

Meet Belarus

ALEXANDER RYTOV

Deputy Head of International Relations Department

Teacher at the Faculty of International Relations
Belarusian State University

First 3 things that come to your mind when I say Belarus



Erasmus+ Staff exchange program
UBB, Cluj-Napoka, Romania, 6-8 June 2017

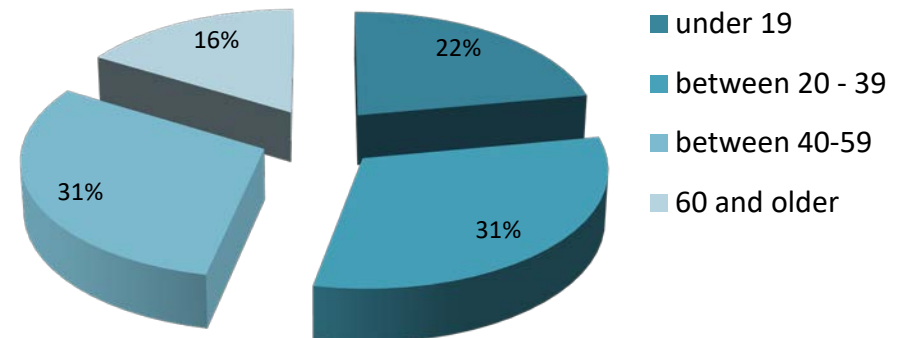
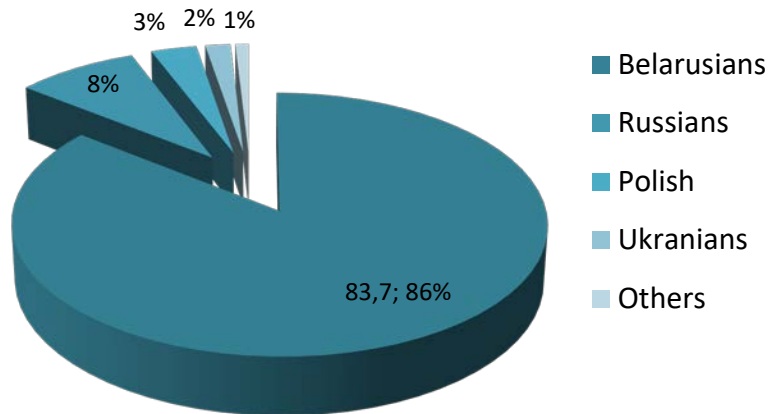




BY - RO comparison

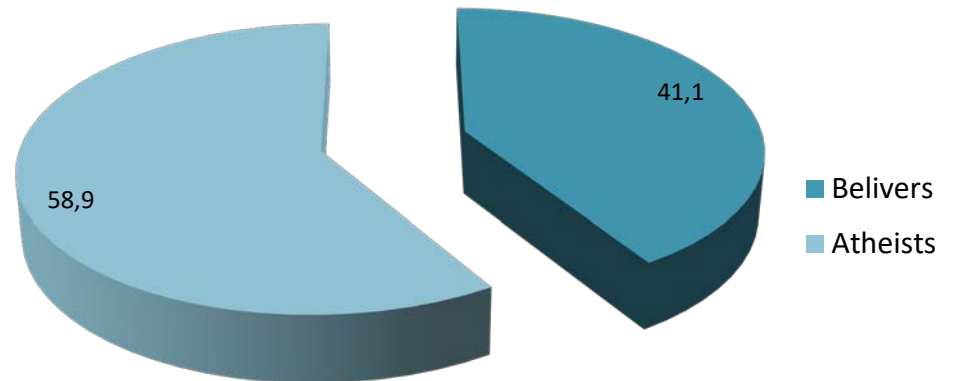
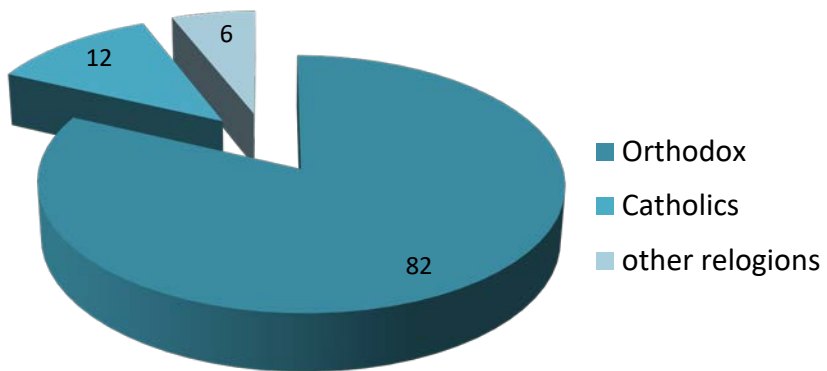
	territory	population	GDP p/c	HDI	Trans-Cors
	207 600 km ²	9 498 600	17 741 \$	0.795 / #52	3
	238 391 km ²	19 426 550	22 124 \$	0.802 / #50	3

