

CIVITTA



Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
of the Republic of  
Lithuania



European Humanities  
University

# SURVEY OF IMPACT TO THE COUNTRY OF ORIGIN (BELARUS) BY EUROPEAN HUMANITIES UNIVERSITY

Research report



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**EHU HAS A STRONG INDIRECT IMPACT ON BELARUS, WHICH TODAY IS EXPRESSED RATHER IN PROVIDING A PLATFORM TO NETWORK FOR GRADUATES WITH THE CLOSE (DEMOCRATIC) VALUES**

**THE POTENTIAL EFFECT CAN BE ENFORCED BY STRENGTHENING CONNECTIONS WITH CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS, RESOLVING INTERNAL ISSUES AND IMPROVING EDUCATIONAL CURRICULUM**



### **EDUCATIONAL IMPACT**

- Today EHU's liberal arts concept helps its students to receive advanced soft-skills (critical thinking, independent learning, creativity, effective communication skills) – resources, which a student can barely receive in a Belarusian university, but are highly appreciated by employees
- Despite today is not as close to the 'European' concept as it could be, it serves as accessible for Belarusians university with teaching methods close to European
- Academic staff is one of the strongest features of EHU, but in order to save this strength EHU should resolve its internal issues with the relationships between academic community and administration
- EHU should strengthen the applied skills teaching in its curriculum and try to provide more assistance and resources with the students' own initiatives

### **SOCIAL AND AXIOLOGICAL IMPACT**

- One of the main functions of EHU is to provide a platform for students and professors with the same (democratic) values and to cement their worldview
- Even though the university barely influences Belarus directly, after graduation its graduates has strong interconnections and after returning to Belarus keep to participate in social transformation processes in the country
- There is a big potential for the university to build stronger connections with Belarusian NGOs and develop its research function

### **PROFESSIONAL IMPACT**

- Despite just 1/3 of graduates work in their field of studies, they often go to self-employment or freelance: the spheres, where creativity and independence are must-have
- EHU also indirectly promotes the concept of socially responsible business: its students are more aware about this concept and more often claim they work in socially-responsible companies

# FROM PERSPECTIVE OF SOCIAL PARTNERS AND CSO, EHU IS A UNIVERSITY WITH AN ATMOSPHERE OF FREEDOM, WHOSE GRADUATES HAVE ADVANCED SOFT-SKILLS, AND IT NEEDS TO FURTHER DEVELOP QUALITY OF EDUCATION, AND REMAIN DISTINCTLY BELARUSIAN

## INSTITUTIONAL PERSPECTIVE

- EHU has an "ideal image" of the Belarusian university in exile: a space of freedom, camaraderie, where you can get a high-quality Belarusian education; the most vulnerable part is the quality of education
- Today, EHU has the value of "a contrario", since in Belarus universities suppress the freedom of students and teachers and are strongly ideologized
- **EHU has high potential for becoming an institutionalised beacon for social and scientific transformation in belarus**

## EDUCATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

- EHU benefits from an atmosphere of freedom, but there are some concerns about the shrinking of this space
- Ambiguity of assessments of the quality of education provided by EHU creates the "transit" image of the university itself

## PROFESSIONAL PERSPECTIVE

- The main value of EHU in the labor market for NGOs is soft-skills and the community, and specific skills do not have much significance when applying for a job
- NGOs often look at EHU graduates as "one of their own"

## IMAGE OF EHU

## VALUES PERSPECTIVE

- EHU influences Belarus mainly through the community and individual graduates
- Graduates are described as more self-confident, thinking critically, while it is believed that they feel uncomfortable in Belarus and leave for this reason, and EHU supports these qualities

## COOPERATION WITH NGOs

- There is a broad request and possibilities to deepen cooperation
- The level of cooperation seems insufficient, often comes down to the exchange of news and is tied to the personal initiative of NGO employees or teachers
- There are cases of painful termination of full-fledged cooperation

## STUDENTS VS. ADMINISTRATION

- The "administration – everyone else" conflict is clearly felt. The reason for the conflict is the lack of involvement of representatives of the student community and the Senate of teachers in decision-making + non-transparent decisions on the distribution of workload and salaries

# THE FOUR-STAGE STUDY COMBINED QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE METHOD

1

## In-depth interviews with EHU graduates

- 9 interviews in total:
  - both graduates who live in Belarus and abroad
  - graduated at least in 2018

### REASON:

In order to avoid methodological mistakes, to operationalize the notions we would use in our research and to receive deep insights about the internal EHU work

### RESULTS:

- Questionnaire designed
- Methodology developed

2

## In-depth interviews with CSOs or NGOs

- 13 interviews in total:
  - NGOs and political organizations working in Belarus
  - have collaborated, contacted or at least heard about EHU

### REASON:

In order to receive an external image of EHU and understand an external, non-educational effect of EHU

### RESULTS:

- insights about the EHU graduates, their skills and image in the labor market acquired
- understanding of the current role of EHU received

3

## Data collection

- CAWI survey of 653 respondents in total, including:
  - 138 EHU students (enrolled not earlier than in 2015)
  - 114 EHU graduates (graduated not earlier than in 2015)
  - 401 non-EHU graduates (living in Belarus, over 21 y.o., graduated not earlier than in 2015 )

### REASON:

In order to check the ideas, we gathered relevant representative data, so survey was organized by methodology, developed after the first stage of the project.

### RESULTS:

- dataset gathered

4

## Analysis and development of recommendations

This report was written in order to provide EHU and its counterparties with effective and sharp decisions, and information.

### RESULTS:

- Description of impact of EHU on its' students and graduates, as well as on Belarus
- Recommendations of possible communication messages
- Dataset with all gathered and processed data

# IN THIS RESEARCH WE'VE USED 20 EVALUATION CRITERIA PROPOSED BY EHU, WHICH COMPLEXLY DESCRIBE THE IMPACT OF EHU ON BELARUS

## FULL LIST OF CRITERIA

1. How many EHU graduates return to their country of origin?
2. How many EHU graduates are employed according to the field of study?
3. Visibility of EHU graduates in Belarus.
4. Is the leadership of EHU graduates identified in the context of social transformations in Belarus?
5. The role of EHU graduates in the dissemination of socially responsible business in Belarus of the EHU.
6. How does a EHU contribute to the promotion of equal opportunities and diversity?
7. How does the EHU foster an approach to the preservation of cultural heritage and cultural diversity?
8. Does the EHU encourage young people from low-income families and from rural areas to study there?
9. How does EHU contribute to the integration of people with disabilities?
10. What is the role of a EHU in ensuring access to common European higher education programs for citizens (students and teachers) in Belarus?
11. Could a EHU serve as a model for other EHUs in Belarus in implementing the principles of the Bologna Process?
12. How does a EHU contribute to the promotion of creativity in Belarus?
13. How does a EHU contribute to the digitization of studies in Belarus?
14. How do EHU students and graduates contribute to democratic change in Belarus?
15. Is EHU an important alternative to universities specializing in humanities and social studies in Belarus?
16. How do international donors evaluate EHU?
17. Evaluations by civil society organizations in Belarus.
18. Does the EHU contribute to the dissemination of freedom of expression and reliable information in Belarus?
19. In what forms does the EHU cooperate with the social partners in Belarus (or in relation to Belarus)?
20. Is / to what extent the inclusion of topics relevant to Belarus provided for in the descriptions of final theses (according to study programs)?


**EHU IMAGE AND PERCEPTION**

**EDUCATIONAL IMPACT**

**GRADUATES' JOB PERSPECTIVES**

**VALUES IMPACT**

**CONNECTION TO BELARUS**

- 
1. Results of quantitative survey
    - **Description of survey and methodology**
    - Educational impact
    - Values impact
    - Return to Belarus perspective
  2. Results of in-depth interviews
  3. Conclusions and recommendations

# IN ORDER TO ASSESS EHU'S IMPACT ON BELARUS WE USED SEVERAL CRITERIA AND MEASURED STUDENTS, GRADUATES AND NON-EHU GRADUATES ACCORDING TO THEM

## LIST OF CRITERIA

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15. Is EHU an important alternative to universities specializing in humanities and social studies in Belarus?
20. Is / to what extent the inclusion of topics relevant to Belarus provided for in the descriptions of final theses (according to study programs)?
21. Diversity and dynamics of the expression of social activity of the academic and administrative staff of the EHU - in connection with professional and non-professional (civic) activities and in connection with Belarus of the EHU.

**EHU IMAGE AND PERCEPTION**

**EDUCATIONAL IMPACT**

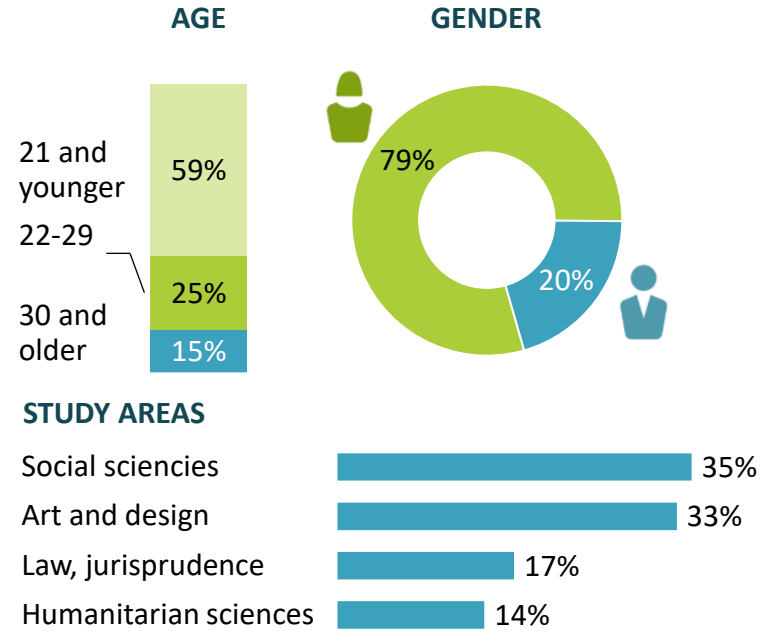
**GRADUATES' JOB PERSPECTIVES**

**VALUES IMPACT**

**CONNECTION TO BELARUS**

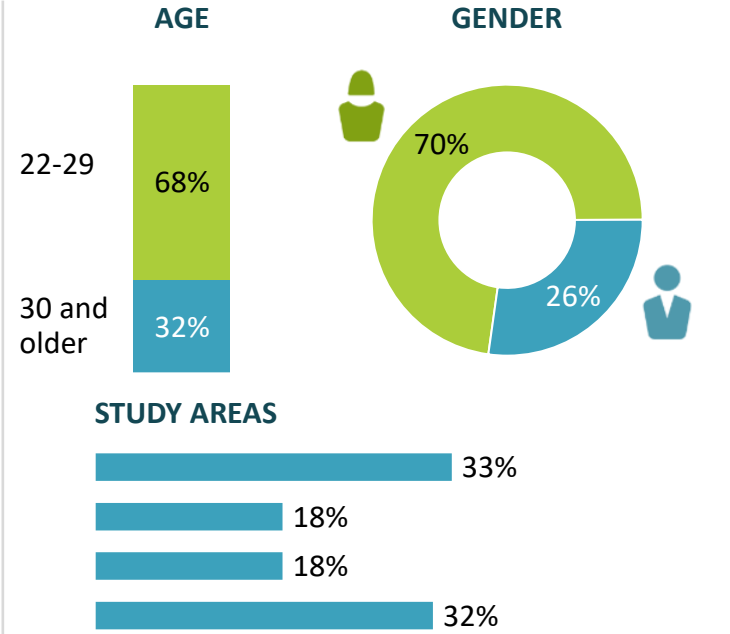
# WE SURVEYED EHU AND NON-EHU GRADUATES (MUST HAVE BEEN GRADUATED NOT EARLIER THAN IN 2015) AND EHU STUDENTS (MUST HAVE BEEN ENROLLED NOT EARLIER THAN IN 2015)

EHU STUDENTS, n=138



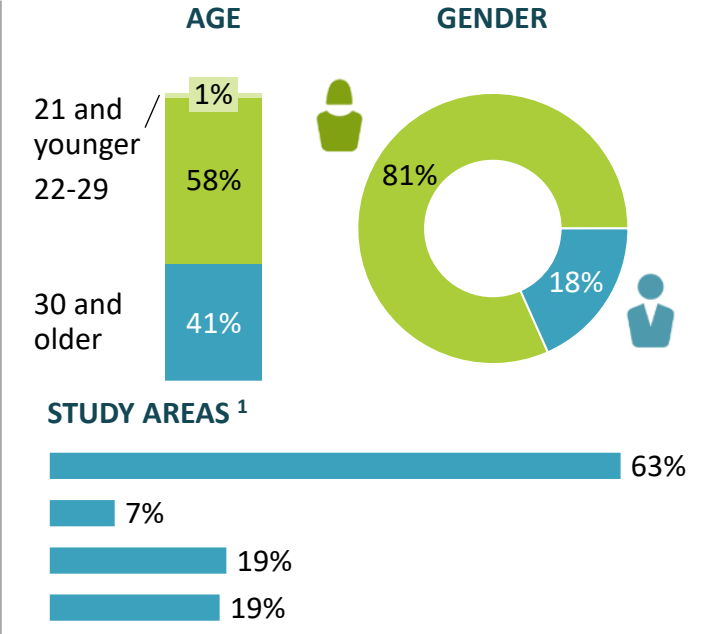
YEAR OF ADMISSION		EDUCATION DEGREE		FORM OF LEARNING	
2020	41%	BA	77%	LR	37%
2019	15%				
2018	17%	MA	17%	HR	63%
2017	17%				
2016	20%	Integr.	7%		
2015	1%				

EHU GRADUATES, n=114



GRADUATION YEAR		EDUCATION DEGREE		FORM OF LEARNING	
2021	4%	BA	73%	LR	45%
2020	13%				
2019	18%	MA	25%	HR	55%
2018	17%				
2017	21%	Integr.	2%		
2016	9%				

non-EHU GRADUATES, n=401

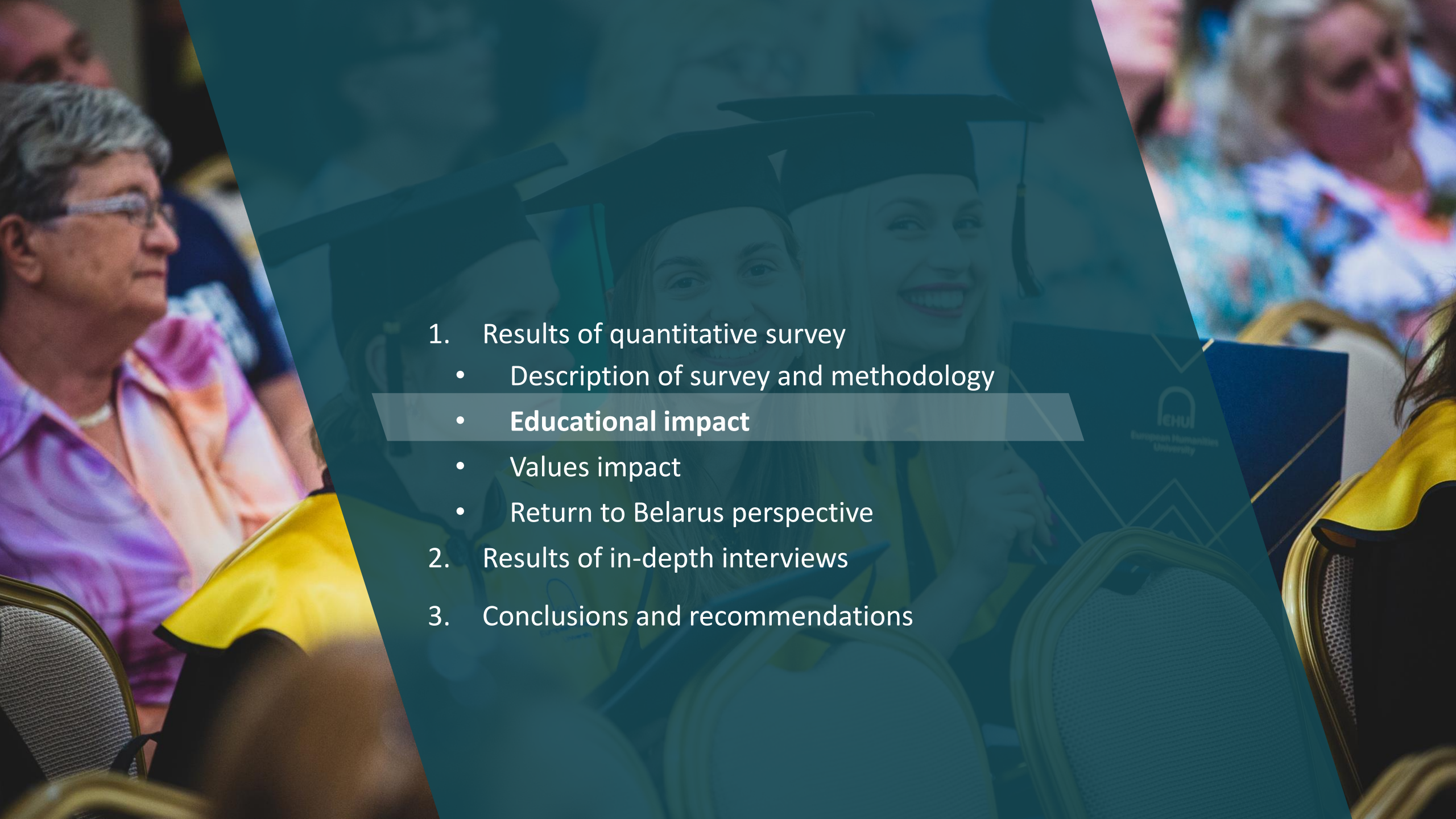


GRADUATION YEAR	
2021	2%
2020	5%
2019	9%
2018	18%
2017	20%
2016	27%

1 – isn't equal to 100%, because some respondents chose several spheres

Note: Here and below, the numbers may not be 100% due to rounding



- 
1. Results of quantitative survey
    - Description of survey and methodology
    - **Educational impact**
    - Values impact
    - Return to Belarus perspective
  2. Results of in-depth interviews
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# IN THE SECTION ABOUT THE ASSESSMENT OF EHU IN TERMS OF EDUCATION AND COMPARISON EHU IS EVALUATED ACCORDING TO THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA

## LIST OF CRITERIA

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**EHU IMAGE AND PERCEPTION**

**EDUCATIONAL IMPACT**

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**GRADUATES' JOB PERSPECTIVES**

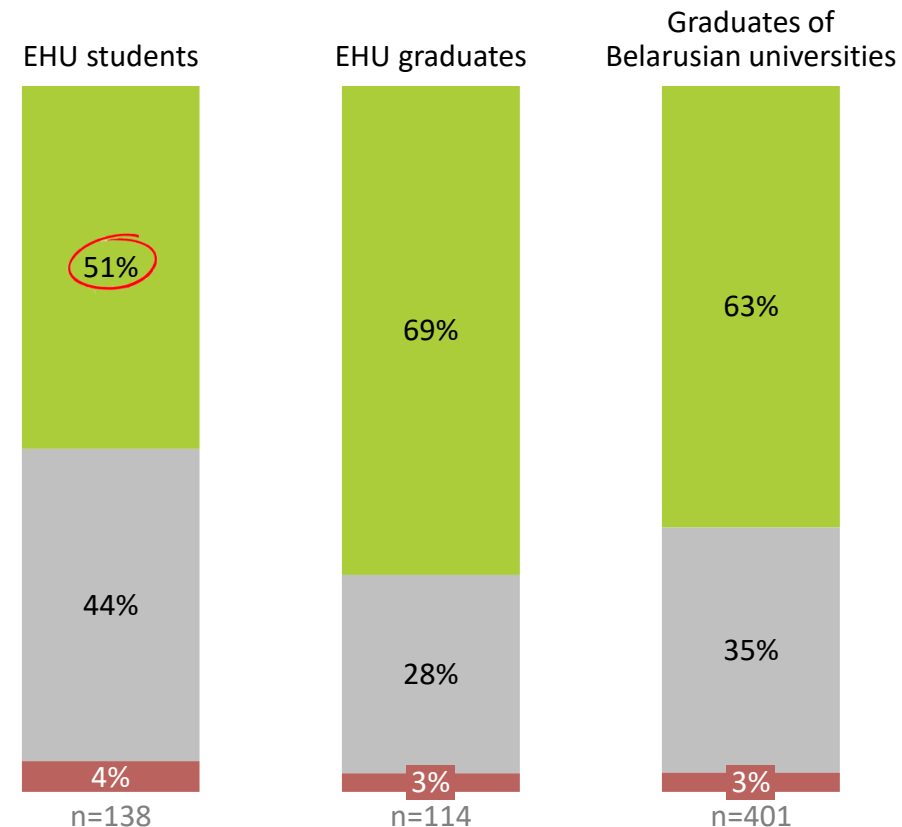
- 
1. Results of quantitative survey
    - Description of survey and methodology
    - Educational impact
      - **Teaching model**
      - Job perspective
      - EHU image and perception
    - Values impact
    - Return to Belarus perspective
  2. Results of in-depth interviews
  3. Summary

# DESPITE EHU GIVES MORE POSSIBILITIES AND HAS ANOTHER EDUCATIONAL MODEL, ITS GRADUATES DECLARE ALMOST THE SAME LEVEL OF SATISFACTION WITH UNIVERSITY AS NON-EHU GRADUATES

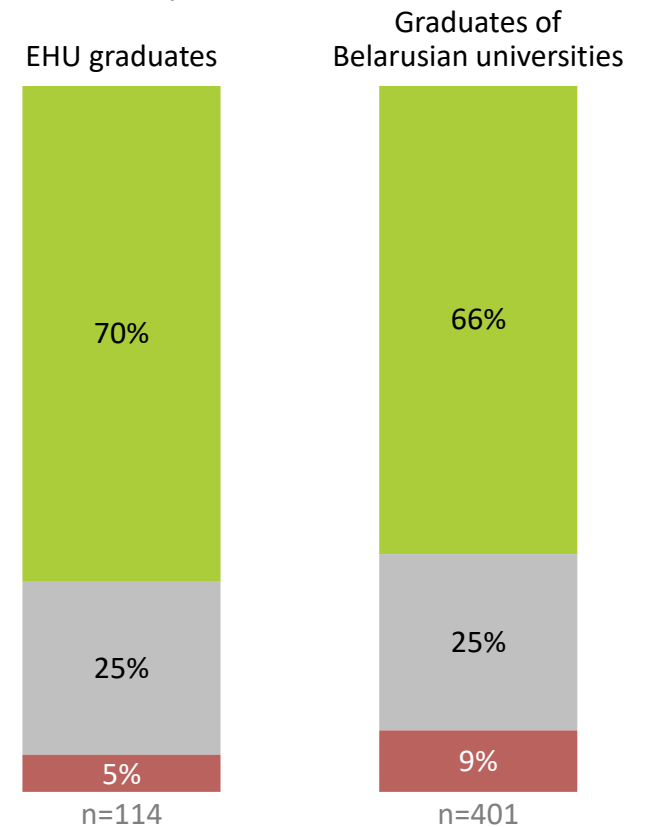
HYPOTHETICALLY, NON-EHU APPLICANTS INITIALLY HAVE LOWER EXPECTATIONS OF UNIS, HENCE HIGH SCORES

SATISFACTION WITH UNIVERSITY BY STUDENTS AND GRADUATES, scale from 1 to 10

COMPLIANCE OF THE EDUCATIONAL PROCESS WITH EXPECTATIONS, scale from 1 to 5



Law students at Belarusian universities give higher grades to their universities than EHU law students and some employees believe that law-graduates from Belarus have more knowledge in their sphere:  
*this is a clear loss to the same BSU [university from Belarus]... its graduates are stronger in substantive knowledge, if you take n EHU graduate and take BSU graduate, even not the best one, then the last will know the law better than an EHU graduate*



■ Liked (scores 8-10)    ■ Didn't like (scores 1-3)  
■ It was okay (scores 4-7)

■ Rather/totally corresponds (4-5)  
■ Average correspondance (3)  
■ Rather/totally doesn't correspond (1-2)

  - significantly less, than others

Source: answers to questions "In general, do you like/did you like studying at EHU (your university)? Evaluate the compliance of the educational process with the expectations that you had before entering the university on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 - completely doesn't correspond, 5 - totally corresponds"









# OVERALL, THERE ARE 8 FACTORS, WHICH ARE HIGHLY CONNECTED WITH EHU STUDENTS AND GRADUATES' SATISFACTION WITH UNIVERSITY IN GENERAL, THREE OF THEM ARE CONSIDERED THE MOST IMPACTFUL

IMPORTANCE OF THE ELEMENTS OF OVERALL SATISFACTION LEVEL WITHIN EHU <sup>1</sup>

THE SCORE OF THE ELEMENT, out of 10

IMPORTANCE LEVEL



		EHU STUDENTS	EHU GRADUATES
	Content of the curriculum as a whole	7,2	7,5
	Home- and self-guided work	7,7	8,0
	The attitude of administration towards students in general	7,4	7,1
	Comprehensibility and availability of information about the university	7,8	8,1
	Correspondence of the acquired knowledge to the chosen specialty	7,4	7,5
	The attitude of academic staff towards students in general	8,3	8,6
	Entrance exam format	8,2	8,5
	Availability of financial support	6,8	7,1



The score of the element is not an objective evaluation: it describes only the perception of the element by EHU students and graduates.

<sup>1</sup> – the importance of the element is based on the regression model: only those elements which influence overall assessment of EHU are considered important. The remaining elements doesn't show statistically significant connection

Source: answers to questions "Evaluate the satisfaction with some elements on a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 - completely not satisfied, 10 – completely satisfied

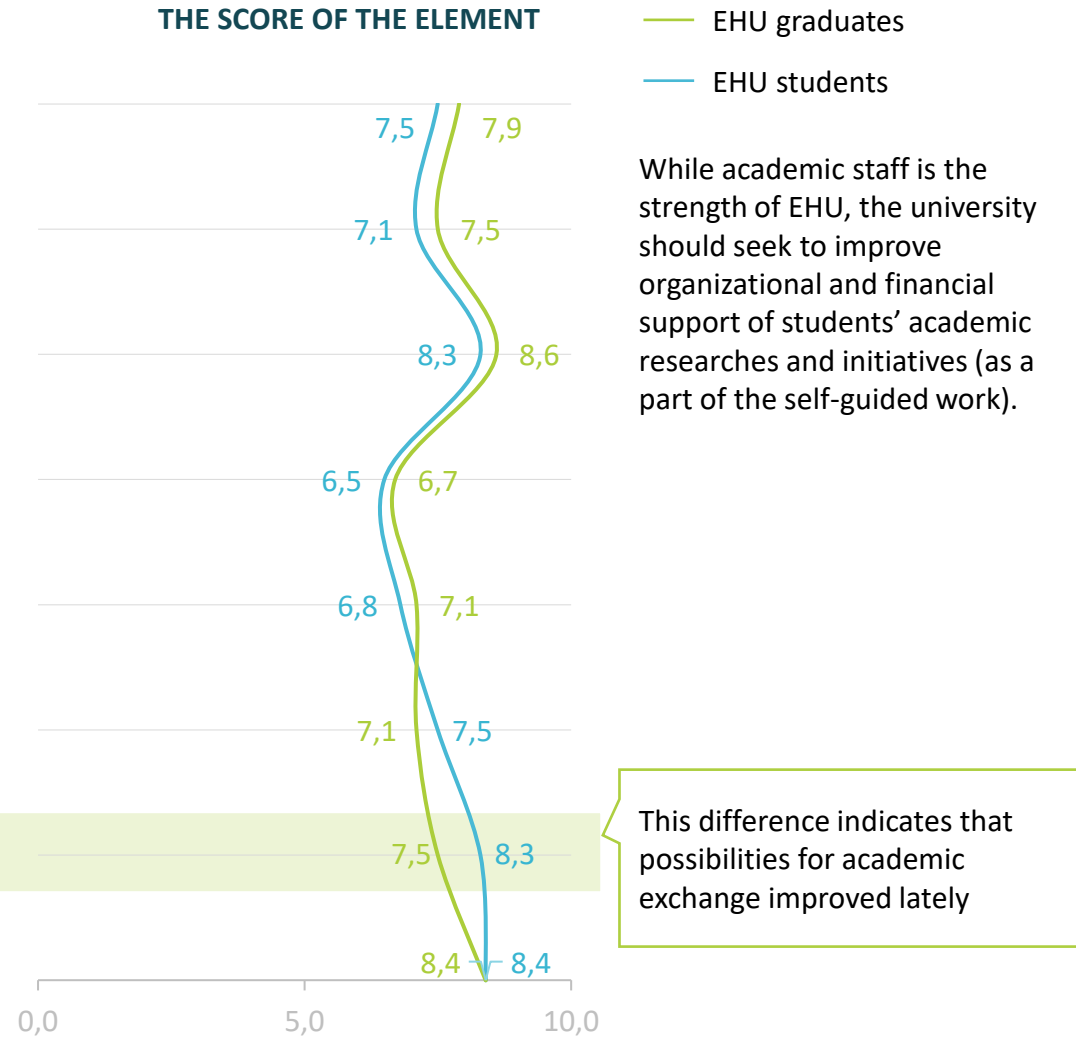
# AT THE SAME TIME EHU SHOULD PROVIDE ENOUGH POSSIBILITIES FOR SELF-GUIDED WORK AND ENSURE IT WILL BE PROPERLY CHECKED

IT IS IMPORTANT TO ENSURE THAT STUDENTS RECEIVE HELP THEY ASK FROM STAFF AND ADMINISTRATION

## IMPORTANCE OF THE ELEMENTS IN THE EVALUATION OF HOME- AND SELF-GUIDED WORK <sup>1</sup>

-  Testing system, knowledge control
-  Variety of courses in the program
-  The attitude of academic staff towards students in general
-  Variety and interestingness of extracurricular activities (sport, culture)
-  Availability of financial support
-  Administration availability
-  Opportunities to participate in academic exchange programs
-  Equal treatment to students

### THE SCORE OF THE ELEMENT



While academic staff is the strength of EHU, the university should seek to improve organizational and financial support of students' academic researches and initiatives (as a part of the self-guided work).

