

Belarus Economy Monitor: trends, attitudes and expectations

Households

May 2025

Summary

- The Consumer Confidence Index in Q2 2025 declined by 1.5 p.p. (according to Rosstat's methodology) and stood at 1%.
- The Consumer Confidence Index excluding the current economic conditions component (Eurostat methodology) accounted for 2%, while the average across EU countries in April 2025 was significantly lower at -15.7%.
- Respondents' assessments of the national economic situation were somewhat more positive compared to evaluations of their own financial situation.
- The share of respondents reporting a decline in income remained at the low 2024 level of 25%.
- The proportion of individuals who lost their jobs in the past two weeks fell to 1.6%. Meanwhile, only 10% of respondents reported that someone they know had lost their job.
- A labour shortage in their respective sectors was reported by 59% of respondents.

Methodology

The bulletin is based on data from 13 online surveys of urban residents aged 18–64. The sample corresponds to the structure of the urban population of Belarus and has been adjusted for gender, region, and age.

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) December 2–8, 2021 (1004 respondents); | 8) February 6–12, 2024 (998 respondents); |
| 2) April 19–25, 2022 (1007 respondents); | 9) May 15–22, 2024 (1002 respondents); |
| 3) August 26–31, 2022 (1001 respondents); | 10) July 24–25, 2024 (1001 respondents); |
| 4) November 21–25, 2022 (992 respondents); | 11) November 8–10, 2024 (991 respondents); |
| 5) March 2–4, 2023 (1014 respondents); | 12) January 31–February 16, 2025 (973 respondents); |
| 6) June 28–30, 2023 (1009 respondents); | |
| 7) October 9–11, 2023 (1003 respondents); | 13) April 30–May 7, 2025 (1000 respondents). |

The Consumer Confidence Index (CCI) reflects the general perception and expectations of the population regarding the country's economy and their financial situation. In our research, it is calculated using methodologies employed by Rosstat and Eurostat. The Eurostat index includes questions about the current and projected financial situation of households, willingness to make major purchases, and the expected economic development of the country over the next year. The Rosstat methodology incorporates these questions along with an assessment of the country's economic situation compared to a year ago.

Evaluation of Consumer Confidence Index Results

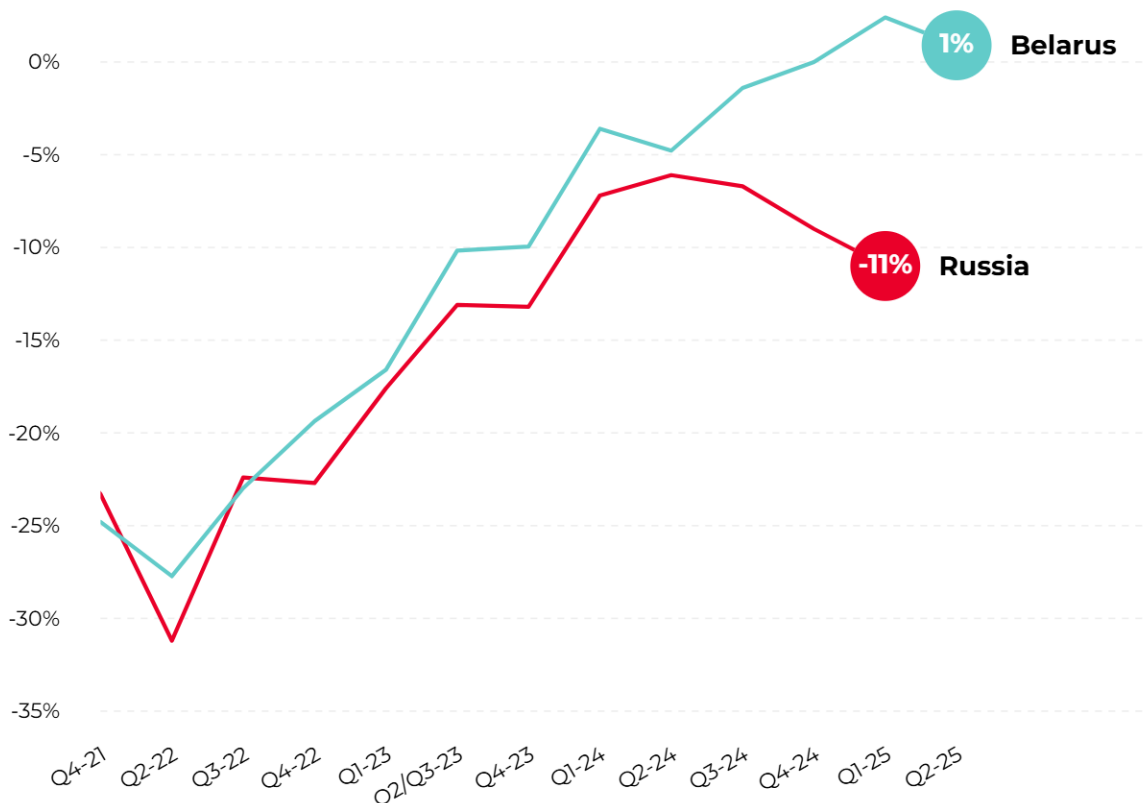
The **Consumer Confidence Index (CCI)** is a composite indicator that reflects the population's assessment of the country's overall economic situation and their personal financial situation. In addition to actual assessments, the index includes questions related to future perceptions: how the economic situation and the financial condition of households are expected to change over the next year. As a result, the index illustrates household **attitudes** and **expectations**, providing insight into their consumer behaviour strategies.