Who live in Belarus



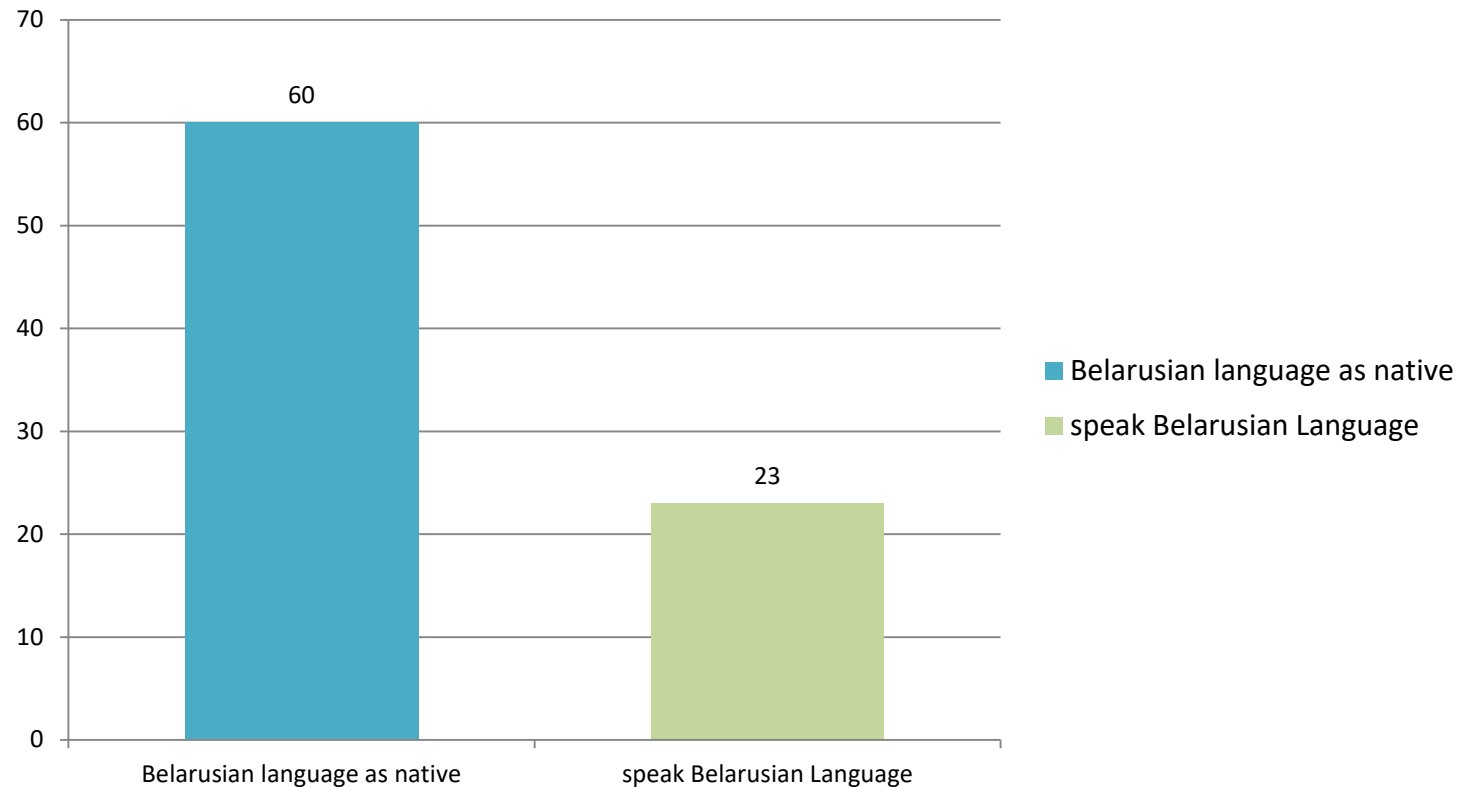
Source: <http://census.belstat.gov.by/>

Religion in Belarus



Source: <http://census.belstat.gov.by/>

What language we speak in Belarus



Source: <http://census.belstat.gov.by/>

Soviet Union referendum, 1991

82,7% of citizens of Belarusian SSR supported the idea of

“preservation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics as a renewed federation of equal sovereign republics in which the rights and freedom of an individual of any nationality will be fully guaranteed”



Source:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Soviet_Union_referendum,_1991

What we've lost

‘When Belarus became independent in 1991, it was the richest of the twelve republics of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) in terms of per capita income, a status reflecting the republic’s steady growth during the 1970s and early 1980s’

