

Social exclusion and social well-being: Ukraine in comparison with Europe

- The main question is:
- Economic situation
 - Social well-being
 - Social values
- Ukraine and Europe: differences or gap?

The “society of risk”, “consumer society”, and “epoch of modernization” as well as “information society” are the most spread definitions of our time. According to many researchers, the main features of modern society are increasing challenges, developing individualization, and prevailing complicated processes of identification (Z.Bauman, U.Beck, A.Etzioni, J.Young etc). The most important is that our society has changed from an inclusive with stability and homogeneity to an exclusive society with many changes and divisions. The socio-economic situation in Ukraine during the few years has been very interesting to explore. It could be an illustration of either exhaustion of the population’s adaptive abilities or the growth of social claims caused by change of authority and greater hopes for the post-revolution orange future. The subject of this presentation is the social exclusion among Ukrainian people. A measure of social exclusion and insecurity is constructed from few dimensions including the following: economic, political, societal, temporal, personal dimension, living space, mobility, social networks. I have attempted to analyze the situation of social exclusion in Ukraine and outlined the value orientations that have been manifested in a context of social exclusion and defined the level of social well-being of Ukrainian people. It is impossible to understand contemporary situation in any country without comparative analysis, so situation in Ukraine is compared with situation in European countries. Ukraine is trying to become a member of European Union. Therefore, it will be interesting to examine the differences or gaps that exist between Ukraine and the EU countries. To explore these issues, I have relied on the data from the European Social Survey (second round).

In this paper I will analyze the following problem fields:

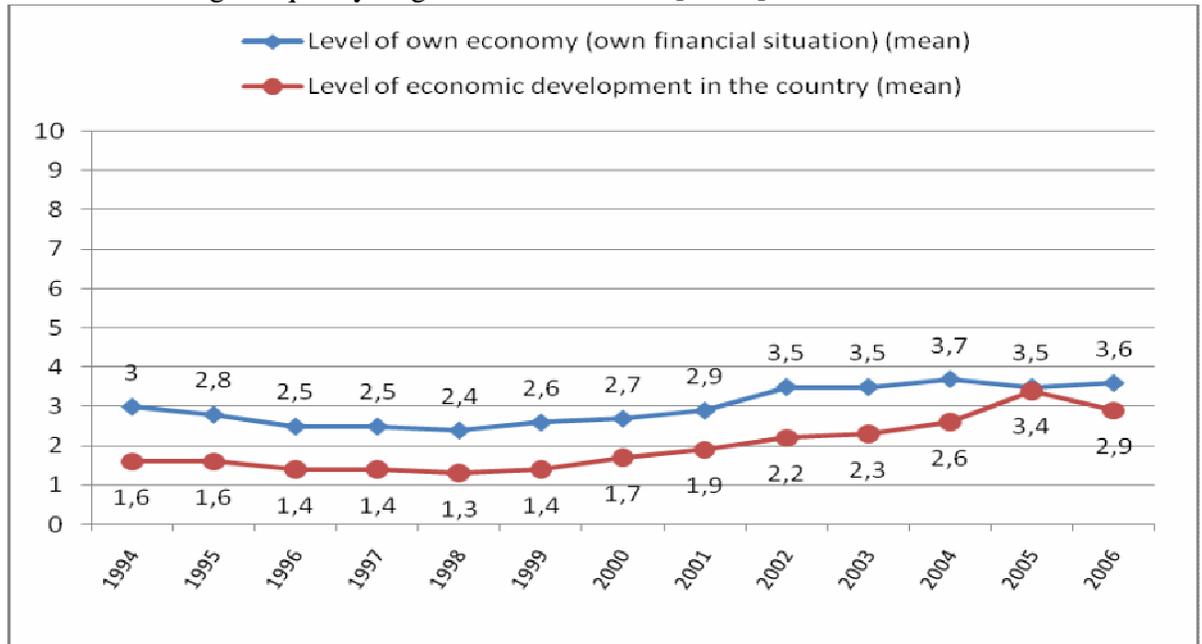
- What is has the economic situation in Ukraine been like since 1991?
- What are potentially exclusionary factors in modern Ukraine?
- What is the social well-being of Ukrainians in light of the Ukrainian socio-economic situation?
- What are the most dangerous factors of being “exclusive” in Ukrainian society nowadays?
- What kind of values are dominating in Ukrainian society in comparison with European countries?

So as result it is important have understanding of next questions: how much are Ukrainians different from European countries (from economic, social situation), is Ukraine ready join EU now?

