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VIKTOR YANUKOVYCH: A SUMMARY OF THE FIRST YEAR IN OFFICE -SURVEY

On 14-28 February 2011, Gorshenin Institute conducted an all-Ukrainian telephone survey on the topic «Viktor Yanukovich: the first year in office» As many as 2,000 randomly sampled adults, aged 18 years and older, living in Ukraine's regional centers, cities, towns and villages, including Kiev and Sevastopol, were interviewed. Gender, age, and the type of a respondent's residence were used as quotas. The maximum margin of sampling error is +/-2.2 percentage points.

Based on the results of **the all-Ukrainian survey**, the Gorshenin Institute experts drew the following conclusions:

Ukrainians believe that the nation's economic situation is critical.

1. The majority of the Ukrainian population (78.1%) thinks that the nation's economic conditions have worsened over the past year. As many as 59.3% of the respondents believe that the economy in Ukraine has «definitely become worse» and 18.8% find that it is «somewhat worse.» According to 11.8% of the survey participants, the economic situation has improved: 8.5% of them believe that the Ukrainian economy has become «somewhat better» and 3.3% of the respondents evaluate its condition as «definitely better.» One in ten Ukrainians (10.1%) had no opinion on the issue.

2. Nearly half of the Ukrainian citizens (50.8%) disapprove of the way Viktor Yanukovich has been handling his job as president during his first year in office. As many as 32.7% of the respondents «strongly disapprove» of his performance and 18.1% of them «somewhat disapprove» of it. Overall, approximately a third of the Ukrainian population (35.5%) has a favorable opinion of the president's performance over the past year. As many as 22.6% of the survey participants «somewhat approve» of the way Yanukovich has been handling the job as president and 12.9% of those interviewed «strongly approve» of it. Nearly 13.7% of the respondents did not choose an answer to this question.

3. Almost half of the Ukrainian population (46.1%) says that its attitude toward Viktor Yanukovich has become worse during his first year in office. As many as 28.8% of those polled believe that it has «definitely changed for worse» and 17.3% admit that it has changed «somewhat for worse». Over a quarter of the respondents claim that their attitude toward Viktor Yanukovich has improved over the past year: 16.1% of them say that their opinion of him has changed «somewhat for better» and 10.0% think it has «definitely changed for better.» At the same time, over a quarter of Ukrainians (27.8%) had a difficulty answering this question.

4. The majority of Ukrainians (59.3%) maintains a negative outlook on the performance of the Ukrainian government headed by Mykola Azarov. As many as 42.9% of the respondents «strongly disapprove» of how the government has been performing and 16.4% of them «somewhat disapprove» of it. Over a quarter of the Ukrainian population (26.9%) has a favorable opinion of the cabinet performance. Among them, 16.1% «somewhat approve» of it and 10.8% of the participants «strongly approve» of it. As many as 13.8% of the respondents did not specify their answer to this question.

The multivector foreign policy is supported by the majority of the Ukrainian citizens.

5. Half of the Ukrainian population (50.6%) has a positive attitude toward the conduct of foreign policy by President Viktor Yanukovich. As many as 25.5% of the respondents «strongly approve» of how the president has been handling foreign policy and approximately the same number of the survey participants (25.1%) «somewhat approve» of it. A third (30.5%) of those interviewed hold a negative opinion about Yanukovich's conduct of foreign policy: 19.2% of them «strongly disapprove» of it and 11.3% «somewhat disapprove» of it. Nearly 18.9% of the respondents remained undecided.

6. The majority of Ukrainians (64.0%) believes that the Ukrainian-Russian relations have improved over the past year. According to 34.1% of the respondents, the relations between the two states have «somewhat improved,» while 29.9% of those interviewed think that they have «definitely improved.» As many as 16.1% of the survey participants think that the relations between Ukraine and Russia have become worse. For 11.6% of the respondents, they have «somewhat deteriorated» and for 4.5%, they have «definitely deteriorated.» Every fifth person surveyed (19,9%) could not provide an answer to this question.

7. Nearly a third of the Ukrainian population (32.7%) believes that the relations between Ukraine and the European Union have improved over the past year. For 23.0% of the respondents, the relations have «somewhat improved» and 9.7% of them said that they have «definitely improved.» According to over a quarter of the survey participants (28.1%), the Ukrainian-EU relations have become worse over the past year. As many as 18.0% of them find that the relations have «somewhat deteriorated» and 10.1% claim that they have «definitely deteriorated.» At the same time, 39.2% of the respondents had a difficulty answering this question.

Yuliya Tymoshenko remains the key opposition figure.