This difference indicates that possibilities for academic exchange improved lately

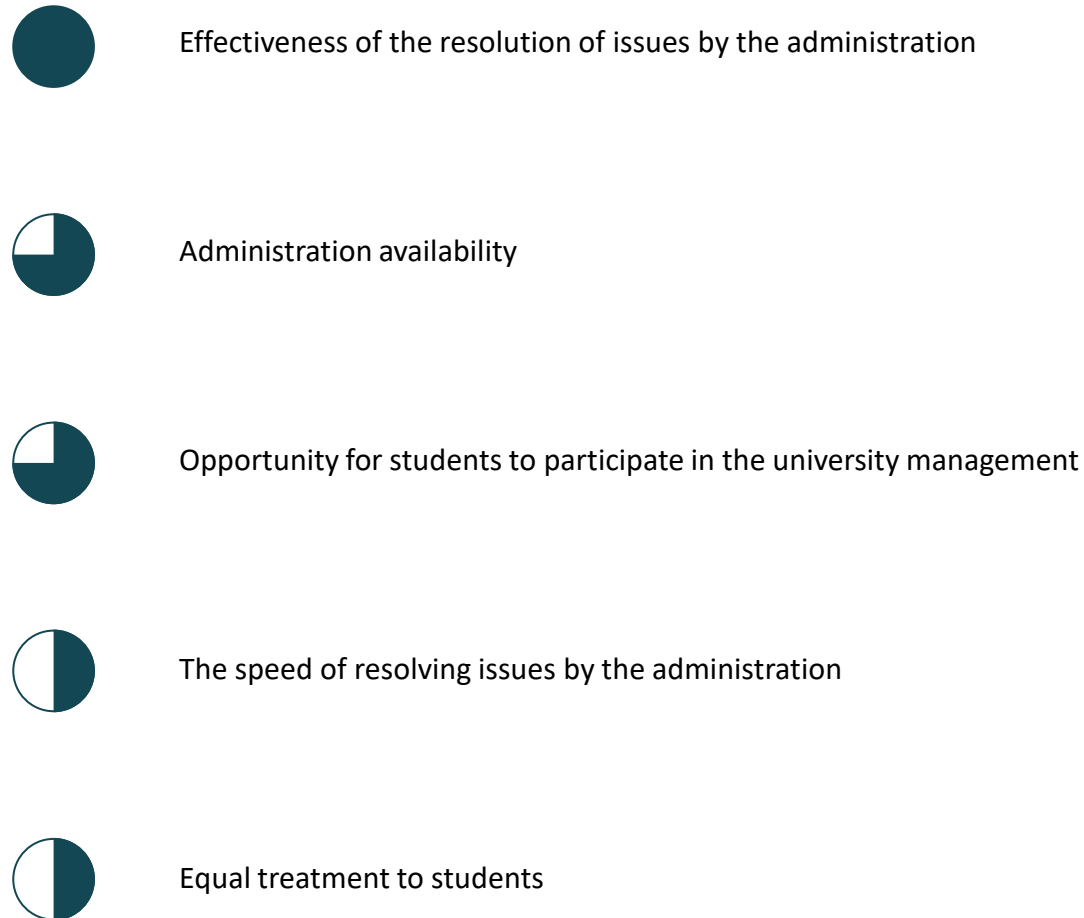
1 – the importance of the element is based on the regression model: the higher the element's score, the higher the overall score. The remaining elements doesn't show statistically significant connection

Source: answers to questions "Evaluate the satisfaction with some elements on a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 - completely not satisfied, 10 – completely satisfied"

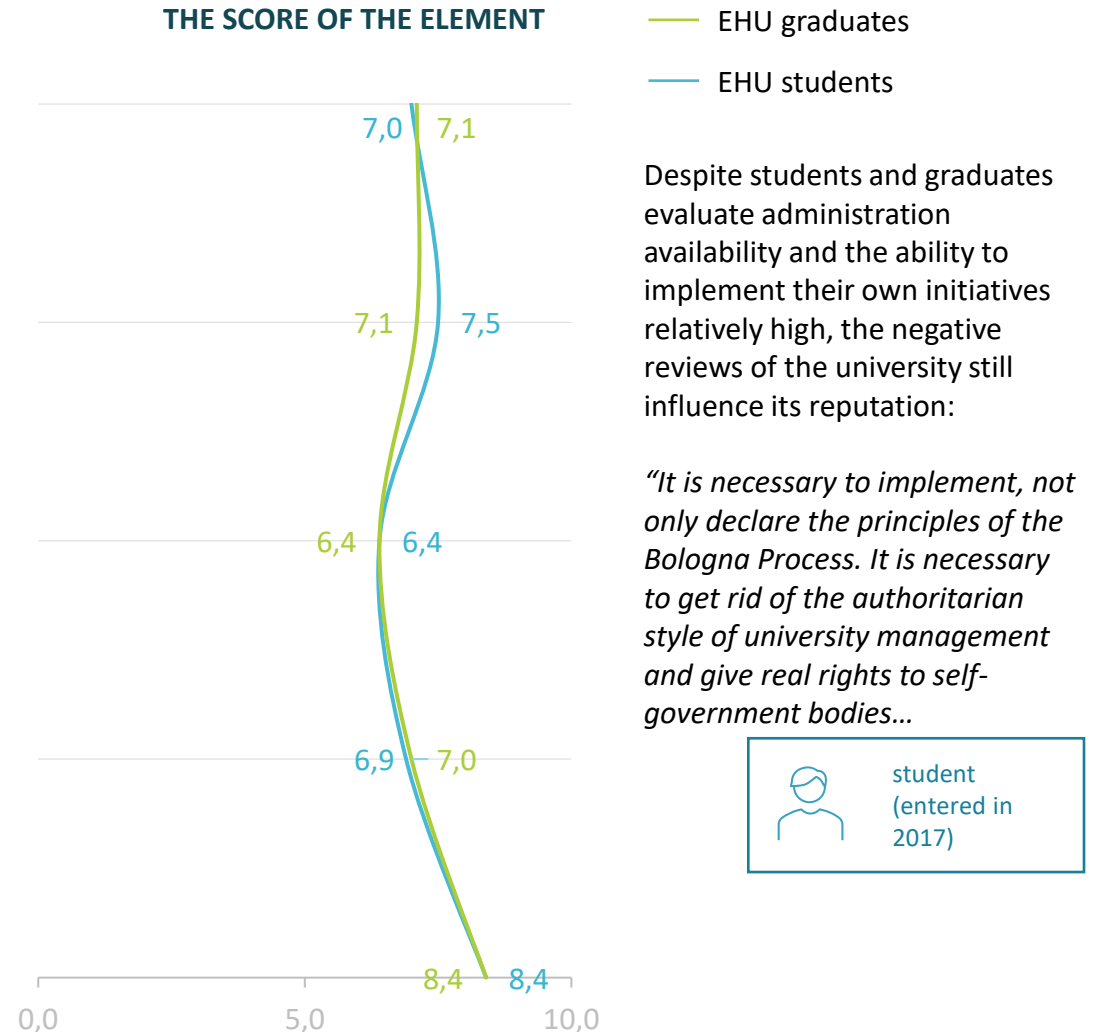
# ONE OF THE CRUCIAL PARTS OF SATISFACTION WITH ADMINISTRATION TO BE IMPROVED IS BETTER INCLUSION OF STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE BODIES INTO DECISION MAKING PROCESS

ALL VITAL DECISIONS MUST NOT ONLY BE EFFECTIVE, BUT ALSO TRANSPARENT

## IMPORTANCE OF THE ELEMENTS IN THE EVALUATION OF THE ATTITUDE OF THE ADMINISTRATION TOWARDS STUDENTS IN GENERAL <sup>1</sup>



## THE SCORE OF THE ELEMENT



Despite students and graduates evaluate administration availability and the ability to implement their own initiatives relatively high, the negative reviews of the university still influence its reputation:

*“It is necessary to implement, not only declare the principles of the Bologna Process. It is necessary to get rid of the authoritarian style of university management and give real rights to self-government bodies...”*

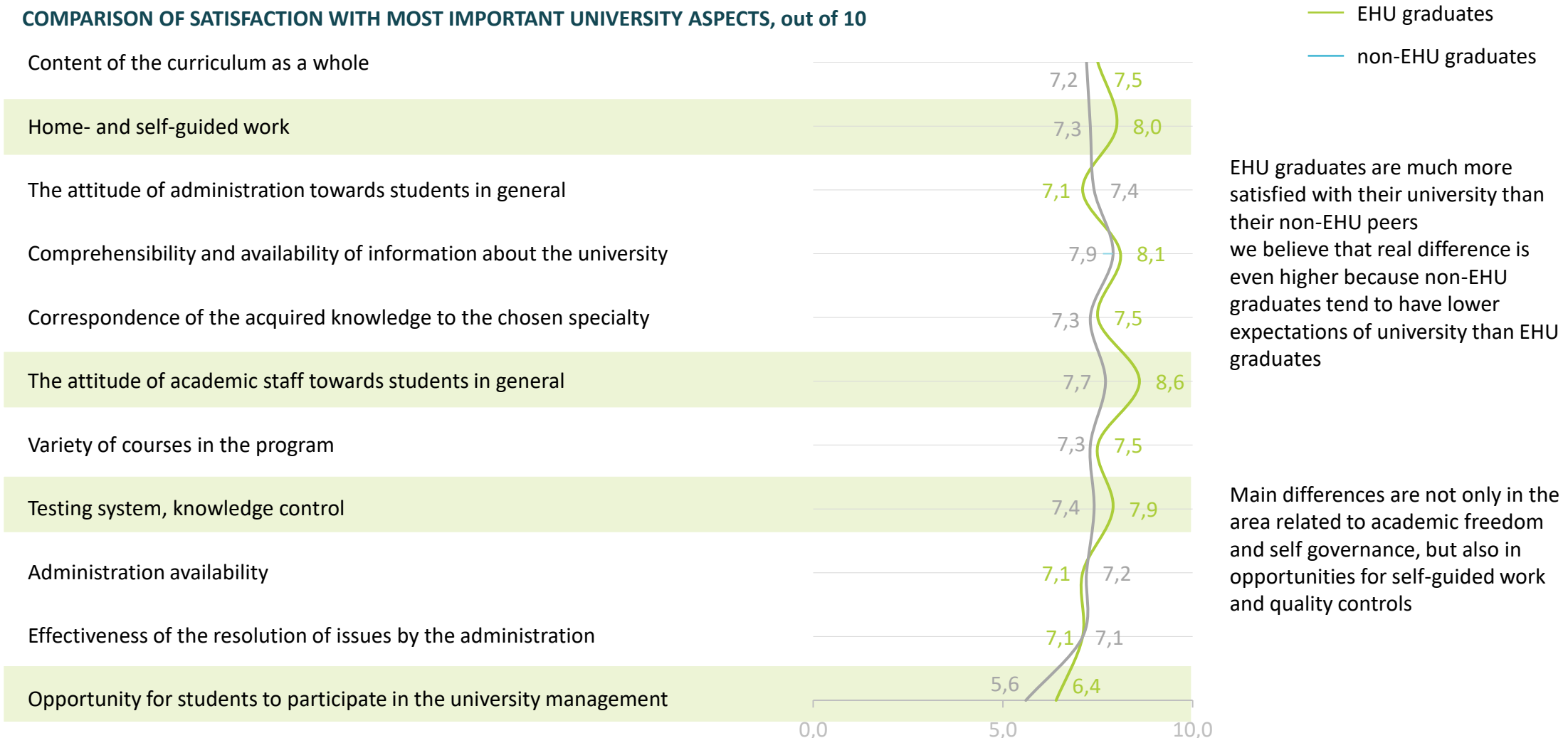


1 – the importance of the element is based on the regression model: the higher the element’s score, the higher the overall score. The remaining elements doesn’t show statistically significant connection

Source: answers to questions “Evaluate the satisfaction with some elements on a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 - completely not satisfied, 10 – completely satisfied

# EHU'S EXPERIENCE IN PROVIDING QUALITY IN AREAS OF SELF-GOVERNANCE AND ACADEMIC FREEDOM COULD AND SHOULD BE USED TO ESTABLISH EHU AS A BEACON AFTER SOCIAL AND POLITICAL CHANGES WILL HAPPEN IN BELARUS

COMPARISON OF SATISFACTION WITH MOST IMPORTANT UNIVERSITY ASPECTS, out of 10



EHU graduates are much more satisfied with their university than their non-EHU peers we believe that real difference is even higher because non-EHU graduates tend to have lower expectations of university than EHU graduates

Main differences are not only in the area related to academic freedom and self governance, but also in opportunities for self-guided work and quality controls

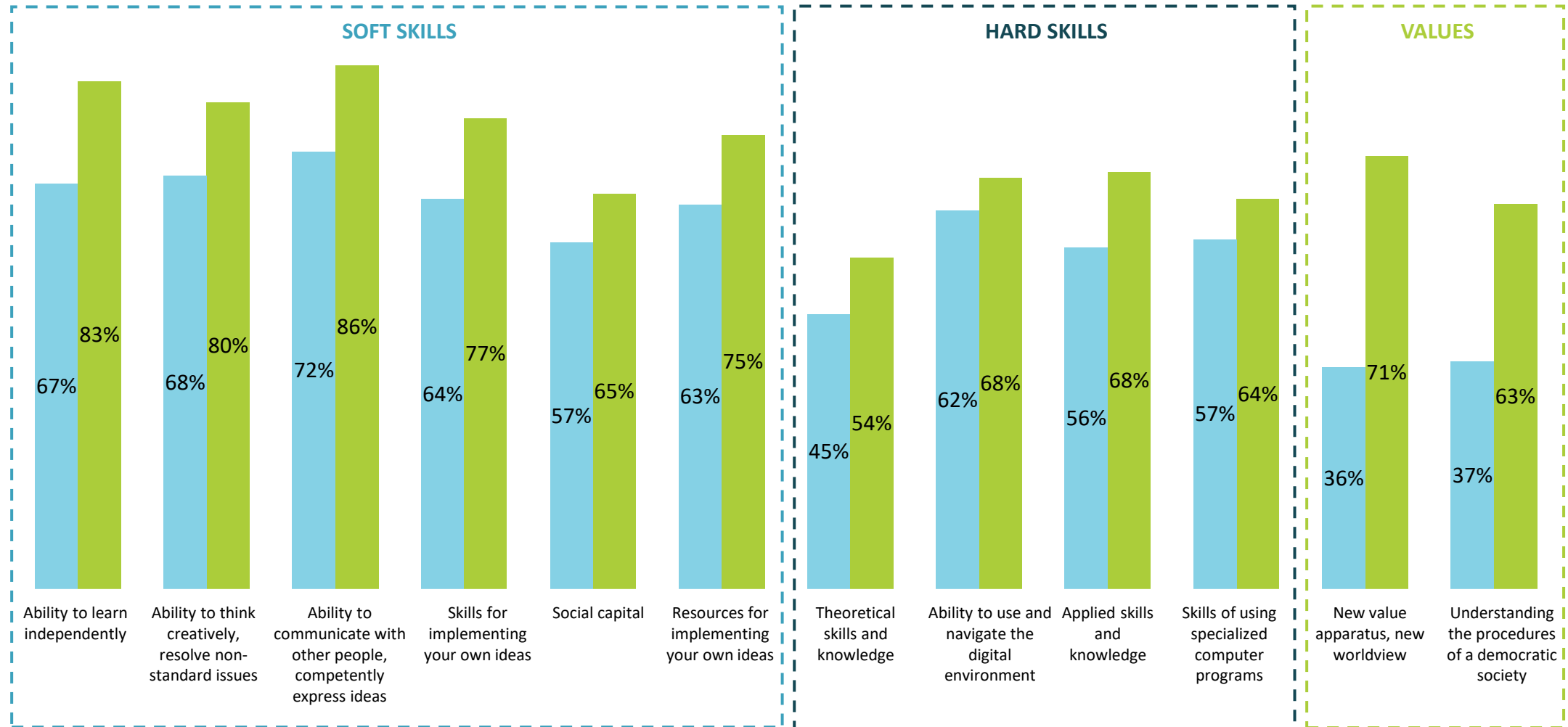
– Significantly higher then non-EHU

Source: answers to questions “Evaluate the satisfaction with some elements on a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 - completely not satisfied, 10 – completely satisfied



# TYPICAL EHU-STUDENT, GRADUATE OR APPLICANT HAS DIFFERENT VIEWS ON WHAT UNIVERSITY SHOULD PROVIDE TO A PERSON, MAIN DIFFERENCE LIES IN AXIOLOGICAL AREA

ASSESSMENT OF THE IMPORTANCE OF SKILLS / RESOURCES, scale from 1 to 4 **IMPORTANT (4)**



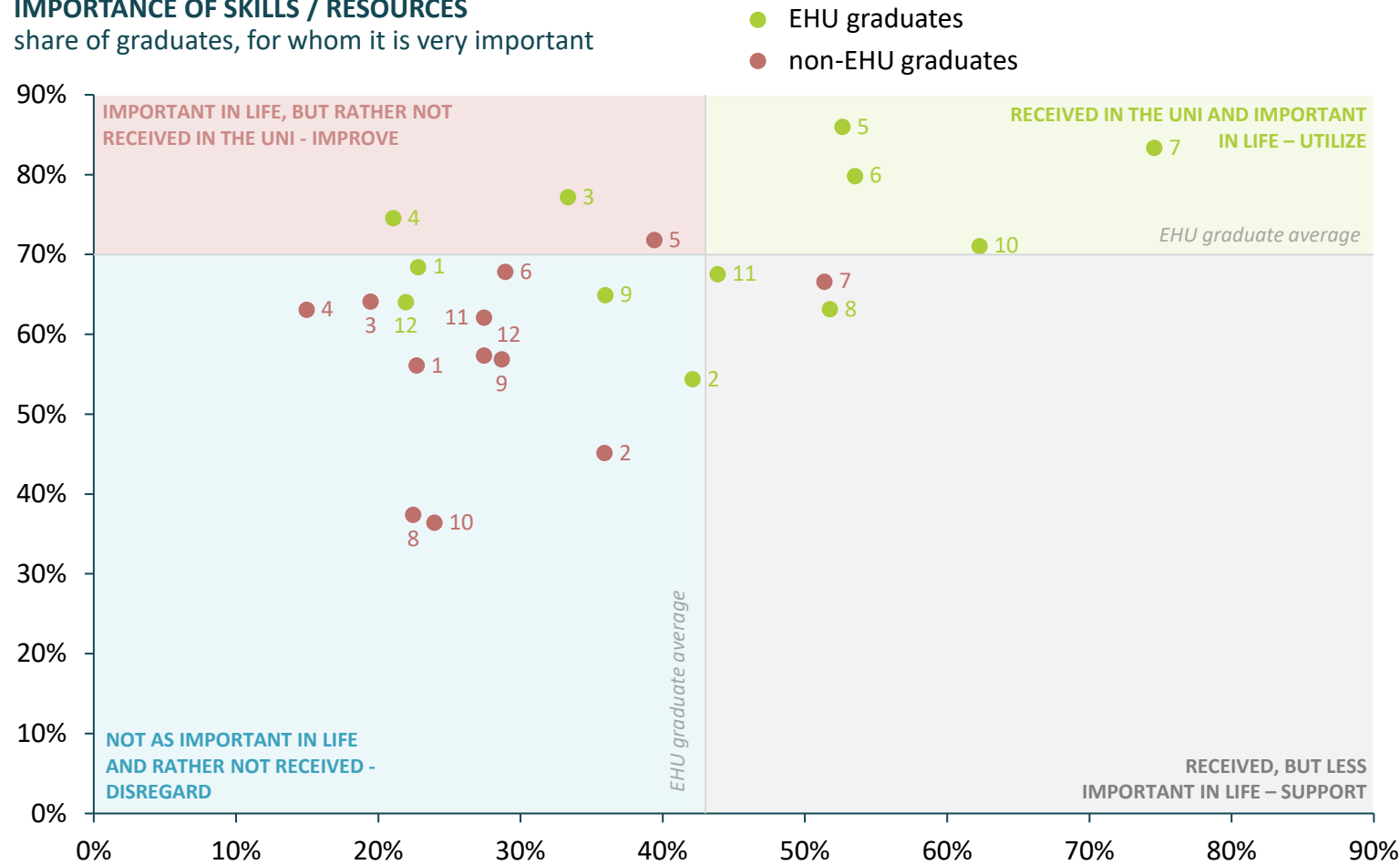
EHU graduates, n=114  
 non-EHU graduates, n=401

Source: answers to the question “How important are the skills / resources mentioned in life to you personally?”

# EHU IS EVALUATED HIGHLY IN TERMS OF PROVIDING MOST IMPORTANT SKILLS OR UPHOLDING IMPORTANT VALUES BY ITS GRADUATES: THIS SHOULD BE USED IN COMMUNICATION TO ATTRACT NEW APPLICANTS

## IMPORTANCE OF SKILLS / RESOURCES

share of graduates, for whom it is very important



- 1 - applied skills and knowledge
- 2 - theoretical skills and knowledge
- 3 - skills for implementing your own ideas
- 4 - resources for implementing your own ideas
- 5 - ability to communicate with other people, competently express ideas
- 6 - ability to think creatively, resolve non-standard issues
- 7 - ability to learn independently
- 8 - understanding the procedures of a democratic society
- 9 - social capital
- 10 - new value apparatus, new worldview
- 11 - ability to use and navigate the digital environment
- 12 - skills of using specialized computer programs

**Both importance and the evaluation of outputs are higher for the graduates of EHU:** it means that EHU applicants has initially higher needs and, at the same time, evaluate their university better.

In particular, effective communication, creative-thinking, independent learning and developing value apparatus and worldview are **strong features of EHU**

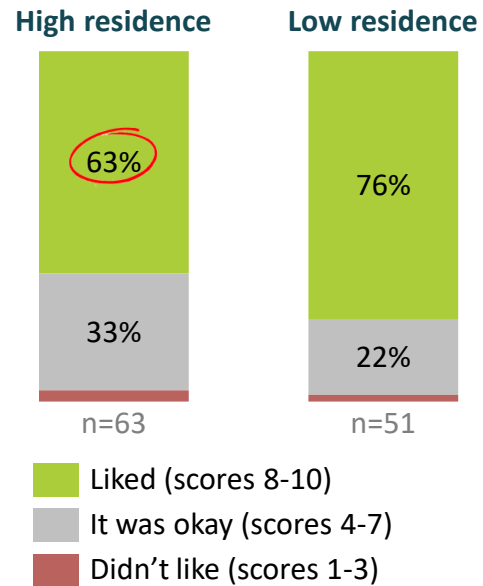
## ASSESSMENT IF UNIVERSITY SUCCEEDED IN PROVIDING SKILLS/ RESOURCES

share of graduates, who believe their university has succeeded to provide resource/skill

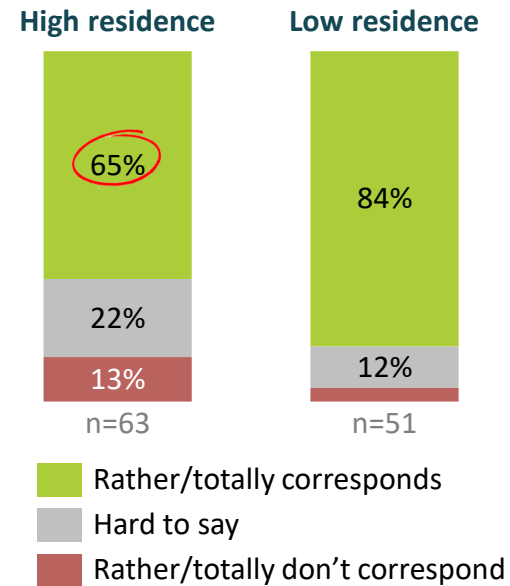
Source: answers to the question "Rate how EHU (your university) succeeded or failed to provide you with various resources / skills"; "How important are the skills / resources mentioned in life to you personally?"

# GRADUATES IN DISTANCE EDUCATION LIKED EHU STUDIES MORE THAN FULL-TIME GRADUATES – THIS COULD BE EXPLAINED BY THE FACT THAT LOW-RESIDENTS ARE RESIDING IN BELARUS AND CAN SEE THE DIFFERENCE WITH UNHINDERED VIEW

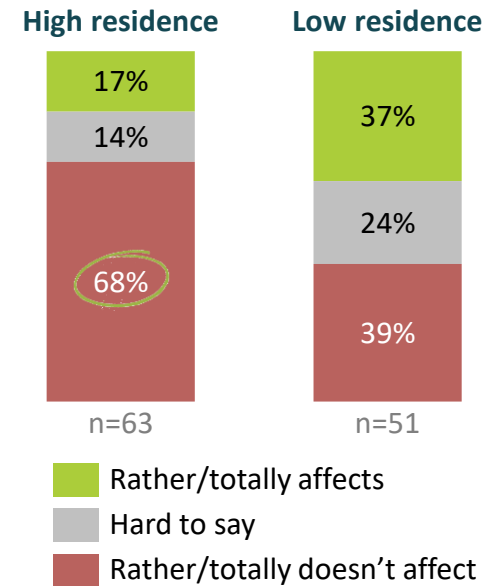
SATISFACTION WITH EHU STUDIES BY FORM OF EDUCATION, scale from 1 to 10



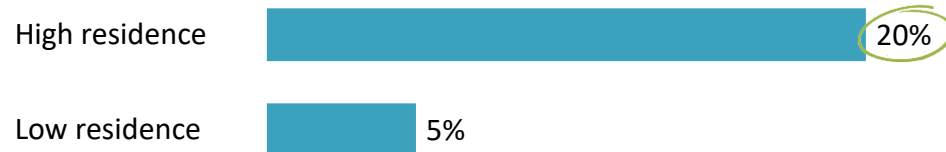
CORRESPONDENCE OF EHU TO THE TERM "EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY" BY FORM OF EDUCATION, %



THE INFLUENCE OF EHU ON THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM IN BELARUS BY FORM OF EDUCATION, %



EHU GRADUATES IN THE THIRD SECTOR BY FORM OF EDUCATION



Evidentially, high-resident EHU students shows more interest to work in the third sector. The university could use this feature to even more strengthen the partnership between NGOs and its students/graduates.

○ - significantly more, than others  
 ○ - significantly less, than others

Source: answers to questions "In general, do you like/did you like studying at EHU (your university)?; Please rate how EHU/the university where you studied corresponds or does not correspond to the term "European University" in your view. Did you participate in international academic student exchange programs (for example, Erasmus, etc.)?"


## \ SUBCHAPTER SUMMARY

**EHU IS AN IMPORTANT ALTERNATIVE TO UNIVERSITIES OF THE SAME PROFILE IN BELARUS NOTABLY BECAUSE OF ITS EFFICIENCY IN DEVELOPING SOFT-SKILLS AND VALUES (AS A RESULT OF A HIGH-LEVEL ACADEMIC STAFF)**

**AT THE SAME TIME, HARD/APPLIED SKILLS AND ASSISTANCE IN THE STUDENT'S OWN INITIATIVES ARE WEAK SIDES OF EHU (SAME FOR BELARUSIAN UNIVERSITIES)**



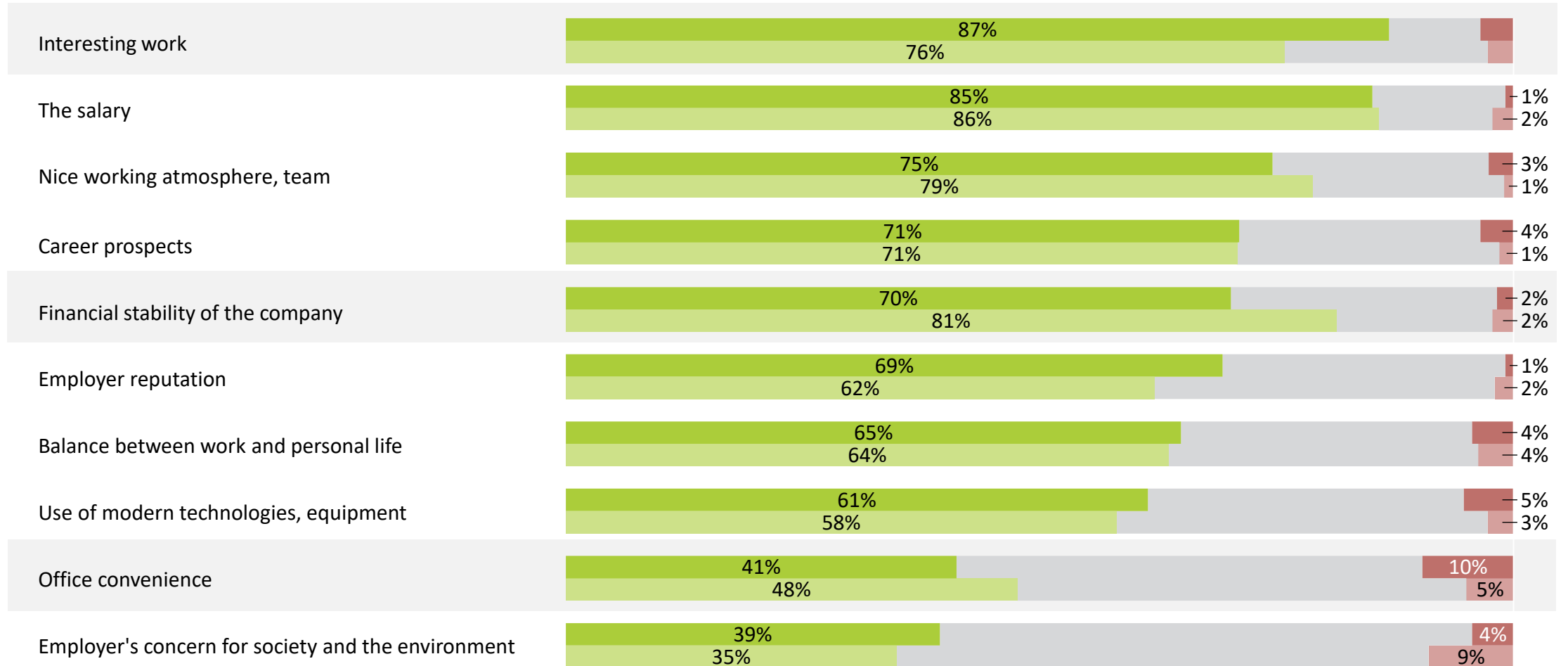
- **EHU and non-EHU graduates' evaluation of their university and the compliance with the educational process expectations are almost the same (criteria 15)**
  - Hypothetically, the difference in fact exists: EHU graduates initially have higher expectations, while non-EHU graduates compare their education only with Belarusian universities, the quality of which is often objectively lower (criteria 15)
  - Moreover, by the most important educational elements EHU is subjectively evaluated higher than other Belarusian universities
- **EHU students evaluate the university much lower than EHU graduates (criteria 15)**
  - This can be explained by re-assessment of the university after graduation: graduates can find received skills/resources ('human capital') are in fact helpful, while students expected other things (notably, applied skills) (criteria 12, 15)
- **Students and graduates see content of the curriculum, home- and self-guided work and the attitude of administration towards students as most important elements of university perception (criteria 15)**
  - While the academic staff is one of the main strengths of EHU, it is important to improve the inclusion of student and academic representatives in the university management (criteria 15)
- **For EHU students and graduates axiological component is much more important than for non-EHU graduates (criteria 15)**
  - EHU should utilize its strong features in the communication: firstly, for EHU this is effective communication and creative-thinking skills, independent learning and developing value apparatus and worldview (criteria 15)

- 
1. Results of quantitative survey
- Description of survey and methodology
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    - Teaching model
    - **Job perspective**
    - EHU image and perception
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  - Return to Belarus perspective
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# WHILE LOOKING FOR A JOB EHU GRADUATES MORE OFTEN LOOK FOR NON-MATERIAL ASPECTS; IT DIFFERS THEM FROM NON-EHU GRADUATES, WHO MOSTLY ARE AFTER SALARY

## FACTORS IMPORTANT WHEN FINDING EMPLOYMENT

Agree Hard to say Disagree



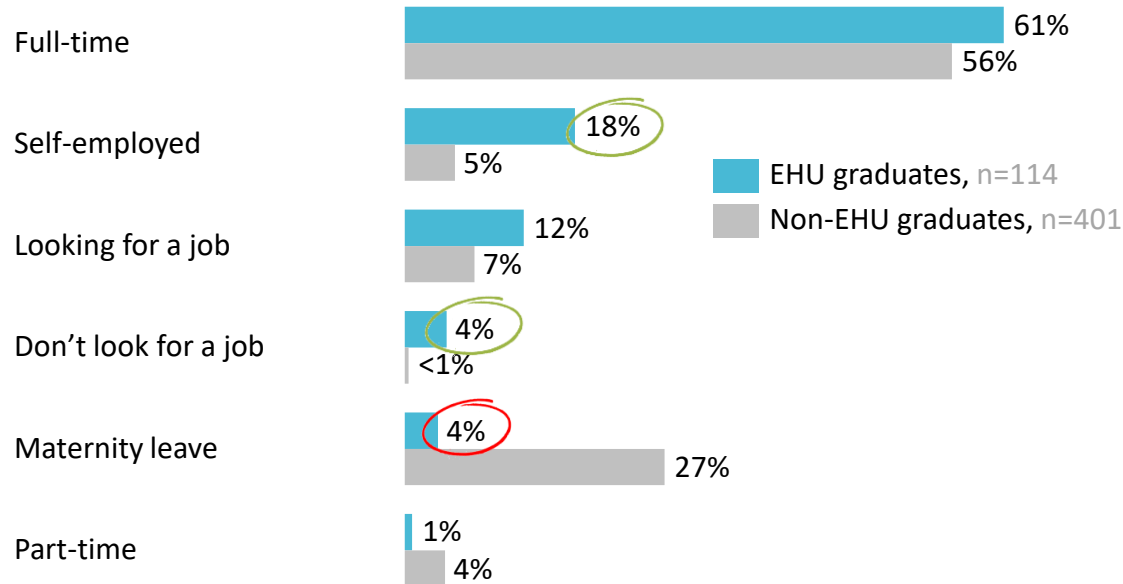
■ - EHU, n=114  
■ - non-EHU, n=401

  - significant differences

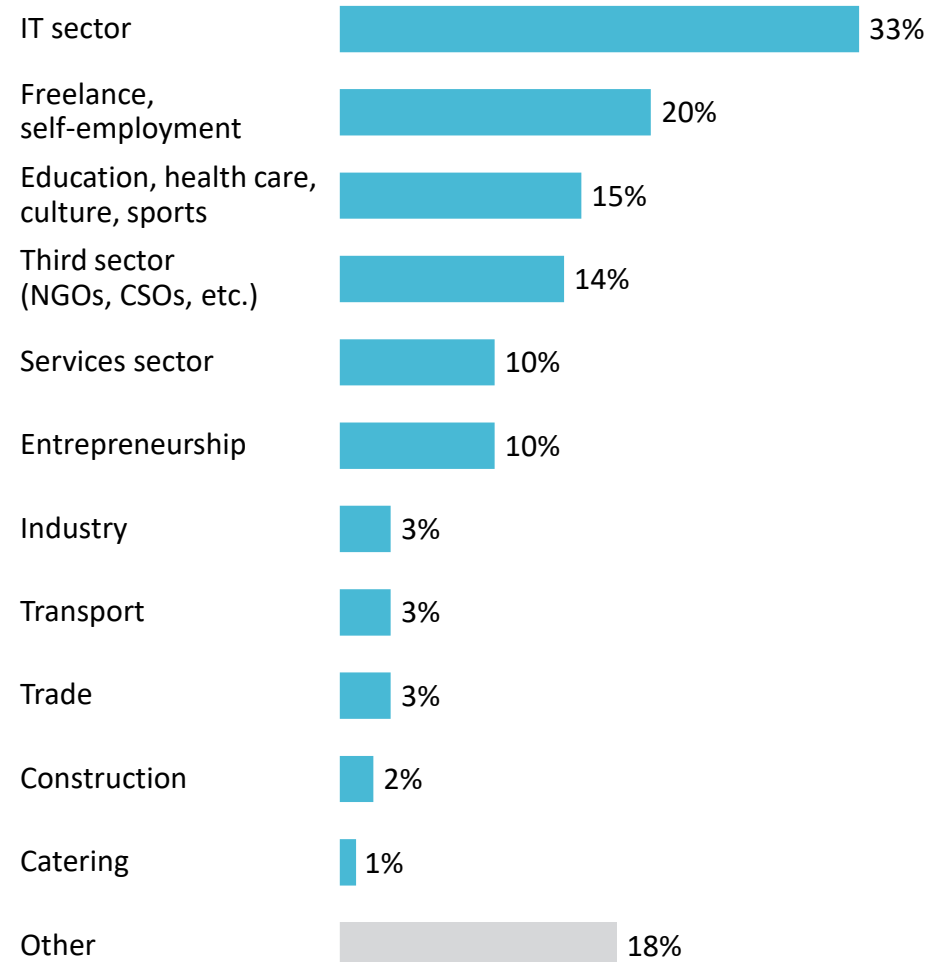
Source: answers to question "On a scale of 1 to 7, rate the importance of employer parameters that you would look at if you were looking for a job today."