Social sciences use different concepts to demonstrate the negative tendencies in the development that prevent societies from moving forward. In the early 1990s, Natalia Panina and Yevgeniy Golovakha termed this phenomenon as the “social insanity”. Similar conditions are also described as “social pathologies”, “anomie”, “deviation” and so forth.

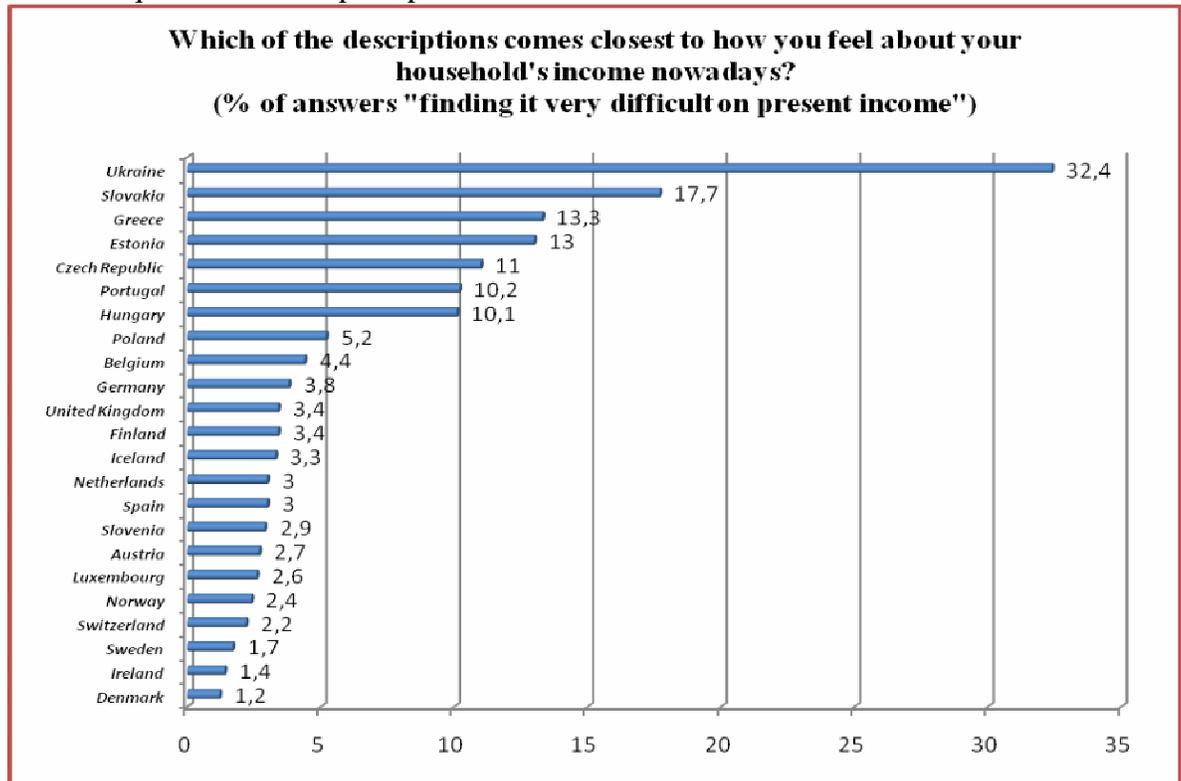
But what is economic situation in condition of social insanity in Ukraine? As shown in Graph 1 (for construction this graph I used data from annual Sociological monitoring of Institute of Sociology, National Academy of Science of Ukraine that we have in our university), the Ukrainians estimate the level of economic development of the country almost as low as their own economic situation. The Ukrainians perception of own financial position has only slightly varied during the 12 years period spanning 1994 to 1996 as depicted in Graph 1. There has been however a minor decline in this perception from 1994 to 2001.

Also as for orientations of the Ukrainians, the most characteristic, one is that they look with “suspicion” as business. Two third of people believe that “today, business is interested only in profits and not in raising the quality of goods and services” [2:139].



Graph 1. Level of own financial situation in comparison with level of economic development in the Ukraine.

Ukrainians support government control over income distribution by a 2 to 1 ratio. About one third of Ukrainians report financial hardship when considering their own family income. What would the consequences of such preception be?



Graph 2. Estimation of own household's income (Ukrainians in comparison with Europeans)

It is very clear that an important integrative “criminogenic” factor is the fundamental contradiction between the relatively even distribution of human demands and the inequality in the existing opportunities to satisfy these demands. It depend first of all on a person’s position in the social structure; the more significant this rupture, the lower the responsiveness of society (its capacity to meet people’s demands, as understood by A. Etzioni), the higher of deviance level, including crime.