8. According to 41.0% of the respondents, Yuliya Tymoshenko represents the opposition forces in Ukraine. She leads in the poll, leaving far behind Arseniy Yatsenyuk (16.0%), Anatoliy Hrytsenko (6.2%) and Oleh Tyahnybok (4.3%). Less than 3% of the survey participants think that Serhiy Tyhypko (2.7%), Mykola Katerynychuk (2.7%), Yuriy Lutsenko (2.0%), Viktor Yushchenko (1.4%), Volodymyr Lytvyn (1.0%) or Valentyn Nalyvaychenko (0.5%) are opposition members. Nearly 0.7% of the respondents believe that the opposition is represented by «other» politician, while 14.4% of the population claims that opposition does not exist in Ukraine. Over a quarter (26.6%) of those interviewed could not name representatives of the Ukrainian opposition.

9. Over a third of Ukrainians (39.6%) believe that the opposition arrests and questioning are instances of political repression. As many as 30.9% of the respondents view arrests and questioning as methods of combating corruption, while 9.3% of those polled think that these actions mean something else. A fifth of the survey participants (20.2%) had no opinion on the issue.

Viktor Yanukovych's presidential approval rating is falling.

10. If a presidential election were held next Sunday, a quarter of the Ukrainian population (25.8%) would vote for Viktor Yanukovych. Yulia Tymoshenko would garner 14.8% of the vote and Arseniy Yatsenyuk would become third with 12.2% of the respondents favoring him. Serhiy Tyhypko would gain 7.8% of the vote, while the rest of the candidates (Petro Symonenko, Anatoliy Hrytsenko, Viktor Yushchenko and Volodymyr Lytvyn) would not even cross a 3-percent barrier. As many as 7.6% of the respondents would vote against all the candidates and 5.6% of them would not vote at all. Nearly 16.7% of the Ukrainian population remains undecided.

The table below provides comparative approval ratings in February 2011 and May 2010:

	May 2010	February 2011
Viktor Yanukovych	46.9%	25.8%
Yuliya Tymoshenko	9.7%	14.8%
Arseniy Yatsenyuk	5.2%	12.2%
Serhiy Tyhypko	14.1%	7.8%
Petro Symonenko	1.2%	2.9%
Oleh Tyahnybok	2.3%	2.4%
Anatoliy Hrytsenko	1.8%	2.1%
Viktor Yushchenko	0.3%	0.6%
Volodymyr Lytvyn	0.7%	0.5%
Other candidate	1.2%	1.1%
Against all the candidates	4.4%	7.6%
Would not vote	5.4%	5.6%
No answer	6.8%	16.7%

12. If a parliamentary election were held next Sunday, almost a quarter of Ukrainians (24.3%) would give their vote to the Party of Regions (M. Azarov). As many as 14.2% of the respondents would support the Fatherland party (Y. Tymoshenko) and 9.7% would vote for the Front for Change party (A. Yatsenyuk). Nearly 5.7% of the voters would choose the Communist Party of Ukraine (P. Symonenko), 4.7% would cast their ballots for the Strong Ukraine party (S. Tyhypko) and the All-Ukrainian Freedom Union would garner 3.6% of the vote. The Our Ukraine party (V. Yushchenko) would receive 1.3% of the vote, the Civil Position party (A. Hrytsenko) would claim 0.6% and the People's Party (V. Lytvyn) 0.4% of the vote. Other party would be favored by 1.5% of the respondents, 9.8% of them would vote against all the candidates and 6.4% of those surveyed would not vote at all. Nearly 17.8% of the population remains undecided on the issue.

A large number of Ukrainians still does not have enough money for basic necessities.

12. When asked about their financial situation, nearly a third of Ukrainians (32.0%) believe that they hardly make ends meet and sometimes do not have enough money for food. Almost the same number of the respondents (31.7%) said that they had enough money for food but not enough for buying clothes and shoes. Over a quarter of the population (26.4%) responded that they had enough money for living but not for large purchases such as furniture or a refrigerator. Only 6.0% of the survey participants said that they experienced no financial difficulties, except when making especially large purchases (e.g., property or a car), while 1.7% of those polled have enough money for everything. Nearly 2.2% of the respondents declined to answer this question.