# AROUND 2/3 GRADUATES DO NOT WORK IN THEIR FIELD OF STUDY, MOSTLY BECAUSE THEY ARE SELF EMPLOYED OR WORK IN IT

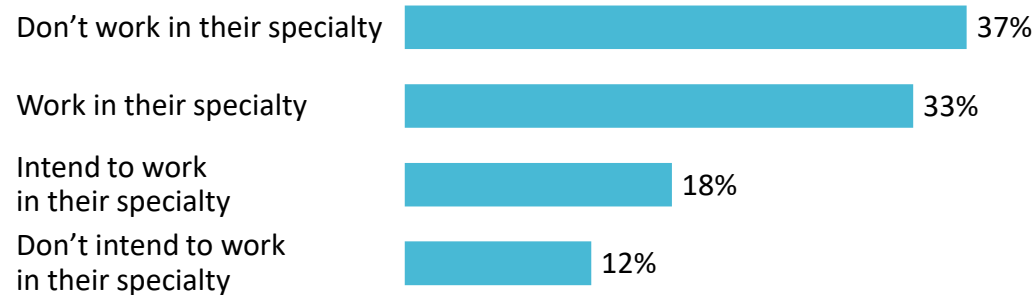
EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF EHU AND non-EHU GRADUATES



AREAS OF ACTIVITY OF EHU GRADUATES, n=91



EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF EHU GRADUATES IN TERMS OF SPECIALTY, n=114

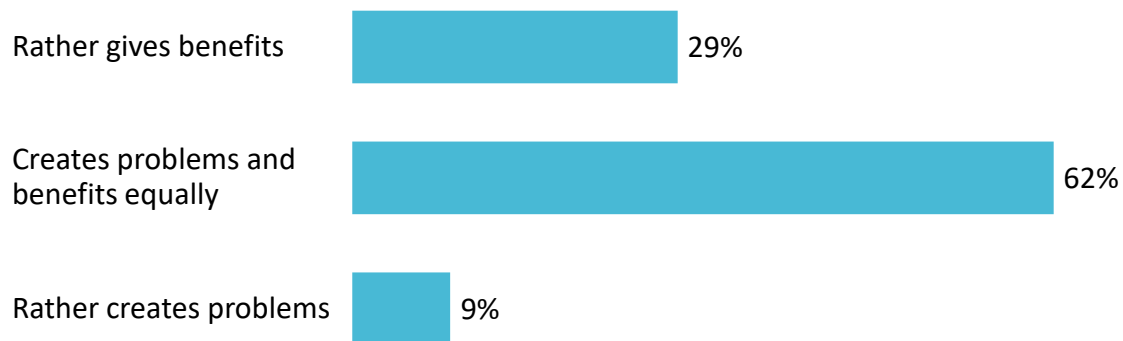


○ - significantly more, than others  
 ○ - significantly less, than others

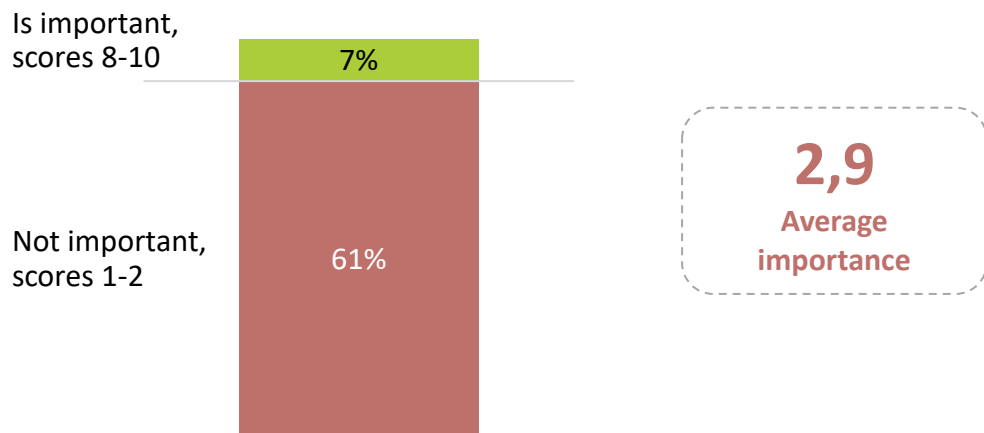
Source: answers to questions "Are you currently working? Can it be said that you are working in the specialty you received at EHU? What is the sphere of your current activity?"

# ON AVERAGE EHU GRADUATES MAKE 2.5 TIMES MORE MONEY THAN NON-EHU GRADUATES, THOUGH THEY RARELY ATTRIBUTE IT TO HAVING EHU DIPLOMA

ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF EHU DIPLOMA <sup>1</sup>, n=114



IMPORTANCE OF EHU DIPLOMA IN THE EYES OF THE EMPLOYER (EHU GRADUATES OPINION), scale from 1 to 10, n=71



<sup>1</sup> – the most often barriers relate to the fact that in the Belarus the state is biased towards EHU, but created 56% of all jobs in the country

AVERAGE MONTHLY INCOME OF RESPONDENTS



n=138; 20% refused to answer



n=114; 9% refused to answer



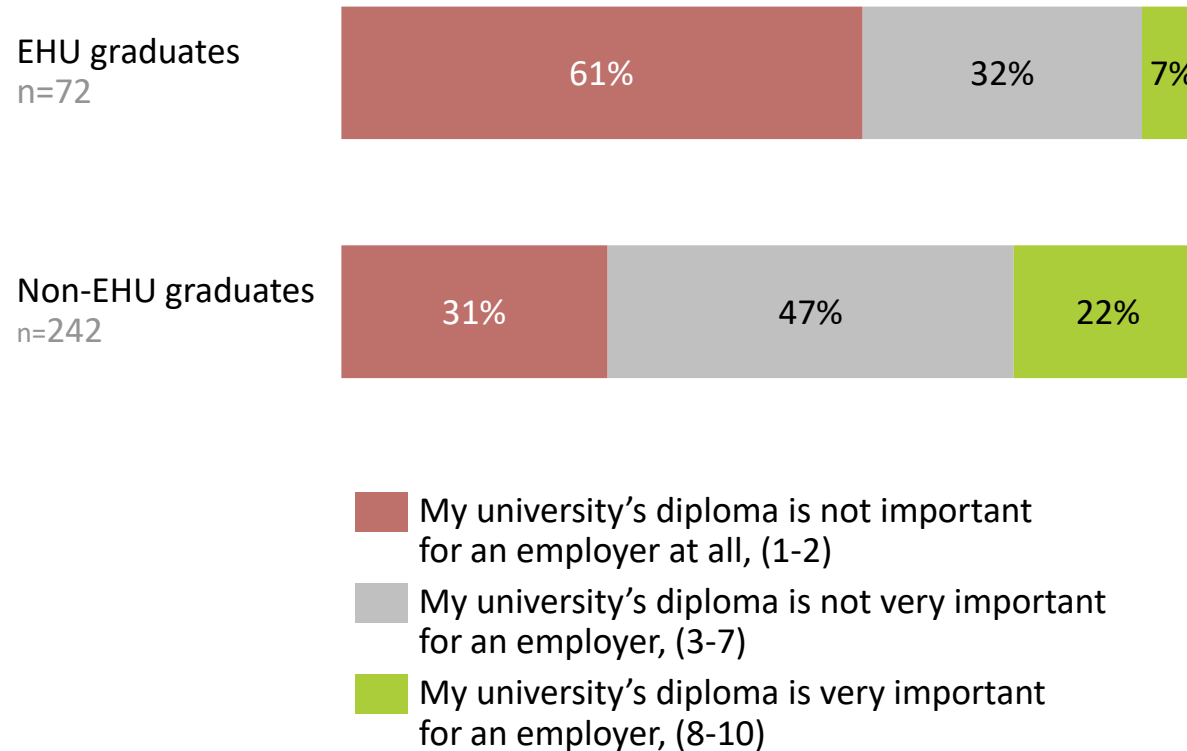
n=401; 3% refused to answer

Source: answers to questions “In your opinion, does the EHU diploma rather give advantages or create problems for professional development in Belarus? Estimate your average monthly income, including all possible sources of income (salary, scholarship, benefits, pension)? In your opinion, from the point of view of your employer, how important is the fact that you are an EHU graduate?”



# EHU GRADUATES TEND TO THINK THAT THEIR DIPLOMA IS NOT IMPORTANT, ALTHOUGH POTENTIAL EMPLOYERS TEND TO SEE EHU DIPLOMA AS AN INDICATOR THAT AN EMPLOYEE HAS THE SAME VALUES AS THEY DO

IMPORTANCE OF DIPLOMA IN THE EYES OF THE EMPLOYER (EHU GRADUATES AND non-EHU GRADUATES OPINION), scale from 1 to 10



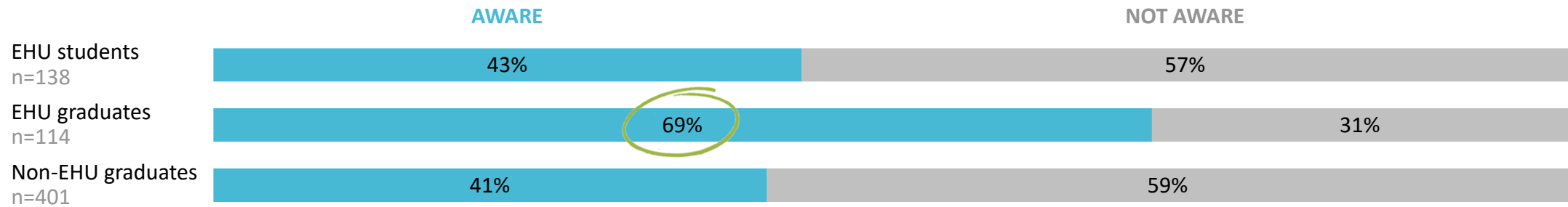
*"A person must have an education, because otherwise he wouldn't come to this area. [of] What [university] diploma is it? We don't pay attention... EHU diploma is OK. It is neither an advantage nor disadvantage: it is normality."*

NGO, development of civil society

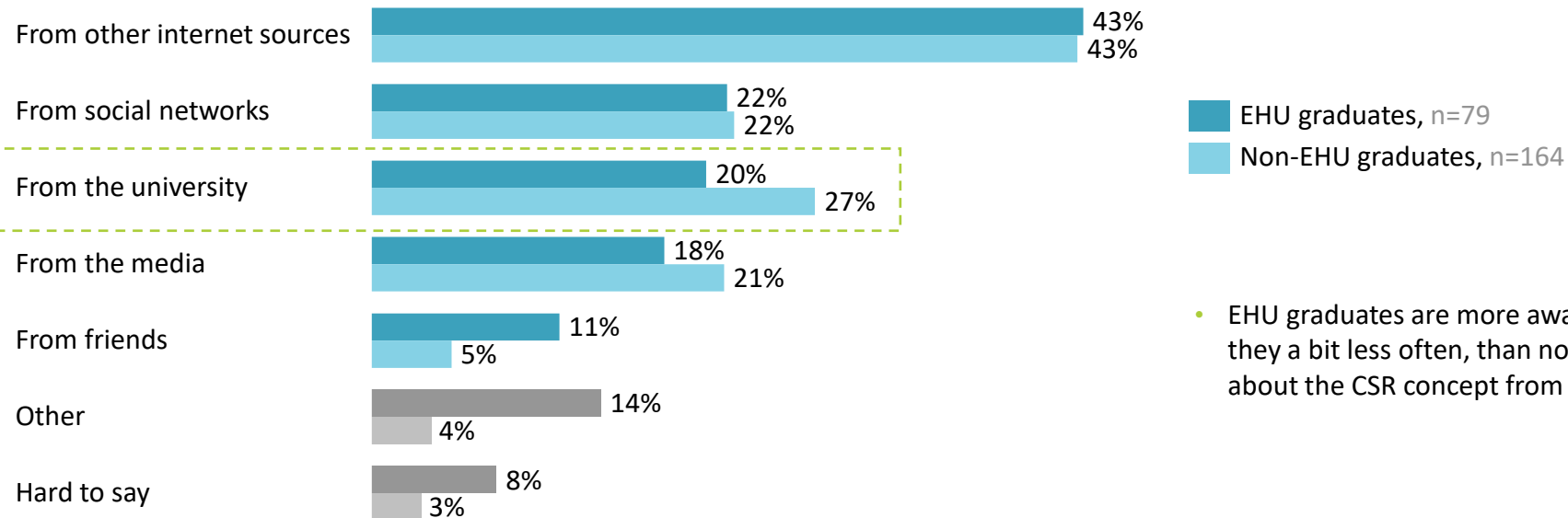
# EHU GRADUATES ARE MORE AWARE OF THE CSR CONCEPT, THAN NON-EHU GRADUATES AND EHU STUDENTS

HOWEVER, EHU IS NOT AMONG THE MAIN SOURCES, FROM WHICH ITS GRADUATES HAVE LEARNED ABOUT THE CSR

AWARENESS OF THE CONCEPT OF CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY (CSR), %



SOURCES FROM WHICH GRADUATES HAVE LEARNED ABOUT CSR, %



- EHU graduates are more aware of the CSR concept. However, they a bit less often, than non-EHU graduates, have learned about the CSR concept from the university

○ - significantly MORE, than others  
 ○ - significantly LESS, than others

Source: answers to the questions: “Have you heard about the concept of socially responsible business (corporate social responsibility)?”; “How did you learn about socially responsible business?”

# EHU GRADUATES BETTER DISTINGUISH CSR PRINCIPLES THAT CONFIRMED THEIR GREATER AWARENESS OF THE CSR CONCEPT

OPINION REGARDING THE MAIN PRINCIPLES THAT DESCRIBE THE CSR CONCEPT, %

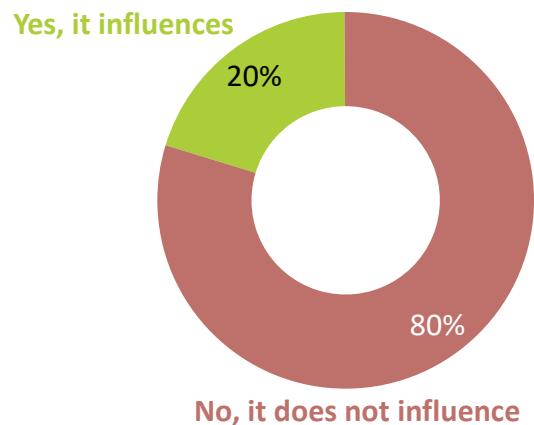


○ - more frequently than others  
 ○ - less frequently than others

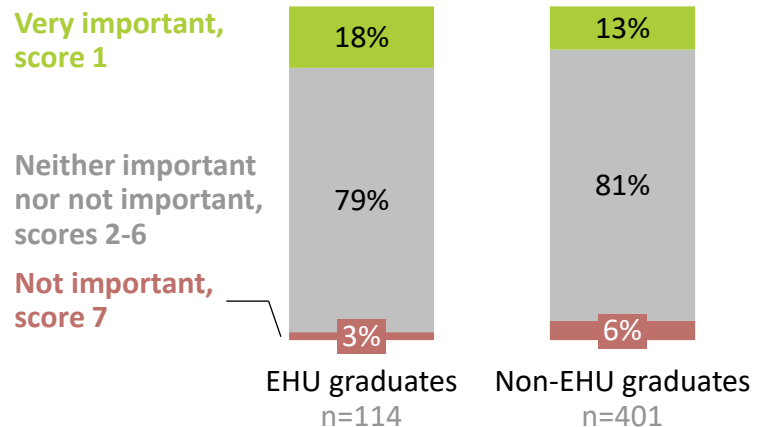
Source: answers to the question: "What, in your opinion, are the main principles that describe the concept of socially responsible business?"

# EHU INFLUENCE THE PROMOTION OF CSR CONCEPT INDIRECTLY: EVEN THOUGH GRADUATES BELIEVE THE UNIVERSITY DOESN'T INFLUENCE, THEY ARE MORE LIKELY TO PARTICIPATE IN EMPLOYER'S CSR ACTIVITIES

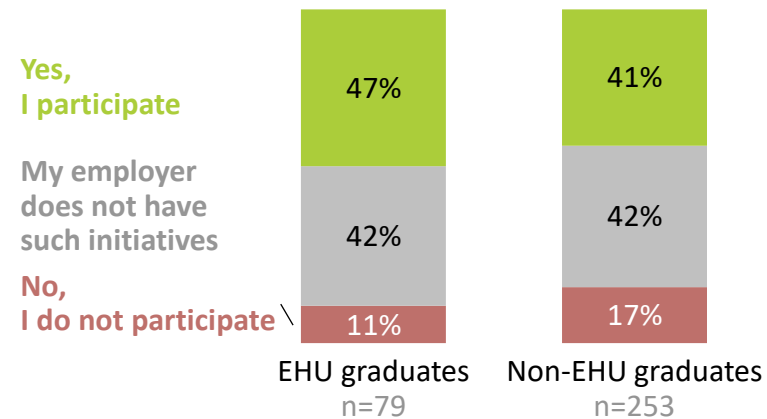
EHU INFLUENCE ON THE PROMOTION OF THE CSR CONCEPT IN BELARUS (EHU GRADUATES OPINION), %, n=114



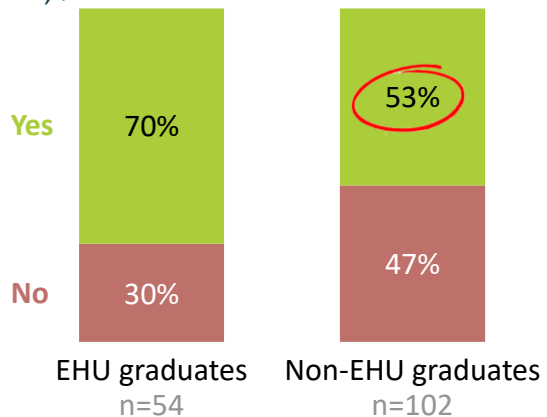
THE IMPORTANCE OF CRITERIA "EMPLOYER'S CONCERN FOR SOCIETY AND THE ENVIRONMENT" WHILE CHOOSING A JOB, % (scale from 1 to 10)



PARTICIPATION IN EMPLOYER'S CSR INITIATIVES, %



THE COMPANY A GRADUATE WORKS FOR ADHERES TO THE CSR CONCEPT, %



- EHU graduates less frequently, than non-EHU graduates, do not participate in employer's CSR initiatives. However, the share of those who participate in such initiatives are almost equal among EHU and non-EHU graduates
- EHU graduates' employers more often adhere to the CSR concept, than non-EHU graduates' employers

- less frequently than others

Source: answers to the questions: "In your opinion, does EHU influence the promotion of the concept of CSR in Belarus?"; "On a scale of 1 to 7, rate the importance of employer criteria "employer's concern for society and the environment"; "Do you agree with the statement that the company you work for adheres to the concept of CSR?"; "Do you personally take part in employer initiatives that are not directly related to work, aimed at caring for the community and the environment?"

## \ SUBCHAPTER SUMMARY

**JUST AROUND 1/3 OF EHU GRADUATES WORK IN THEIR FIELD OF STUDY**


**OTHERS FIND LIBERAL ARTS DEGREE OBTAINED FROM EHU USEFUL**

**ON AVERAGE EHU GRADUATES EARN 2.5 TIMES MORE MONEY THAN NON-EHU GRADUATES**

**EHU INDIRECTLY HELPS TO PROMOTE THE CSR CONCEPT IN BELARUS: ITS GRADUATES ARE AWARE ABOUT IT AND MORE OFTEN CLAIM THEY WORK IN A SOCIALLY-RESPONSIBLE COMPANIES**



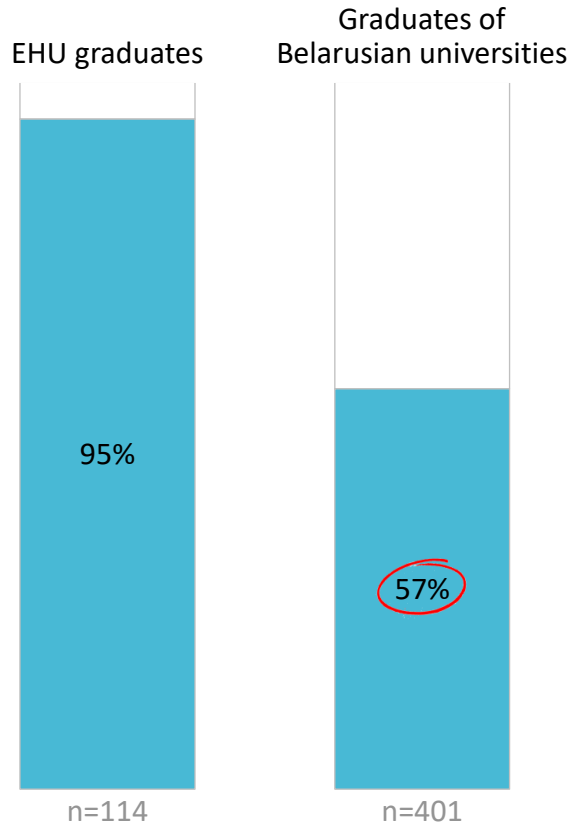
- **EHU and non-EHU graduates search for a job differently: while the for the first it is more important to have interesting job, financial stability and office convenience are more important for the last (*criteria 2, 12*)**
  - Evidentially, the salary, nice working atmosphere and career prospects are important both for EHU and non-EHU graduates
- **Despite just 1/3 of graduates work in their field of studies, a lot of them goes to self-employment or freelance, while the most popular sector is IT (*criteria 2*)**
  - Hypothetically, such a big share of self-employment is a strength of EHU: its graduates are much more independent and creative in order to work in this way (*criteria 2, 12*)
- **EHU Graduates tend to think that their diploma is not important, although potential employers tend to see EHU diploma as an indicator that an employee has the same values as they do (*criteria 2*)**
  - In fact, diploma (either EHU, or not) is a nice-to-have feature: while the fact to have a higher education is important (but not for everyone), the specific university is often neither an advantage nor disadvantage (*criteria 2*)
  - Despite EHU graduates believe their diploma does create some problems (mostly because of the Belarusian state position towards the university), up to 1/3 believe it rather gives benefits (*criteria 2*)
- **The concept of social responsibility is much more understandable to EHU graduates compared to non-EHU graduates (*criteria 5*)**
  - They are more aware about this concept and better distinguish between the real CSR features and simple compliance with law/social marketing (*criteria 5*)
  - EHU graduates more often work in the company, adhering the CSR concept (*criteria 5*)

- 
1. Results of quantitative survey
    - Description of survey and methodology
    - Educational impact
      - Teaching model
      - Job perspective
      - **EHU image and perception**
    - Values impact
    - Return to Belarus perspective
  2. Results of in-depth interviews
  3. Conclusions and recommendations

# ALMOST EVERY EHU GRADUATE IS AWARE OF THE BOLOGNA PROCESS COMPARING TO ONLY EVERY SECOND OF NON-EHU GRADUATE

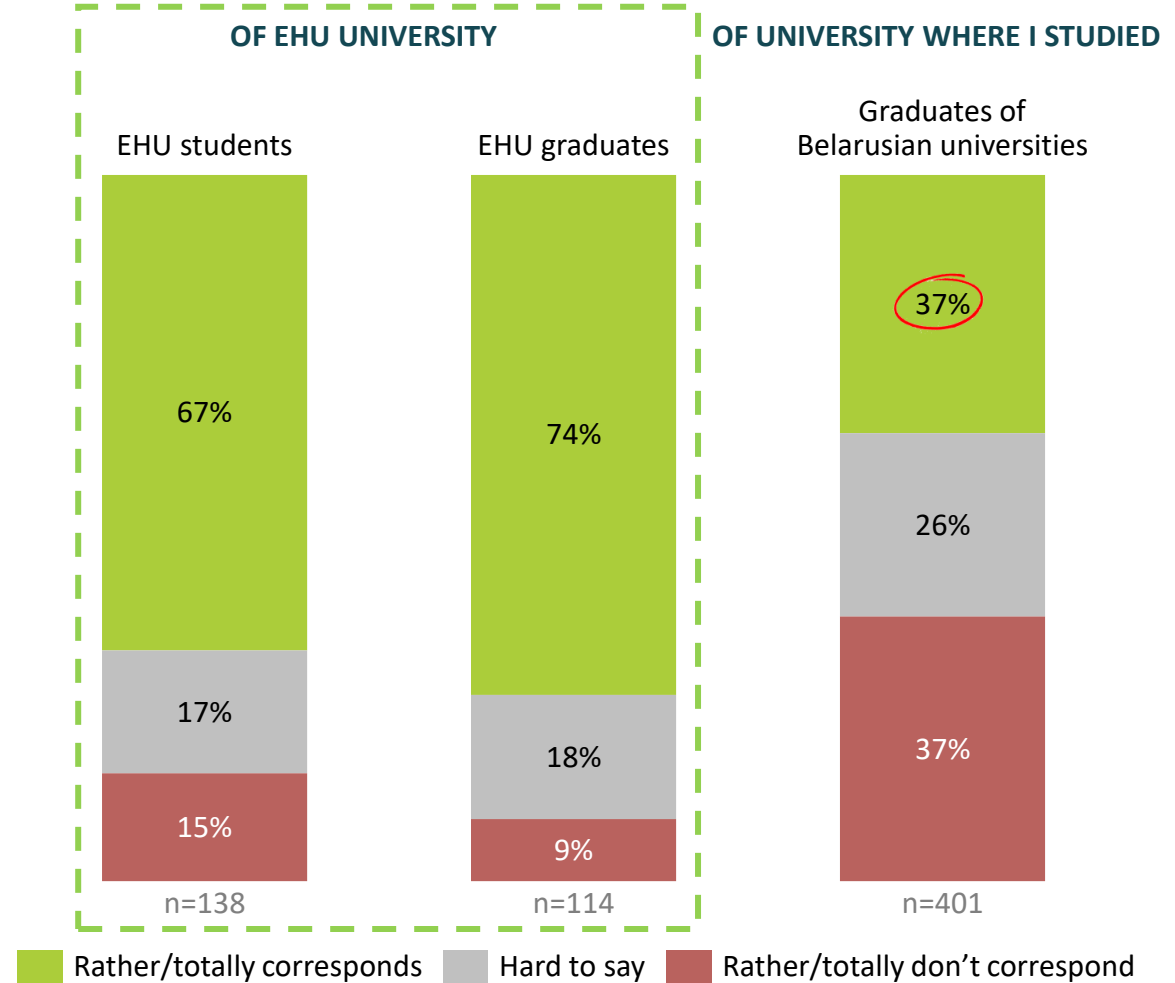
MOREOVER, EHU GRADUATES AND STUDENTS CONSIDER THEIR UNIVERSITY AS EUROPEAN ALMOST TWICE AS OFTEN

AWARENESS OF BOLOGNA PROCESS



■ Aware of Bologna process

CORRESPONDENCE TO THE TERM "EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY"



■ Rather/totally corresponds ■ Hard to say ■ Rather/totally don't correspond

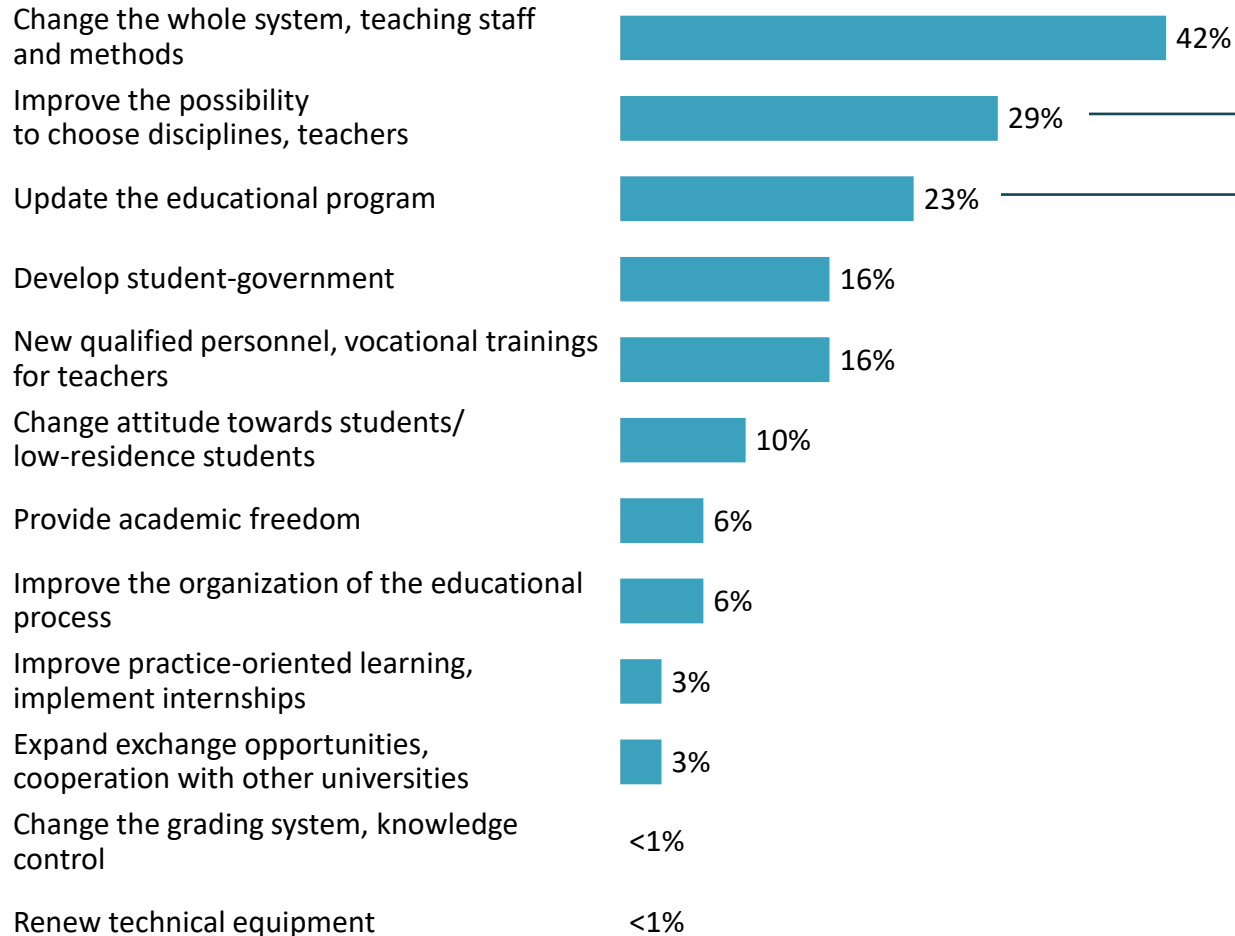
○ - significantly less, than others

Source: answers to question "Have you heard about the Bologna Process before?"; Please rate how EHU/THE UNIVERSITY where you studied corresponds or does not correspond to the term "European University" in your view.