Many researchers say that social and economic inequalities are some of the biggest criminogenic factors. People have real opportunities to satisfy their needs depending on their belongings to one or other social class, stratum, or group (i.e. depending on their social and economic status). Inequality of opportunity generates social conflict, dissatisfaction, envy, and, various forms of deviation. The processes of inclusion/exclusion are acquiring more and more criminogenic and deviantogenic significance both for the contemporary world and for the future. It is clear that the "excluded people" are becoming a mass reserve and a social basis of social deviation (Gilinskiy, 1998).

Here some connections can be:

- Social-economic inequality is a main cause of poverty.
- Poverty is the first main cause for social exclusion.
- Personal disorder is the second main cause for exclusion.
- The waste of social connection (as result poverty or personal disorder) is the third cause for exclusion.

It is a pity, but social distinctions, social-economic inequality were, are and will be. It is the objective social natural phenomenon, conformity to natural laws. Moreover the social-economic inequality is an impetus for social progress. However, there is one persisting problem with the social exclusion, namely: how to diminish negative consequences of such exclusion? The developed, civilized countries created the system of social guarantees and help for the excluded citizens. Many NGO work with social excluded and include them in social life. In contrast, the situation in the developing countries is much more complicated. For assistance stigmatizes the excluded and gives birth to social dependency [6:101].

Many times in this paper term “exclusion” was used. But what is social exclusion? And what kind situation Ukraine has with exclusion?

In order to consider the social exclusion in Ukraine, I need define the following term.

In this paper social exclusion is define as:

"The unique interplay of a number of factors, whose consequence is the denial of access, to an individual or group, to the opportunity to participate in the social and political life of the community, resulting not only in diminished material and non-material quality of life, but also in tempered life chances, choices and reduced citizenship." [3:208]

Exclusion is a more complex concept than poverty, having not only economic but also multiple non-economic dimensions and characteristics. It is a heterogenic concept with interrelated causes and dimensions, which can be experienced independently, or concurrently with others and at different times, to different extents, by different individuals and groups. Thus, it is possible to be excluded without experiencing poverty; and it is possible to experience poverty, yet being included.

For understand what potential exclusionary factors in modern Ukraine are today, first look on different dimensions of this process.

The dimensions of exclusion that have been identified by different researches are shown in the table, below. In this table I printed in italics most important and actual dimensions in exclusion nowadays in Ukrainian society.

<i>Economic</i>	<i>Income poverty, unemployment, lack of access to “safety net” credit facilities, lack of access to technology</i>
Living space	Neighborhoods, including safety, crime, poor local environment, disunity of community, geographical isolation (accessibility), local services, including transport, education
<i>Organized political (ability to influence decision making at an organized level)</i>	<i>Disenfranchisement (low turnout/registration), low participation in groups and organizations, denial of citizenship rights and freedoms, lack of representation, inability to participate in the exercise of authority</i>
Mobility	Poor or unavailable transport, reduced accessibility to social networks, facilities, goods and services
Personal	Impairment, ethnicity, culture, gender, class; skill levels/educational achievement; religion, health
Personal political (ability to make decisions over own life)	Powerlessness; restricted choices
Social networks	Breakdown of formal and informal networks, loneliness, isolation, lack of information, social attitudes
<i>Societal</i>	<i>Crime, family dynamics, poor education, inequality, lack of social rights</i>
<i>Temporal</i>	<i>Temporal poverty</i>

Table 1. *Dimension of exclusion [based on 3:211]*

Also I use M. Wolf’s classification of social exclusive situations that can show us factors of this phenomenon (Wolf, 1994): exclusive from means of existence; exclusive from social service and nets of security; exclusive from culture of consumption; exclusive from political choice; exclusive from mass social organizations and solidarity; exclusive from possibility to understand contemporary reality (it is a result of very swift changes in contemporary “information society”). So what are most dangerous factors to be “excluded” in Ukrainian society nowadays?

During the period of Post-Soviet transformation, the fundamental social and economic changes in Ukraine were dramatic. This period spanned from 1991 through independence, to nowadays. During this period of time, the unemployment rate rose more than in 10 times. The part of urban population engaged in subsistence agriculture for production of foodstuff for their families has reached almost two thirds.

