of Belarusians by covering issues such as the history of Belarus, the history of ideas, and the Belarusian economic model. This will enable academics in Belarus to utilise the audio lectures and electronic teaching materials for their own classes. Students and a general audience will, in turn, be able to listen to the lectures of leading experts through their iPads and or smartphones. We also plan to expand the audio component of our work by recording podcasts with leading experts and decision-makers for Belarus Digest.

The Ostrogorski Centre also plans to expand our presence in Belarus. Despite its achievements and our already established network of collaborators in Belarus, the Centre does not have an office or permanent staff there. A more institutionalized presence will help us have more influence inside Belarus and, in particular, will help us organise events and collaborate with other Belarus-based organizations.



Yarik Kryvoi
Director, Ostrogorski Centre

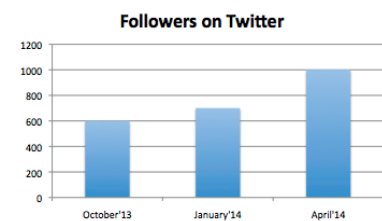
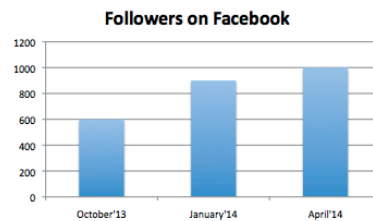
Our Projects: Belarus Digest



Belarus Digest provides non-partisan analysis of Belarus-related events written by Belarusians specifically for an English-language readership.

Belarus regime's conduct and poor reputation provides a fertile ground for all kinds of myths and speculations. Belarus Digest tries to de-mystify Belarus and write about what is actually going on in the country.

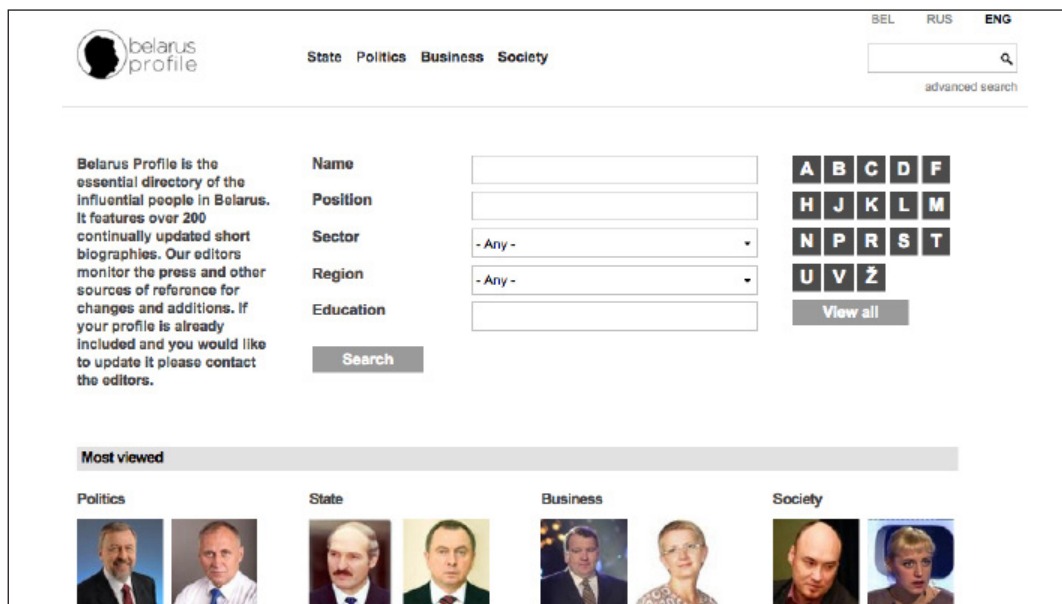
Belarus Digest launched in 2008. Today our authors write on Belarus from Minsk, London, Boston, Berlin and Kyiv.