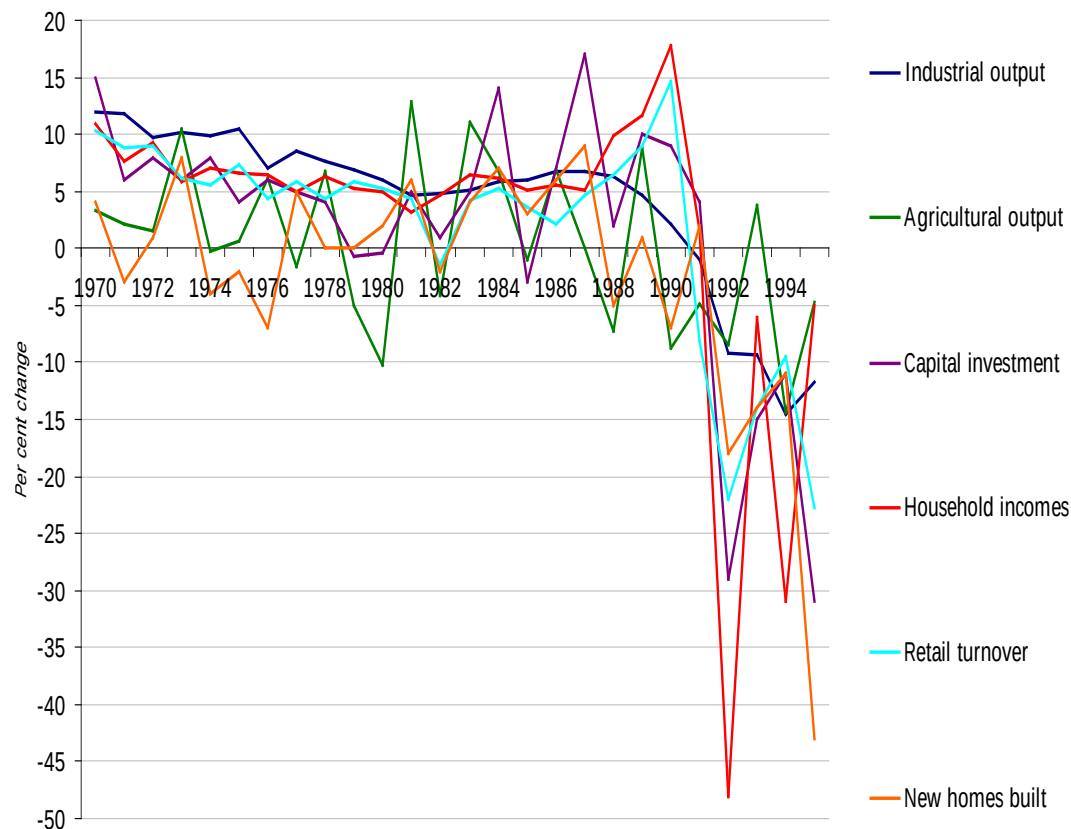
‘Belarus’ industry was the most technologically advanced in the entire Soviet Union with specialisation on R&D and assembling high-tech products.

Source: Viachaslau Yarashevich, Belarus’ Economy In Transition: How Different Is It From Russia And Ukraine?, 2013 .-

http://www.ec.unipg.it/DEFS/uploads/belarus_economy_in_transition.ppt.

What we've lost

- ✓ From 1991 to 1995 Belarus' GDP fell by a third; real wages – by almost a half; and investment – by 60%
- ✓ Hyperinflation wiped out dozens of billions of savings
- ✓ Prices doubled every month (at ~2000% annual rate)
- ✓ Wages hovered around 20\$ a month
- ✓ Unemployment, non-existent in the Soviet era, reached nearly 3% by official counts, unofficially it was several times higher



Source: Viachaslau Yarashevich, *Belarus' Economy In Transition: How Different Is It From Russia And Ukraine?*, 2013 .-

http://www.ec.unipg.it/DEFS/uploads/belarus_economy_in_transition.ppt.



A. Lukashenko's economic agenda

- Price stabilization
- State control of economy
- Investment resumption
- State support of agriculture and industry
- State regulation over currency exchange
- Active social policy