# TO BECOME MORE 'EUROPEAN' EHU SHOULD OVERVIEW ITS TEACHING METHODS, UPDATE LEARNING PROGRAMS AND IMPLEMENT CHOICE OF DISCIPLINES

FROM THE POSITIVE, THERE ARE NO ISSUES WITH THE TECHNICAL SIDE OF EDUCATION PROCESS

EXPECTED CHANGES FOR EHU TO BECOME MORE 'EUROPEAN' UNIVERSITY, %, n=31



## CHANGE THE WHOLE SYSTEM, TEACHING STUFF AND METHODS

*“Change administration staff, quit hiding information, while maintaining the image of an ideal inclusive university in the media”*

*“Provide clarity in grants/discounts on tuition fees distribution and participation in exchange programs, as well as in all administrative processes. Don't dismiss teachers (as don't extend the contract) who disagree with the decisions of the university administration.”*

## IMPROVE THE POSSIBILITY TO CHOOSE DISCIPLINES, TEACHERS

*“Add more options for choosing courses within the program, since at the moment there is usually either no choice at all or there is only one available option”*

## UPDATE THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMM

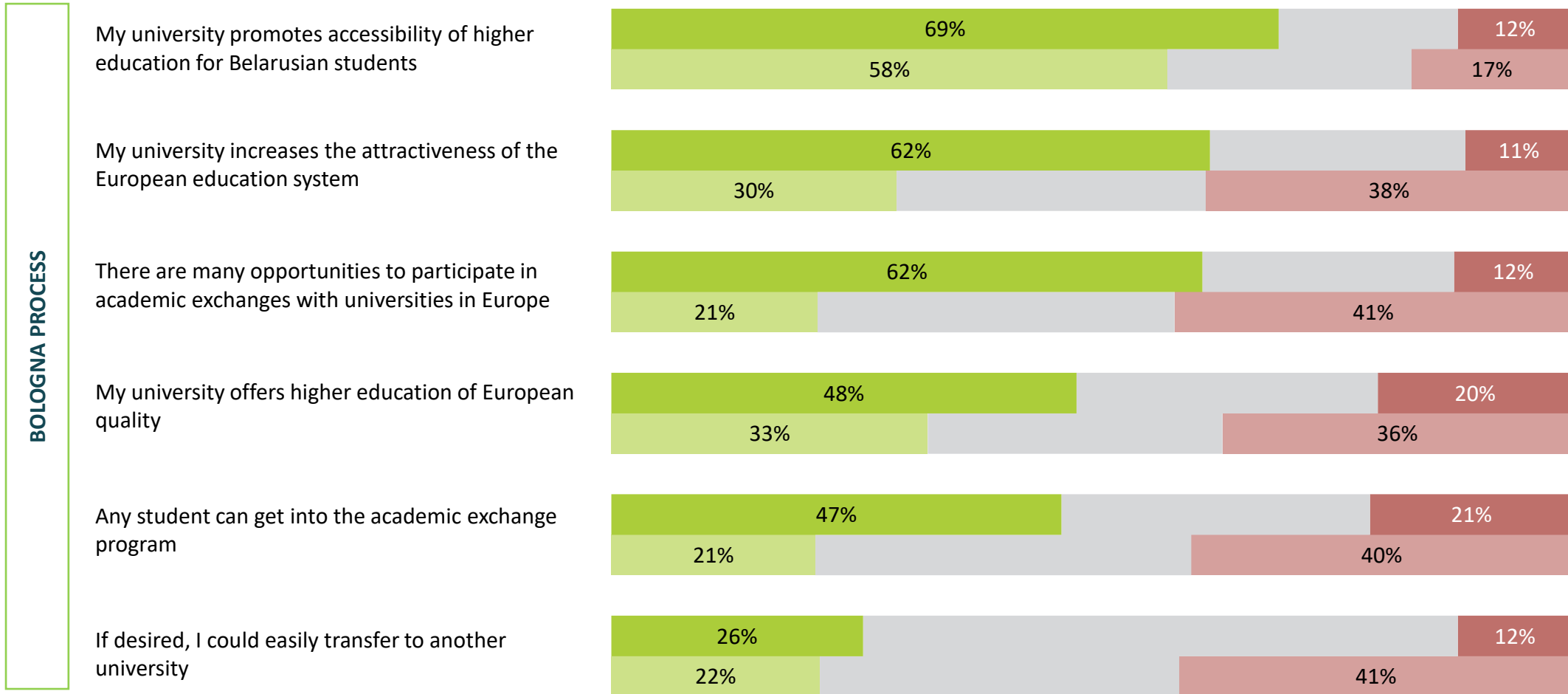
*“Remove university-wide courses, leave only major-oriented ones, improve learning-planning process...”*



# COMPARED TO BELARUSIAN UNIVERSITIES, EHU IS MUCH BETTER IN PROVIDING THE EUROPEAN PRINCIPLES OF EDUCATION TO ITS STUDENTS

## AGREEMENT WITH STATEMENTS REGARDING THE RESPONDENTS' UNIVERSITY

Agree Hard to say Disagree



BOLOGNA PROCESS

- EHU, n=252  
- non-EHU, n=401

Each statement has a statistically significant differences between EHU and non-EHU

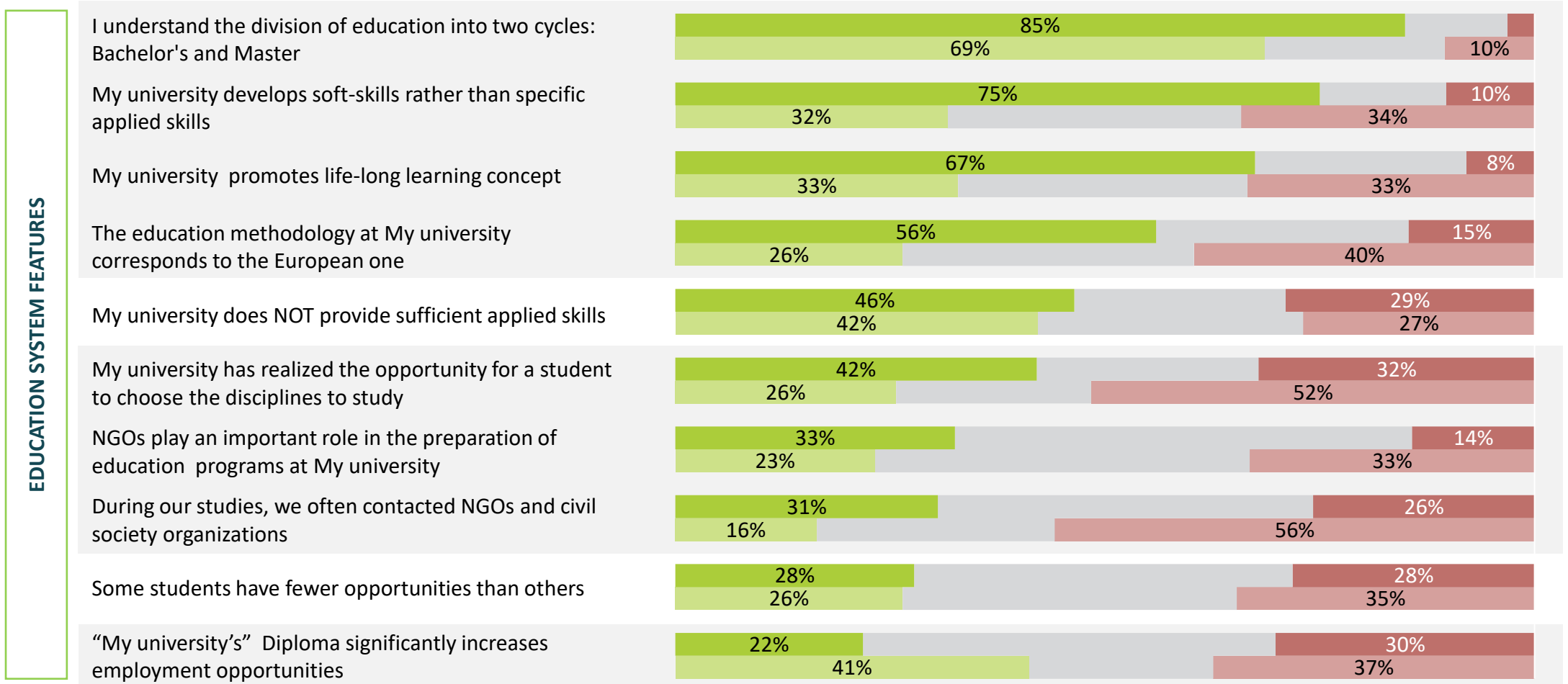
Source: answers to question "Please rate how much you agree or disagree with the statements about EHU on a scale from 1 to 5".

# INTERESTINGLY, NEITHER EHU NOR OTHER BELARUSIAN UNI'S ARE CONSIDERED TO PROVIDE ENOUGH APPLIED SKILLS, THIS COULD BE ONE OF THE MAIN EHU'S AREA FOR DEVELOPMENT

AS MENTIONED AFORE, EHU'S MAIN VALUE SEEMS TO BE DEVELOPING SOFT SKILLS

## AGREEMENT WITH STATEMENTS REGARDING THE RESPONDENTS' UNIVERSITY

Agree Hard to say Disagree

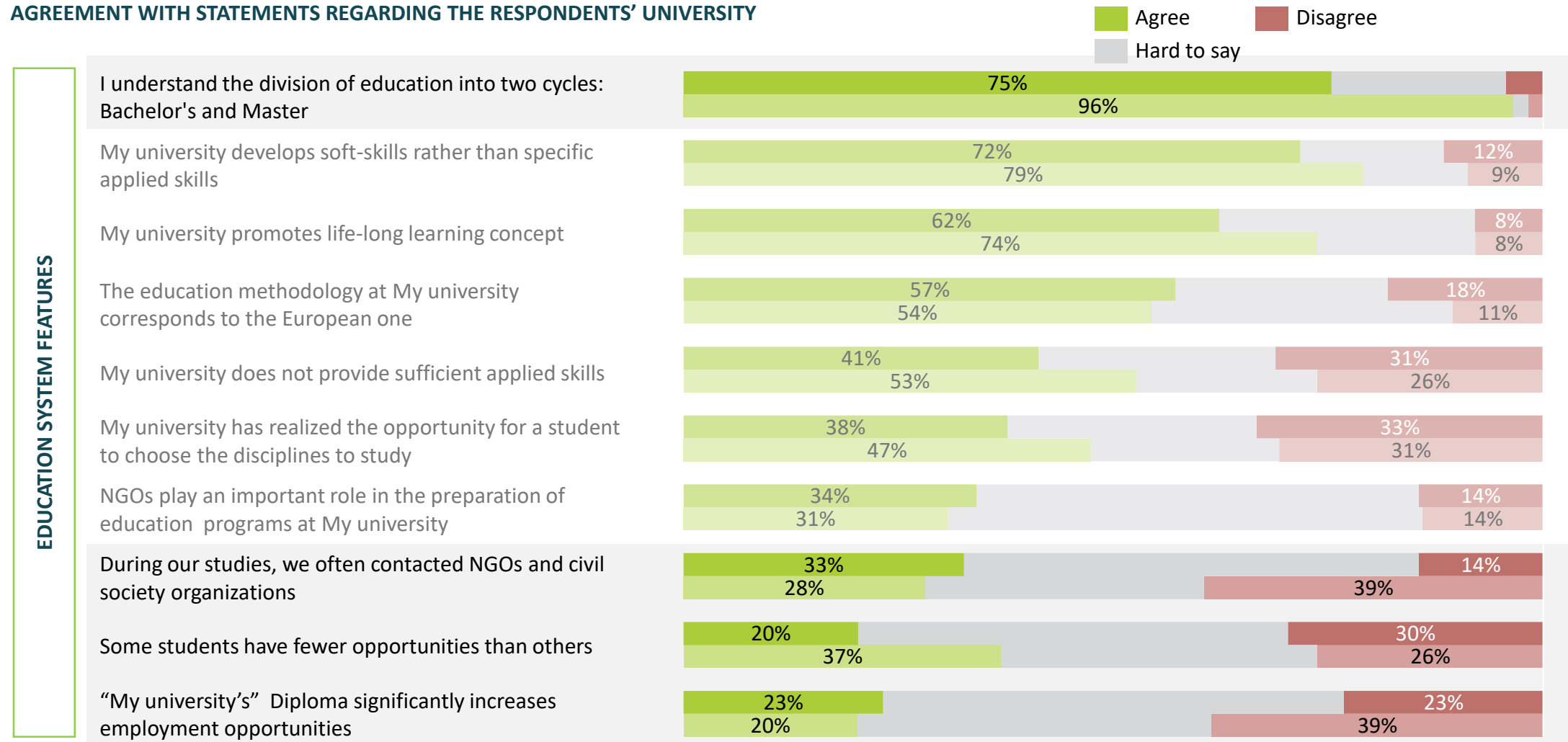


■ - EHU, n=252  
■ - non-EHU, n=401  
■ - significant differences

Source: answers to question "Please rate how much you agree or disagree with the statements about EHU on a scale from 1 to 5".

# IT SEEMS THAT EHU IMPROVED IN TERMS OF TWO CRITERIA OF INTEREST: EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITIES AND COOPERATION WITH NGOS: STUDENTS ARE LESS LIKELY TO EVALUATE THESE CRITERIA NEGATIVELY THAN GRADUATES

## AGREEMENT WITH STATEMENTS REGARDING THE RESPONDENTS' UNIVERSITY

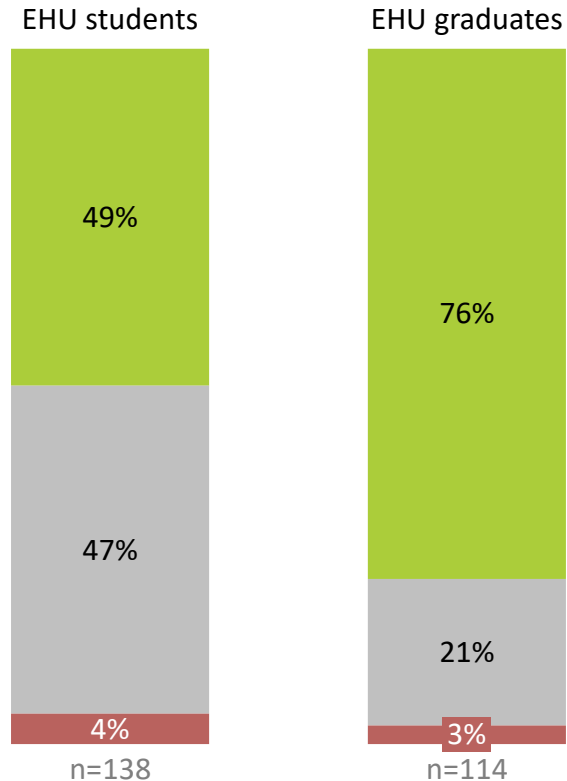


■ ■ - EHU students, n=138  
■ ■ - EHU graduates, n=114  
■ - significant differences

Source: answers to question "Please rate how much you agree or disagree with the statements about EHU on a scale from 1 to 5".

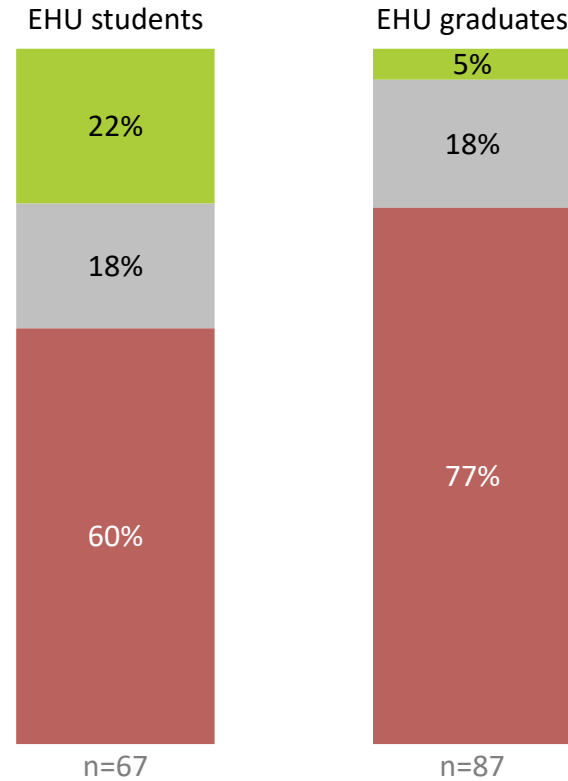
# POSITIVE IMPACT OF EHU IS HINDERED BY THE DISMISSALS OF PROFESSORS: AT LEAST A HALF OF THE STUDENTS HAS NOTICED CHANGES IN TEACHING STAFF AND BELIEVE IT TO BE NEGATIVE

AGREEMENT WITH THE STATEMENT: "CHANGES IN THE TEACHING STAFF BEGAN AT EHU"



■ Rather/totally agree 
 ■ Rather/totally disagree  
■ Hard to say

ASSESSMENT OF THE IMPACT OF THE CHANGES ON THE QUALITY OF THE EDUCATIONAL PROCESS AT EHU



■ Changes have slightly / significantly improved the quality of education  
■ Changes did not affect the quality of education  
■ Changes have slightly / significantly worsened the quality of education

*"There are some changes in personnel, this entails the fact that each person sees the work on his own in their departments."*  
*"The administration made very strange decisions and in a strange way hasn't coordinated it with the academic and student communities. So, there were conflicts that entailed the dismissals of the most magnificent, phenomenal specialists, professors and this is a huge loss, both for the university and for Belarus..."*  
*"It goes on constantly throughout the last 10 years and Belarusian special forces use it: they are constantly throwing into the media that EHU is falling apart and will be closed soon..."*



**MOREOVER, AMONG THE MOST INFLUENTIAL PROFESSORS, GRADUATES OFTEN MENTION THOSE WHO DOESN'T WORK THERE TODAY**

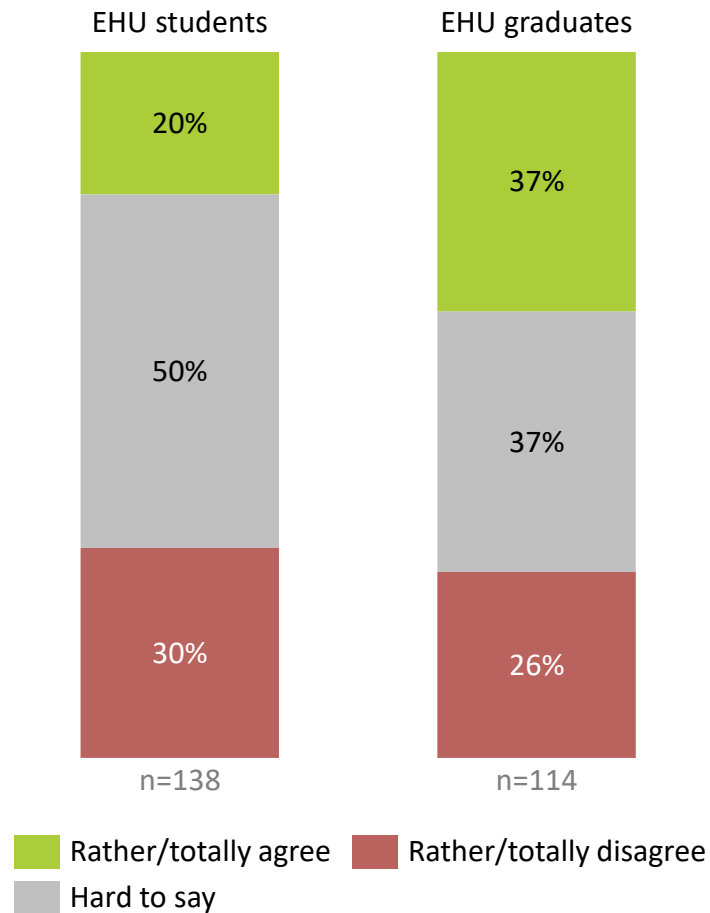
**EHU PROFESSORS, WHO ACTIVELY INFLUENCE THE PROCESSES TAKING PLACE IN BELARUS, ACCORDING TO THE GRADUATES, n=58**



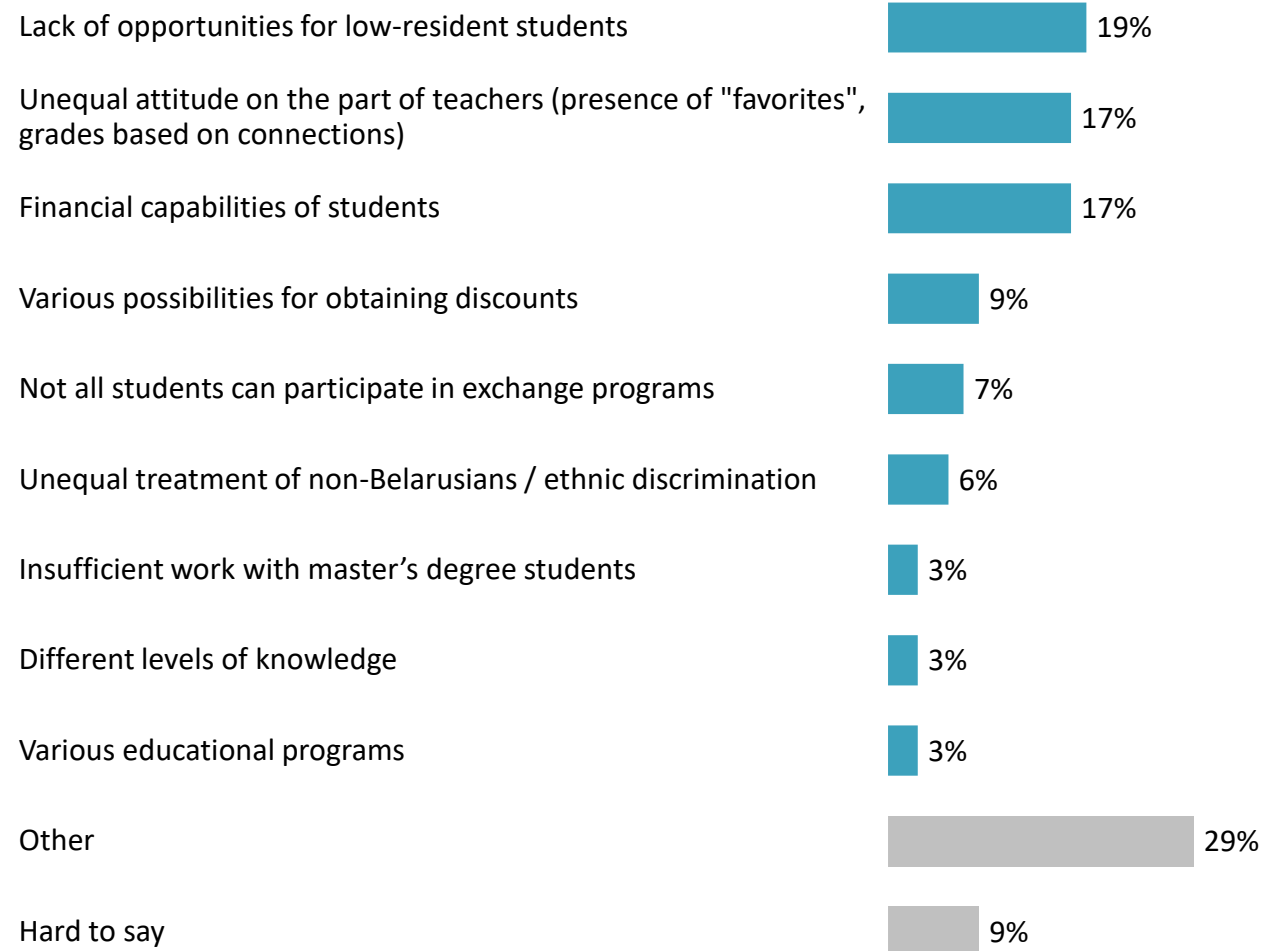
■ Works at EHU
 ■ Does not work at EHU
 ■ No information

# INEQUALITIES APPEAR MOSTLY IN LACK OF OPPORTUNITIES IN DISTANCE EDUCATION AND UNEQUAL ATTITUDE OF PROFESSORS

AGREEMENT WITH THE STATEMENT: "SOME EHU STUDENTS HAVE FEWER OPPORTUNITIES THAN OTHERS"

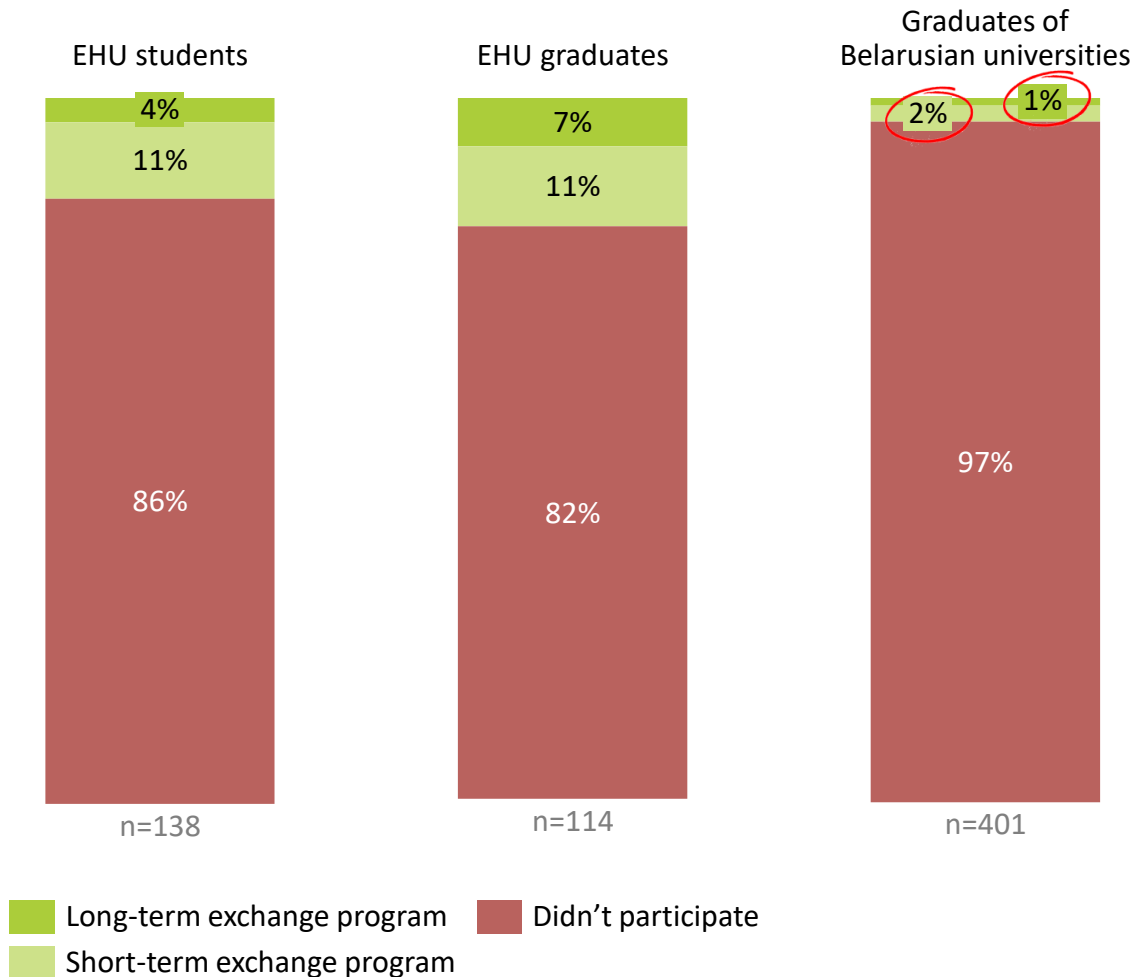


INEQUALITY WITHIN THE UNIVERSITY, n=70



Source: answers questions "Please rate how much you agree or disagree with the statements about EHU on a scale from 1 to 5. Some EHU students have fewer opportunities relative to others"; "You indicated that some of EHU students have fewer opportunities than others. How is this expressed?"