Belarus and Russia

The Belarusian Consumer Confidence Index, which comprises five components (according to Rosstat's methodology), remained in the positive zone, standing at 0.9%. In contrast, the index in Russia remained in negative territory, having declined by 2 p.p. to -11% (as of February 2025). For an extended period, the recovery and subsequent growth of the index in both countries followed a similar pace; however, since the second half of 2024, their trajectories have diverged.

Figure 1. The Consumer Confidence Index in Belarus and Russia in 2021–2025

(There were no Q1-2022 data on Belarus)



Source: Rosstat, authors calculations for Belarus.

Note. Why is it relevant to compare Belarus with Russia?

- a) Russian economy — just like Belarusian economy — has been experiencing challenges with the long-term economic growth potential, and it has been overheated.
- b) Economic sanctions influence both countries.
- c) Both countries face labour deficit.
- d) Russia is the key trading partner of Belarus.

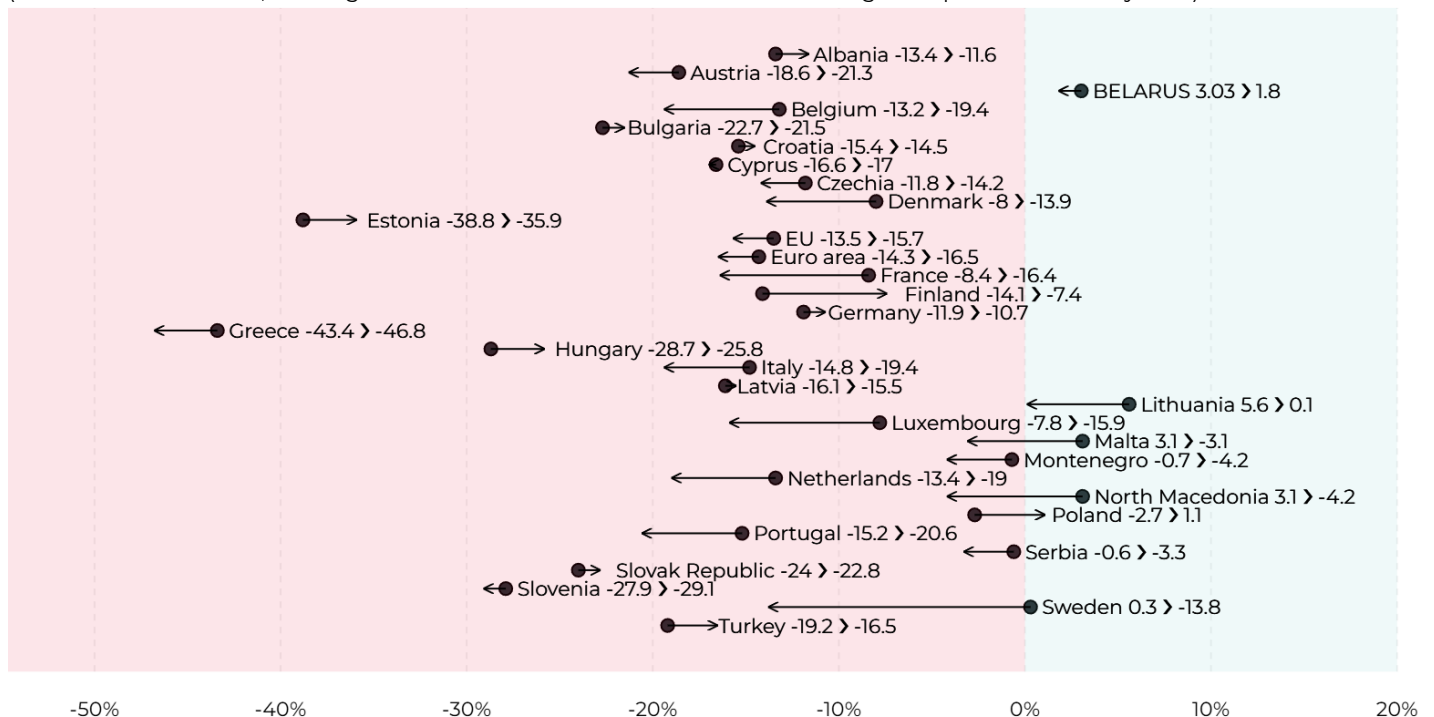
Belarus and EU

According to Eurostat methodology, the Consumer Confidence Index in Belarus remained in the positive zone in April/May 2025 and stood at 1.8%, having dropped by 1.3 p.p. The growth of the index in Belarus stands out compared to neighbouring countries. Despite a significant decline in Lithuania – from 5.6% to 0.1% – the index remained in the positive zone. In Latvia, the index remained virtually unchanged, increasing by just 0.6 p.p. compared to the previous wave. Poland was among the few EU countries where the index rose – from -2.7% to 1.1% in April 2025 – crossing into positive territory. Overall, it is relatively uncommon for the Consumer Confidence Index to remain in the positive zone; however, the index is presented without seasonal adjustment, which makes it more volatile.

In Q2 2025, the average Consumer Confidence Index across most observed European countries declined by 2.2 p.p., with the EU average standing at -15.7%. The sharpest increase was recorded in Finland (+6.7 p.p.), while the steepest declines were observed in Sweden (-14.1 p.p.), Luxembourg (-8.1 p.p.), and France (-8 p.p.). The lowest Consumer Confidence Index was traditionally reported in Greece, at -46.8%.