Ukrainian researchers Valeriy Khmelko and Svitlana Oksamytnaya stated that analysis of the data, during the period under review, shows that household income stratification grew practically from year to year up until 1998, when it reached its peak. Thus, in December 1991, 20% of families with the lowest income shared 5.5% of total income of all Ukrainian families, while the highest 20% had 44.2% of total income. The top 5% had 17.1% of total family income. According to the data for September and October of 1998, the poorest 20% shared only 2.3 and 1.8% of total family income respectively; while the richest 20% by income garnered around 52% of the income. Furthermore the income of the top quintile was greater than that of the lowest one by a ratio of 22:1 in September, and 29:1 in October 1998 [5]. These parameters of this stratification in 1998 were even greater than in the United States during the Great Depression in 1930. However, since the second half of 1999 the situation has started to change. During this last period the household income stratification in Ukraine has decreased distinctly.

Between the end of 1991 and the end of 2003 the only people that have not seen essential changes are adults without obligatory school education and who are less than 40 years old- at some fluctuations this indicator remained at a level about 8%. During this same period of time, the

proportion of the persons suffering from long-term unemployment has increased more than 5 times - from 1.2 % up to 6.1 %; while the proportion of the individuals who have not received any help from their associates when they needed it has increased almost three times - from 5.3 up to 14.5%. Moreover, the proportion of households whose level of income is less than half of the median income has increased with appreciable fluctuations - from 1991 to 1999 when it has reached almost 27%, and then it has gradually decreased by the end of 2003 to 19.4 % - practically up to the level of 1992 (data from [5]).

For years of the Post-Soviet transformation in Ukraine from among the considered symptoms of social exclusion the shortage of money for meal has increased to a great extent. The proportion individuals belonging to households, which do not have enough means to purchase their daily food need was almost 53 % in 1996. This figure was slightly down between 1997 and 2000, accounting for 41 and 49%, respectively [5]. However, during the last three years, this fraction has declined to 32%, thereby accounting for one third of population of Ukraine.

Analyzing changes of scopes of social exclusion symptoms in Ukraine during the period under review (from 1991) I considered five indicators at an individual level:

- a long unemployment (during one year or more);
- a lack of the compulsory school education at adults from 18 to 40 years of age;
- an absence of any help from individual's associates when individual was in need of some help;
- belonging to a household with less than half of the median income in the corresponding region;
- belonging to a household, which lacks the means to purchase the daily food needed.

Problem is that this situation is reproduced during long time.

What is social well-being of Ukrainians within the framework of Ukrainian socio-economic situation (in comparison with other European countries)?

First of all I need to say that social well-being is the satisfaction people experience when they see themselves as part of a compassionate community they have helped create - a community in which all have an opportunity to live a satisfying life, and public and private institutions share with the entire citizenry the responsibility to secure for everyone an education, living wages, public safety, equal justice under the law, environmental protection, and unfettered religious and political participation (Y.Golovaha, N.Panina).

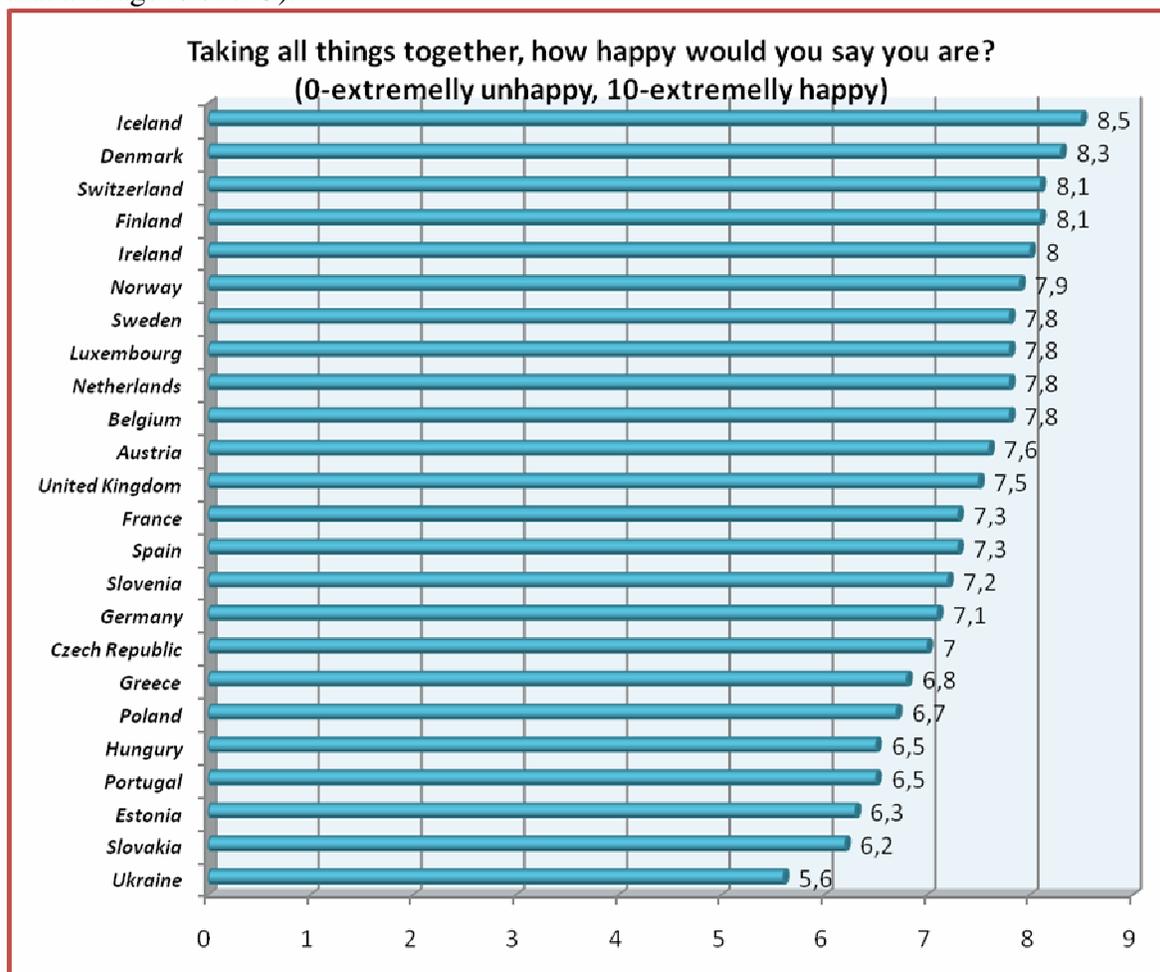
Constitutions of social well-being are next:

- Level of safety (personal security) from main dangers: crime, poverty, bureaucrats, ecological threats etc.
- Level independence of people in solving own life problems
- Level of satisfaction with own life in whole
- Level of optimism estimation (prognoses) own present and future life

One of the most important integral indicators that connect with well-being and showing the state of the individual in society is their satisfaction with life. The same indicator is used to measure the ability of the country to provide its citizens with a decent life.

When comparing life satisfaction index in Ukraine and European countries, I can see that on a scale from 0 to 10, Ukrainians estimated their satisfaction with life at 4.4, the lowest in Europe (as I said before I analyzed data set from European Social Survey (second wave). Moreover, only in Ukraine was this score in the lower half of the scale (below 5), meaning that in Ukraine a negative estimation prevails. Those, most happy about their life are Danes (8.46). Those closest of Ukrainians are citizens of Slovakia and Hungary (5.7). The same distribution could be seen in answers to the question "Taking all things together, how happy would you say you are?" (Picture below) Ukrainians are the unhappiest in Europe (5.6), followed by the neighbors from Slovakia (6.2), Danes

and Icelanders are the happiest (8.3 and 8.5). I can console ourselves with the fact that the proportion of happy people in Ukraine somewhat larger than proportion of unhappy ones (because that average is over 5).



Graph 3. *Level of happiness (Ukrainians in comparison with Europeans)*

Optimism may also be warranted in the area of personal security, where Ukraine is not the worst in Europe. Over the last 5 years, victims or relatives of victims of robbery and physical violence made up 18% of Ukrainian citizens, while in Sweden this has been 27%, whereas in Denmark, France, and Poland this fraction has been 26%, 27%, and 21% respectively. The safest countries in the EU are Austria and Germany, where only 10% were victims or relatives of victims of robbery and physical violence in the last five years. But a different picture was displayed by answers to the question “How safe do you feel while walking at dusk in the district where you live?” Those who felt totally safe constituted 46% of Danish, 36% of Swedish and only 15% of Ukrainians. This might mean that in the Europe robbery and violence tend to occur outside residential districts, in contrast to Ukraine [2:140].

In all this situation of economic crisis and social anomy is very important note differences that took place in Ukrainian lifestyle from Soviet times [V.Bakirov, 1:198]. Soviet Ukrainian lifestyle can be characterized by:

- a feeling of well-being, absence of fear for the future;
- care and support expectation (not always justified) for government, enterprise management, trade union etc.;
- low level of claims and, consequently, low level of labor service;

- no real political activity.