# EHU IS MUCH MORE APPRECIATED FOR PROVIDING THE OPPORTUNITY TO PARTICIPATE IN THE INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE PROGRAMS



*“This is great because students are gaining new experiences and in future look at the third sector as a potential place of work. With the international aspects of EHU they [graduates] would be very helpful here [in Belarus]. Because this is about foreign languages, knowledge, partnerships, bringing some practices here to work in different areas.*

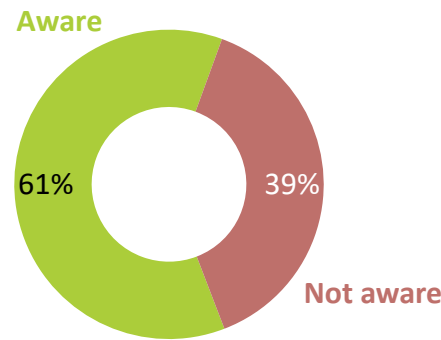


  - significantly less, than others

# EHU CAN ENHANCE THE LEVEL OF SUPPORT FOR LOW-INCOME APPLICANTS COMMUNICATIVELY: ONLY 61% OF GRADUATES WERE AWARE OF EXISTENCE OF STUDENT SUPPORT PROGRAMS

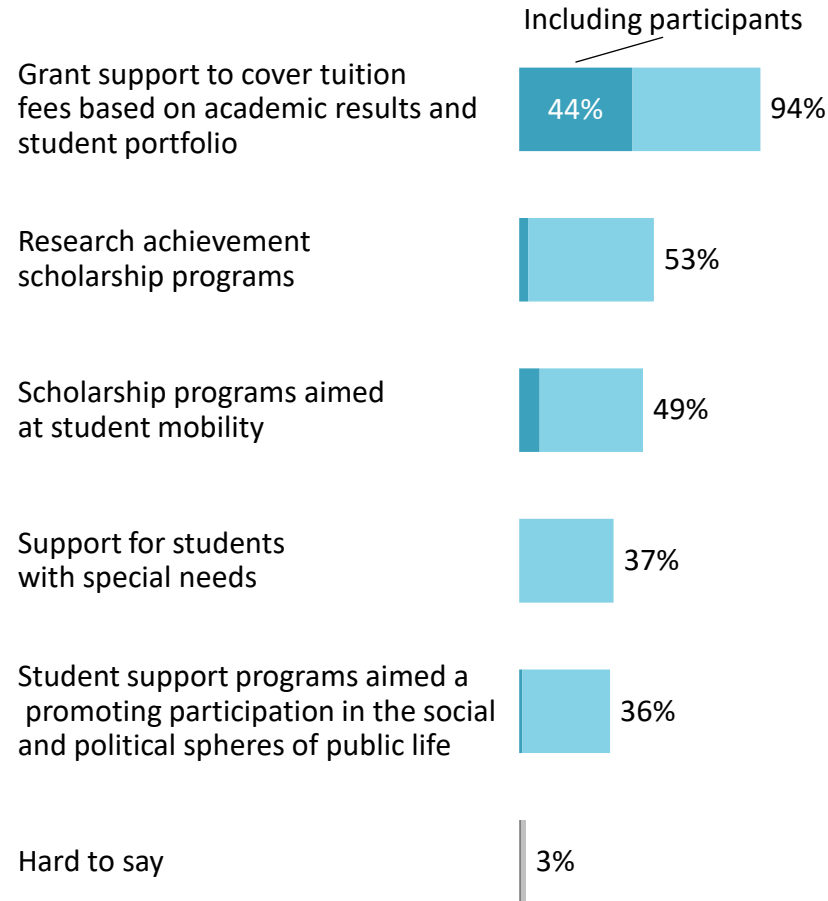
RULES FOR RECEIVING SUCH SUPPORT MUST BE ABSOLUTELY CLEAR AND TRANSPARENT AND POTENTIALLY VOTED FOR BY STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE BODIES

GRADUATES' AWARENESS OF STUDENT SUPPORT PROGRAMS AT EHU, n=114

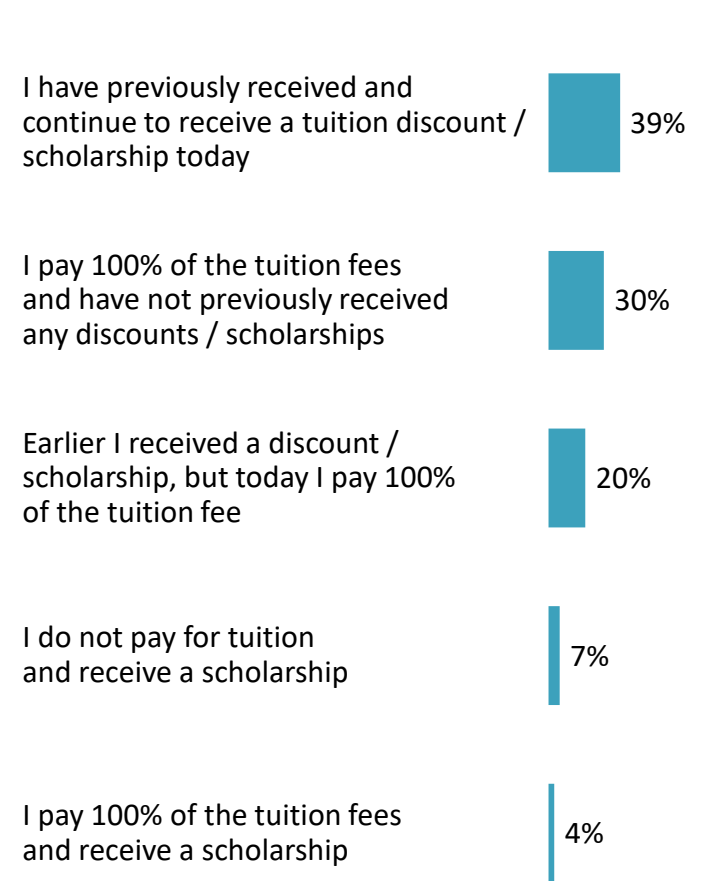


Graduates say that **tuition discount / scholarship** covered about **59%** of their tuition fees.

STUDENT SUPPORT PROGRAMMS AT EHU ACCORDING TO GRADUATES, n=70



FINANCIAL STUDYING CONDITIONS OF EHU STUDENTS, n=138



Source: "Have you heard about the existence of student support programs at EHU? What are these programs? Estimate what percentage of the tuition fees have been covered by the tuition discount / discount? On what financial terms do you study?"



## \ SUBCHAPTER SUMMARY


**EHU DOES PROMOTE EUROPEAN EDUCATION, SERVING AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO BELARUSIAN UNIVERSITIES**

**EHU PROMOTES EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES, ACADEMIC EXCHANGE PROGRAMS AND EUROPEAN EDUCATIONAL FEATURES**

**EHU CAN FURTHER IMPROVE ITS “EUROPEAN” ASPECTS**



- **EHU helps to make European educational practices closer to Belarusian students** (*criteria 10, 11*)
  - EHU students are more aware about Bologna process principles, much more often participate in the academic exchange programs (*criteria 10, 11*)
- **In order to serve as a model for other Belarusian universities in implementing Bologna process, EHU should improve several internal important areas, which distance the EHU from the ideal ‘European university’** (*criteria 11*)
  - The tendency to change the teaching staff has negative impact both on the quality of education and the reputation of the university (*criteria 21*)
  - The management of the university is often described as not transparent and ignoring the academic and students' communities (*criteria 11*)
  - Student-governance and possibilities to choose disciplines are seemed to be rather not developed (*criteria 11*)
  - The educational program is often characterized as ‘too focused on humanities’, not “applied enough”, and is expected to be updated (despite in the end its graduates are becoming advanced in soft-skills) (*criteria 11*)
- **Formally, EHU does provide the equality of opportunities, although some mention unobvious inequalities** (*criteria 6, 8*)
  - Inequalities appear in the low-resident form of education (compared to high-resident students), the existence of unequal attitude towards student from teachers or financial difficulties (*criteria 6, 8*)

- 
1. Results of quantitative survey
    - Description of survey and methodology
    - Educational impact
    - **Values impact**
    - Return to Belarus perspective
  2. Results of in-depth interviews
  3. Conclusions and recommendations

## \ IN THE SECTION ABOUT VALUES AND JOB PERSPECTIVE OF EHU GRADUATES, THE UNIVERSITY IS EVALUATED ACCORDING TO THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA

### LIST OF CRITERIA

- 4. Is the leadership of EHU graduates identified in the context of social transformations in Belarus?
- 12. How does a EHU contribute to the promotion of creativity in Belarus?
- 13. How does a EHU contribute to the digitization of studies in Belarus?
- 14. How do EHU students and graduates contribute to democratic change in Belarus?
- 18. Does the EHU contribute to the dissemination of freedom of expression and reliable information in Belarus?



**VALUES IMPACT**

**CONNECTION TO  
BELARUS**

## IN ORDER TO UNDERSTAND THE AXIOLOGY OF EHU AND NON-EHU GRADUATES WE'VE PREPARED 55 VALUES AND ASKED TO CHOOSE THE MOST IMPORTANT FOR THEM

We prepared list of 55 items which indicate life values and asked the respondent to choose the most important ones for them. Based on the results of factor analysis, some of the values were excluded and the following grouping was formed. Factor analysis measures the level of hidden features (factors) based on identifying groups of interrelated values.

- Family
- To be a free person
- To create something new
- Personal dignity
- Stability
- Freedom of speech
- Free elections
- To be active
- Career
- 46 more...

“Select no more than 9 values which are seemed to be important for you”

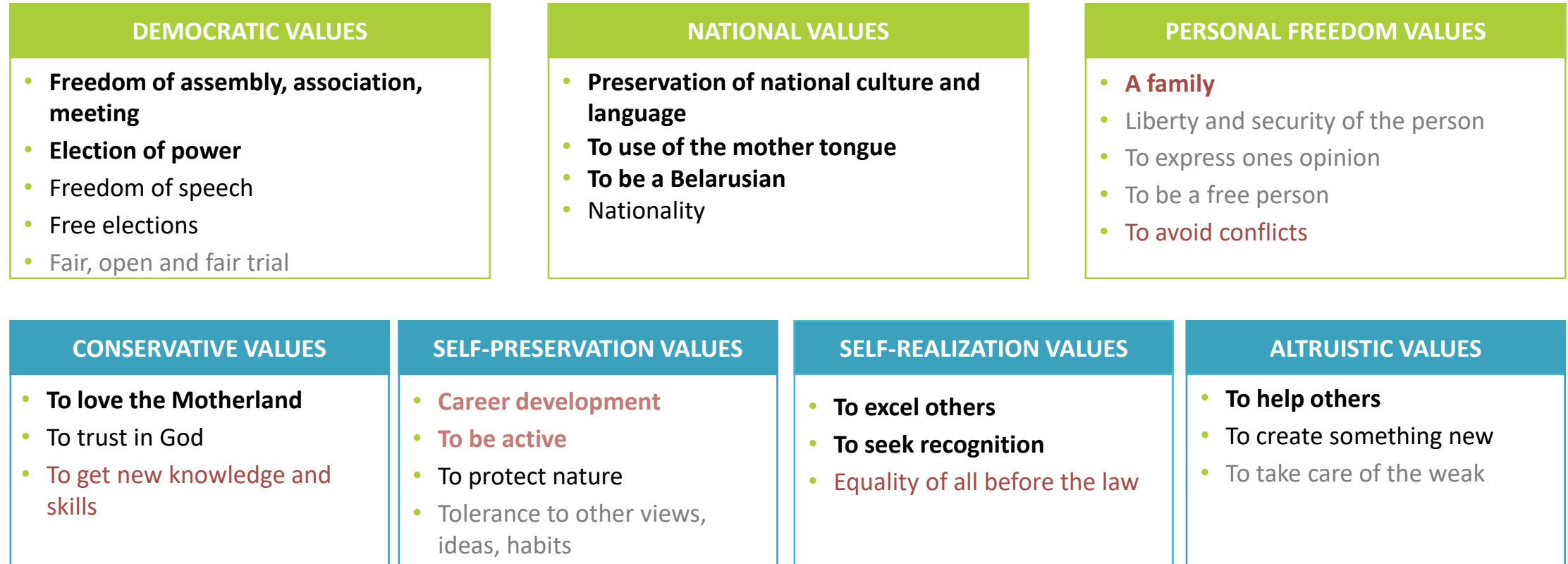
“Of the selected values, select no more than 3, which are the most important for you”

SET OF FACTORS WHICH HELP US TO UNDERSTAND HOW PEOPLE SEE THE WORLD AND HOW THEIR WORLD VIEW DIFFERS IN TERMS OF VALUES

# PEOPLE EVALUATE THEIR AXIOLOGY THROUGH 7 INDEPENDENT FACTORS

STUDENTS AND GRADUATES (EHU AND NON-EHU) DIFFER FROM EACH OTHER IN HOW IMPORTANT CERTAIN FACTORS ARE TO THEM IN ASSESSING SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND OTHER ASPECTS

## GROUPS OF VALUES



Maximum extent of significance High extent of significance Medium degree of significance Negative inhesion (unimportant value)

# EHU SERVES AS AN INDIRECT ACTOR IN THE SPREAD OF DEMOCRATIC, NATIONAL, PERSONAL FREEDOM, ALTRUISTIC VALUES: UNLIKE FOR NON-EHU GRADUATES, SUCH VALUES ARE MORE IMPORTANT FOR EHU STUDENTS AND GRADUATES

HOW EXPRESSED ARE VALUE FACTORS AMONG

	EHU STUDENTS	EHU GRADUATES	non-EHU
Democratic values	0,60	0,29	0,30
National values	0,39	0,42	0,34
Personal freedom values	0,94	0,94	0,00
Conservative values	0,15	0,22	0,48
Self-preservation values	0,38	0,57	0,30
Self-realization values	0,62	0,21	0,32
Altruistic values	1,00	0,63	0,07



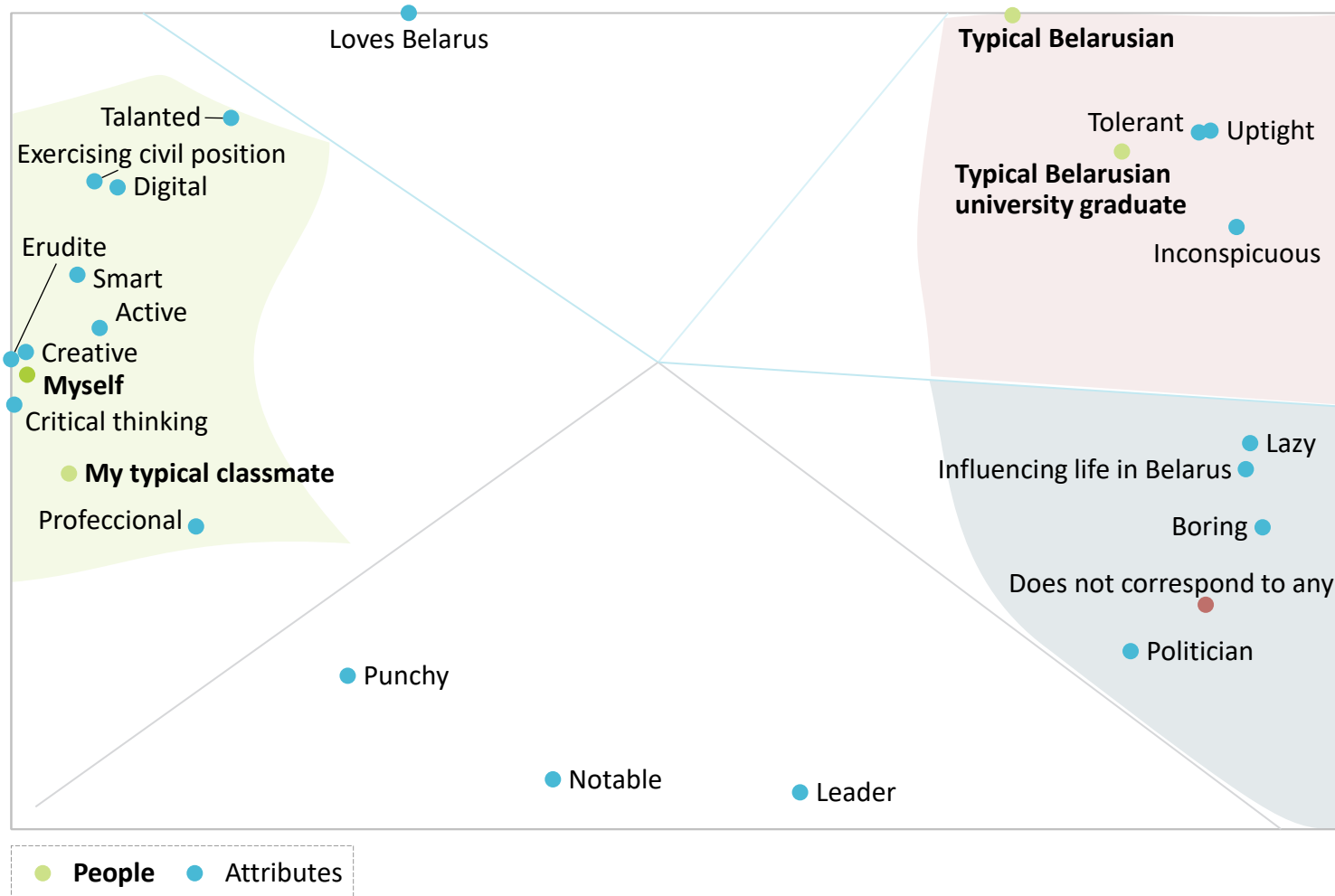
- For **EHU students**, the most closely related are **democratic** values (freedom of assembly, meetings, election of power), **freedom** (expression of opinion, freedom and security), as well as **self-realization** (exceeding others) and **altruistic** (helping others) values
- **EHU graduates** as well more often than non-EHU stand for **personal freedom** and **altruism**
  - Also, they more often than other adhere to **self-preservation** (national culture and language) and **national** values
- For **non-EHU** democratic, national, personal freedom values are not much important as for others
  - They are much more likely to adhere to **conservative** values

1,00 – extremely expressed in comparison to others  
 0,00 – not at all expressed in comparison to others

Source: answers to the questions “ Which of the following values are of the greatest importance to YOU?”

# THIS TRANSLATES INTO THE WORLDVIEW OF EHU GRADUATES: THEY SEE THEMSELVES AND THEIR CLASSMATES AS ACTIVE, SMART AND TALENTED AND STAND AT DIFFERENT POLES WITH TYPICAL BELARUSIANS AND BELARUSIAN GRADUATES, WHO, IN THEIR OPINION, ARE PASSIVE

A MAP OF THE PERCEPTION OF ONESELF AND OTHERS AMONG EHU GRADUATES



According to EHU graduates' perception of oneself and others, three main groups can be distinguished, which have their own personal characteristics:

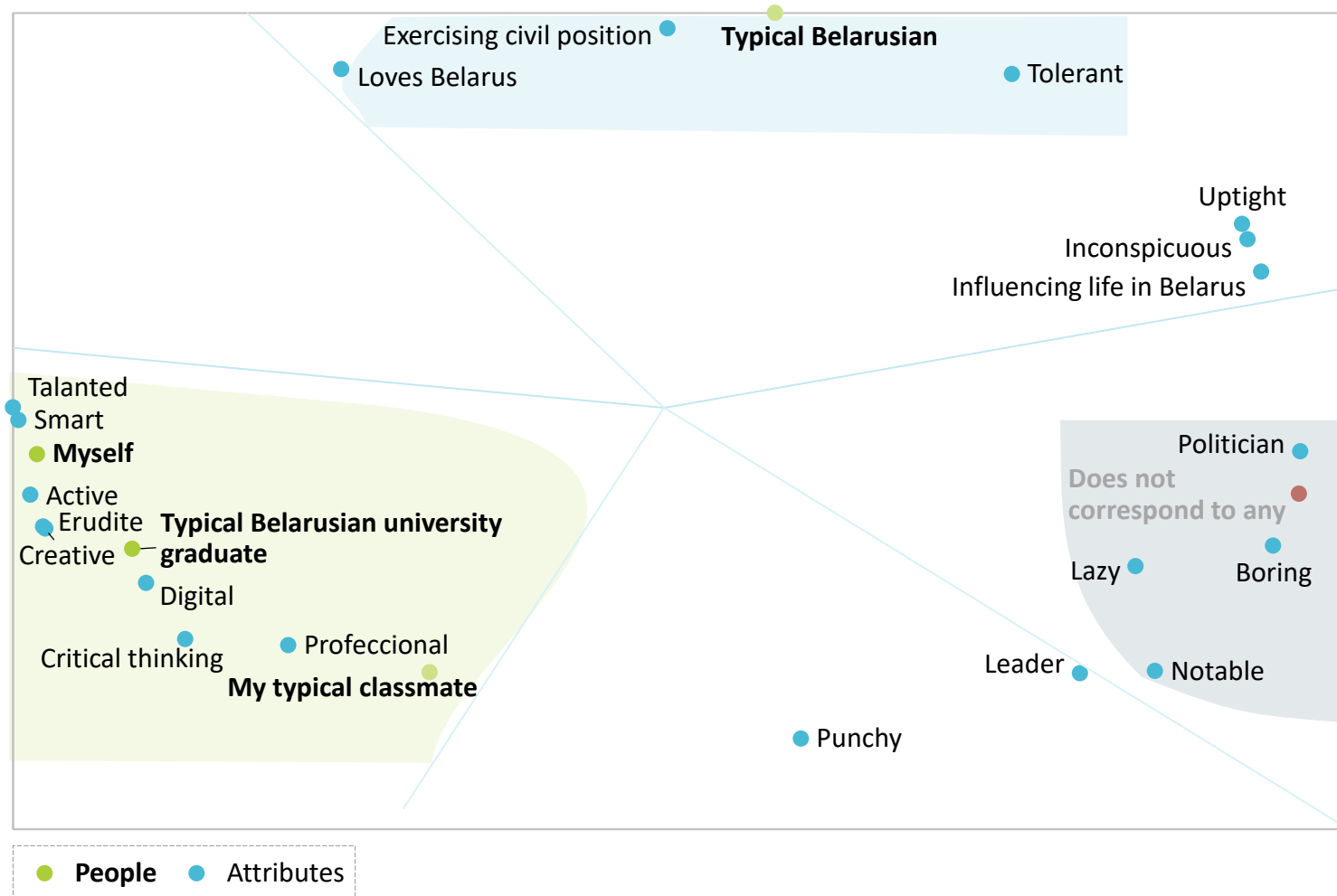
**EHU graduate (myself) and his typical classmate:** perceive themselves as creative, smart erudite, with critical thinking and form an "active" group

**Typical Belarusians and Belarusian graduates:** EHU graduates perceive them as tolerant, uptight, inconspicuous and relate to the group "passive"

**Attributes that don't correspond to any person:** boring, lazy, politician

# AT THE SAME TIME, NON-EHU GRADUATES DO NOT RELATE THEMSELVES TO TYPICAL BELARUSIANS AND PERCEIVE THEMSELVES AND OTHER RECENTLY GRADUATED NON-EHU PEOPLE AS ACTIVE, SMART AND ERUDITE

A MAP OF THE PERCEPTION OF ONESELF AND OTHERS AMONG non-EHU GRADUATES



According to Belarusian graduates' perception of oneself and others, three main groups can be distinguished, which have their own personal characteristics:

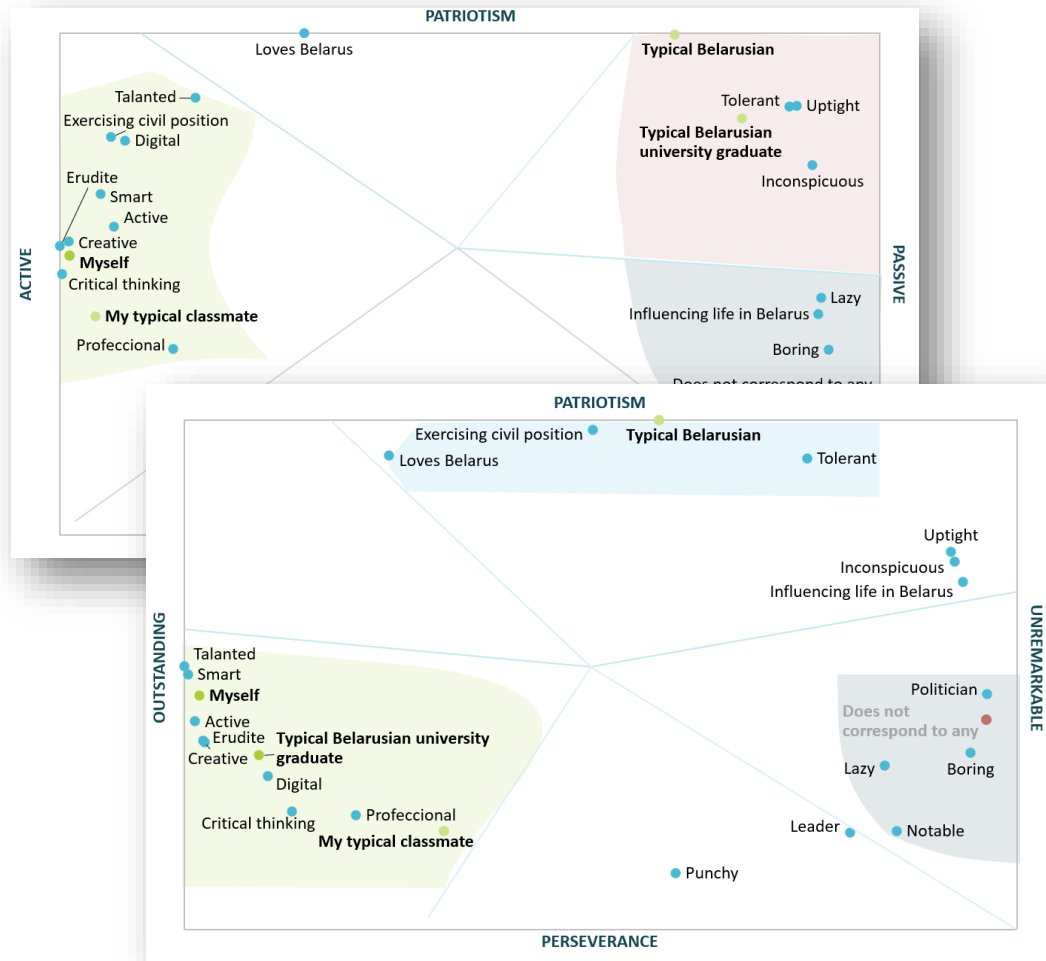
**Belarusian graduate (myself), his typical classmate and other typical Belarusian graduates:** perceive themselves as creative, smart, erudite, with critical thinking and form an "outstanding" group

**Typical Belarusians:** perceived as tolerant, with civil position, and love for the country

**Attributes that don't correspond to any person:** politician along with lazy, boring, uptight



# EHU SHOULD REINFORCE THE MESSAGE THAT EHU GRADUATES INFLUENCE SOCIAL TRANSFORMATIONS IN BELARUS AND PARTAKE IN SOCIAL PROCESSES IN GENERAL



Interestingly, **EHU graduate doesn't see the difference between a typical Belarusian and typical Belarusian university graduate**: for them they are uptight, inconspicuous (and at the same time tolerant). Moreover, EHU graduates oppose themselves from typical Belarusians and 'passive' attributes.

On the other hand, **non-EHU graduates oppose themselves from 'typical Belarusians'**, but don't characterize them negatively.

Additionally, the attribute **'influencing life in Belarus' or 'leader' does not apply to somebody at all**. Graduates (both EHU and non-EHU) doesn't associate themselves with it, but also don't describe Belarusians with this attribute.

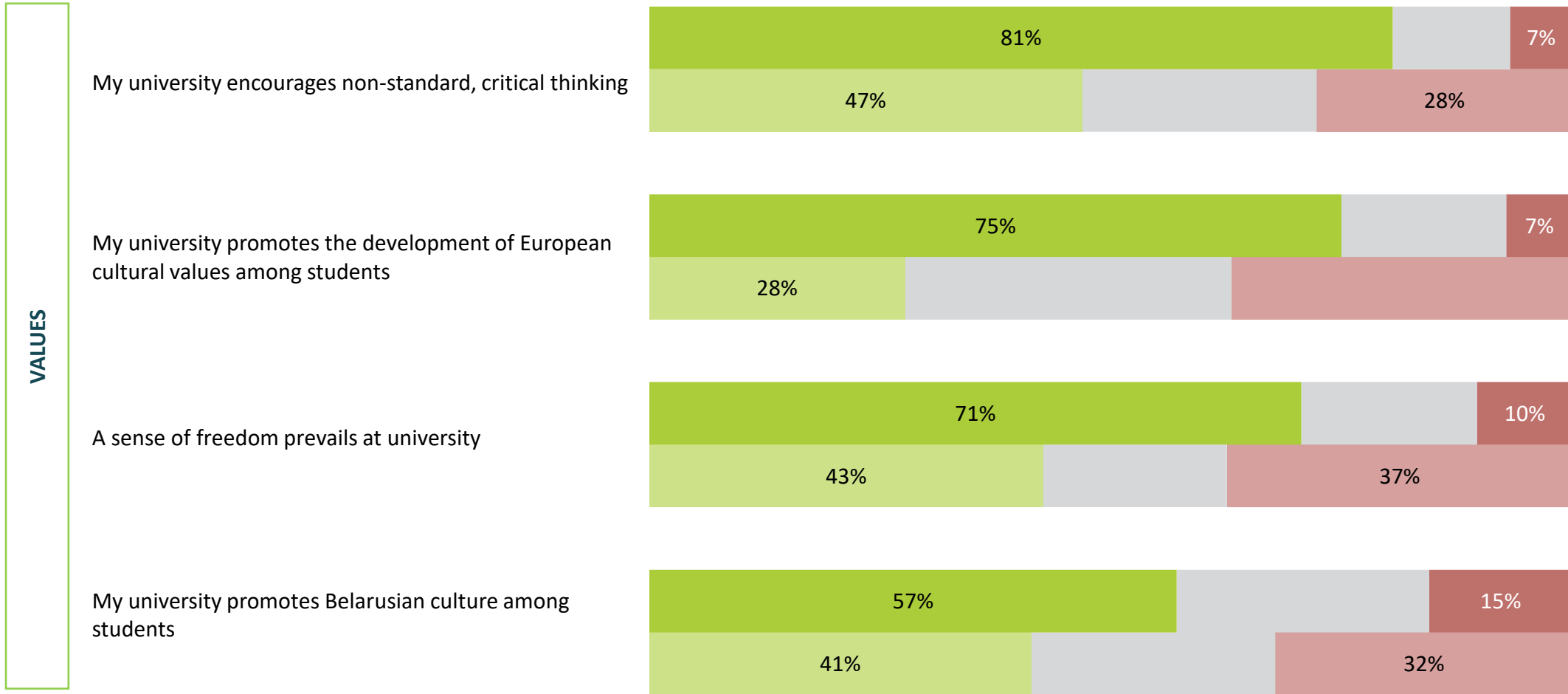
**'Smart', 'critical thinking', 'creative', 'digital' are seemed to be socially-desirable**: both EHU and non-EHU graduates believe it's about them.

# EHU MUCH MORE EFFECTIVELY PROMOTES FREEDOM, CRITICAL THINKING, AND OVERALL EUROPEAN VALUES

EVEN DESPITE THERE ARE CLAIMS THAT EHU DOES NOT COMMIT ENOUGH TO PROMOTION OF BELARUSIAN CULTURE, IT STILL DOES MUCH BETTER JOB THAN OTHER BELARUSIAN UNIVERSITIES

## AGREEMENT WITH STATEMENTS REGARDING THE RESPONDENTS' UNIVERSITY

Agree Hard to say Disagree



■ ■ - EHU, n=252  
■ ■ - non-EHU, n=401

Source: answers to question "Please rate how much you agree or disagree with the statements about EHU on a scale from 1 to 5".