Later on transformed into
the conception of

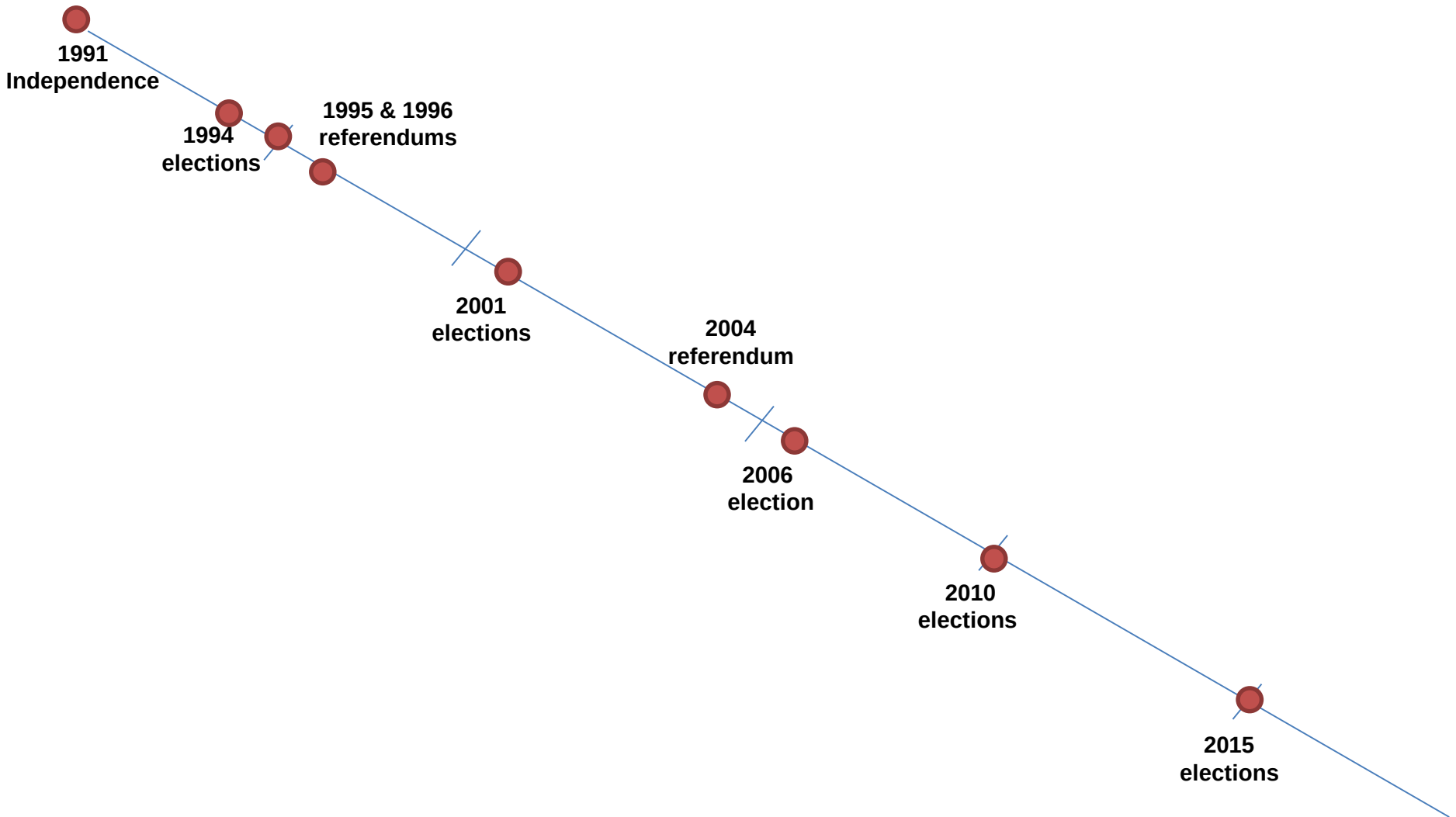
Belarus - a welfare state

as antithesis to neoliberal /
liberal political-economical
model

Source:

Otvesti narod ot propasti' [To turn away people
from abyss], *Narodnaya Gazeta*, 14 June
1994)

Milestones of political development of Belarus in 1990s-2000s



Recommended literature

Korosteleva E.A., Marsh, R. and Lawson, C., (eds.) (2003)
Contemporary Belarus: Between Democracy and Dictatorship,
London : RoutledgeCurzon

Ioffe G., “Understanding Belarus: Economy and Political Landscape” //
Europe-Asia Studies. 2004. Vol. 56 (1).

Belarus: between the West and the East?

ALEXANDER RYTOV

Deputy Head of International Relations Department

Teacher at the Faculty of International Relations
Belarusian State University

The contest

Drastic
geopolitical,
economic,
social
transformations
in the world in
1990s-2000s



- formation of new centers of power
- escalation of state rivalry
- intensifying competition among socio-political models

Belarus maintains diplomatic relations with 177 countries of the world and represented by foreign offices in 59 countries worldwide

In Belarus:

45 foreign embassies

4 embassy branch offices

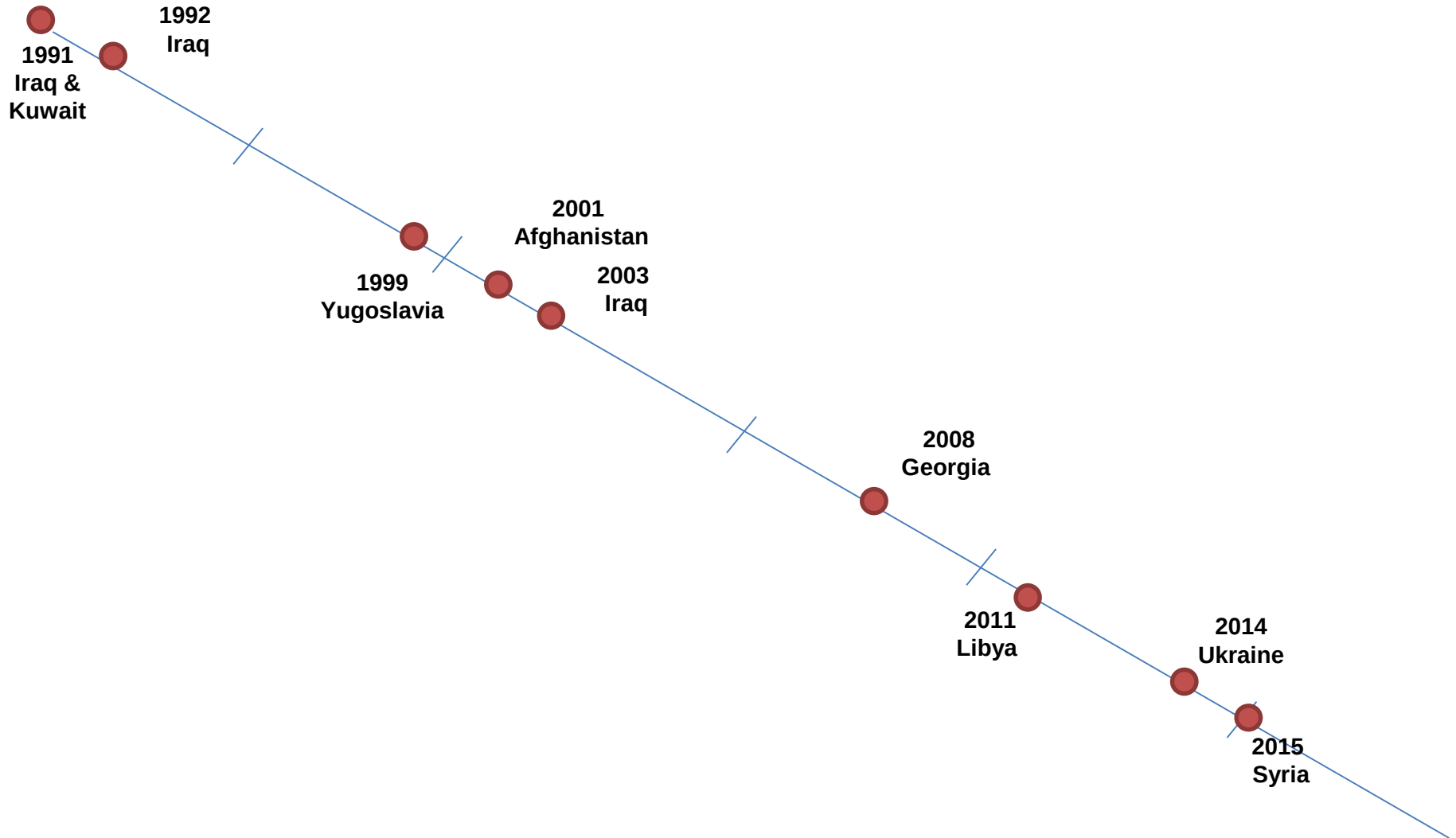
2 trade missions

35 consular offices (including honorary consuls)

15 missions to international organizations

88 foreign diplomatic missions

Military conflicts in 1990s-2000s



The concept of “multilateralism” in Belarus foreign policy

Make use of different forms, types and levels of involvement with international organizations, non-state actors in international relations (international non-governmental organizations, business, financial and industry, public structures).

Results:

- interstate and supranational executive bodies
- short-term forms of multilateral cooperation (joint statements)
- bilateral and multilateral treaties and agreements
- memberships (institutional and non-institutional (observer status, etc.)
- multilateral consultations at the highest level
- etc.

*More about multilaterism and Belarus foreign policy could be found in:
Alena A. Dastanka. Multilateralism in foreign policy of Belarus: European and Euarasian dimension.
– Regional Formation and Development. – Vol.15, No.2 (2014). – p. 5–15*