Figure 2. Consumer Confidence Index in Europe in May and February 2025

(The Y-axis is A-Z sorted, the lengths and directions of the arrows show the change compared to February 2025)



Source: Eurostat, authors calculations for Belarus.

Note. Why is it relevant to compare Belarus with the EU countries?

The predictive power of the index for the EU countries based on the Eurostat methodology (excluding the component on the current state of the economy) is higher than the index that includes all 5 components.¹

¹ [A Revised Consumer Confidence Indicator. European Commission, official website, 2018.](#)

Components of the Consumer Confidence Index

Note. Component calculation formula

$$\text{Component} = (MP + P \div 2) - (MN + N \div 2)$$

where MP is the most positive responses,
P is positive responses,
MN is the most negative responses,
N is negative responses.

In the 2021–2023 survey waves, the population of Belarus assessed the country's economic situation more negatively than their family's financial situation (see Figure 3 – Q1 and Q3). By the end of 2024 and in the first half of 2025, the gap between these negative assessments had narrowed significantly: 29% and 31% of respondents, respectively, reported that the country's economic situation and their family finances had worsened over the past year. Compared to the same period last year, perceptions of the country's economic condition have improved: 26% of respondents stated that the situation improved (+6 p.p. year-on-year), 31% believed it remained unchanged (+1 p.p. y/y), and 29% indicated that it deteriorated (-7 p.p. y/y).

Assessments of family finances in May 2025 remained largely unchanged: 23% of respondents reported an improvement, 44% observed no change (a decrease of 1 p.p. compared to the previous quarter), and 31% reported a deterioration (an increase of 2 p.p. quarter-on-quarter).