## \ SUBCHAPTER SUMMARY

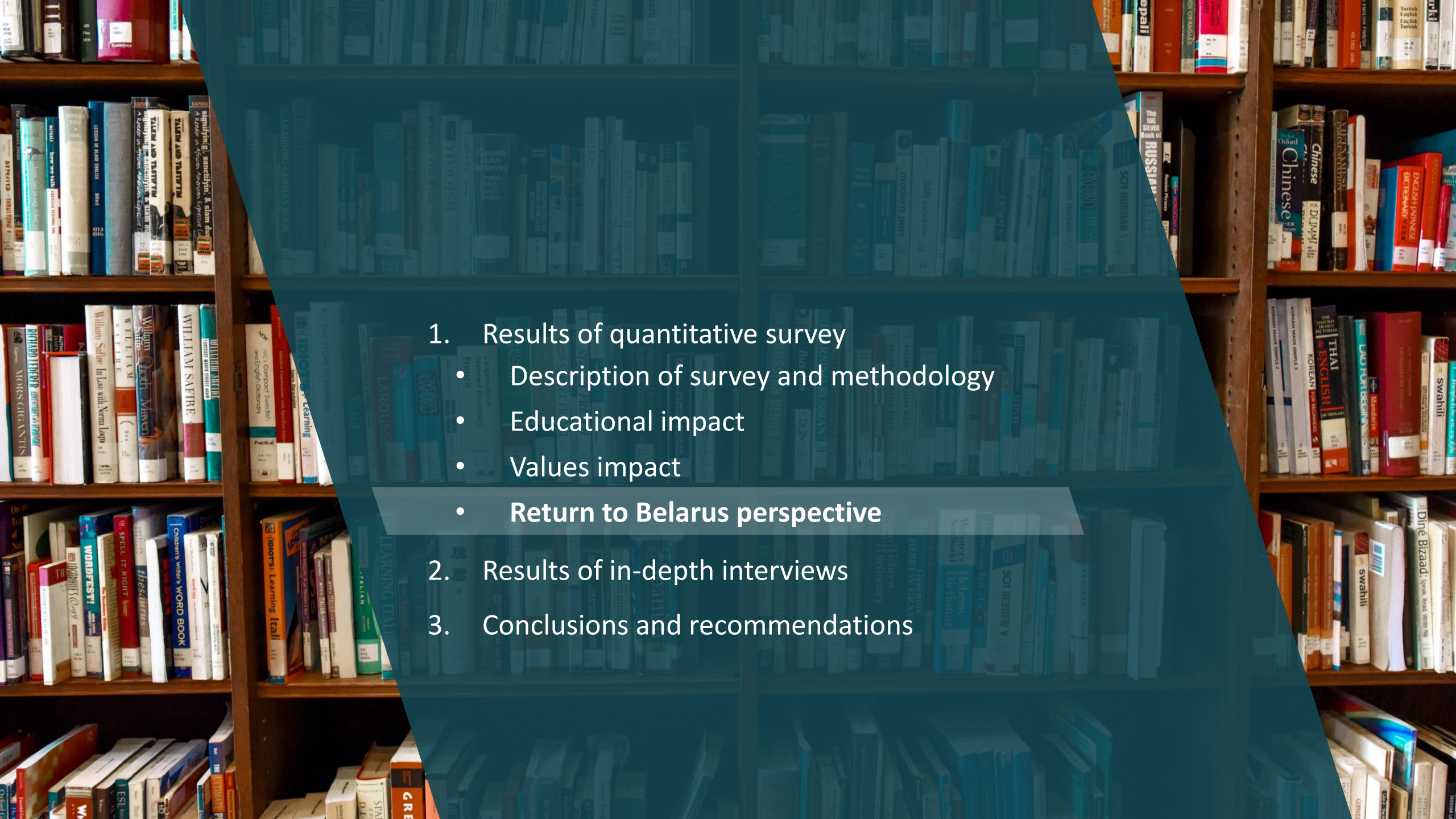
**EHU GRADUATES ARE SIGNIFICANTLY DIFFERENT FROM non-EHU GRADUATES IN TERMS OF VALUES: DEMOCRATIC AND EUROPEAN VALUES ARE MUCH CLOSER FOR THEM**

**EVEN IF EHU DOES NOT CHANGE THE APPLICANTS' WORLDVIEW, IT CEMENTS THEIR SET OF VALUES**

**EHU CREATES A NETWORK OF PEOPLE WHO CONSEQUENTLY PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN THE SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION PROCESS**



- **There is a drastic difference on axiological level between EHU and non-EHU graduates (criteria 4)**
  - While personal freedom, self-preservation, self-realization and altruistic values are closer to EHU students/graduates, the main values of non-EHU are conservative (criteria 4)
  - It is not evident if EHU is changing the value apparatus of its students, but it cements democratic values, provides a platform to exchange ideas and serves like an 'indicator' of a worldview (criteria 4)
  - Notably, unlike Belarusian universities, EHU encourages non-standard, critical thinking, promotes European cultural values and the sense of academic freedom (criteria 4, 10, 18)
- **Neither EHU, nor non-EHU graduate describe themselves as a 'typical Belarusian' (criteria 4)**
  - In their worldview 'typical Belarusian' is connected to stereotypes: the graduates don't describe them as creative, professional, active, digital, etc., but take this description for themselves (criteria 12, 13)
  - Non-EHU graduates juxtapose 'Typical Belarusian' and 'Typical Belarusian university graduate', describing the latter as themselves (in a positive way) (criteria 12, 13)
  - The descriptors 'leader' and 'influencing life in Belarus' remain free: both EHU and non-EHU graduates do not see themselves as such (criteria 4)

- 
1. Results of quantitative survey
    - Description of survey and methodology
    - Educational impact
    - Values impact
    - **Return to Belarus perspective**
  2. Results of in-depth interviews
  3. Conclusions and recommendations

## IN THE SECTION ABOUT RETURN IN BELARUS OF EHU GRADUATES, THE UNIVERSITY IS EVALUATED ACCORDING TO THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA

### LIST OF CRITERIA

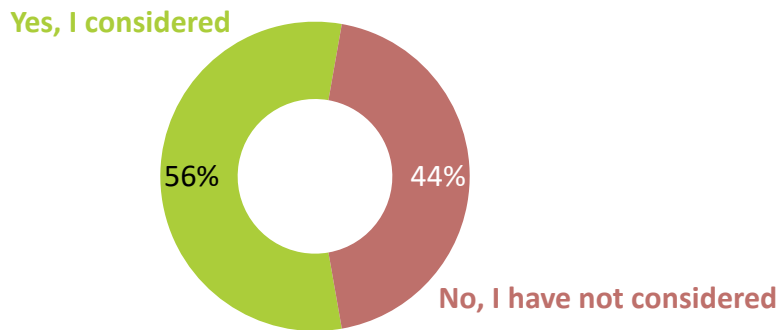
1. How many EHU graduates return to their country of origin?
2. How many EHU graduates are employed according to the field of study?
3. Visibility of EHU graduates in Belarus
4. Is the leadership of EHU graduates identified in the context of social transformations in Belarus?
7. How does the EHU foster an approach to the preservation of cultural heritage and cultural diversity?
8. Does the EHU encourage young people from low-income families and from rural areas to study there?
14. How do EHU students and graduates contribute to democratic change in Belarus?
15. Is EHU an important alternative to universities specializing in humanities and social studies in Belarus?
20. Is / to what extent the inclusion of topics relevant to Belarus provided for in the descriptions of final theses (according to study programs)?



## RETURN OF BELARUSIAN GRADUATES TO THEIR HOME COUNTRY

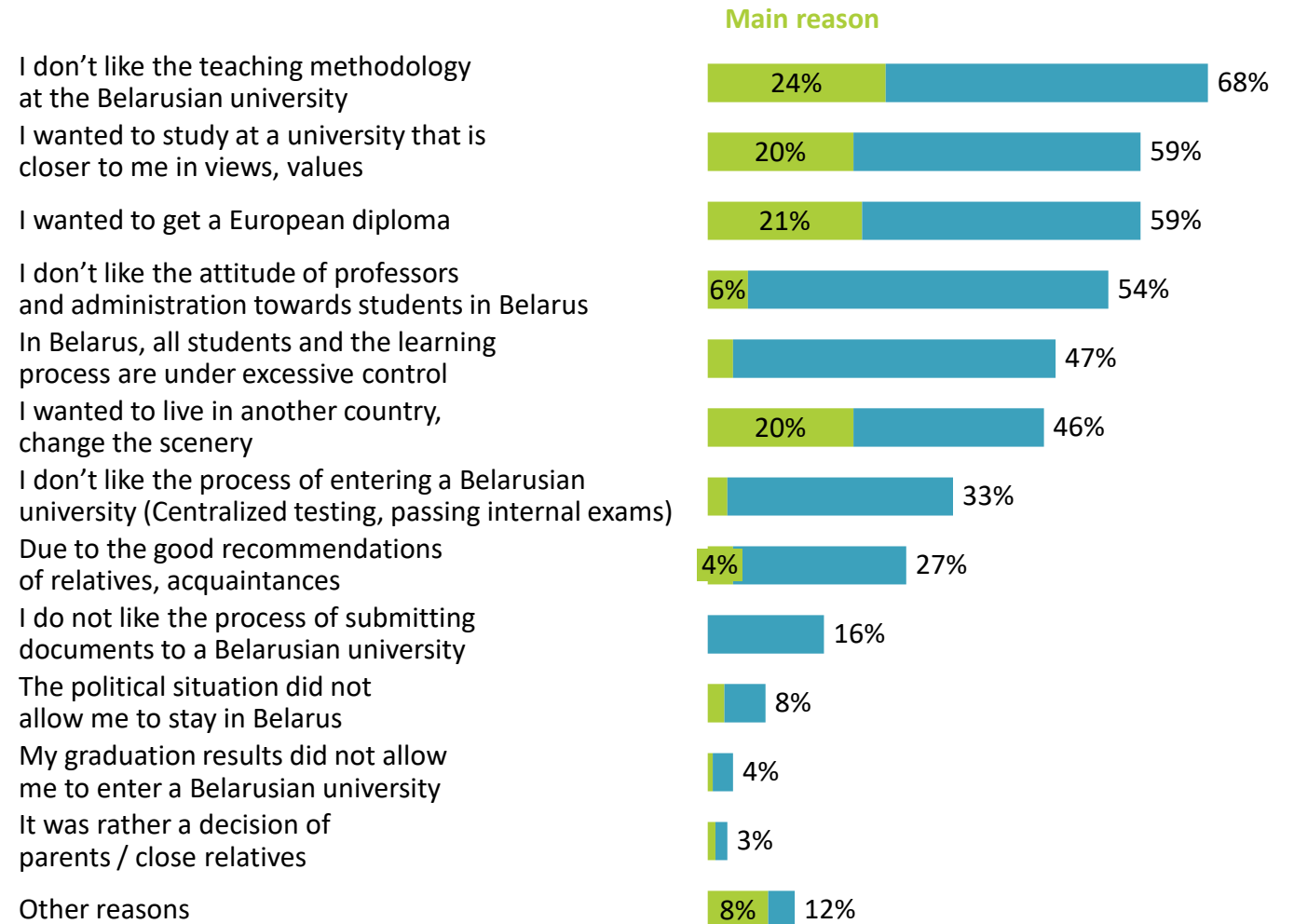
# 44% OF EHU APPLICANTS HAVEN'T EVEN CONSIDER THE POSSIBILITY TO ENTER UNIVERSITY IN BELARUS; THE MAIN REASON IS DISSATISFACTION WITH TEACHING METHODS AND VALUES

CONSIDERATION OF OBTAINING HIGHER EDUCATION IN BELARUS, n=252



People who **haven't considered** to obtain higher education in Belarus did it **by fundamental reasons**: they more often don't like the process of entering a Belarusian university (42%), the attitude towards students (63%) or just wanted to study at a university that is closer to their views (68%)

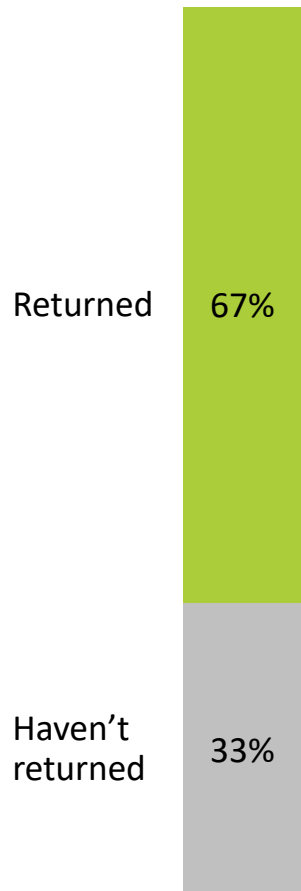
POSSIBLE REASONS FOR OBTAINING HIGHER EDUCATION IN BELARUS, n=252



Source: "Have you considered the possibility of obtaining higher education in the Belarusian universities?"; "Why did you choose EHU and not a Belarusian university? Select all the applicable reasons"; "What is the main reason?"

# AFTER GRADUATION ALMOST THREE OUT OF FOUR EHU GRADUATES RETURN TO BELARUS

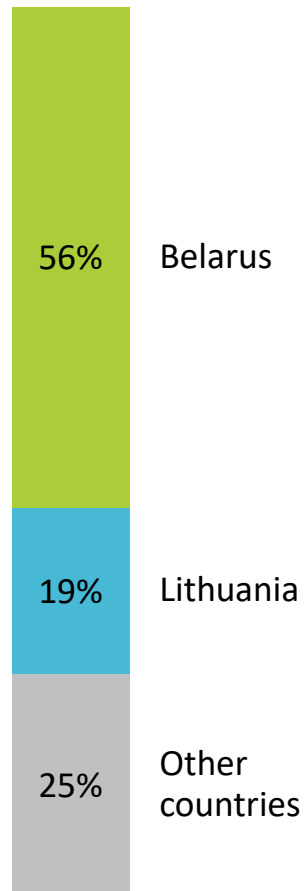
SHARE OF EHU GRADUATES RETURNED TO BELARUS, n=112



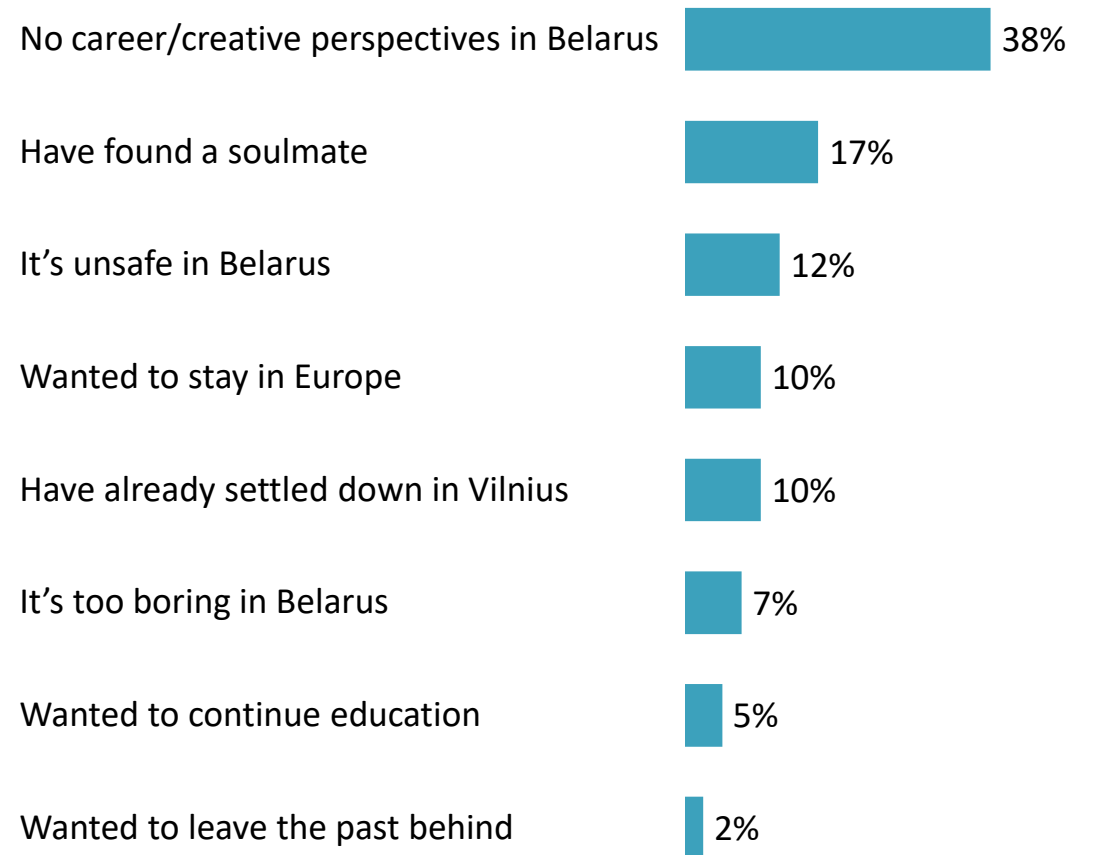
**11%**

of EHU graduates have left Belarus again after the events of August 2020

COUNTRIES EHU GRADUATES LIVE IN TODAY, n=112



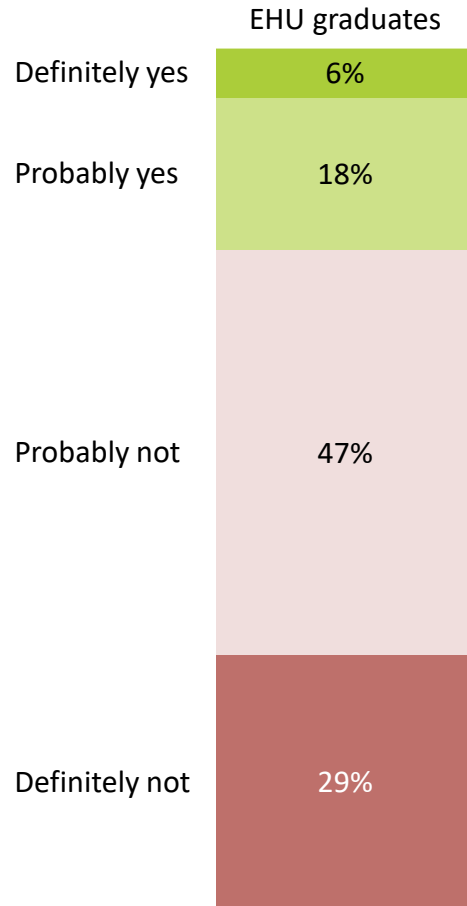
MAIN REASONS TO LEAVE BELARUS, n=42



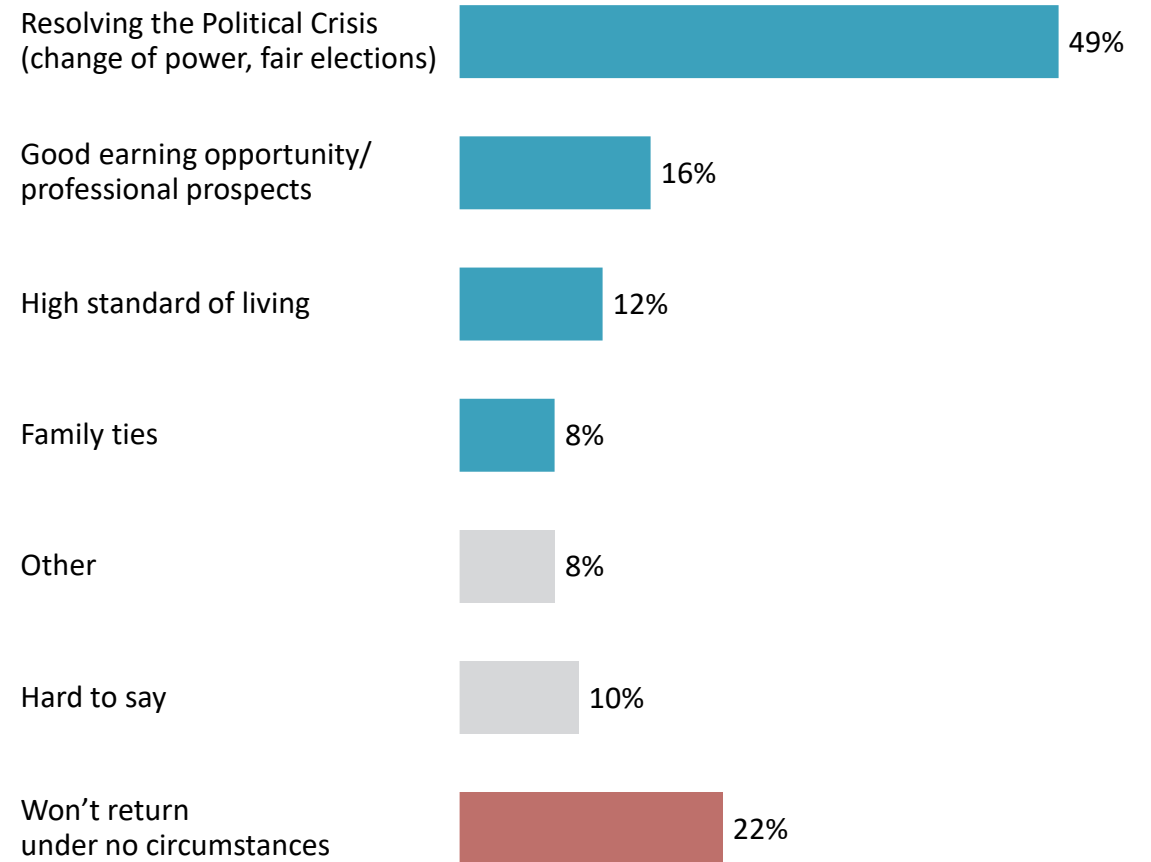
Source: answers to the questions "What country do you currently live in?"; "Have you live there before August 2020 events in Belarus?"; "What was the main reason why you haven't returned to Belarus"

# GRADUATES WHO HAVEN'T RETURNED ARE NOT LIKELY TO DO IT IN THE NEAREST FUTURE, BUT THE BEGINNING OF POLITICAL TRANSFORMATION COULD CHANGE THEIR MINDS

THE LIKELIHOOD OF THE RETURN OF EHU GRADUATES TO BELARUS, n=51



PRECONDITIONS TO RETURN TO BELARUS, n=51



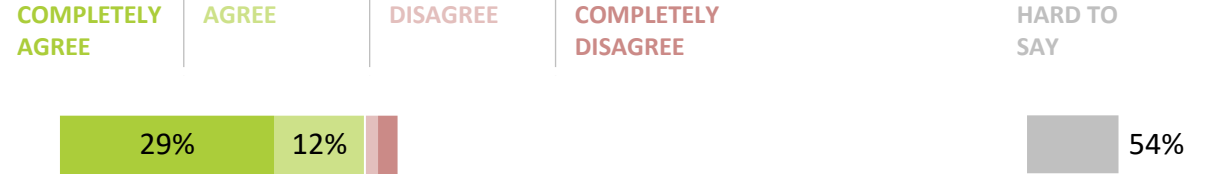
Source: answers to the question "Do you plan to return to Belarus in the future?"; "Under what condition would you return to Belarus?"



# AS OF NOW, MAJORITY OF EHU GRADUATES TEND TO THINK THAT BELARUS ISN'T INTERESTED IN THEIR RETURN

## OPINIONS OF EHU GRADUATES ON THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS

Getting a job in a government organization in Belarus is more difficult with an EHU diploma than with a Belarusian diploma , n=114



It is difficult to get a job in the specialty taught by EHU due to the lack of a market where such specialists are needed , n=114



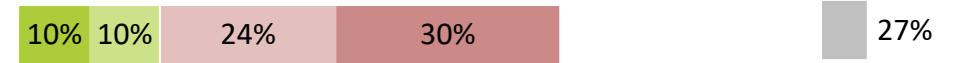
I personally faced bureaucratic problems associated with the need to translate a diploma from English into Russian, its assurances , n=63



Having a EHU diploma helped me find a job in Belarus , n=63



Personally faced various kinds of barriers (political, ideological, legislative, psychological) in Belarus , n=63



EHU contributes to the continuation of professional activities in Belarus , n=114



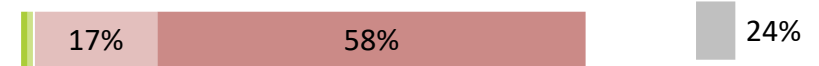
Had an advantage in getting a job over holders of diplomas of Belarusian universities , n=114



Barriers associated with an EHU diploma in Belarus are a myth , n=114

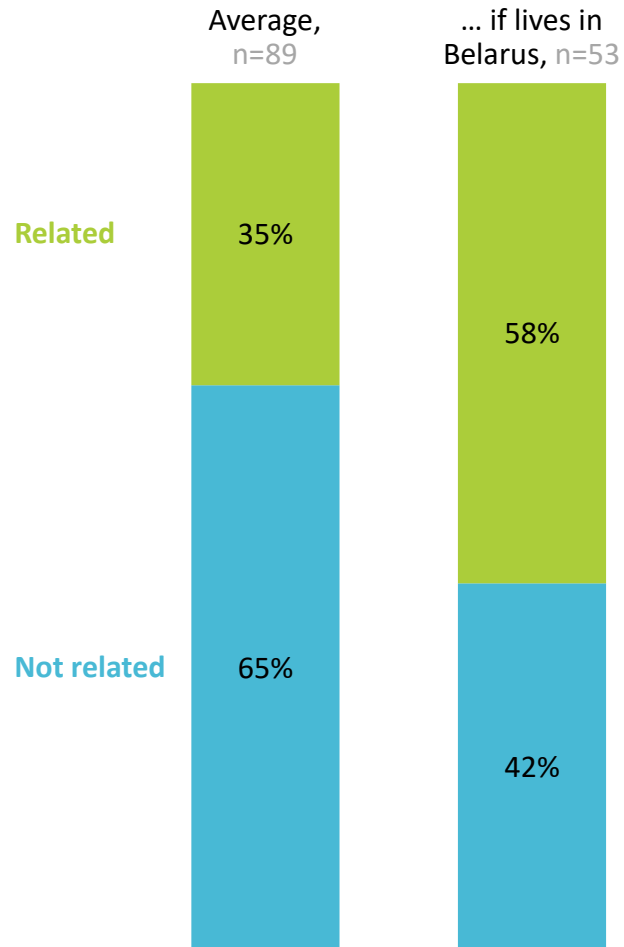


Belarus itself is interested in and contributes to my return for professional development in the country , n=114

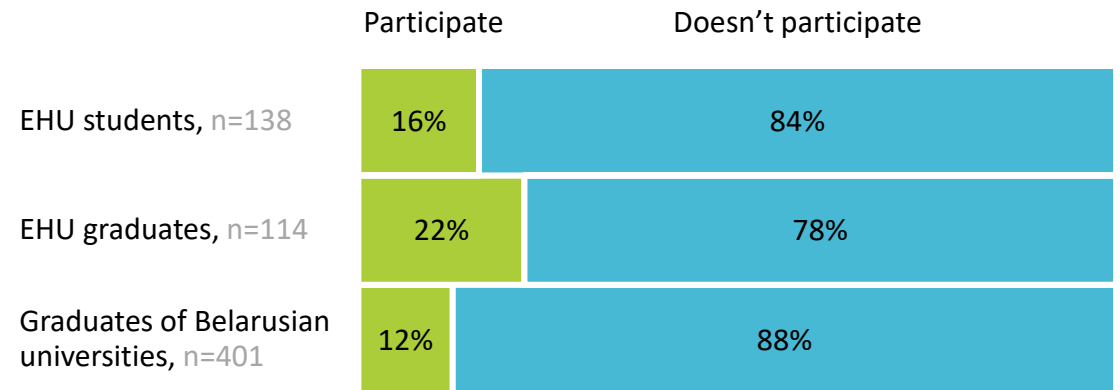


# THOSE WHO RETURN ARE USUALLY RATHER ENGAGED IN COUNTRY'S LIFE: MORE THAN A HALF OF THEM HAS BELARUS-RELATED JOBS AND THEY ARE MUCH MORE LIKELY THAN OTHERS TO PARTAKE IN BELARUSIAN CULTURE OR CIVIL SOCIETY NGOS

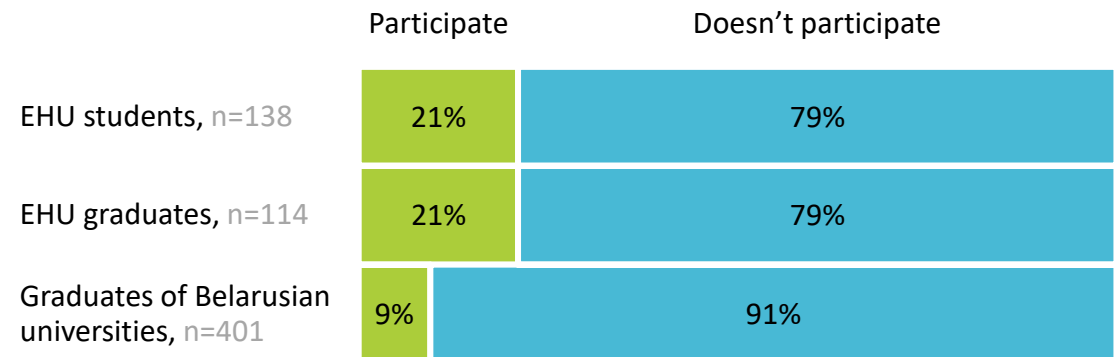
## RELATION OF EHU GRADUATES' WORK TO BELARUS



## PARTICIPATION IN NGOS, PROMOTING BELARUSIAN CULTURE



## PARTICIPATION IN NGOS, ENGAGED IN DEVELOPMENT OF BELARUSIAN CIVIL SOCIETY



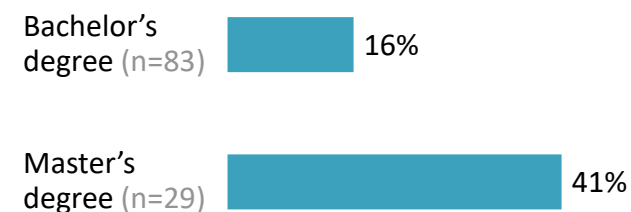
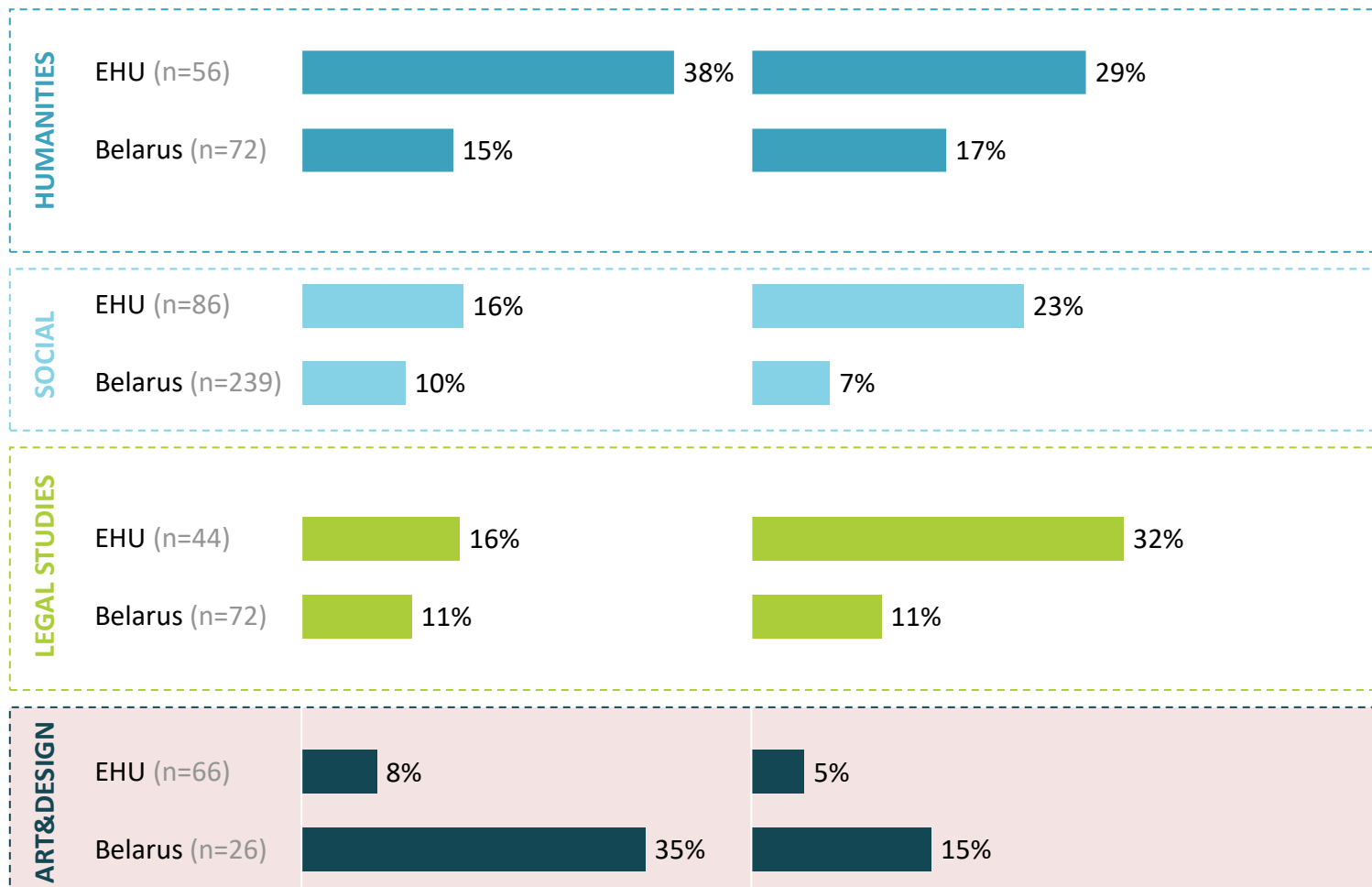
# SITUATION IS DIFFERENT WHEN TALKING ABOUT ART AND DESIGN EHU GRADUATES – THEIR BELARUSIAN COUNTERPARTS ARE MUCH MORE LIKELY TO BE ENGAGED INTO CIVIC LIFE