The concept of “multilateralism” in Belarus foreign policy

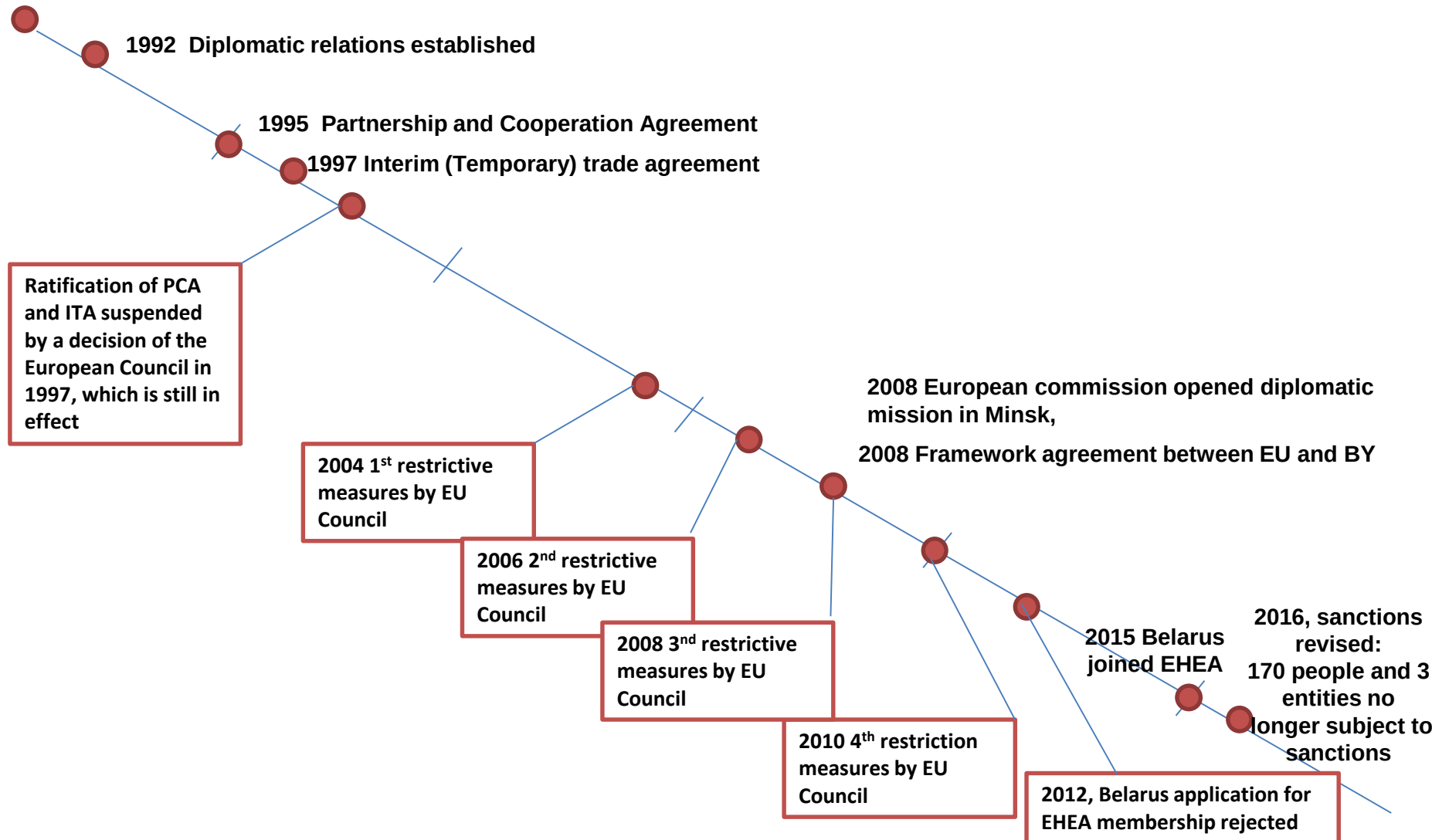
Worldwide level

- United Nations (1945)
- Non-Aligned Movement (1998)
- NATO Partnership and Cooperation Program (1997)

European / sub-regional level

- EU Eastern Partnership (2009)
- Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (1992)
- Council of Europe (the Special Guest status was granted in 1992 and suspended in 1997 till now)
- Central European Initiative (1996)
- Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (observer status 2005)
- Council of the Baltic Sea States (2009)

Belarus - EU relations in 1990s – 2000s



Belarus - EU relations in 1990s – 2000s

1994–1997 - active phase: PCA and ITA signed

1997–2008 – freezing: ratification suspended, frozen political relations with developing economic cooperation

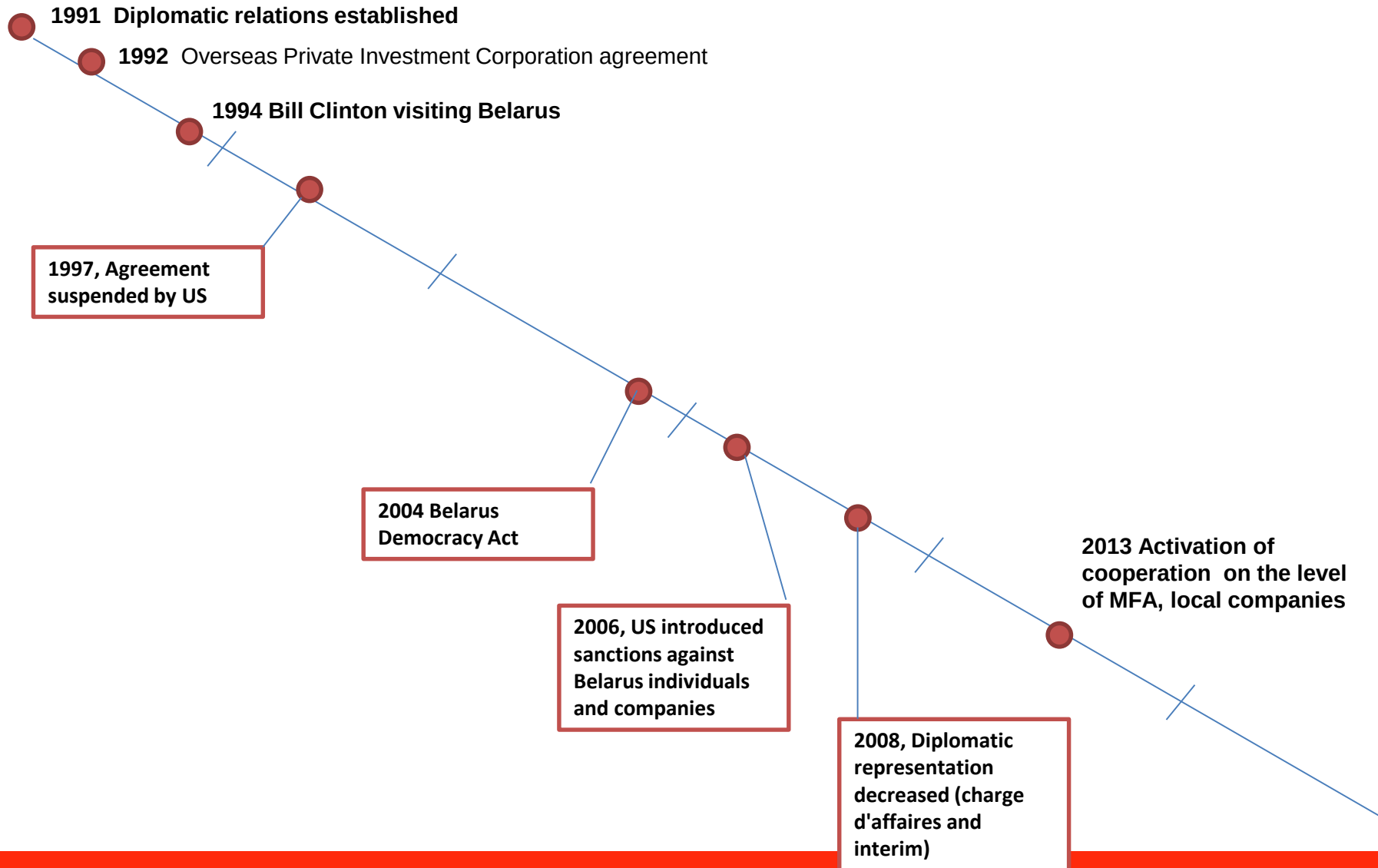
2008–2010 - looking for normalization of relations: visits to Belarus by EU High-Level representatives, European commission opened diplomatic mission in Minsk, joining EaP)

