



**Russians (Russkiye)
in Ukraine:
Mythicizing the
Myths**

Methodology:

- My choice of the topic
- Word – Term – Notion – Phenomenon
- Interpretation Scheme

Brief information on Rusскиye (Russians) in Ukraine:

- Backgrounds
- Main features of contemporary situation:
- number, settlement, socio-demographic situation, language, cultural activities

General remarks to myths:

Taking into account the etymology of the term (in Late Latin and Greek languages ***Mythos*** – a fairy tale, legend, story) and basing on the theories of Carl Gustav Jung on myth as an attempt to find a real connection with nature, we can find several meanings of the term «*myth*» that links us with the ancient history of mankind (on the example of figures and events), with the origin of different phenomena. «**MYTH – a fable or a legend embodying the convictions of a people as to their gods or other divine personage, their own origin and early history and the heroes connected with it, or the origin of the world; in a looser sense, any invented story (I add, any idea, or concept); something or someone having no existence in fact**».

Two groups of the myths:

First group: 1) the development trends in integrative processes in Ukraine crucially depend on the attitude of national minorities to the society consolidation processes and state building; 2) mythicized interpretations of «*proruskost'*» (ideology and activities orientated towards *Ruskiye* in Ukraine) and «*prorossiyskost'*» (ideology and activities orientated towards Russia); 3) the anti-Russian line is today the main in the official policy of Ukraine.

Second group: 1) the myth «Russian-speaking population of Ukraine»; 2) *Ruskiye* of “near abroad”, including Ukraine, are under the pressure of new states' policy and efforts of national (in their interpretation nationalist) forces and movements and are «washed out» and even eliminated; 3) rapid deformation and extinction of *Russiansness*, such of its markers as language, spiritual culture, monuments of material culture.

Sources and spreaders (transmitters) of the myths:

I have determined three main sources of formation and propagation of these myths:

- a) The Ukrainian pro-Russian (please do not confuse with “proruskiye”) oriented researchers of problems of *Ruskiye* in Ukraine, in fact by those, who live in Ukraine.
- b) Russian researchers who study the problems of Ruskiyeness on the state territories, that belonged to the former Soviet Union.
- c) Publicists of both countries – Ukraine and Russia.

What does mythicizing of myths mean?:

I **link** this process with the attempts of **myths' legitimation**, i.e. the efforts of their mobilizers to give them the official recognition as the factor of ethnonational development (through the advancement of the bills, the subject of which *Ruskiye* in Ukraine is, as in the situation concerning languages – those are prepared more than ten; myths enrootment in the public opinion, using media for this, as well as imitative “public discussions”, scientific conferences, symposiums etc.).

I **propose** to understand **mythicizing** as not simply a transformation of this or that statement in the myth, or the interpretation of this or that care speaking about the concrete (specific) procedures of mythicizing of the myths themselves, so firstly we mean the desire ***of politicians to use these myths as a basis for legislative design of their political activities*** – the consolidation of the benefits of *Ruskiye* in legal acts and the creation of the favorable atmosphere for entrepreneurship (promotion) of the Russian ethnicity (Russianisness) in the ethnonational space of Ukraine to gain the dominant positions in the Ukrainian society.

Who mythicizes the myths:

- **Pro-Russian Ukrainian politicians (members of Parliament, members of Government)**
- **Pro-Russian leaders of political parties**
- **Pro-Russian leaders of NGOs**

Content of the main myths:

The first myth, the content of which focuses on important, I would say extremely acute for an independent Ukraine moment – building and strengthening of independent state, the main structure creating component of which the Ukrainians (Ethno-Ukrainian nation) are. Here we are not talking only about the importance of *Ruskiye*, because they are not especially stressed in this context. However, bearing in mind that *Ruskiye* form three quarters of national minorities, then, following the logic of the authors' statement, the consolidation processes can be set depending on the *Ruskiye* attitude to them.