Cited by

- Bloomberg Businessweek
- The Economist
- BBC
- The Guardian
- Wall Street Journal
- El Confidencial
- The Interpreter
- France24
- MSNBC
- Slate
- Kyiv Post
- Eastbook.eu
- Eastern Europe Studies Centre
- Centre for European Reform
- Radio Free Europe Radio Liberty
- Huffington Post
- Eurasian Geography and Economics
- Transitions Online
- Prospect
- Anthropology of East Europe Review
- Social Movement Studies
- International Journal of Business and Social Research
- European Journal of Higher Education
- East European Politics & Societies
- Law & Social Inquiry
- Post-Soviet Affairs
- Richmond Journal of Global Law and Business

Our Projects: Belarus Profile



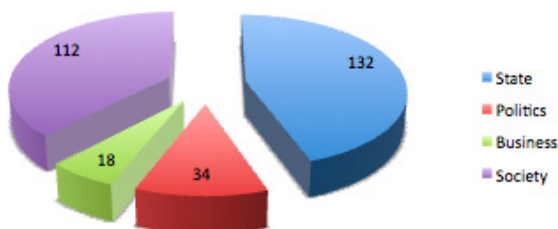
Belarus Profile provides up-to-date information about over 250 influential people from all walks of life in Belarus.

Containing biographical listings of people who have an impact on life in Belarus, including politicians, opposition activists, civil servants, and notable figures from the academia, business, civil society, and other areas, its ambition is to become the most respected reference source with biographical information.

Belarus Profile is built for biographical searching which makes it a valuable resource for anyone concerned with Belarus politics, economy and society.

Each biography appears in Belarusian, Russian and English languages and contains basic personal information, details of education and career as well as relevant internet links.

Distribution of Individuals by Sector



Sample Profile

Milinkievič Aliaksandr Uladzimiravič

Alternative spelling
 Milinkievich Aliaksandr Uladzimiravich

Position
 Chairman of the Movement for Freedom

Organization
 Movement for Freedom

Career
 Began his career as a physics teacher in a secondary school. From 1972 to 1976 worked at the Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Belarus, from 1976 to 2000 at the Hrodna State University. Also from 1980 to 1984 he worked at the University of Self (Algeria).

Held senior positions at the Hrodna regional television station.
 From 1990 to 1996 he was a deputy head of the Hrodna City Executive Committee. In 1996 he resigned from his post as a sign of protest against a national referendum.

In 1996-2003 led the public association Rabatsha, headed the election headquarters of Siarhien Domash during the presidential election of 2001. In 2003-2005 headed the Hrodna branch of the "Association of the Belarusian schools" and was a presidential candidate in 2006.

In the same year was awarded the Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought.

Position held since
 2007

Year of birth
 1947

Region of birth

Most viewed
 Lukashenko Aliaksandr Ryhoravich
 Mikoj Uladzimir Uladzimiravich
 Masnikovich Michail Uladzimiravich
 Cytz Juryj Ailksandrovich
 Fraxapovich Piotr Pietrovich

Our Projects: The Journal of Belarusian Studies

The screenshot shows the website for 'THE JOURNAL OF BELARUSIAN STUDIES'. At the top, there are navigation links for 'ABOUT', 'ARCHIVES', 'SUBMISSIONS', 'CONTACT', and 'LINKS'. The main content area is titled 'About The Journal of Belarusian Studies' and includes the following text:

In 1985 the Anglo-Belarusian Society began publishing a yearbook - The Journal of Belarusian Studies.

Since 2013, the Journal of Belarusian Studies is published in London by the [Ostrogorski Centre](#) in cooperation with the [Anglo-Belarusian Society](#).

The Journal is distributed annually to universities, libraries and private subscribers in the UK, the US, Belarus and other countries throughout the world.

The Journal publishes articles on Belarusian literature, linguistics, foreign relations, civil society, history and art, as well as book reviews.

Yaraslau Kryvoi serves as the Journal's editor. The Journal's Advisory Board consists of Aleksander Nadson (UK), Arnold McMillin (UK), Jim Dingley (UK), Andrej Kotljarchuk (Sweden), Curt Woolheiser (USA), David Marples (Canada), Iryna Dubianetskaya (Belarus), Martin Paulsen (Norway), Alastair Rabagliati (Belgium) and Andrew Wilson (UK).

The Journal is the oldest English language peer-reviewed periodical on Belarusian studies. It is currently accepting new [submissions](#).

The 2014 issue of the Journal (hard copy) can be purchased [online](#).