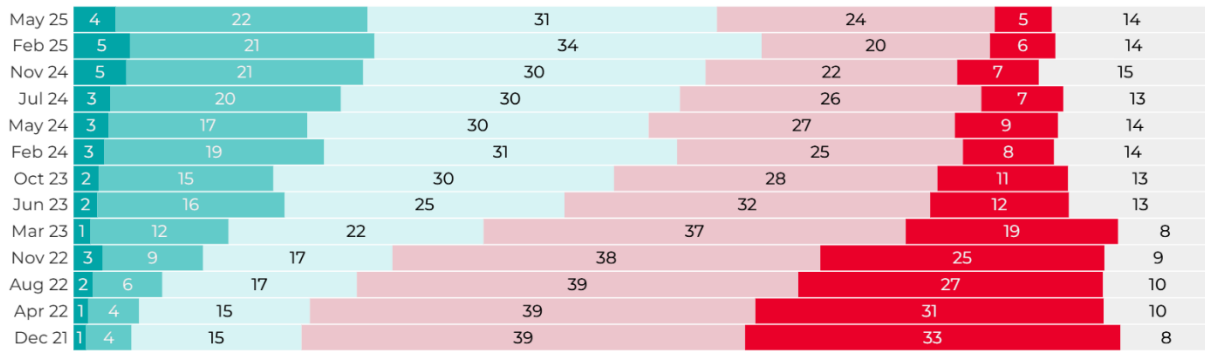
Regarding future expectations, a traditionally high level of uncertainty and inability to make forecasts persists among the population (see Q2 and Q4). Specifically, 27% of respondents found it difficult to assess the future economic situation of the country, while 15% were unsure about what would happen to their own family finances. Perceptions of the country's economic outlook have become less uniformly negative: 21% of respondents expect a deterioration, whereas 30% anticipate an improvement. Expectations regarding changes in family finances remained at the positive level observed in the previous wave: only 17% expect their financial situation to worsen (+1 p.p. q/q), while 34% expect it to improve (+1 p.p. q/q).

Positive attitudes toward the allocation of disposable income have reached parity with negative assessments: 21% of respondents considered the timing favourable for major purchases, while an equal share – 21% – believed the timing to be rather unfavourable. Additionally, 44% indicated a balanced view, seeing both advantages and disadvantages (see Q5). Unsurprisingly, consumer lending continues at a steady pace, and consumer demand remains overheated. At the same time, 30% of respondents viewed conditions for saving as favourable – an increase of 3 p.p. quarter-on-quarter.

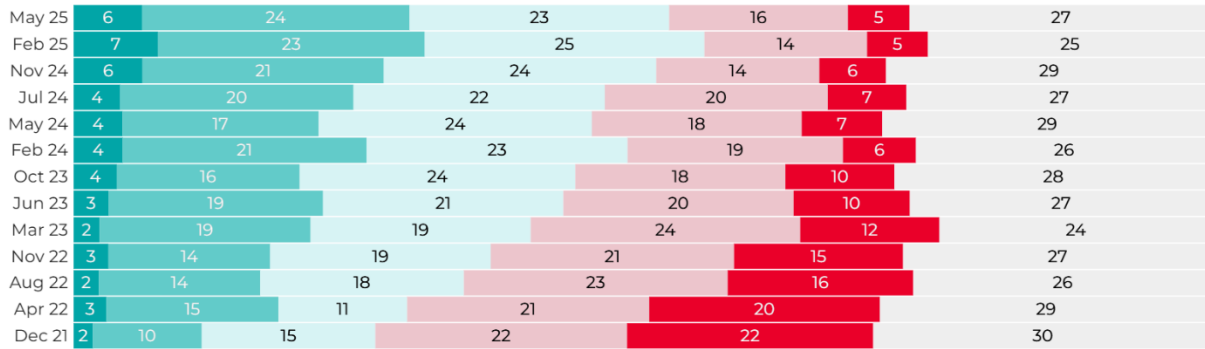
Figure 3. Components of the Consumer Confidence Index (%)

Improve Likely improve No change Likely decline Decline Difficult to answer

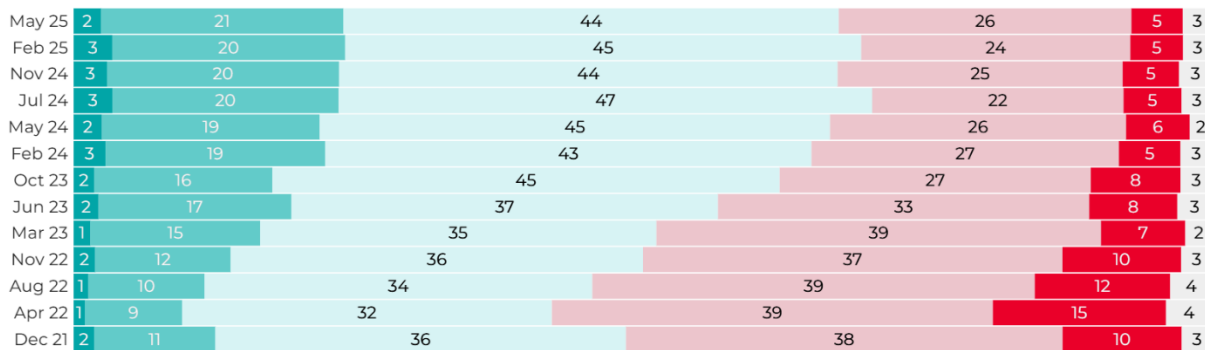
Q1 Economic situation compared to last year?