ADDITIONALLY, EHU MASTER’S GRADUATES ARE MORE ‘ACTIVE’ THAN THEIR BACHELOR’S COUNTERPARTIES

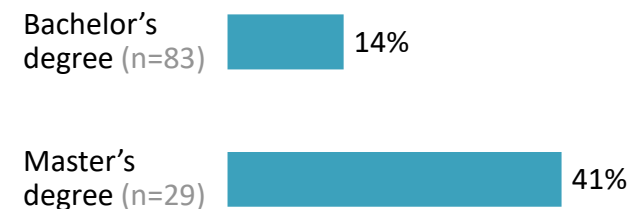
**PARTICIPANTS IN NGOS, PROMOTING BELARUSIAN CULTURE, ACTIVITY-SPECIFIC**

**...ENGAGED IN DEVELOPMENT OF BELARUSIAN CIVIL SOCIETY, ACTIVITY-SPECIFIC**

**PARTICIPANTS IN NGOS, PROMOTING BELARUSIAN CULTURE, BY EDUCATION DEGREE IN EHU**



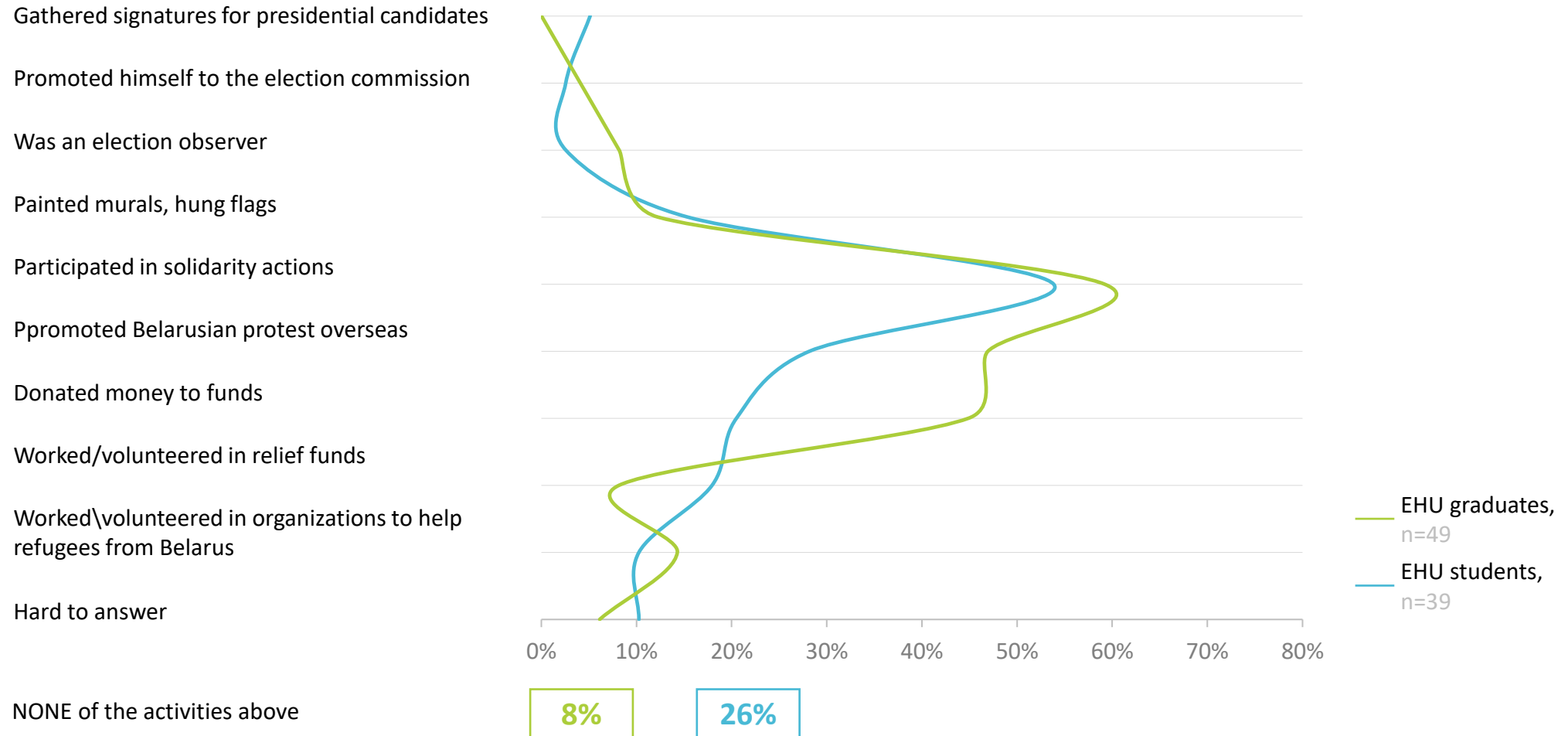
**... ENGAGED IN DEVELOPMENT OF BELARUSIAN CIVIL SOCIETY, BY EDUCATION DEGREE IN EHU**



Source: answers to the questions “Would you say that your work is related to Belarus?”; “Are you a member of NGOs promoting Belarusian values and culture?”; “Are you a member of NGOs involved in the development of civil society in Belarus?”

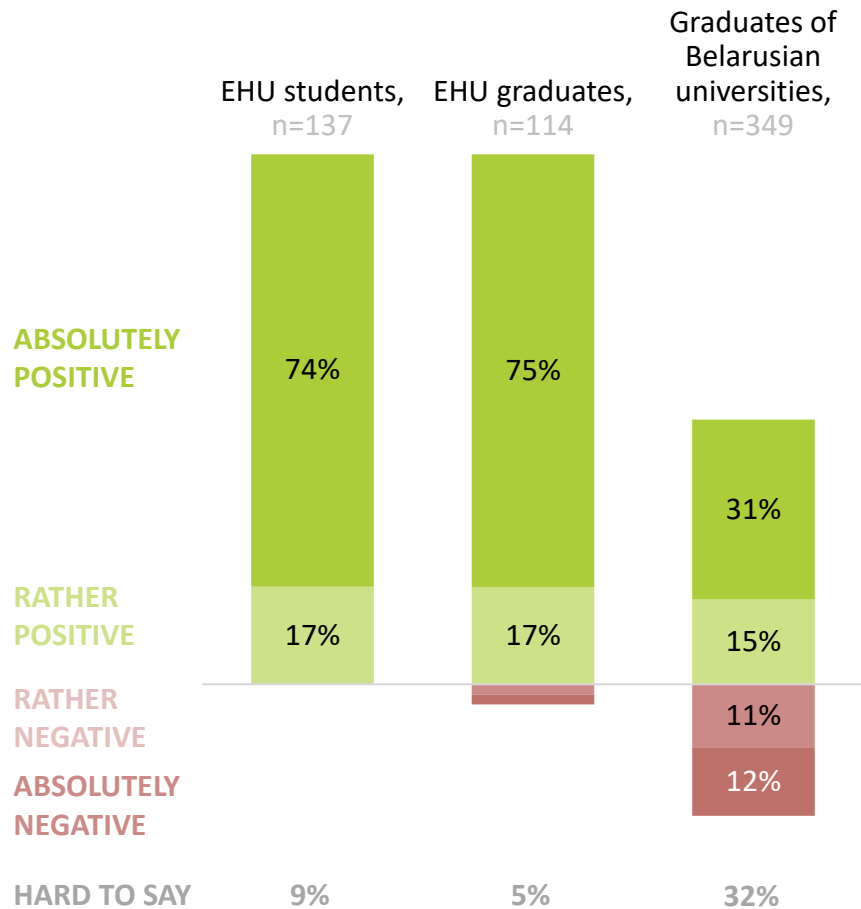
# EHU STUDENTS AND GRADUATES LIVING ABROAD PARTICIPATE IN THE BELARUSIAN SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION TOO: MOST OF THEM WERE INVOLVED IN AT LEAST ONE FORM OF ACTIVITIES CONNECTED TO PROTESTS IN BELARUS IN 2020

PARTICIPATION IN THE PROTEST ACTIVITIES IN BELARUS among those who live abroad

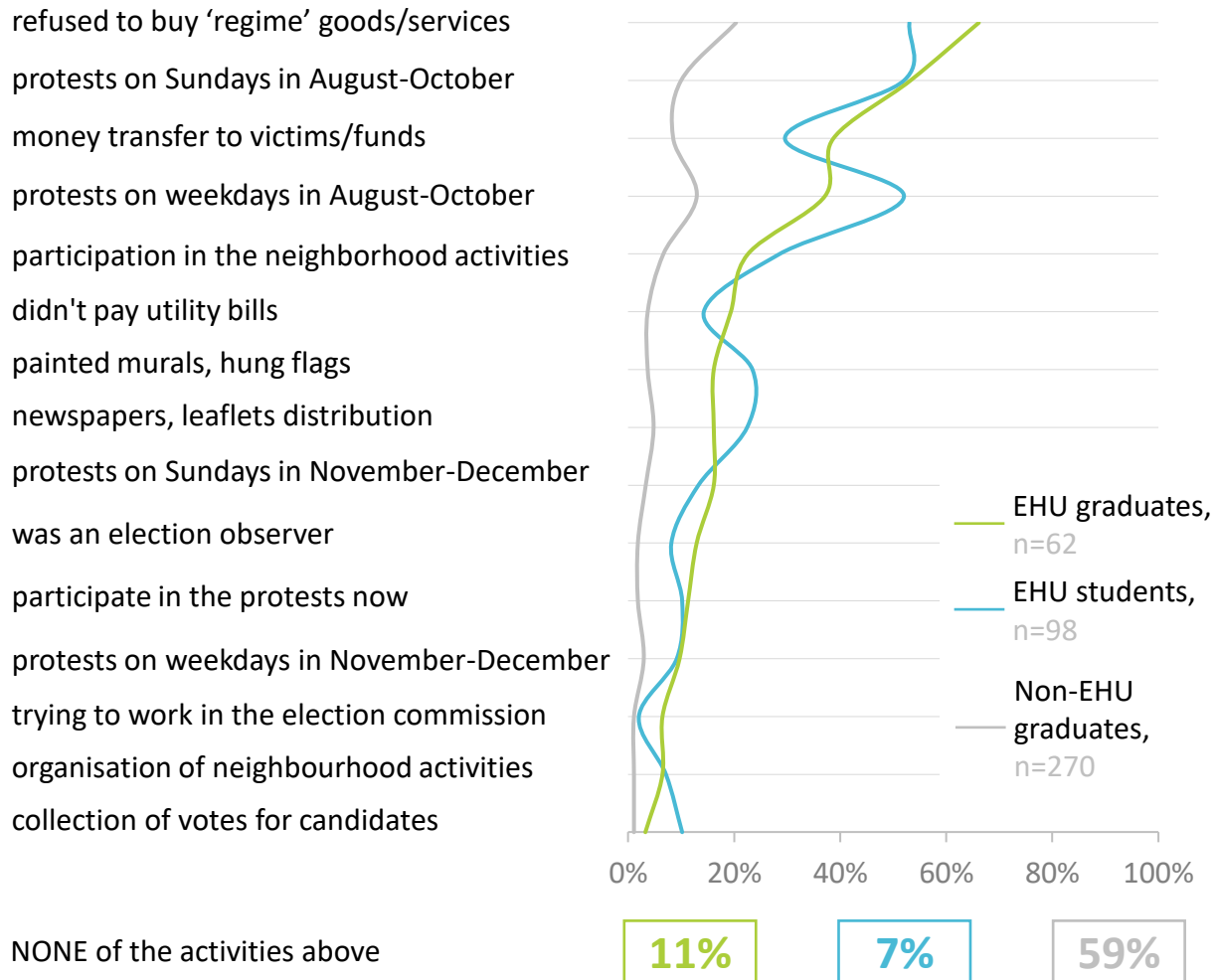


# COMPARING WITH NON-EHU GRADUATES, EHU STUDENTS AND GRADUATES ARE MORE ENTHUSIASTIC AND INVOLVED IN PROTEST MOVEMENT AND THEY ARE MORE LIKELY TO TAKE PART IN ONGOING SOCIAL TRANSFORMATIONS IN BELARUS, IN MANY DIFFERENT ROLES

ATTITUDE TO PROTESTS AGAINST THE CURRENT GOVERNMENT IN BELARUS



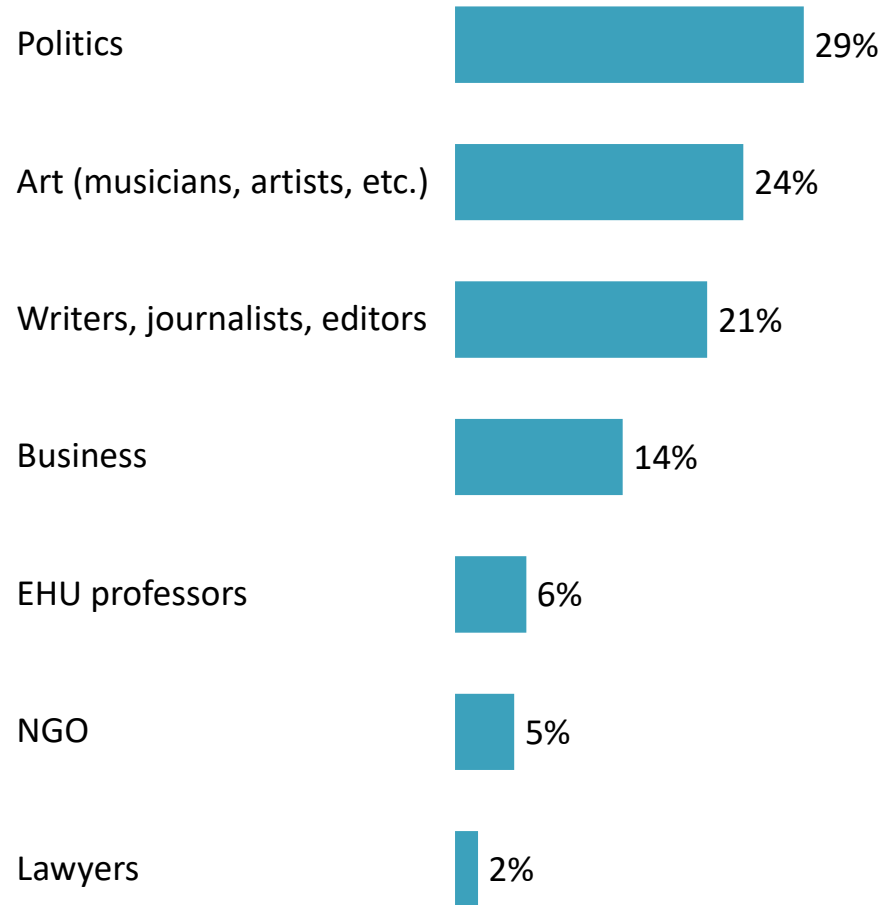
PARTICIPATION IN THE PROTEST ACTIVITIES IN BELARUS



Source: answers to the questions "How do you feel about the protest against the current government in Belarus?"

# PARTICIPANTS IN THE SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION IN BELARUS ARE OFTEN MENTIONED AMONG EHU'S MOST VISIBLE GRADUATES

AREAS OF ACTIVITY OF VISIBLE EHU GRADUATES\*, n=52



VISIBLE EHU GRADUATES, n=52



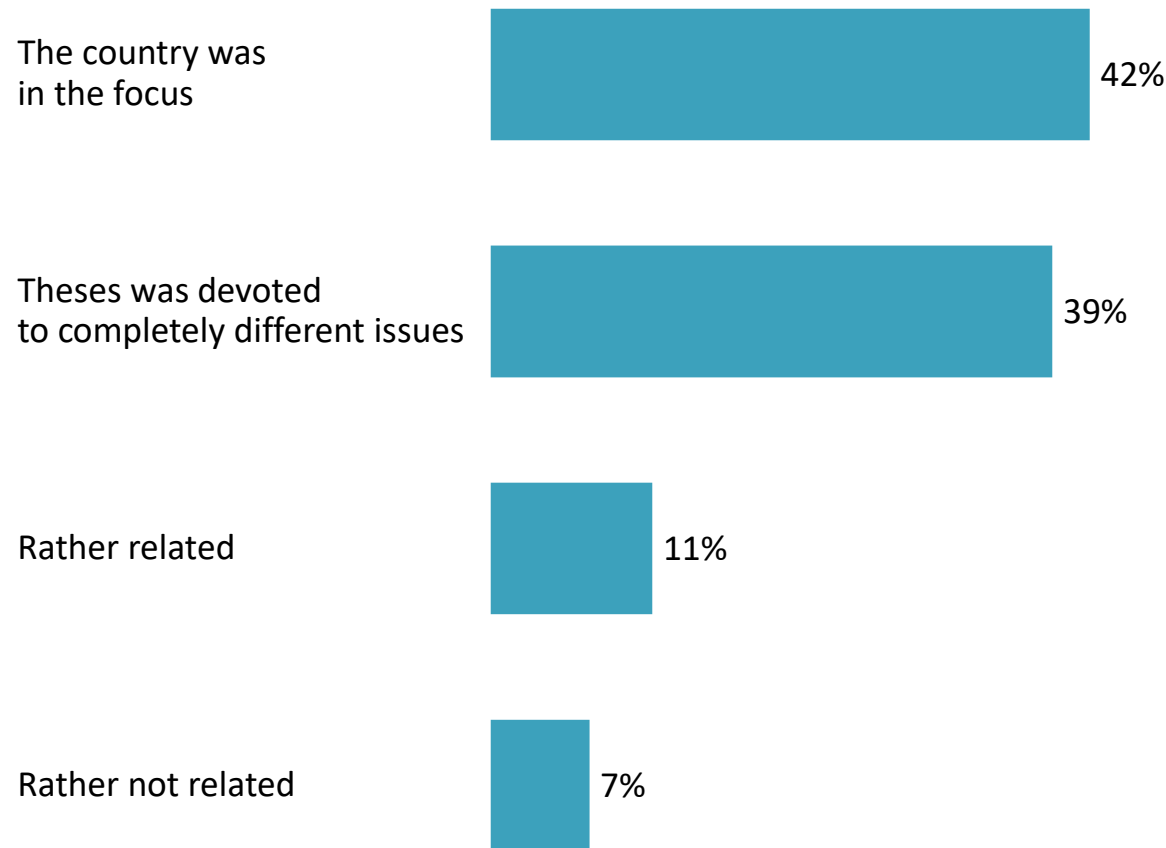
■ Participants of social transformation in Belarus

\* isn't equal to 100%, because some graduates work in several spheres

Source: "Name 1-2 graduates of EHU, about who you can say that they are "visible, known" in Belarus (on any scale)"

# AROUND HALF OF THE GRADUATE’S THESES ARE CONTRIBUTED TO BELARUS AS WELL THEY ARE LESS LIKELY TO BE STUDENTS OF ART AND DESIGN, LAW AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

RELATION OF EHU GRADUATES’ THESES TO BELARUS,  
n=114



It is important to note that theses were associated with Belarus mainly among students of **humanities specialties** – **69%**, in other areas, on average, only **25%** of theses had a connection with the country.

*“There are more opportunities for research in the Belarusian language, because they are carriers of this material; access to them [Belarusian context] is much better, so you can use the university to do research on the material that is delivered from Belarus to Lithuania. Not only in terms of history and so on... We have a lot of our own topics that are relevant either for our market or for our professors*



Source: answers to the questions “Was your graduation theses directly related to the country in which you lived before entering EHU?”

## \ SUBCHAPTER SUMMARY


**APPLICANTS CHOOSE EHU INSTEAD OF BELARUSIAN UNIVERSITY DUE TO DISAGREEMENT WITH LOCAL VALUES AND TEACHING METHODS**

**MOST EHU GRADUATES ARE RETURNING TO BELARUS AND ACTIVELY PARTICIPATE IN THE PROCESSES OF SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION**



- **44% haven't even considered to obtain higher education in Belarus** (*criteria 1*)
  - The main reasons are dissatisfaction with Belarusian teaching methods and proposed values, which are disconnected to the applicants' views (*criteria 1*)
- **After graduation up to ¾ of graduates return to Belarus and actively participate in the social transformation there** (*criteria 1, 4*)
  - EHU graduates are more likely to participate in NGOs, developing civil society or promoting Belarusian culture (*criteria 4, 14*)
  - EHU graduates believe Belarus is not interested in their return and the market there is not developed enough to work here with their specialty, but political transformation could change their minds (*criteria 1*)
- **EHU students and graduates are much more positive about the protests against the current government in Belarus**(*criteria 4, 14, 18*)
  - Up to 90% of EHU students/graduates (even who live outside from Belarus) declared their participation in protest activities, connected with Belarus-2020 (versus 40% of non-EHU graduates) (*criteria 4, 14, 18*)
  - Among visible EHU graduates people often mention participants of social transformation in Belarus from different areas of activity (notably – from politics) (*criteria 3*)
  - Belarus often becomes the focus of the EHU graduates' final theses (*criteria 20*)



- 
- The image shows a library environment with bookshelves filled with books. In the foreground, a group of students is gathered around a table, looking at documents and books. A large, semi-transparent teal overlay covers the center of the image, containing a list of three items. The background shows a student sitting on a green cushion reading a book, and another student sitting on a blue cushion also reading. The overall atmosphere is one of quiet study and academic collaboration.
1. Results of quantitative survey
  2. **Results of in-depth interviews**
  3. Conclusions and recommendations

# IN DEPTH INTERVIEWS PROVIDE ASSESSMENT PROFESSIONAL, EDUCATIONAL, INSTITUTIONAL, AND VALUE PERSPECTIVE

## CRITERIA COVERED AT THIS STAGE

4. Is the leadership of EHU graduates identified in the context of social transformations in Belarus?
6. How does a EHU contribute to the promotion of equal opportunities and diversity?
7. How does the EHU foster an approach to the preservation of cultural heritage and cultural diversity?
10. What is the role of a EHU in ensuring access to common European higher education programs for citizens (students and teachers) in Belarus?
11. Could a EHU serve as a model for other EHUs in Belarus in implementing the principles of the Bologna Process?
12. How does a EHU contribute to the promotion of creativity in Belarus?
14. How do EHU students and graduates contribute to democratic change in Belarus?
15. Is EHU an important alternative to universities specializing in humanities and social studies in Belarus?
16. How do international donors evaluate EHU?
17. Evaluations of EHU by civil society organizations in the country of origin
19. In what forms does the EHU cooperate with the social partners in Belarus (or in relation to Belarus)?

## AREAS OF ASSESSMENT COVERED IN THE INTERVIEW

### PROFESSIONAL PERSPECTIVE

- identify the advantages and barriers of the EHU diploma
- to formulate the differences between EHU students and Belarusian university students in the eyes of the employer

### EDUCATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

- understand the role of EHU in the development of higher education in Belarus
- identify the differences between EHU and other educational institutions of a similar profile
- evaluate the quality of the educational process

### INSTITUTIONAL PERSPECTIVE

- determine the functions that EHU performs
- formulate the image of the "ideal EHU"

### VALUE AND SOCIAL PERSPECTIVE

- identify the value and image characteristics of EHU
- to determine the impact of EHU on the processes of social transformation in Belarus
- define the context of Belarus within EHU
- describe the value characteristics of a EHU graduate

## \ EHU INFLUENCES BELARUS INDIRECTLY THROUGH ITS STUDENTS BY MAINTAINING ATMOSPHERE OF FREEDOM AND OPENNESS TO DISCUSSION

### FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION, SUPPORT FOR DISCUSSIONS – THE MAIN ADVANTAGES OF STUDYING AT EHU

- The value of EHU lies in the atmosphere of freedom, freedom of expression (in relation to Belarusian universities), and the absence of hierarchy in communication with teachers (*graduates*)
  - At the same time, it is noted that those who enter EHU are initially more courageous, open to new things, "smarter, less blinkered", do not take everything for granted (*graduates, NGOs*)
- The development of critical, analytical thinking, debating skills is a repeatedly emphasized positive characteristic of the university (*graduates, NGOs*)
  - At the same time, many people note that this is the merit of the teachers, and not the university as an institution (*graduates*)

### EHU INFLUENCES SOCIO-CULTURAL PROCESSES IN BELARUS THROUGH ITS GRADUATES

- EHU influences Belarus by its very existence: it is a window for "escape" from the system with further return of students in Belarus with experience of living and working abroad (in an environment where human rights and democracy are given more attention) (*NGO*)
- Rather, the university is not expected to have a socio-political influence, since there is no field for direct influence;
  - One of the options for developing ties and community is to enter into alliances with organizations involved in the relevant branches of EHU (heritage, theater, Congress of researchers of Belarus, etc.) (*NGO*)

### MANY PEOPLE BELIEVE THAT EHU APPLICANTS INITIALLY DIFFER FROM THE AVERAGE ENROLEES IN BELARUS

- Although some EHU graduates are actively involved in what is happening in Belarus in the future (they participate in various initiatives, foundations, and are engaged in activism), some of them were interested in this initially (*graduates*)
  - At the same time, it cannot be said that the university does not play any role at all: for many, it is the environment of people with similar views and the atmosphere of freedom that has had a significant impact (the social function of the university) (*graduates*)

## NGO'S VALUE EHU GRADUATES' SOFT SKILLS, WORLDVIEW, AND NETWORK OF CONTACTS

**EHU STIMULATES THE DEVELOPMENT OF COMPETENCES THAT ARE WELL DESCRIBED BY THE CONCEPT OF "HUMAN CAPITAL"**

- One of the main EHU graduates features is their active life philosophy (*NGO*)
  - Such philosophy is grounded on the independent thinking, overall proactivity and attitude to do something
- Another distinctive feature of EHU graduates is their mental and value inclusion into the "European context"
  - ... *EHU fosters a certain awareness of the fact that the world is big and is not limited by the borders of one country. You can everywhere look for opportunities to learn, to travel, an internships, to have to learn languages, etc.*



**GRADUATES BELIEVE THAT EHU DOES NOT HAVE ENOUGH TRAINING IN APPLIED SKILLS**

- Graduates say that they lack technical, applied skills, for example, basic courses in finance, more in-depth economics; training in quantitative methods (*graduates*)
- Some of the subjects graduates consider "too [*focused on*] humanities", "too general" (*graduates*)
  - A significant advantage of NGOs is seen in the interaction between EHU and, in particular, the University of Kaunas: there are significantly fewer" university-wide " subjects (*NGOs*)

**NGO'S, ON THE OTHER HAND, SAY THAT THE SKILLS OF EHU GRADUATES SUFFICIENT**

- NGOs describe the skills taught at EHU as "normal, sufficient, and not bad" (*NGOs*)
  - At the same time, there is an opinion that it is impossible to get applied skills for working in the NGO sector (in particular, human rights) at the university, in this connection, EHU is valued precisely for the value component (*NGO*)

**IN THE LABOR MARKET, NGOS VALUE EHU GRADUATES PRECISELY FOR THEIR SOFT-SKILLS**

- The EHU diploma for NGOs is rather a confirmation that the graduate is "one of their own": they are more open and independent, do not hesitate to express ideas and discuss various tasks, integrate more easily into new communities, and have more life experience in general (*NGOs*)
  - Graduates of "old" programs are more trusted (*NGOs*)

## EHU HAS MORE ACADEMIC FREEDOM THAN BELARUSIAN UNIVERSITIES, AND FREEDOM IN GENERAL, AS MANIFESTED BY STUDENTS CHALLENGING FACULTY DECISIONS

AS AN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION, EHU IS VALUED FOR ITS ACADEMIC FREEDOM

- Relative to Belarus, EHU has a higher level of academic freedom, better teachers, but courses tend to be somewhat outdated (*graduates, NGOs*)
- In the academic world, EHU is neither known nor has a dubious reputation, which is more of a minus than a plus (*NGO*)

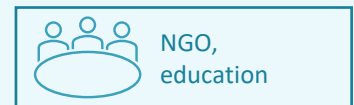
STUDENTS SCRUTINIZE ADMINISTRATION DECISIONS

- "Good, smart" teachers throughout the history of EHU have conflicts with the administration, which are resolved by "Belarusian" methods on the principle of loyalty to the administration (*NGO*)
- The essence of the conflict boils down to the perceived exclusion of the elected representative communities of students and teachers from decision-making: there is an opposition of "administration against everyone else" (*graduates, NGOs*)
  - It also mentions a significant increase in the academic load (2 times in 12 years) in parallel with a slight increase in wages (*NGO*)

THE REFORMS OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS ARE CHARACTERIZED EXTREMELY NEGATIVELY

- After the change in the program of university-wide courses in 2013-2014, it is believed that the quality of education began to deteriorate (*NGO*)
  - The university-wide block is rated as less useful, but takes hours away from courses that are developed by the teachers themselves (*NGOs*)
  - Additional questions are raised by the fact that the teaching of the university-wide block is carried out by teachers loyal to the administration (*NGO*)
  - The reform was not supported by the Teachers ' Senate (*NGO*)

*"[As a result] we have graduates of Belarusian schools who do not have a normal humanities and social science unit and receive poor-quality education»*



# \ TODAY, EHU IS FOCUSED ONLY ON ONE OF THE THREE MAIN FUNCTIONS – IT IS NECESSARY TO DEVELOP THE REMAINING TWO

## IDEALLY, THE UNIVERSITY SHOULD PERFORM 3 FUNCTIONS:

### EDUCATIONAL

its implementation at the proper level requires increased attention to the teaching staff

### RESEARCH-PROJECT

specificity in the eyes of the respondent consists of two elements:

- co-production of knowledge,
- proactive integration of theory into practice

### SOCIAL-PERFORMATIVE

this is university's willingness and ability to be involved in social processes in different formats. Not only through its graduates, but also directly as an institution, within the framework of current educational programs, and with the help of research practices

**A comparison of the current perception of the European Humanities University with the image of an ideal university allowed us to establish that of the three model functions of EHU (according to respondents' estimates), the main emphasis is on the first – educational.**

- *What, in your opinion, is the main function of EHU as a university?*
- *"It's a university ". It has to teach.*



- *It seems to me that this is a university that provides basic higher education and a master's degree, and I do not know if it gives further.*



## IN ADDITION TO EDUCATIONAL, EHU PERFORMS A CULTURAL AND SOCIAL FUNCTION – IT IS A "REFUGE" FOR THOSE WHO DO NOT WANT TO FACE THE INTERNAL BELARUSIAN SYSTEM

### EHU IS VALUED MOSTLY IN CONTRAST TO BELARUSIAN UNIVERSITIES FOR ITS SOCIAL AND CULTURAL COMPONENTS

- EHU does not compete with universities of the same profile, but rather is an affordable alternative to a university in Belarus, a "Poor man's European university": many people have the choice Belarus/not Belarus (*graduates*)
- Almost no one claims that he chose EHU because of the academic component, more often mentioned:
  - **Opposition to the Belarusian educational system** | do not like the admission process in Belarus (the system of testing instead of essays); do not like the attitude of teachers and administration to students; in Belarus, the quality of education in general is low; one can study at EHU, but not engage in ideology (*graduates*)
  - **The desire to expand your horizons, try something new** | It is noted that in the country of residence it becomes simply boring to live, there are no people with similar views; applicants want to change the situation, while the geographical proximity to Belarus serves as an opportunity to return back (*graduates*)
  - **More opportunities to participate in academic exchanges** | It is considered that in Belarus it is much more difficult to participate in the exchange program (*graduates*)
  - **Recommendations of parents and friends** | Due to intra-university conflicts, some graduates treat EHU very negatively, which potentially leads to problems with applicants (*graduates*)
  - **Political and economic situation in Belarus** (*graduates*)
- Some believe that the system of values in EHU is declared, but rather absent in reality (*NGO*)
- Against this background, EHU will have a better starting position in the "New Belarus" due to the fact that the burden of problems in other Belarusian universities is much heavier (*NGO*)

### EHU IS STILL EXPECTED TO DEVELOP ITS EDUCATIONAL FUNCTION

- Although EHU students who come from Belarus are comfortable in the EHU that it is today (as opposed to Belarusian universities), it is necessary to maintain the high quality of teaching (*NGO*)
- If EHU is exclusively engaged in a socializing function – it turns from a university into an immigrant organization: «*why make such an expensive NGO for networking and socialization, it is better to make some three-month camps*»



# BLURED, TRANSITIONAL IMAGE OF EHU IS INTERCONNECTED WITH THE AMBIGUITY OF ASSESSMENTS OF THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION (DEPENDING ON PROGRAMS)

IN THE PERCEPTION OF EMPLOYERS, EHU OCCUPIES A CERTAIN INTERMEDIATE POSITION BETWEEN THE BELARUSIAN AND EUROPEAN EDUCATIONAL SPACE

EHU IS SEEMED TO BE A "MEDIATOR" BETWEEN EUROPE AND BELARUS – AND IT IS CLOSER TO A STATIC "WINDOW" RATHER THAN AN ACTIVE "INTERMEDIARY"

- The factors that plays in favor of the European vector the respondents often mention "the manner of teaching" and the peculiarities of teaching methods inside EHU

*"[EHU] is closer to American or European university rather than Belarusian"*



*"[There is no] ideological burden that exists in Belarus"*

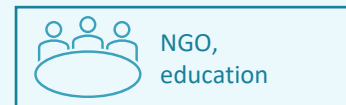


- In its turn, the main reason why EHU is considered to be more "Belarusian" than "European" university is Belarusian background of the staff and university administration

*"... [in EHU] work people with Belarusian experience in the sense that they have no background connected to European university functioning... So this background is included in the procedures. This means that if you'll take the statutory documents (or something that regulates relations withing the university and outside) – there will be significant differences in things the organisation of the internal work, even formally (and consequently – during the implementation on practice). These things will be different [from the European approach]."*



*"... [EHU understands its role] as "Belarusian migrants". It perceives it in the same way as Mikhailov: it is a European university. There is a name, and shoulder straps, and merits, but nevertheless this haven't prevented to demonstrate a completely Belarusian approach. This means that there is an understanding, but there is no life in another environment"*





# EHU HAS A GREAT POTENTIAL IN THE VALUE TRANSFORMATION IN BELARUS, BUT NOW THIS POTENTIAL LIES ON ITS STUDENTS AND PROFESSORS – THIS POTENTIAL SHOULD BE INSTITUTIONALIZED

TODAY THE PUBLIC OPINION MOST LIKELY LACKS A UNIFIED AND CLEAR IMAGE OF EHU AS A CORE ACTOR IN THE SPACE OF VALUE AND SOCIAL TRANSFORMATIONS

- This thesis is based on the disagreement of the opinions about the fundamental question: can we talk about the existence of a certain structured value system in the activities of EHU.