The second myth

Has many aspects (multidimensional myth) is linked with the interpretation of "*pro-Ruskiyeness*" and "*pro-Rossiyskiyeness*". We speak not about the myth itself, but rather about the mythicizing of the mentioned two phenomena, that became the factors of the ethnonational development of Ukraine in connection with the presence in the Ukrainian society of the appreciable proportion of Russian origin population.

The third myth – the anti-Russian line in the official policy of Ukraine

Is also a complex construct (more political), because its subject is also multifaceted and covers a wide range of relations between Ukraine and Russia. This myth is aggregated by Russian-oriented researchers and politicians in Ukraine and frank Ukrainophobes in Russia.

The myth of “Russian-speaking population of Ukraine”

The term "Russian-speaking" in its content is already a myth itself. It is heavily exploited by the supporters of ethnic *Ruskiye* of Ukraine rights preservation in order to present them as, if not dominant force in the Ukrainian ethnic space, at least, as one that should determine its content and design. Mobilizers of this myth within the construction of new meta-communities go further, affirming, that "most of the population of Ukraine – is not Ukrainians and not *Ruskiye* – these are the Russian-speaking Slavs".

The myth: Russians of "near abroad", including (especially) Ukraine, under the pressure of new states and efforts of national (in their interpretation nationalist) forces and movements are "washed out" and, even eliminated.

Here there is a distorted (intentionally provocative) interpretation of *Ruskiye's* adaptation processes to the new conditions of existence, which led to some changes in quantitative and qualitative indicators, that fix their current situation and characterize the dynamics of their development.

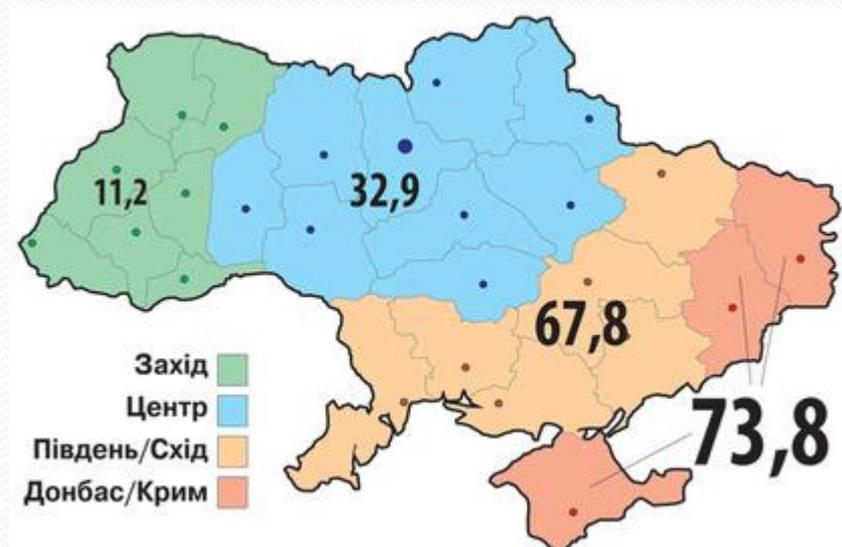
The myth of rapid deformation and extinction of Russkiyeness, those of its markers as language, spiritual culture, monuments of material culture

is connected with the assertion of
reduction of Russian presence in
Ukraine.

Myth that we are educated on the common values, traditions and customs, music and literature, that is why we have the same mentality.

Similar but not the same.