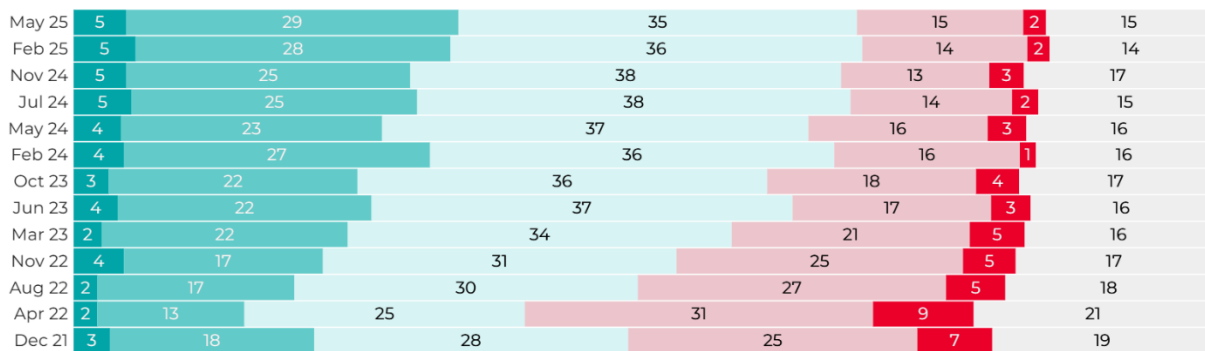
Q2 Economic situation over the next year?



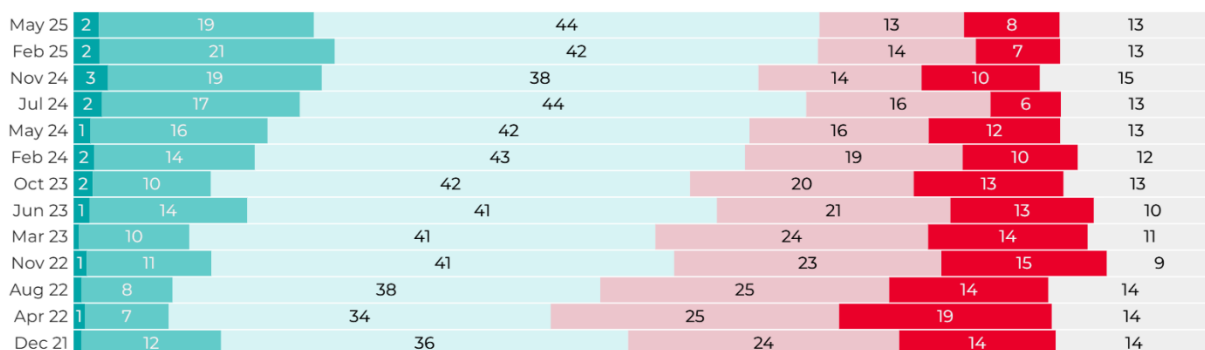
Q3 Financial position of your household compared to the last year?



Q4 Is it going to change over the next year?



Q5 Is it the right moment to make major purchases?



Optimists and pessimists

The average Consumer Confidence Index stood at 2% (according to Eurostat methodology), while the average value of one of its components – expectations regarding the country's future – reached 4.5% (see Figures 4A-B). A significant contribution to the positive index value also came from the component reflecting expectations for future family finances, which accounted for 10%.

Among age groups, the least pessimistic in both current and future assessments were individuals aged 18-24 – a pattern also observed in many other countries, as young people are entering the labour market and expect to increase their income. The lowest Consumer Confidence Index, both across age groups and overall, was observed among those aged 45-54, at -7%.