- On the one hand, for some respondents that was hard to say which exactly values EHU promotes

*From this perspective I've never thought about it about EHU, what values they hold...*



- On the other hand, some respondents are firmly sure that EHU is the bearer and broadcaster of a quite defined system of values: democratic and pro-Belarusian

EHU IS MORE AS AN ACCUMULATOR OF AXIOLOGICAL POTENTIAL AND A CARRIER OF THE POTENTIAL FOR VALUE TRANSFORMATIONS

- It is widely believed that earlier this potential was higher

*“When it [EHU] was in Belarus it knew why [its mission]. With all the shortcomings, with all the moments, now it also knows why is he [its mission], but this is not so inspiring.*



- At the same time there is an opinion that in the nearest future the existing potential will be in demand and will be further scaled up

RIGHT NOW, THE SUBJECTS OF THIS POTENTIAL, ARE PRIMARILY PROFESSORS AND STUDENTS RATHER THAN EHU AS AN INSTITUTION

*Some of our teacher took part in the protests in 2010 and we [students] have joined them, carried out their requests and instructions... not as an institution, but rather as people*



## RIGHT NOW, MANY EHU GRADUATES ARE DIRECTLY INVOLVED INTO POLITICAL PROCESSES IN BELARUS BY HOLDING POSITIONS OF POWER IN LEADING “NEW OPPOSITION” STRUCTURES

### OLD AND NEW EHU GRADUATES ARE HOLDING KEY POSITIONS IN SVIATLANA TSIKHANOUSKAYA'S OFFICE

- The office is an attractive place for EHU graduates to come and offer their services as volunteers or employees
  - A lot of graduates perform important duties there, such as chief communication strategy manager, etc.

*When you come to [Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya's] office, you practically can't stop greeting with people, there are so many common faces 'I've seen in EHU*



### IN COORDINATION COUNCIL THERE ARE LESS EHU PEOPLE DUE TO OBJECTIVE REASONS

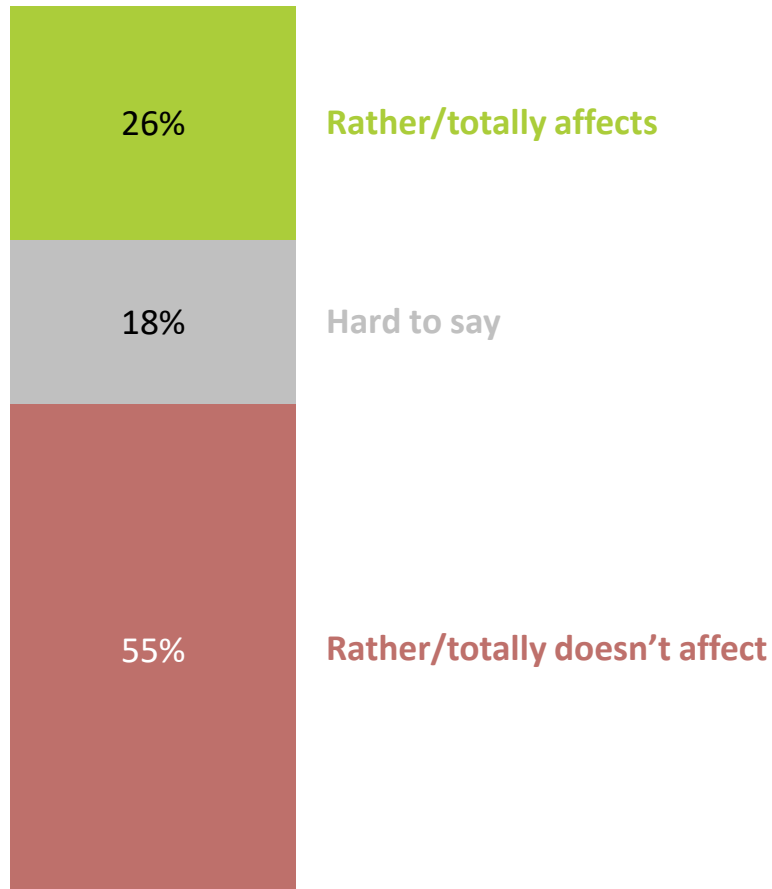
- This is mostly explained by geographical factors: Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya's office is situated in Vilnius where many of EHU students or graduates live, while Coordination Council operates in Minsk or Warszawa

### EHU GRADUATES IN BELARUS TEND TO BLEND WITH OTHER BELARUSIANS

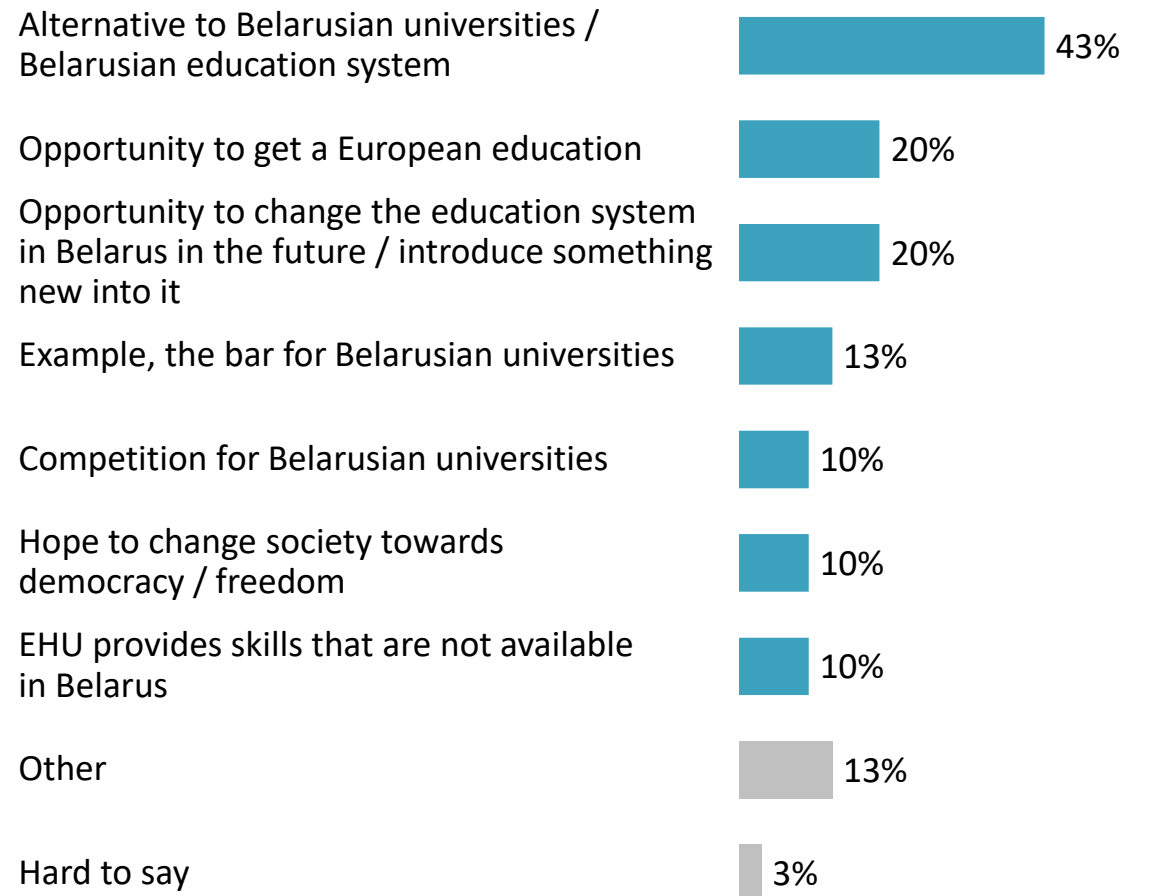
- People in Minsk engaged in political activities rarely tell a lot about themselves to their contacts in offices of “new opposition” due to conspiracy issues
- It does not matter to “new opposition” structures, from which university does a person willing to cooperate come, so they never bother to ask

# ACCORDING TO THE GRADUATES, EHU DOESN'T HAVE A DIRECT IMPACT ON THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM IN BELARUS; PROBABLY THIS MEANS THAT GRADUATES CAN'T REALLY SEE THE POSSIBILITIES FOR EHU TO HAVE SUCH IMPACT

EHU'S INFLUENCE ON THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM IN BELARUS, n=112



EHU'S METHODS OF INFLUENCE ON THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM IN BELARUS, n=30



Source: answers to the questions "In your opinion, does EHU affect the educational system in Belarus?"; "How exactly does it affect?"

# EHU SHOULD FURTHER INCORPORATE TEACHING AND RESEARCH OF THE BELARUSIAN CONTEXT

**THE CONNECTION WITH BELARUS REMAINS AN IMPORTANT IMAGE CHARACTERISTIC OF THE UNIVERSITY**

- The opportunity to focus on Belarus in academic research is an important advantage of EHU over other European universities (NGOs)
  - At the same time, in reality, due to the heavy workload, research opportunities are reduced and are associated with the personal enthusiasm of teachers (NGOs)
- The ideal EHU is described as a university that will return to Belarus as soon as possible: "[EHU] is forcefully temporarily abroad, and not just a steppingstone to travel to Europe" (NGO)
- EHU is more of a Belarusian than a European university: the people working at EHU rely on the Belarusian experience, their baggage is different from the existence in a "transparent, inclusive" society (NGO)

**LEVEL OF DISCUSSION ABOUT THE CONTEXT OF BELARUS COULD BE HIGHER**

- The context of Belarus as a whole is discussed rather superficially at the university: rather, on a specific subject in history and in the form of specific facts without affecting the student himself (graduates, NGOs)
  - There is a desire to study the Belarusian context more deeply, more specialized, but rather as an elective: for example, how politics and various events influenced art (graduates)
- Students not from Belarus note that they have begun to understand Belarus much better, although this is rather a merit not of the university, but a consequence of communication with Belarusians (graduates)
- The university – wide course, in which the Belarusian agenda is absent, and the introduction of the context of Belarus is the initiative of the teachers themselves, is called particularly detached from reality and Belarus

*List of literature of university-wide courses – "dead German philosophers"*



**EVERYONE WOULD LIKE TO SEE EHU FULFILL ITS MISSION TO PROMOTE EDUCATION FOR BELARUSIANS (AND ABOUT BELARUS)**

*EHU is valuable as a university that ensures the involvement of Belarus in the European context and preserves the Belarusian academic thought.*



*Get an education, but it would be great if you could invest your potential in the development of Belarus*



## ONE OF THE AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT COULD BE INTEGRATION OF BELARUSIAN STUDENTS INTO LOCAL COMMUNITIES IN LITHUANIA, AND THE INTEGRATION OF NON-BELARUSIAN STUDENTS INTO THE EHU COMMUNITY

**EHU SHOULD PAY ATTENTION TO THE INTEGRATION OF STUDENTS IN A CULTURE NEW FOR THEM**

- EHU has its own "circle of Belarusians": many students are not involved in local life on their own, and the university does not contribute much to interaction with the local community (*graduates*)
- Initiatives to get acquainted with the local culture and conduct events related to Belarus today are rather the initiative of the students themselves and the student representation, rather than the university itself (*graduates*)

**THE FORMAL CRITERIA OF "EQUALITY" ARE MET AT THE UNIVERSITY; THE DIFFERENCES ARE MANIFESTED ON DEEPER LEVEL**

- Graduates notice that there is gender equality at the university, most understand the system of discounts and the lack of reference to demographics (*graduates*)
- Inequality manifests itself depending on the level of activity and financial situation of students (*graduates*)
  - Those who communicate more with teachers get more additional opportunities, get information about various opportunities earlier (*graduates*)
    - At the same time, there is a request for assistance in the implementation of student initiatives: people from Belarus are concerned that they are expected to offer such initiatives, but, having received education in Belarus, many are not physically ready for this (*graduates*)
  - Some point out that the need to obtain financial support for a student is a reason for a special attitude on the part of the teacher (*graduates*)
- Although EHU claims that it is a university not only for Belarusians, students from other countries feel more disadvantaged: for example, many scholarships are available only for students from Belarus (*graduates*)
- The isolation of part-time students from the rest is noted: they do not have enough informal communication (with other students, with teachers); information about various opportunities comes last; they are practically not involved in student self-government (*graduates*)

## EHU COULD ESTABLISH MORE SYSTEMATIC WORK BETWEEN THE EHU BRANCH DEPARTMENTS AND ORGANIZATIONS WORKING IN SIMILAR INDUSTRIES

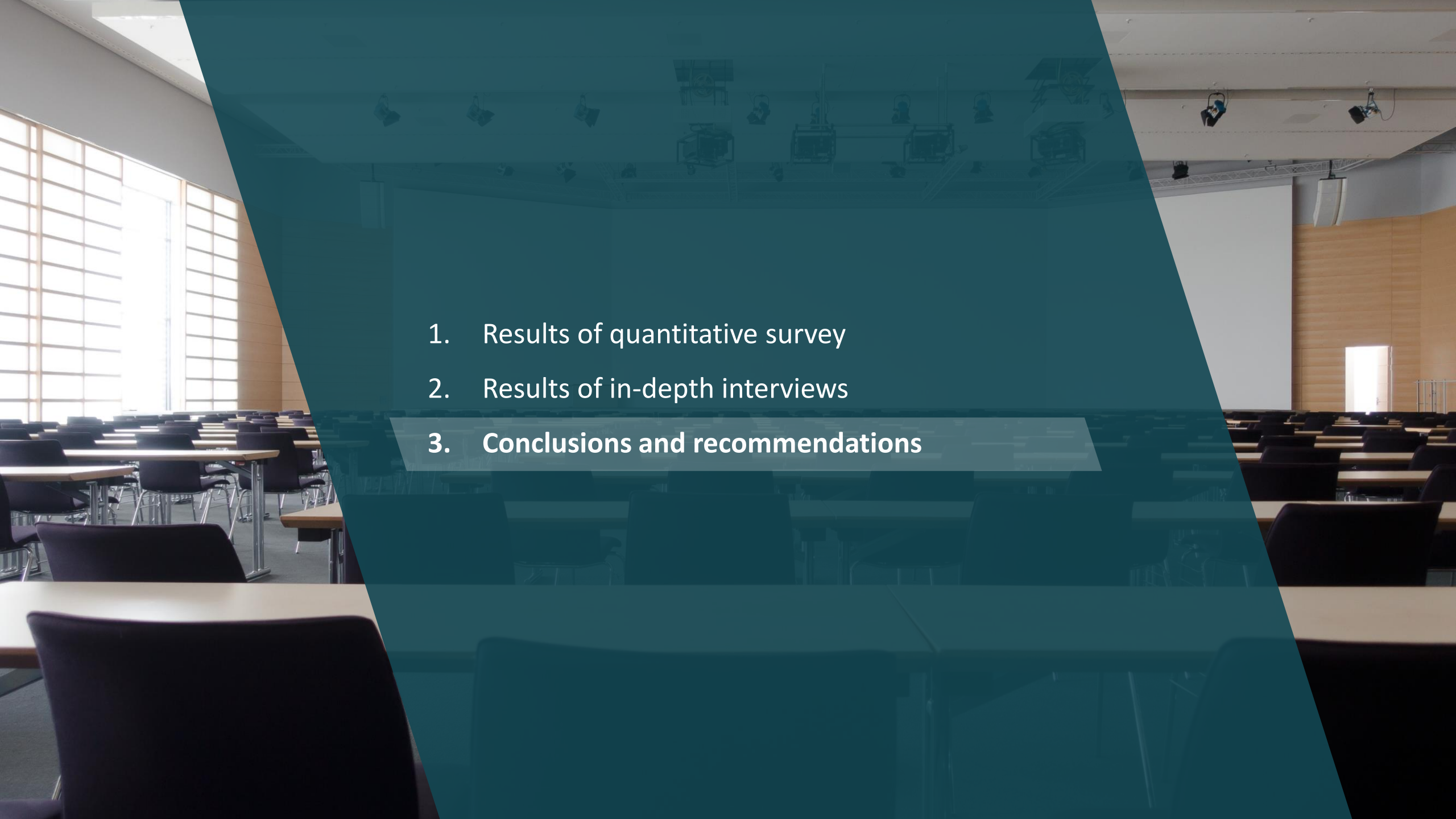
### THERE IS NO SYSTEMATIC APPROACH IN COOPERATION BETWEEN EHU AND NGOs

At the same time, interviews were conducted with organizations from the list of EHU social partners – that is, with the main partners

### IN SOME CASES, CONFLICTS WITH A REPRESENTATIVE OF AN NGO LED TO A COMPLETE RUPTURE OF COOPERATION

### AT THE SAME TIME, THE NGOs THEMSELVES HAVE SEE THE POSSIBILITIES TO ENDEEPEN COOPERATION

- The initiatives of interaction are rather at the private level and are expressed in a "respectful attitude" to the university and "openness to cooperation»: this indicates the absence of a systematic approach (*NGO*)
    - Among the mentioned examples of interaction are a newsletter about the activities of EHU, "communication from time to time", lectures to students, an invitation to practice / volunteering (*NGO*)
  - Obstacles to establishing sustainable relations are problems in the legal field of Belarus, the lack of sustainable funding within EHU, the conflict between the administration and the academic community and the frequent change of personnel (cooperation is established at the level of teachers) (*NGO*)
  - Some organizations cooperated with EHU earlier, but for various reasons did not continue to cooperate (*NGO*)
    - At the same time, the depth and volume of cooperation is reduced for various reasons (*NGOs*)
  - At the same time, some mentioned that formally, NGO representatives have an advisory voice in some strategic issues of EHU development (*NGO*)
- 
- In some cases, conflict situations led to the termination of cooperation with NGOs "without notice and discussion", although the option to resolve the conflict could be a change of the NGO representative (*NGO*)
    - Moreover, we are talking about those NGOs with which previously cooperation was conducted at the institutional level: the admission of students to practice, to work, to participate in the development of programs, etc. (*NGOs*)
- 
- A good resource for the development of cooperation – communication with the student community and administration, a large number of EHU graduates in the NGO team (*NGO*)
  - Many organizations express interest in developing cooperation: they offer to invite students to practice, implement joint projects in the field of non-formal and formal education, experience sharing in expert areas, conduct practical workshops, etc.) (*NGO*)


- 
1. Results of quantitative survey
  2. Results of in-depth interviews
  3. **Conclusions and recommendations**

# \ EHU PROVIDES ITS GRADUATES WITH DECENT HUMAN CAPITAL AND SOFT SKILLS, BUT HAS A GAP IN HARD SKILLS – INCLUSION OF SOME HARD SKILLS COURSES INTO CURRICULUM WILL HELP CLOSE THE GAP

## SOFT SKILLS OF EHU'S STUDENTS AND GRADUATES

- Both graduates and NGOs name soft-skills as **the strongest feature of EHU graduate**
- NGOs value EHU graduates **precisely for their soft-skills**
  - The EHU diploma for **NGOs is rather a confirmation that the graduate is part of “likeminded” group**: they are more open and independent, do not hesitate to express ideas and discuss various tasks, integrate more easily into new communities, and have more life experience in general
  - In NGOs opinion graduates of "old" programs are more trusted
- From perspective of social partners and CSO, EHU is a university, whose graduates have advanced soft-skills

## FOR SOME GRADUATES, EHU COURSES ARE “TOO FOCUSED ON HUMANITIES”

- 
- Just a third of EHU graduates work in their specialty: this is a consequence of the ‘humanities focused’ profile of the university
  - EHU is not considered as university that provides enough applied skills
  - Graduates believe that EHU does not have enough training in applied skills
    - They say that they lack technical, applied skills, for example, basic courses in finance, more in-depth economics; training in quantitative methods
    - Graduates consider some courses "too *[focused on]* humanities", "too general"



**EHU NEEDS TO ADD HARD SKILLS COURSES INTO CURRICULUM**



# \ EHU MAINLY INFLUENCES BELARUS VIA ITS GRADUATES, WHO IN THEIR TURN ARE INFLUENCED BY ACADEMIC STAFF – IT IS VITAL TO SUPPORT THE ATMOSPHERE WHERE ACADEMIC STAFF CAN FOCUS ON TEACHING AND HELPING STUDENTS

## EHU'S ACADEMIC STAFF

In the perception of employers, EHU occupies a certain intermediate position between the Belarusian and European educational space

- The factors that plays in favor of the European vector the respondents often mention “the manner of teaching” and the features of teaching methods inside EHU
- In its turn, the main reason why EHU is considered to be more “Belarusian” than “European” university is utilization of “Belarusian” practices of governance inside university

## ACADEMIC STAFF AND STUDENTS

Students are satisfied with the attitude of academic staff towards students in general

- Professors and other academic staff are considered as the strength of EHU and the main value of university
- At least a half of the students has noticed changes in teaching staff and believe it to be negative
- Among the most influential professors, graduates often mention those who doesn't work there today



## MEASURES TO BE TAKEN

- Minimizing the conflicts with academic staff should be a priority
- Inclusion of student representative bodies into decision making is vital – the EHU students and graduates' satisfaction with such inclusion is poor at the moment

# TYPICAL EHU APPLICANT DIFFERS VERY MUCH FROM TYPICAL BELARUSIAN IN TERMS OF VALUES, EHU SUPPORTS SUCH VALUES AND HELPS BUILD UPON THEM – THIS SHOULD BE USED IN COMMUNICATIONS

## EHU VALUES

- EHU serves as an indirect actor in the spread of democratic, national, personal freedom, altruistic values
- The main value of EHU lies in the atmosphere of freedom, freedom of expression (in relation to Belarusian universities), and the absence of hierarchy in communication with professors
  - At the same time, it is noted that those who enter EHU are initially more courageous, open to new things, "smarter, less blinkered", do not take everything for granted

## VALUES OF EHU APPLICANTS

Many people believe that EHU applicants initially differ from the average enrollees in Belarus

- Although some EHU graduates are actively involved in ongoing processes in Belarus (they participate in various initiatives, foundations, and are engaged in activism), some of them were interested in this before applying to EHU
  - At the same time, university plays significant role in shaping these values for graduates: for many, it is the environment of people with similar views and the atmosphere of freedom that has had a significant impact (the social function of the university)

## EHU'S INFLUENCE ON BELARUS

- It's is a window for "escape" from the system with further return of students in Belarus with experience of living and working abroad (in an environment where human rights and democracy are given more attention)
- Indirect influence through graduates and professors

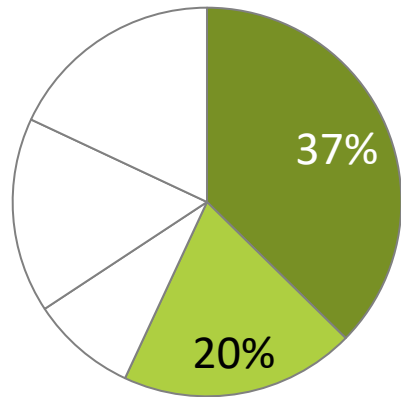


EHU should reinforce the message that EHU graduates influence social transformations in Belarus and partake in social processes in general

- One of the options for developing ties and community is to enter into alliances with organizations involved in the relevant branches of EHU (heritage, theater, Congress of researchers of Belarus, etc.)

## \ TO ATTRACT MORE APPLICANTS, EHU SHOULD POSITION ITSELF AS A BEACON FOR FREELY MINDED PEOPLE AND AS A PLACE WHERE MOST IMPORTANT SOCIAL BONDS FORM

SHARES OF BELARUSIAN SOCIETY IN TERMS OF SUPPORT FOR CURRENT PROTESTS, by Chatham House, Jan 2021



### PROTESTS STRONGHOLD

### SYMPATHISERS

The size of these groups has been growing lately and now they represent biggest part of Belarusian society and include its most active and industrious members

- One of the strong sides of EHU is that it provides its graduates with **strong human capital** and predictable **set of values**
- This set of values is very close to the values shared by dominant groups in belarusian society.
- EHU graduates and the groups also share support for the cause of social transformations
- One of the advantages EHU Diploma provides is being seen **as part of “likeminded” group**



- EHU can attract more applicants by **showing that they will be part of something big** and will have great prospects of **transforming Belarus and acquiring the job** in new country
- EHU should reinforce the message that **EHU graduates influence social transformations** in Belarus and partake in social processes in general
- EHU should focus on communicating its strong sides - **effective communication, creative-thinking, independent learning and upholding values dear to possible applicants**

# \ EHU SHOULD FOCUS ON ESTABLISHING ITS PRESENCE AS AN INSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY IN THE FIELD OF RESEARCH PROJECTS AND SOCIAL-PERFORMATIVE FUNCTIONS BY BECOMING A PLATFORM FOR ACADEMIC DISCUSSION ABOUT BELARUS

TODAY EHU IS FOCUSED ON FULFILLING ONLY ONE FUNCTION OF A CLASSICAL UNIVERSITY – EDUCATIONAL:

- ✘ respondents note that both research-project and social-performative functions are not priorities for EHU (at least, their implementation is not known either only to the general public, but also to EHU partners)
- ✘ in fact, today EHU is absent in the information space of Belarus
- ! there is a weighty demand in society both for independent interdisciplinary research on Belarusian topics, and for free academic platforms for discussing current issues.

EHU SHOULD BE REVITALIZED ALONG THE FOLLOWING TRACKS:

**STRATEGICAL LEVEL:** to plan and implement systemic activities in the publishing industry, for example:

- Scientific journal– monthly or quarterly
- "Student Yearbook" - publications based on the best graduates' theses
- "Professors Yearbook" – publications based on best research from EHU's academic community

**TACTICAL LEVEL:** to plan, widely announce and hold in 2021 an international representative conference dedicated to the events of 2020 in Belarus - with the prospect of such a conference becoming an annual one

**OPERATIONAL LEVEL:**

- to initiate the start of several interdisciplinary (political science, sociology, philosophy, history, etc.) research projects dedicated to the events of 2020 in Belarus,
- to initiate a series of international round tables / seminars on relevant topics based on the events of 2020 in Belarus with the involvement of researchers from Belarus, Ukraine, Poland, Lithuania, Russia, etc. - with the possibility of this cycle of round tables / seminars in the format of monthly or quarterly

# THIS PRESENCE CAN BE CEMENTED BY WORKING MORE WITH SOCIAL PARTNERS AND INVITING THEM TO PARTICIPATE, SOME INTERNAL OPTIMISATION OF PROCESSES IS DUE

## EHU DOESN'T HAVE A SYSTEMATIC APPROACH IN COOPERATION BETWEEN EHU AND NGOs:

- ✘ All activities that go beyond the exchange of news are usually interpreted not as a result of the systemic work of EHU, but rather as **a product of the “grassroots” initiative of either professors or the partners-employers themselves.**

## FACTORS HINDERING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF CLOSER AND LONGER-TERM RELATIONS BETWEEN EHU AND PARTNERS IN BELARUS

All these factors can be summarized in two blocks:

- **Peculiarities of the legal field of Belarus**
- **Specificity of transformations taking place at EHU**

the second one specifies in two ways:

- **The internal organizational processes and the conflicts generated by it**, which hinder the work of the organization as a whole and form a not very positive “external” image of EHU
- **The peculiarities of the experience of EHU interaction with partner organizations.** In this context, the respondents mention the rupture of professional interaction between EHU and such organizations and initiatives as BISS, SYMPA and the Kalinousky program

## METHODS OF DEVELOPING COOPERATION:

Many organizations express interest in developing cooperation, EHU only needs to reach out to them in order start developing cooperation:

- A good resource for the development of cooperation – communication of NGOs with the student community and administration
- The presence of a large number of EHU graduates in the NGO team can help establish the relations
- Changes and simplification in internal organizational processes

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