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Editors' picks

- Punishment Without Crime: Belarusian Prison Poetry
- Belarus and its Neighbourhood in the Early Seventeenth Century
- Nasha Niva

On the 22nd of November 1906 the first

On the right side of the screenshot, there is a search bar and a list of featured articles under the heading 'Belarus Digest':

- Belarus Moves Towards Full-Scale Border Control With Russia - Belarus Security Digest
- The Belarusian University in Exile Needs More Than a New Rector
- The Belarusian Opposition: Recovering from 2010, Preparing for 2016

Below this is the 'Anglo-Belarusian Society' section with links to 'Arnold McMillin: World War I as Reflected in Belarusian and English Poetry of the Time' and 'Forthcoming Events (Save the Dates)'. At the bottom right, there is a 'Belarusians.co.uk' section with links to 'Чароткі: Дзеці ініцыятыўнай арганізацыі грамадзянскай супольнасці ў Беларусі' and 'Svyatlana Alesieyevich: The Empire Will Not Pass Away Without Bloodshed'.

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Recent Issues

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Events



October 2013, the Ostrogorski Centre presented the first issue of the Journal of Belarusian Studies during the Third Congress of Belarusian Studies, Kaunas, Lithuania.

July 2014, Director of the Ostrogorski Centre Yaraslau Kryvoi and senior analyst Siarhei Bohdan taught at the Transformation Studies Summer School organised by European Humanities University in Trakai, Lithuania.



December 2013, a delegation from the Ostrogorski Centre, numbering eight people, actively participated in the events accompanying the recent Summit of the Eastern Partnership in Vilnius, Lithuania.

August 2014, Yaraslau Kryvoi, Director of the Ostrogorski Centre, and analyst Ryhor Astapenia taught at a summer school for Belarusian students in Lithuania, that took place 24-29 August 2014 and was organised by the Movement for Freedom.



March 2013, the Ostrogorski Centre signed a memorandum of cooperation with The European Humanities University (EHU) — a Belarusian university-in-exile based in Vilnius, Lithuania.

September 2014, senior analyst at the Ostrogorski Centre Siarhei Bohdan took part in the discussion “EU-Belarus: What Now? Fine Tuning Policy and Assistance” during the Fourth Belarus Reality Check, Riga, Latvia.



June 2014, Belarus Digest joined The New East Network launched by the Guardian. The Guardian regularly reprints articles from Belarus Digest and other media focusing on the post-Soviet world.

2013-2014, analysts at the Ostrogorski Centre briefed and consulted on various Belarus-related issues officials for the European Union, United Kingdom, Germany and other.

July 2014, the Ostrogorski Centre made a presentation of its projects during a session of the Belarus Research Council, Vilnius, Lithuania.

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- Alastair Rabagliati
- Heidi Smith
- Andrew Wilson

Staff



Dr Yaraslau Kryvoi is the director at the Ostrogorski Centre. Areas of expertise: education, international public law, commercial dispute resolution, business climate.



Siarhei Bohdan is a senior analyst at the Ostrogorski Centre. Areas of expertise: security, Middle East, Iran, Central Asia, Belarus foreign policy.



Igar Gubarevich is a senior analyst at the Ostrogorski Centre based in Minsk. Areas of expertise: Belarus foreign policy, business climate in Belarus, Western Europe, United States, international organisations.



Ryhor Astapenia is an analyst at the Ostrogorski Centre and coordinator of Belarus Profile project. Areas of expertise: Belarusian foreign policy, security, Belarus' political system.



Devin Ackles is a project coordinator at the Ostrogorski Centre. Areas of expertise: energy, education, EU integration.



Volha Charnysh is an analyst at the Ostrogorski Centre, the Executive Editor of Belarus Digest. Areas of expertise: identity politics, migration, historical legacies, ethnic conflict.



Paula Borowska is an analyst at the Ostrogorski Centre. Areas of expertise: national minorities, borderlands studies, religious studies, Belarus-Poland relations.



Yauheni Preiherman is an associate analyst at the Ostrogorski Centre. Areas of expertise: Belarusian foreign policy, public administration, political system of Belarus.



Vadzim Smok is an associate analyst at the Ostrogorski Centre. Areas of expertise: Belarusian national identity, national minorities, history.

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