At the regional level, the most pessimistic sentiment was recorded in Vitebsk Region, where the Consumer Confidence Index in May 2025 stood at -3.5%. By contrast, the most optimistic expectations regarding the country's economic future were observed among residents of Brest and Mogilev Regions: the value of the “expectations about the country” component for these respondents was 15% and 10%, respectively.

By income level, those with the lowest income (up to 700 BYN) reported the most negative perceptions as expected. Interestingly, satisfaction with the economic situation rises proportionally with income: the Consumer Confidence Index among respondents with incomes up to 700 BYN stood at -6%, while for those earning over 2000 BYN, it remained in the positive zone at 11%. However, this trend does not hold for expectations regarding the national economy: the most pessimistic economic outlook was reported by respondents with incomes of 1001-1200 BYN (2.5%), while the most optimistic outlook came from those earning up to 700 BYN (6%).

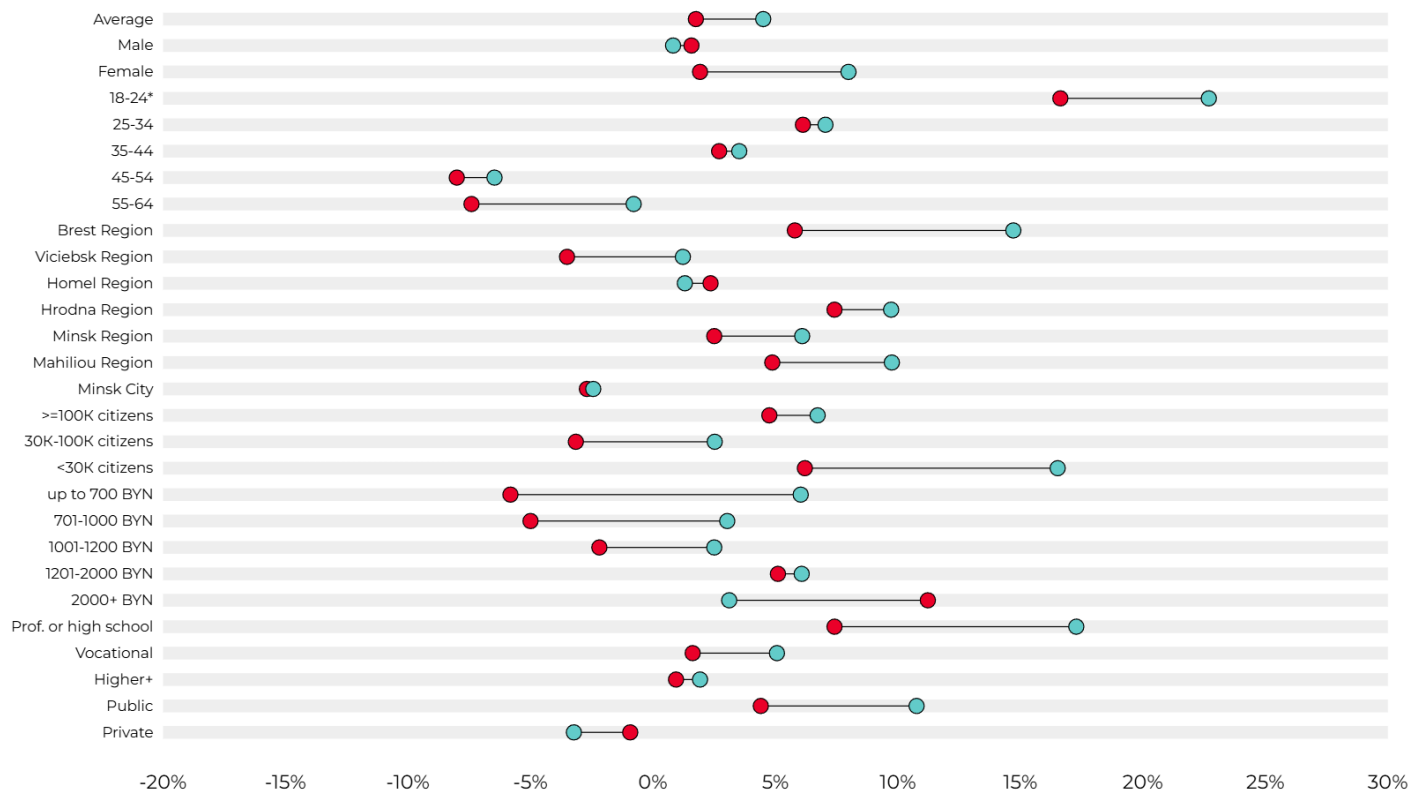
Belarusians with higher education have traditionally reported lower values for both the expectations component and the overall Consumer Confidence Index compared to those with secondary, specialized secondary, or vocational education.