2010–2012 - restrictive measures as the results of the presidential elections in 2010 and the events around them, few political contacts

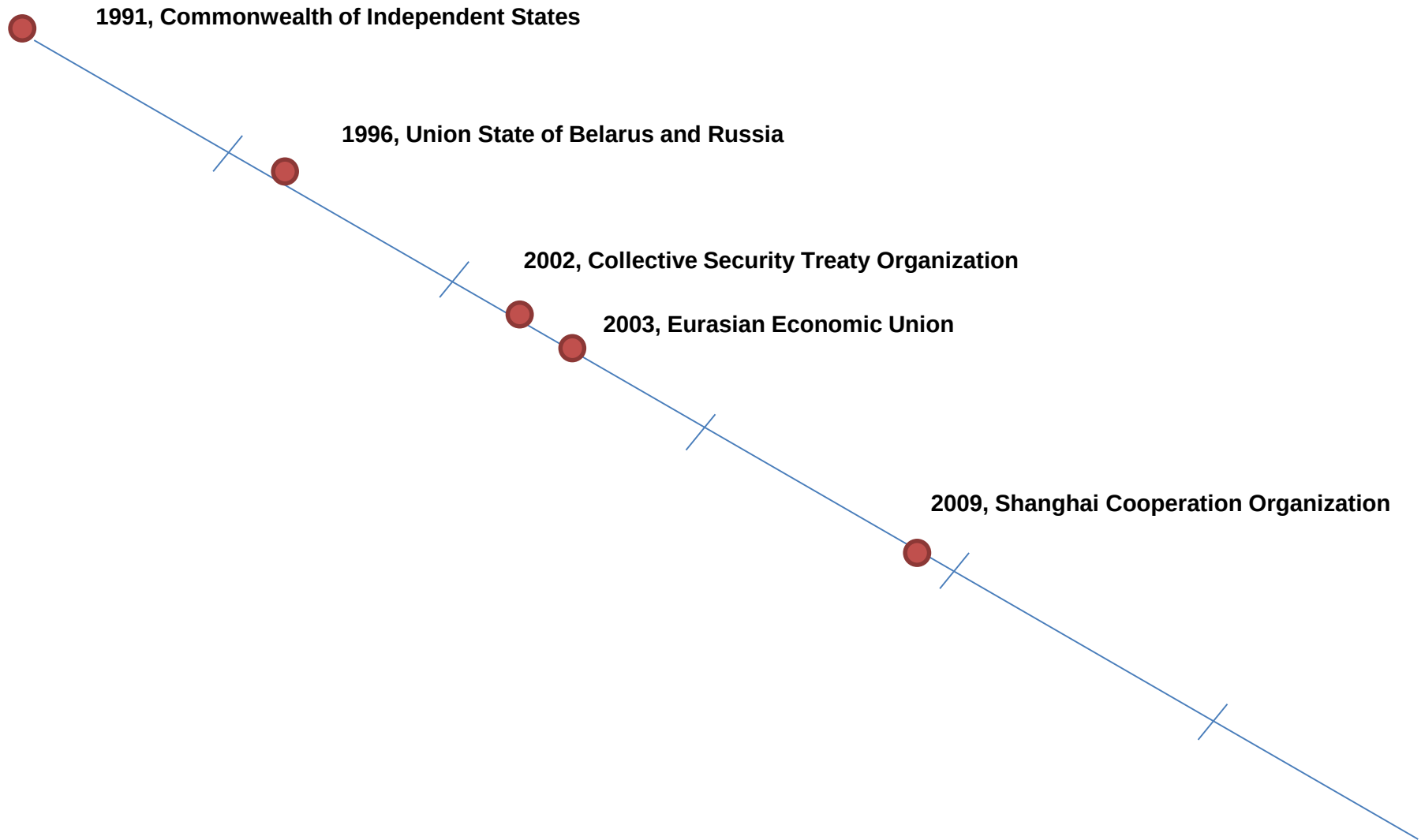
2012 – till now: resuming the contacts, negotiations on visa facilitation and readmission agreements, as well as consultations on modernization issues, still no attempts to institutionalize the bilateral relations between the EU and Belarus, revising sanctions (2016).