Arguments breaking the myths: Language





Squeezing the Language Out

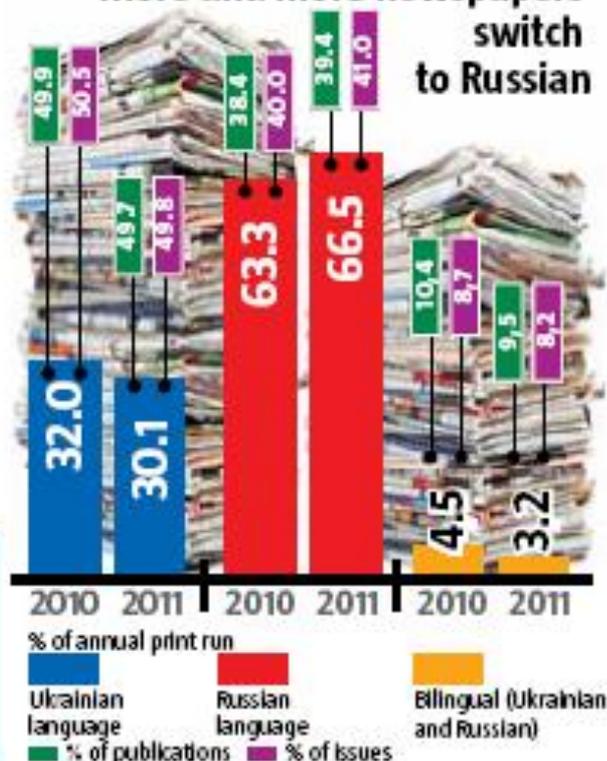
Ukrainian is being pushed out of many areas of public life

Over the past two years, temporary improvements in the status of the Ukrainian language gained from 2005-2009 have been nullified. Things went back to what they had been in 2005, when the decline of Ukrainian usage peaked under President Kuchma. Over the ten years leading up to 2005, the share of Ukrainian-language print media had declined from 47% in 1995 to 31% in 2005, accompanied by the growth of Russian-language print media from 47% to 64% respectively.

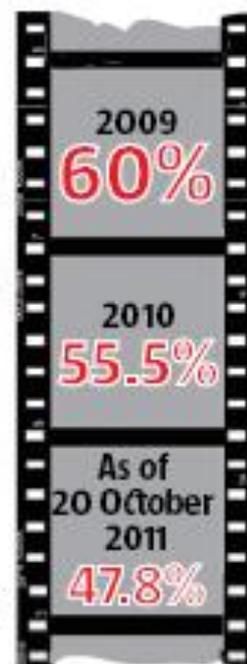
The print run of Ukrainian-language books and brochures published in Ukraine is shrinking



More and more newspapers switch to Russian



The share of films dubbed in Ukrainian and shown in movie theaters legally is plummeting



UKRAINIAN IS DISAPPEARING FROM TV AND RADIO

Based on monitoring of the eight most popular TV channels from 6-10 p.m. on weekdays and 12-4 p.m. on weekends held in late October 2011

Total hours of monitoring
Hours of shows in Ukrainian
Hours of Ukrainian/Russian shows
Hours of shows in Russian

14:14
19:49
29:57
Total hours of monitoring by language segments



% of hours for Ukrainian shows
% of hours for bilingual shows
% of hours for Russian shows

Monitoring time

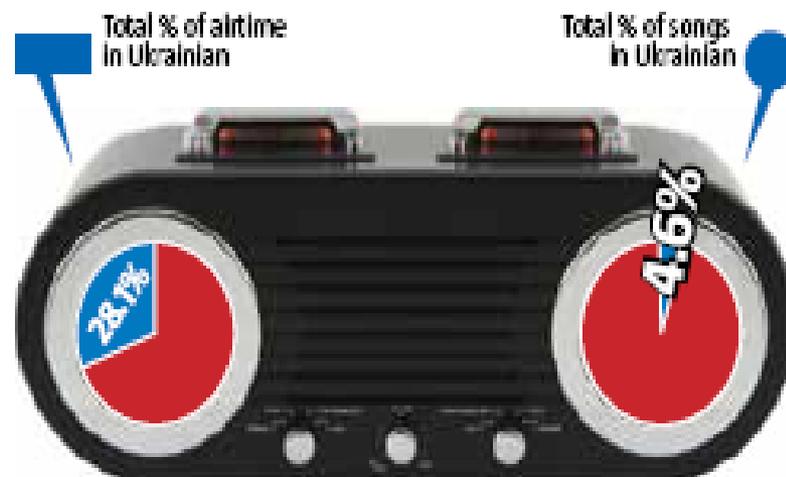
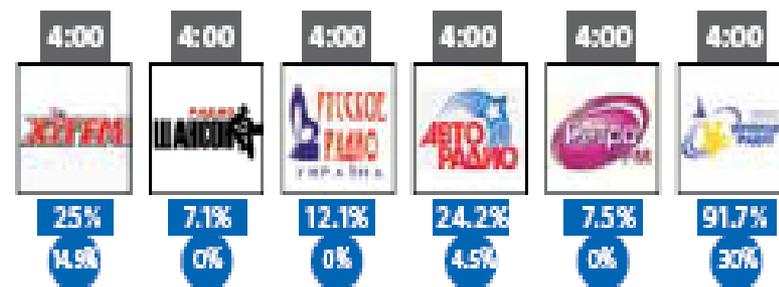
Total: 6.4 hours of monitoring