Employees of private enterprises also assessed both the overall Consumer Confidence Index and the expectations regarding the country's future more negatively than those working in state-owned companies, with values of -1% and -3%, respectively.

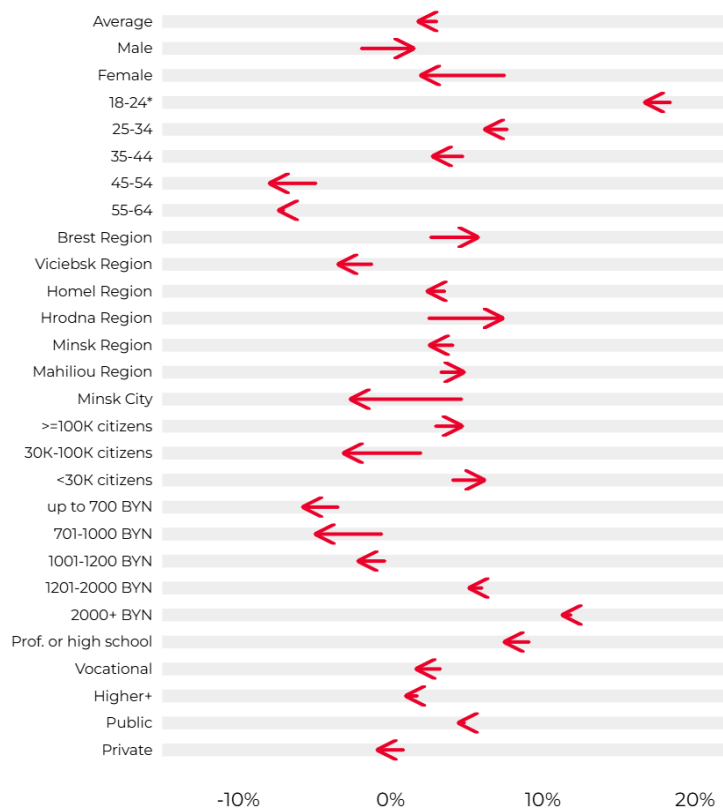
Both components showed slight declines in May 2025. The most notable deterioration in consumer confidence was observed among women and residents of Minsk. Respondents from the Gomel Region assessed the expectations component more negatively, while residents of the Brest Region and smaller towns reported more optimistic views regarding the country's future (see Figure 4B).

Figure 4. The Consumer Confidence Index ■ and the country's future component ■
(groups by gender, age, region, income, education, sector, ownership type)