APPENDIX

- 1. Would you say that the state of the nation's economy got better or worse over the past year?**
 2. Definitely better – 3.3%
 3. Somewhat better – 8.5%
 4. Somewhat worse – 18.8%
 5. Definitely worse – 59.3%
 6. No opinion – 10.1%

- 2. Do you approve or disapprove of the way Viktor Yanukovich has been handling his job as president during his first year in office?**
 1. Strongly approve – 12.9%
 2. Somewhat approve – 22.6%
 3. Somewhat disapprove – 18.1%
 4. Strongly disapprove – 32.7%
 5. No opinion – 13.7%

- 3. How has your attitude toward Viktor Yanukovich changed during his first year in office?**
 1. Definitely for better – 10.0%
 2. Somewhat for better – 16.1%
 3. Somewhat for worse – 17.3%
 4. Definitely for worse – 28.8%
 5. No opinion – 27.8%

- 4. Thinking about the Ukrainian government headed by Mykola Azarov, do you approve or disapprove of its performance over the past year?**
 1. Strongly approve – 10.8%
 2. Somewhat approve – 16.1%
 3. Somewhat disapprove – 16.4%
 4. Strongly disapprove – 42.9%
 5. No opinion – 13.8%

- 5. Do you approve or disapprove of the way President Viktor Yanukovich has been handling foreign relations?**
 1. Strongly approve – 25.5%
 2. Somewhat approve – 25.1%
 3. Somewhat disapprove – 11.3%
 4. Strongly disapprove – 19.2%
 5. No opinion – 18.9%

- 6. How have the relations between Ukraine and Russia changed over the past year?**
 1. Definitely improved – 29.9%
 2. Somewhat improved – 34.1%
 3. Somewhat deteriorated – 11.6%
 4. Definitely deteriorated – 4.5%
 5. No opinion – 19.9%

- 7. How have the relations between Ukraine and the European Union changed over the past year?**

1. Definitely improved – 9.7%
2. Somewhat improved – 23.0%
3. Somewhat deteriorated – 18.0%
4. Definitely deteriorated – 10.1%
5. No opinion – 39.2%

8. In your opinion, who represents opposition forces in Ukraine at present?

(several options can be chosen)

1. Yuliya Tymoshenko – 41.0%
2. Arseniy Yatsenyuk – 16.0%
3. Anatoliy Hrytsenko – 6.2%
4. Oleh Tyahnybok – 4.3%
5. Serhiy Tyhypko – 2.7%
6. Mykola Katerynychuk – 2.7%
7. Yuriy Lutsenko – 2.0%
8. Viktor Yushchenko – 1.4%
9. Volodymyr Lytvyn – 1.0%
10. Valentyn Nalyvaychenko – 0.5%
11. Other candidate – 0.7%
12. No opposition exists in Ukraine – 14.4%
13. No opinion – 26.6%

9. In your opinion, what do the arrests and questioning of the Ukrainian opposition signify?

1. Political repression – 39.6%
2. Fight against corruption – 30.9%
3. Other – 9.3%
4. No opinion – 20.2%

10. If a presidential election were held next Sunday, who would you vote for?

1. Viktor Yanukovych – 25.8%
2. Yuliya Tymoshenko – 14.8%
3. Arseniy Yatsenyuk – 12.2%
4. Serhiy Tyhypko – 7.8%
5. Petro Symonenko – 2.9%
6. Oleh Tyahnybok – 2.4%
7. Anatoliy Hrytsenko – 2.1%
8. Viktor Yushchenko – 0.6%
9. Volodymyr Lytvyn – 0.5%
10. Other candidate – 1.1%
11. Vote against all – 7.6%
12. Would not vote – 5.6%
13. No opinion – 16.6%

11. If a parliamentary election were held next Sunday, what party would you vote for?

1. The Party of Regions (M. Azarov) – 24.3%
2. The Fatherland party (Y. Tymoshenko) – 14.2%
3. The Front for Change party (A. Yatsenyuk) – 9.7%
4. The Communist Party of Ukraine (P. Symonenko) – 5.7%
5. The Strong Ukraine party (S. Tyhypko) – 4.7%
6. The All-Ukrainian Freedom Union (O. Tyahnubok) – 3.6%
7. The Our Ukraine party (V. Yushchenko) – 1.3%
8. The Civil Position party (A. Hrytsenko) – 0.6%
9. The People's Party (V. Lytvyn) – 0.4%
10. Other party – 1.5%
11. Would vote against all – 9.8%
12. Would not vote – 6.4%
13. No opinion – 17.8%

12. How would you describe the financial situation of your family?

1. Barely making ends meet, sometimes not having enough money for food – 32.0%
2. Having enough money for food although not enough for clothes or shoes – 31.7%
3. Overall, having enough money but not enough for large purchases (e.g., furniture, refrigerator, etc.) – 26.4%
4. No financial difficulties, except for when making especially large purchases (property, expensive cars, etc.) – 6.0%
5. Having enough money for everything – 1.7%
6. Refused to answer – 2.2%

Note: More detailed information about this and other surveys conducted by Gorshenin Institute can be found on kipu.com.ua.