8:00	0:10	1:25	6:25
8:00	2:39	2:20	3:01
8:00	0:03	1:00	6:57
8:00	0:41	3:00	4:19
8:00	0:00	6:00	2:00
8:00	1:38	2:00	4:22
8:00	4:05	1:15	2:40
8:00	4:58	2:49	0:13

Based on the monitoring* of six most popular radio stations from 4-8 p.m. on 31 October 2011

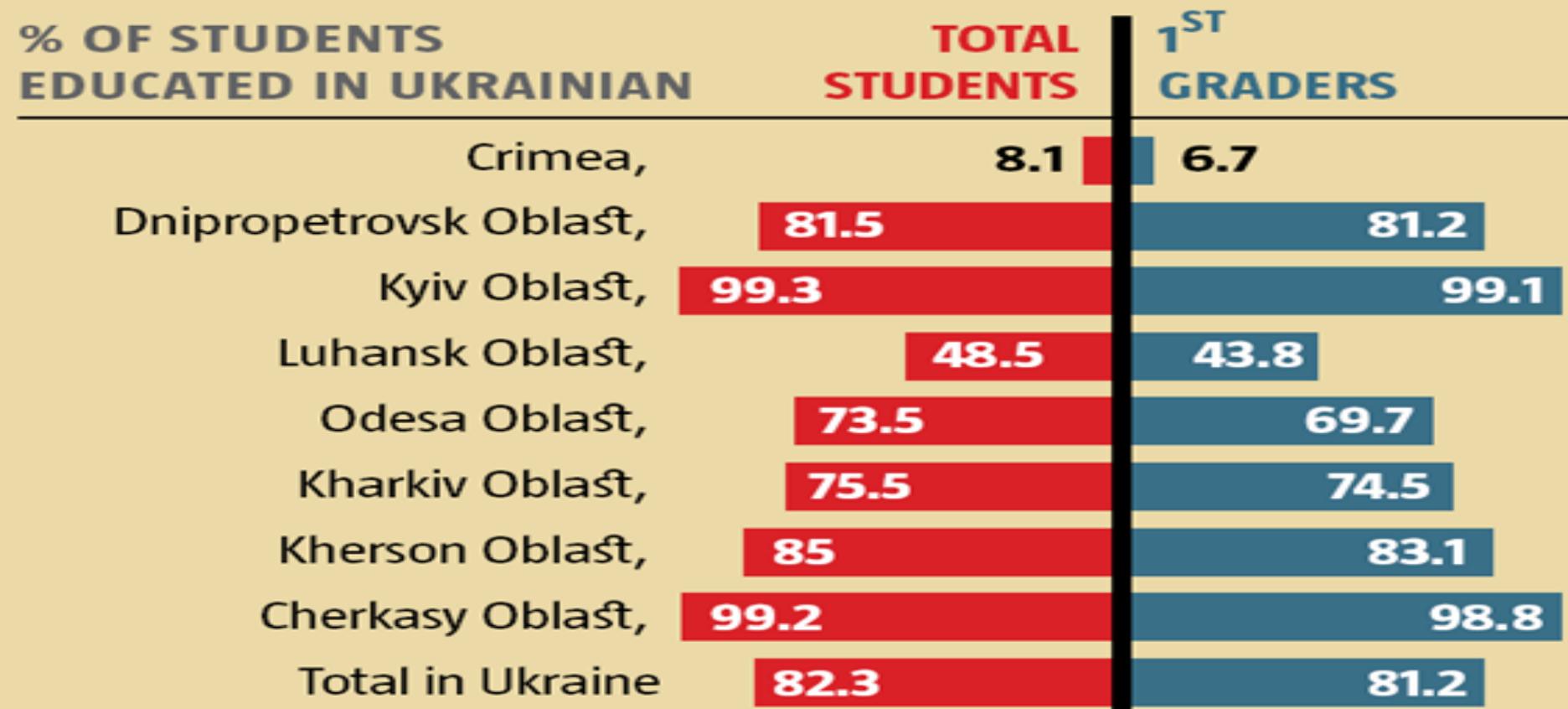
*by the Freedom Space NGO

Total: 24 hours of monitoring

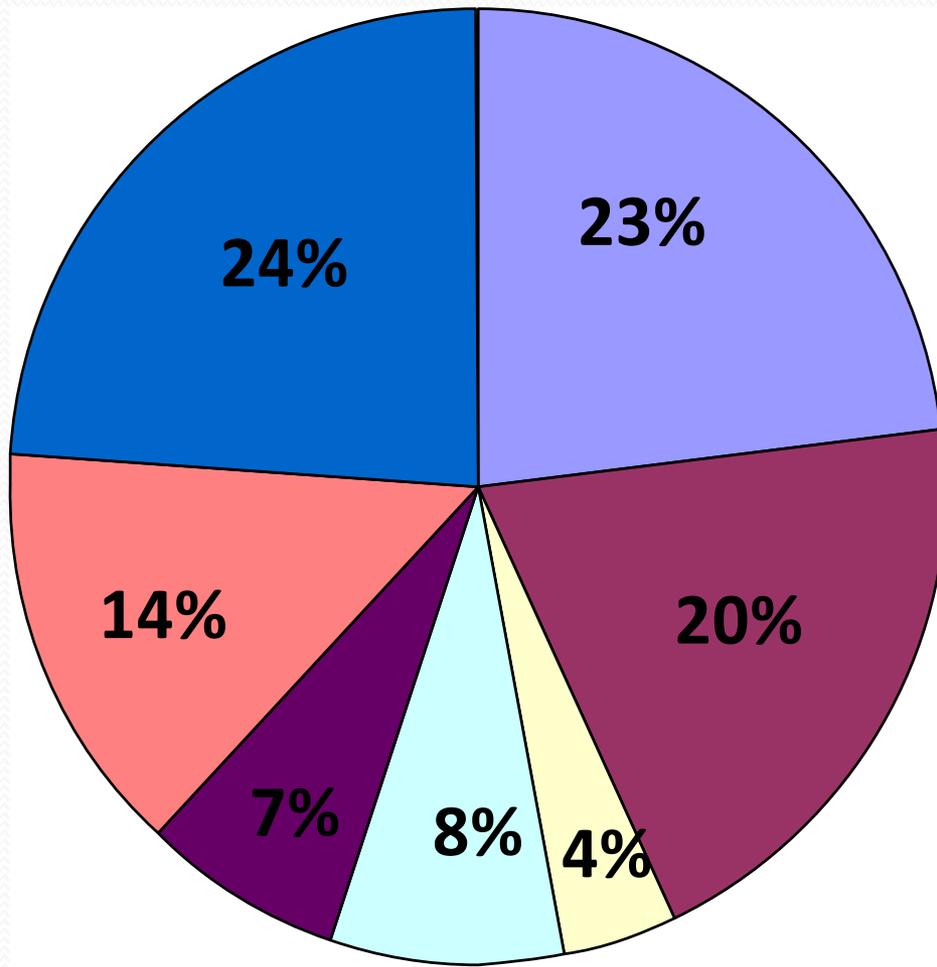


Based on the following research: The Language Balance in Ukraine in 2008-2009 by Olena Medvedeva, The Status of the Ukrainian Language in Ukraine by the Freedom Space volunteer campaign, and data from the State Statistics Committee

According to The Status of the Ukrainian Language in Ukraine in 2011, an analytical study carried out by the Freedom Space NGO, the share of children educated in Ukrainian from the 1st grade, out of all boys and girls educated in Ukrainian, shrank during the 2010-2011 school year. This year, a disappointing 82.3% of all students, and 81.2% of first-grade students were taught in Ukrainian. Eight regions including Crimea, Dnipropetrovsk, Kyiv, Luhansk, Odesa, Kharkiv, Kherson and Cherkasy Oblasts, contributed to this downturn in the national statistics.