Post-Soviet Ukrainian lifestyle can be characterized by:

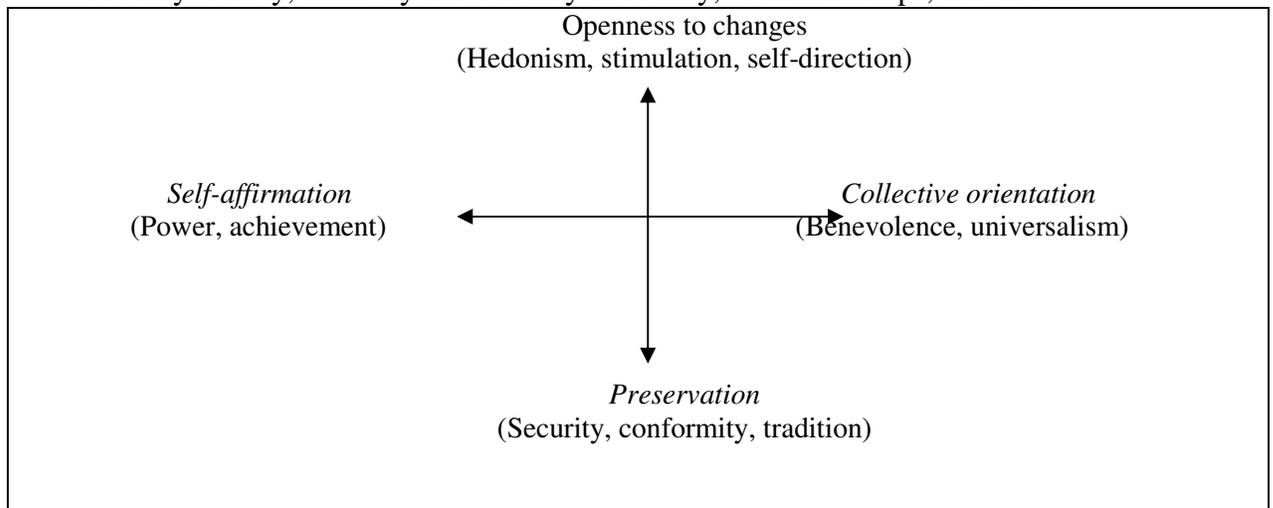
- an anticipating the future with pessimistic predictions and evaluating the past with nostalgic memories; people eager for social stability;
- living in the atmosphere of utter distrust to other people and political and social institutions
- frustrating by a slump in the standard of living; low level of satisfying with own life;
- afraid of ruling and law-enforcement authorities
- political life, political behavior gradually became part of living

What kinds of values are prevailing in Ukrainian society nowadays?

I need indicate that the information about methodology of measuring values below was provided by Professor Shalom Schwarz, who designed the ESS Human Values Questions.

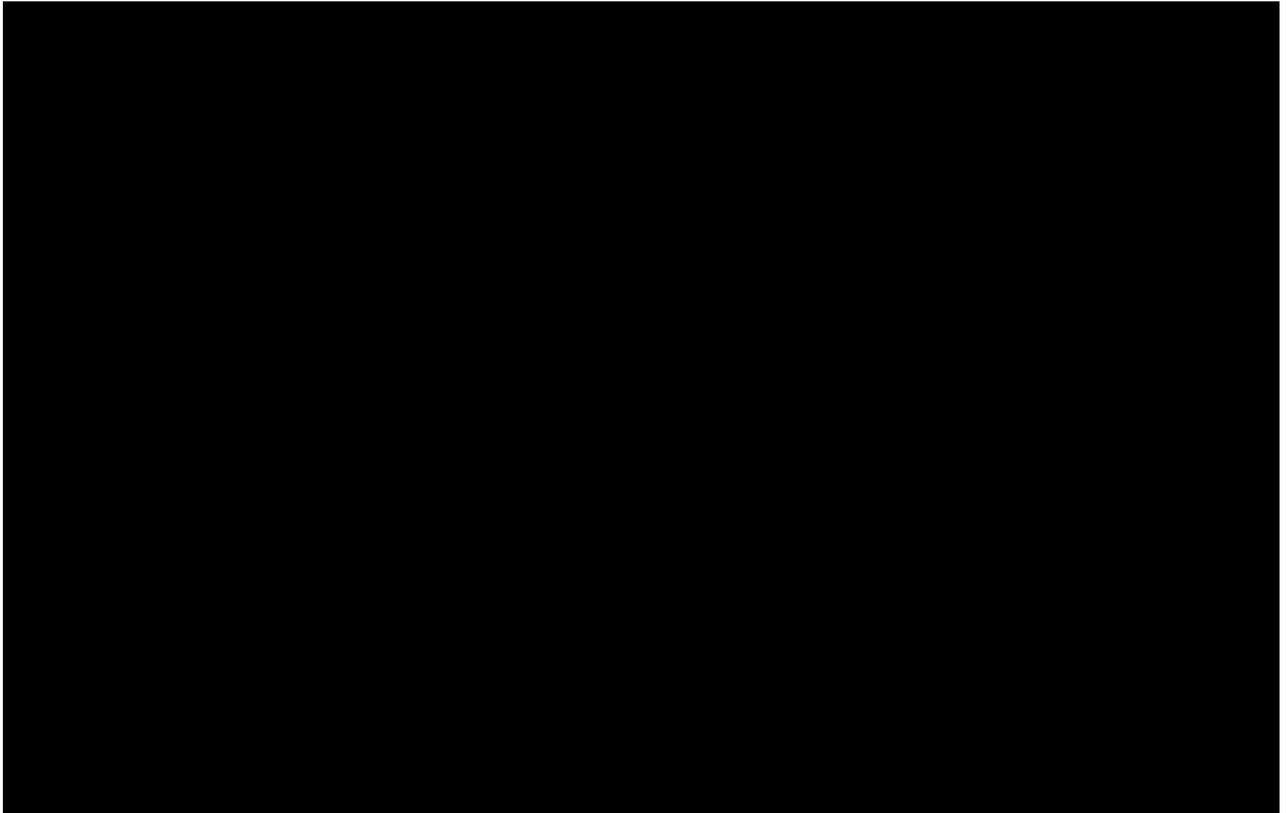
For understanding this system of values it is important note the definitions of the latent motivational types of values in terms of their goals (methodology of S. Schwarz)¹:

- Power: Social status and prestige, control or dominance over people and resources.
- Achievement: Personal success through demonstrating competence according to social standards.
- Hedonism: Pleasure and sensuous gratification for oneself.
- Stimulation: Excitement, novelty, and challenge in life.
- Self-direction: Independent thought and action choosing, creating, exploring.
- Universalism: Understanding, appreciation, tolerance and protection for the welfare of all people and for nature.
- Benevolence: Preservation and enhancement of the welfare of people with whom one is in frequent personal contact.
- Tradition: Respect, commitment and acceptance of the customs and ideas that traditional culture or religion provide the self.
- Conformity: Restraint of actions, inclinations, and impulses likely to upset or harm others and violate social expectations or norms.
- Security: Safety, harmony and stability of society, of relationships, and of self.



¹ More about methodology of S. Schwarz on <http://ess.nsd.uib.no>

Analyzing ESS data showed next situation with value preferences Ukrainians in comparison with Europeans (this diagram is active - by clicking is easy see data in lists for every EU country separately and compare it with Ukraine)



Graph 4. *Value preferences (Ukrainians in comparison with Europeans)*

The Ukrainians can be characterized by the extremely high manifestation of the values entering into a category of Preservation (Security, Conformity, Tradition and Power) and, on the contrary, the extremely low expressiveness of the values entering into the opposite category of the Openness to changes (Self-direction, Hedonism and Stimulation).

In addition, the value of Benevolence is extremely low and the value of Power (from the category «Self-affirmation», where wealth, respect and authority over people are in focus, but not active self-realization and self-feedback) is extremely high. It is necessary to note that for the last two years there were no increases of the level of state of social self-feeling of the population, despite the appreciable growth of social optimism and trust of authority in 2005.

Also data shows that the family is still the main and in many cases the only resource for the survival of those who need social support in Ukraine. That is why Ukrainians, more than citizens of other European countries agree to the idea that their families must be the main priority in men's and women's life (about 58% who fully agree, mostly agree made up 32%). As to this index, the closest to Ukraine are Greece, Czech Republic and Poland (48-49%) [2:140].