*More about multilaterism and Belarus foreign policy could be found in:
Alena A. Dastanka. Multilateralism in foreign policy of Belarus: European and Euarasian dimension.
– Regional Formation and Development. – Vol.15, No.2 (2014). – p. 5–15*

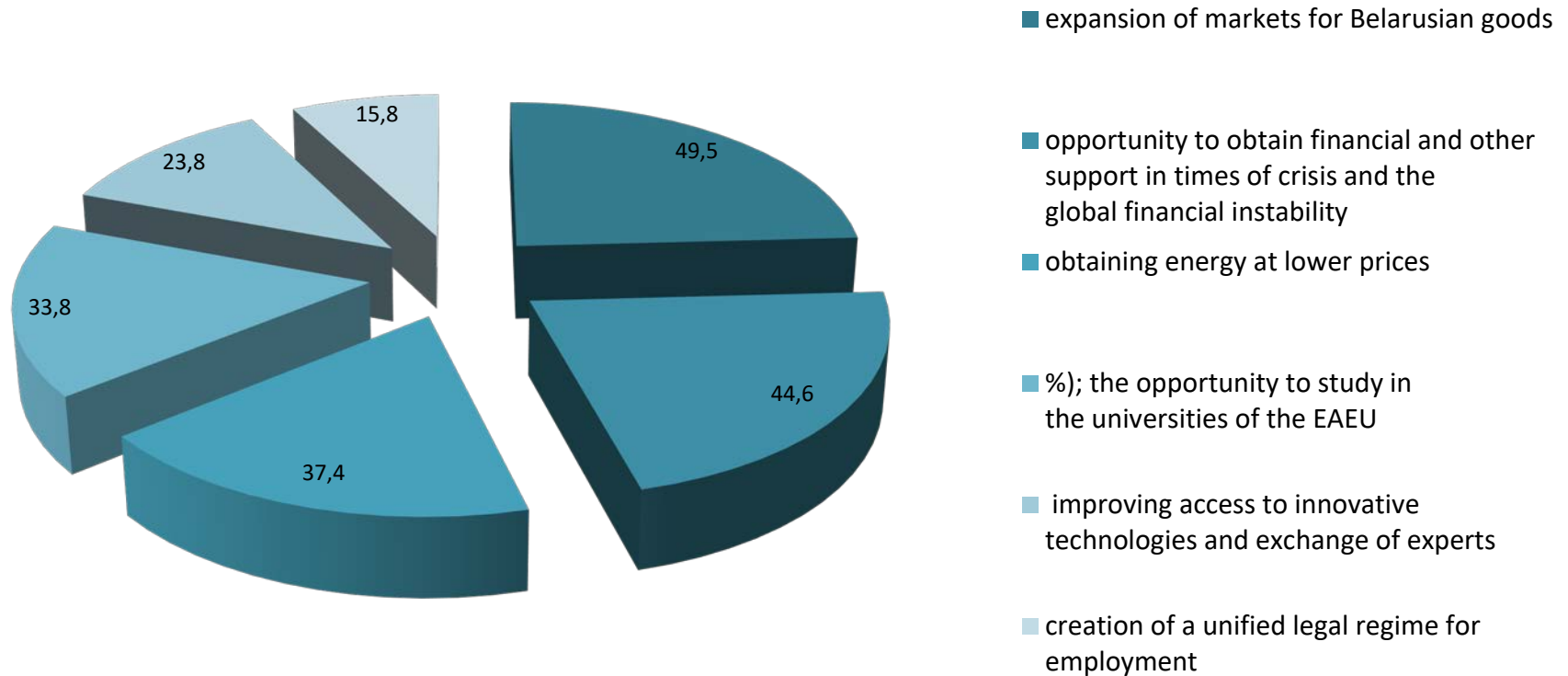
Belarus - US relations in 1990s – 2000s



Belarus - EURASIA 1990s – 2000s



Expectations from Eurasian integration



Source:
2014, the Institute of Sociology of NAS of Belarus survey "Belarus-2030"



The West or the East?

Literature and sources:

Alena A. Dastanka. Multilateralism in foreign policy of Belarus: European and Euarasian dimension. – Regional Formation and Development. – Vol.15, No.2 (2014). – p. 5–15 (<http://journals.ku.lt/index.php/RFDS/article/viewFile/1081/pdf>)

Belarus foreign policy:

- 1) https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Foreign_relations_of_Belarus
- 2) http://mfa.gov.by/en/foreign_policy/

USA [Belarus Democracy Act of 2004](#)

EU Council decisions on Belarus

<https://europeansanctions.com/eu-sanctions-in-force/belarus/>

Thank you!

ALEXANDER RYTOV

Deputy Head of International Relations Department

Teacher at the Faculty of International Relations
Belarusian State University

rytov@bsu.by

https://bsu.by/A.Rytov_IPDM