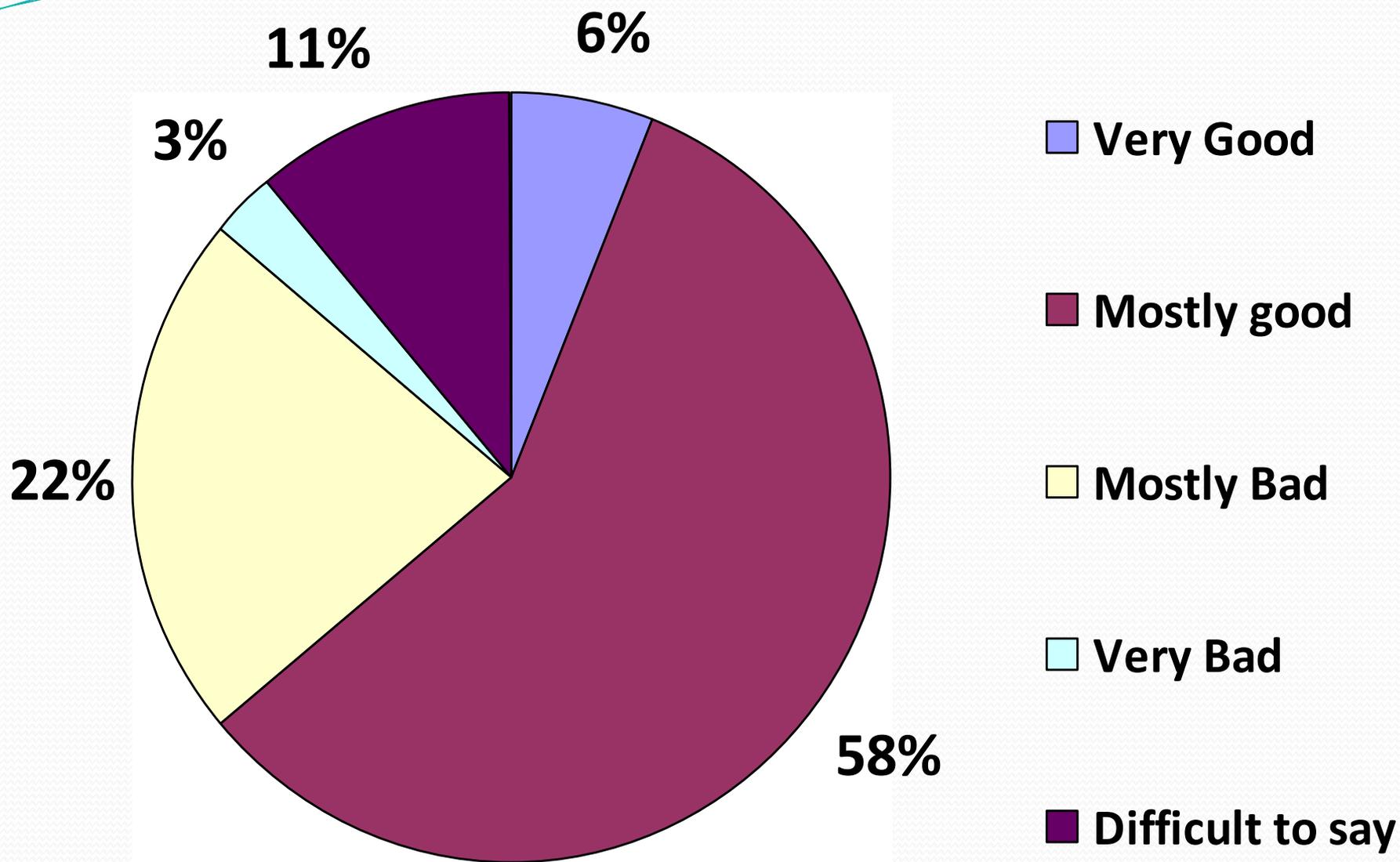


Attitudes of Ukrainians Towards Russia



- Friendly State
- Brotherly Country
- Difficult to Say
- Competitor
- Source of Danger, Hostile Country
- Strategic Partner
- Simply Neighbour