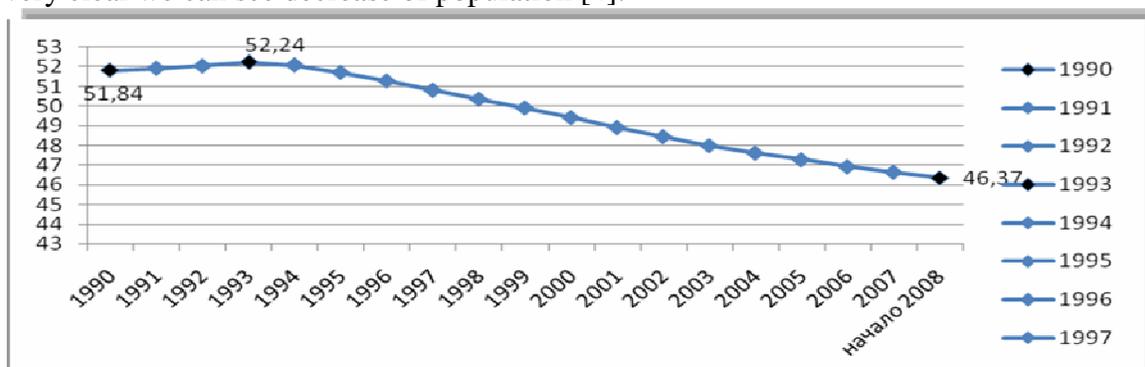
Excessive involvement in families and housework makes it impossible for Ukraine to eliminate traditional stereotypes related to the position of women in family and society. In Ukraine more than in other countries people agree with the following statements: "Women must be ready to decrease their job load in favor of their families", "If there is a lack of working places, then man should have more rights to a job than women". The Ukrainian way to Euro-integration must go along with a decisive overcoming of traditional stereotypes like these.

The stagnation after 2005 could be an illustration of either exhaustion of the population's adaptive opportunities or of the growth of social claims caused by change of authority and greater hopes for the post revolutionary future. The data have shown, that today in society of risks, Ukrainian people could be characterized by high prudence, need for protection from the strong state, conservatism, and fear of social condemnation. As a consequence, there is a rather weak need for innovation, creativity, freedom, and independence. Furthermore, people are less willing to care about each other as they care just about their own families.

Even in Ukraine I can read from researchers that “majority of Ukrainians do not need democratic values”², that the democratic values do not have any practical meaning for the majority of Ukrainian citizens. One example of this statement are the results of “Consciousness of Ukrainian Choice” research, carried out by Gorshenin’s Institute within the framework of “Mental Bases of Choice” annual program, forwarded to UNIAN. Commenting the received results, Gorshenin’s Institute expert Volodymyr Zastava noted that “rudiments “of the Soviet conscious” are rather strong in the Ukrainian society yet, because the democratic values were not needed in the Soviet Union. So the attitude of Ukrainians toward private property indicates this - according to opinion of the majority, private property is not something private and inviolable. At the same time, the attitude to private property as inviolable value and to entrepreneurs as a “mover of economics” in the large meaning of this word is a pivot, on which the whole society is based on, while the democracy is some kind of instruments, which help to protect property, freedom, and personal life choice, noted V. Zastava.

So it is necessary to note in the end that the well-being of families and the future of children remain the principal consolidating values as for the common values of everyday life for all ages. The value of individualism is accepted more reluctantly, it succeeds in competition with the collectivist ideology only among the intellectual elite, the young people, and the inhabitants of big cities but not among other social groups. But individualistic values are widespread in EU countries. For Ukrainians, the issue of the intrinsic value of a personality remains problematic. It's not a coincidence that the heroes of our society are the people who created powerful military-administrative machines: Bogdan Khmelnytskyj in the East and Stepan Bandera in the West (as I saw from popular TV show “Great Ukrainians” that took place this year in Ukraine). In developed democratic societies, other types of heroes are esteemed: Mahatma Ghandi, Mother Theresa, Albert Schweitzer, to whom the fundamental values are life and dignity of every person irrespective of his or her position in social hierarchy.

For show result of existence Ukrainian people I analyzed official statistic and in graph 5 it is very clear we can see decrease of population [4].



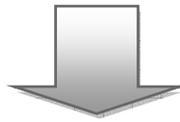
Graph 5. Dynamic of population in Ukraine (from 1990 till start of 2008) (in millions people)

²Majority of Ukrainians do not need democratic values–poll / <http://www.unian.net>

Conclusion

When I compared Ukraine and European countries, so it is clear that:

- The surveys show that the overwhelming majority of people live under extremely poor economic conditions and experience material difficulties.
- The majority of the Ukrainians does not cherish any hopes as for some improvement in their family financial position within next five year.
- The majority of respondents expresses profound dissatisfaction with their living and everyday conditions.
- After 2005 people again feel pessimism and disappointment. Less hopes for have stability in future.
- Ukrainians could be characterized by high prudence, need for protection from the strong state, conservatism, and fear of social condemnation. As a consequence, there is a rather weak need for innovation, creativity, freedom and independence.



...Ukraine is not ready join EU **yet**, because these are not differences between Ukraine and EU, this is gap...

If Ukraine choose to enter EU and follow the way of Western societies, it is necessary to wait for changing (or its better say “transformation”) the system of our social values, because Ukrainians need get over gap in value system that is result of economic situation and present social well-being.

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