**Visa-free regime for Ukraine – public opinion**

*Nationwide polling of the population of Ukraine was conducted by the Ilko Kucheriv Democratic Initiatives Foundation and the Razumkov Centre from June 9-13, 2017. A total of 2,018 respondents ages 18 and older were polled across all regions of Ukraine with the exception of the Crimean Autonomous Republic and the occupied territories in the Luhansk and Donetsk oblasts. The theoretical margin of error was 2.3%.*

*Polling was conducted on the financial support of the MATRA Program of the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Ukraine.*

*For the sake of comparison, data of polling conducted in 2013-2016 by the Ilko Kucheriv Democratic Initiatives Foundation (DIF) in collaboration with the Razumkov Centre and the Kyiv International Institute of Sociology (KIIS) are provided.*

* 34% of the population today have a foreign passport (in May 2016 – 30%). Among them 7% have a new biometric foreign passport, 8.5% – an old foreign passport with a valid Schengen visa and 20% – an old foreign passport without a valid Schengen visa. Residents of the West (11%) have the highest number of biometric passports and youth up to 30 years of age (12%). Residents of the East (2.5%) and people over the age of 60 (2%) have the lowest number of biometric passports.
* Among those who do not have a biometric passport, 7% plan to apply for one this year and another 28% are also planning to submit an application for such a passport, but later, and 45% are not planning at all to apply and another 13% are undecided as to whether they need a biometric passport or not. The greatest difference between having a foreign passport and the intention of receiving one is in age: among the generation that is older than 60, around 84% do not have any foreign passport and 78% do not have any intention of applying for such a passport.
* Introduction of a visa-free regime with EU countries is important and very important for 39% of Ukrainian citizens. A visa-free regime is most important for residents of the Western region (53%) and the Central region (44%). It is less important for residents of the South (23%) and the East (25%). The age differences are even more significant: a visa-regime is the most important for youth aged up to 30 years (60%) and the least important – for those over the age of 60 (21%).
* 32% of Ukrainian citizens have the intention of traveling to countries of the Schengen Area, first and foremost, youth (56%). The main purpose of travel is tourism (64%), visiting relatives and friends (22%), working visits (18%), while 22% hope to find gainful employment abroad. The majority of the population (62.5%) knows that a visa-free regime does not give Ukrainians the right to work in Schengen countries, while 15% feel that such a right exists.
* In general, only 14% of Ukrainians feel that they know the rules of a visa-free regime with EU countries and another 50% know somewhat about these rules, but did not especially learn them, and 35% know absolutely nothing about them.
* 38% of Ukrainians consider themselves Europeans, while 55% feel they are not. The highest European self-identity is inherent to residents of the Western region of Ukraine (53%), while in the other regions the feeling of being European is much lower: in the Central region – 37%, in the South – 35% and in the East – 30%. The age differences are considerable: those who feel themselves the most European are the youth – 49% and the least – people of the older generation who are older than 60 years of age – 27%.
* In order to feel European a certain level of material well-being is necessary, first and foremost – 59% of Ukrainians feel this way, while citizens in all regions and all age groups are solidary in this. The feeling of being protected by the law (36%) and respect for democratic values and people’s rights (26%) are in the top three factors that are most important for European identity.
* 57% of Ukrainian citizens support Ukraine joining the European Union in the future, 8% of the population gives preference to a Eurasian Economic Union with Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan and 25% support non-affiliation with any union. Support of a Eurasian Union (just like other variants of a union with Russia) sharply fell after 2013 – from 30% to 8%, while support of accession to the EU rose – from 42% to 57%. However, at the same time the percentage of those who feel that Ukraine should not join a union neither with Europe nor with Russia rose – from 13% to 25%.
* Support of joining the EU is higher in the Western region (79%) and in the Central region and is lower – in the Southern region (32%) and in the Eastern region (41%), where a considerable share of residents give preference to not joining any of the two unions (43% in the South and 32% in the East).
* As to age differences, youth aged up to 30 years (69%) and in the age group of 30-39 years (64%) supports integration with the EU the most. People of age older than 60 years (41%) support integration with the EU the least, while non-affiliation with any of the two unions has considerable support (35%) in this age group.

**Survey results**

 **Do you have the foreign passport***? (choose all the answer options that suit you)*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| I have a new biometric foreign passport | 6,9 |
| I have an old foreign passport with valid Schengen visas | 8,5 |
| I have an old foreign passport, but without valid Schengen visas | 19,6 |
| No, I don't have foreign passport  | 66,0 |

**If you do not have the biometric passport, are you going to obtain it this year?**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| I already have biometric passport  | 6,9 |
| Yes, I’m going to obtain it this year | 7,4 |
| I’m going to obtain it, but later  | 27,9 |
| I’m not going to obtain foreign passport at all  | 45,4 |
| Difficult to say  | 12,6 |

**How important is the introduction of the visa-free regime with the EU-countries for you?**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Very important  | 10,1 |
| Generally important  | 28,6 |
| Slightly important  | 23,8 |
| Not important at all  | 33,7 |
| Difficult to say  | 3,8 |

**Are you going to go to any of the Schengen countries?**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Yes, definitely  | 9,9 |
| Most likely, yes | 22,0 |
| Most likely, no | 17,6 |
| Definitely not  | 40,2 |
| Difficult to day  | 10,4 |

**If you are going to one of the Schengen countries, then for what purpose?\***

*% to those, who are definitely or most likely going to go to any of the Schengen area countries*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| For study, internship etc.  | 7,8 |
| Visiting relatives and friends | 21,8 |
| Employment abroad | 22,1 |
| Work visits  | 18,1 |
| Tourism | 63,8 |
| Cultural exchange | 7,5 |
| Sports competitions | 1,2 |
| Treatment | 2,4 |
| Permanent residence  | 3,9 |
| Other | 1,2 |

*\** *The response rate is over 100%, since it was possible to mark several answer options*

**In your opinion, does the visa-free regime with Schengen countries give Ukrainians the right to work in these countries?**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Yes | 15,0 |
| No | 62,5 |
| Difficult to say  | 22,5 |

**Are you familiar with the rules of entry and stay in the countries of the Schengen Area?**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Yes, I got acquainted and I know these rules well  | 14,0 |
| I know something but didn’t specifically study them | 50,2 |
| No, I don’t know anything about it  | 34,7 |
| Not answered  | 1,1 |

**Do you consider yourself a European?**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Definitely, yes | 11,0 |
| Rather, yes | 26,8 |
| Rather, no | 29,0 |
| Definitely not | 25,7 |
| Difficult to say | 7,6 |

**In your opinion, what is needed to make you feel a European?** *Choose up to three answer options*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| A certain level of material well-being  | 58,9 |
| Respect the values of democracy and human rights  | 26,2 |
| Be able to go to the European countries without visas  | 15,5 |
| To feel yourself protected by law | 36,1 |
| Be able to elect the government in free democratic elections | 12,4 |
| To feel yourself a free person  | 16,4 |
| To know foreign languages  | 9,9 |
| To know the European culture  | 3,7 |
| Nothing is needed, Ukrainians are already Europeans  | 10,6 |
| I think there is no need that Ukrainians feel themselves Europeans  | 7,2 |
| Other | 1,7 |
| Difficult to say | 5,3 |

**If you had to choose only one option, what Union, in your opinion, should Ukraine join in the long term?**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| The European Union (EU) | 56,8 |
| The Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU)  | 7,8 |
| Should not join neither the European, nor the Eurasian Union  | 25,5 |
| Difficult to say  | 9,9 |