Attitudes of Russians Towards Ukraine



Prospects of acceptance of *othering* in Ukraine (in particular Russkiye)

On the base of survey (March – April 2011): «Interethnic Tolerance in secondary school students of Ukraine»

Attitudes towards poliethnicity of Ukrainian society:

- *Positive* – 31.59 %
- *Rather positive* - 25.42 %
- *Indifferent* – 21.31 %
- *Rather positive* – 6.17 %
- *Ukraine for Slavonic people only* – 7.10 %
- *Ukraine for Ukrainians only* - 4.67 %
- *Difficult to answer* – 3.74 %

Perception of different ethnicities in Ukraine:

The high level of perception by Ukrainian citizens is typical for ethnic groups of Slavonic origin, among them the highest level for Ukrainians and Russians-Ruskiye (the difference between total acceptance and total) :

- *Ukrainians – 59.00 % (61.51% - 6.19 %)*
- *Representatives of Ukrainian diaspora – 35.34 % (40.39 % - 5.05 %)*
- *Russians (Ruskiye) – 17.80 % (25.92% - 8.12%)*
- *Byelorussians – 10.36 % (14.97 % - 4.67 %)*
- *Poles – 8.32 % (14.51 % - 6.19 %)*
- *Slovaks – 1.53 % (8.59 % - 7.06 %)*
- *Czech - -1.34 % (7.22% - 8.56 %)*

Bogardus Social Distance Scale (concerning Rusскиye)

The scale asks people the extent to which they would be accepting of others.

- As close relatives by marriage - 25.92 %
- As my close personal friends – 16.63 %
- As neighbors on the same street - 8.32 %
- As co-workers in the same occupation – 20.12 %
- As citizens in my country - 16.68 %
- As only visitors in my country – 4.06 %
- Would exclude from my country – 8.12 %

Highlights: Law on languages

- Yanukovich promised to make the Russian the second language soon. 18.03.2012
- “Front Zmin”: bilingualism costs too much 20.03.2012
- Party of region: the language of the majority must be the state language 20.03.2012
- Tymoshenko: talkings of Yanukovich concerning bilingualism is the preelectoral trick 20.03.2012
- Lytvyn: there is no bill on the second State language in the Rada 20.03.2012
- German: Yanukovich did not promised the second state language. 20.03.2012
- German on Russian language: the president said quite other things 20.03.2012
- Kiev disavowed the Yanukovich statement 20.03.2012
- Communists with “two hands” for giving Russian the status of the State language 21.03.2012
- Yefremov (Party of region): there no enough votes for a higher status of the Russian language 21.03.2012
- Expert: one must stimulate the learning English language in Ukraine, but not to defend the Russian 21.03.2012
- Lytvyn: To adopt the second State language the Referendum is needed.

Crimea: Hate Language

Study of the Public Organization "Yevpatoria Centre for Regional Development" - The "Crimean Media. Hate Language"(February, 2011).

29 pan and local print media.

45 cases of "hate language" as an indicator of non-tolerance towards people of other ethnic groups.

25 cases of "language issue" as a factor inciting ethnic hatred.

Holders of "hate language":

editor board	-38%
journalists	-36%
politicians	-10%
people	- 6.5%
experts / politologists	- 4%
artists	- 4%
public figures	- 1%
representatives of law enforcement	- 1%

Types of "hate language":

create a negative image of the ethnic group;

charge of one or another ethnic group or its representatives in nationalism, chauvinism or extremism;

mention of the ethnic group or its representatives in humiliating or offensive context.

Language of hostility (Crimea)