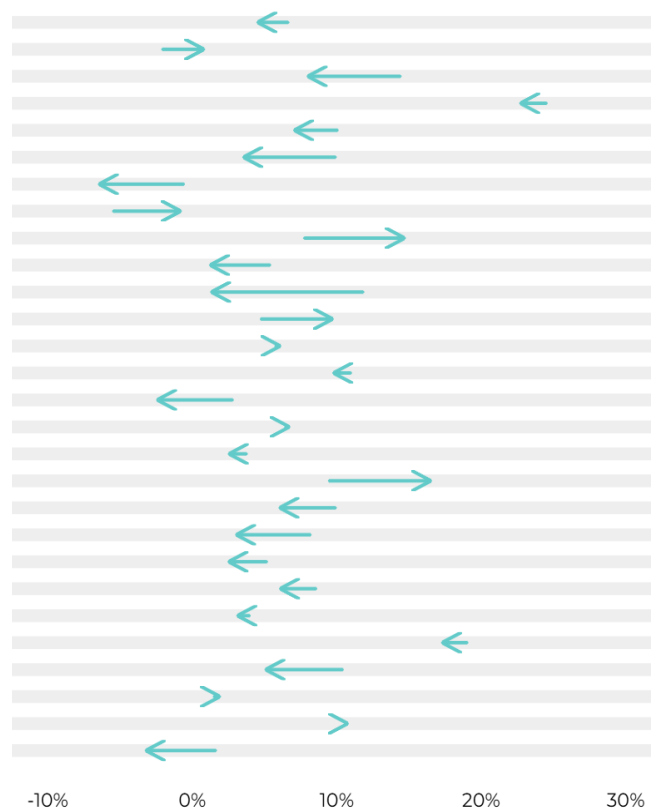
4A. May 2025



4B. Change in the index over the period



4C. Change in the future component over the period

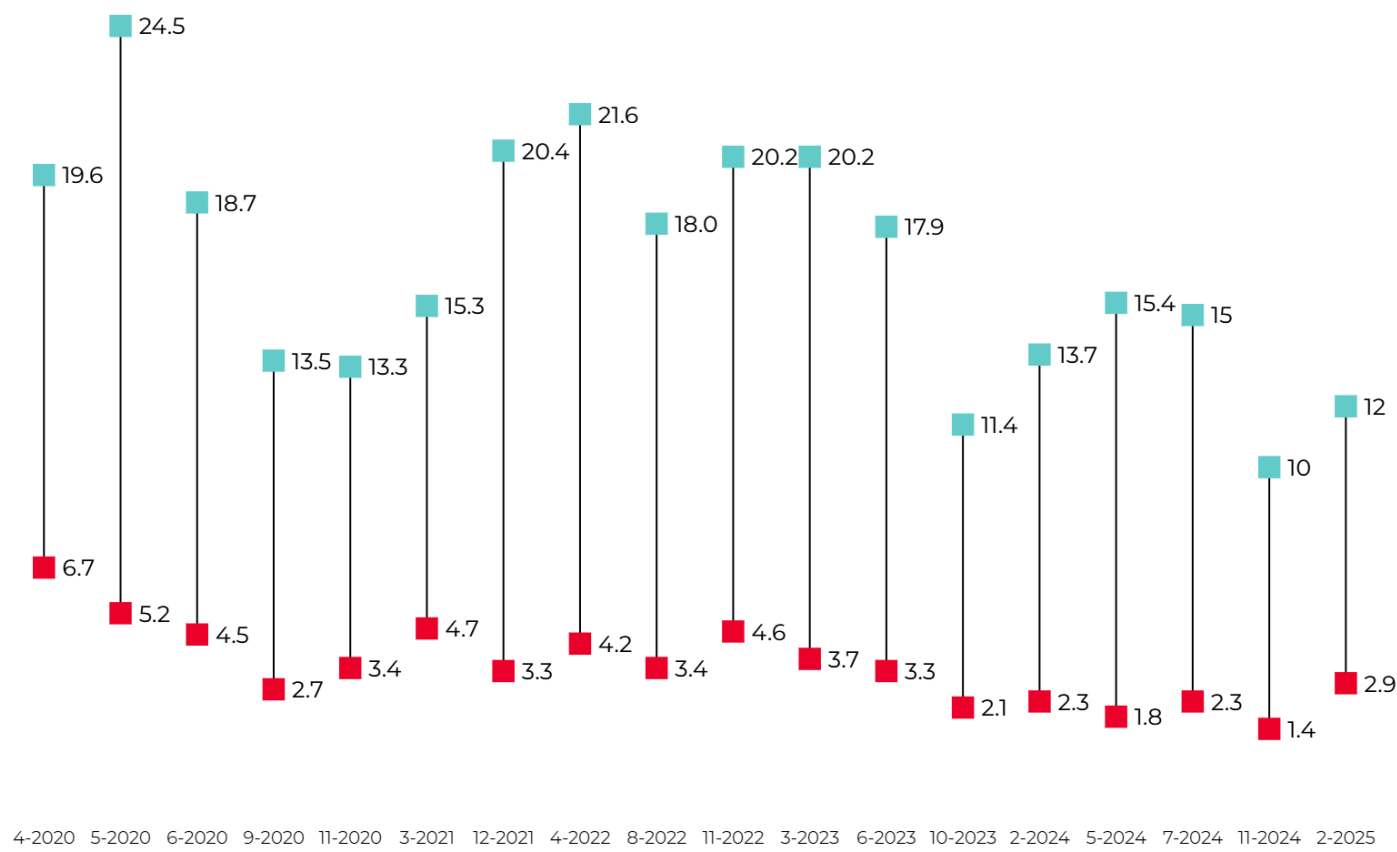


Labor market

The labour market has long exhibited a paradoxical situation: on the one hand, the share of respondents who lost their jobs averaged 3.8%, while on the other hand, the incidence of job loss among friends and acquaintances remained relatively high – at 19.7% (see Figure 6). In Q4 2024, both indicators reached record lows: only 1.4% of respondents reported job loss, and 10% noted that someone they knew had been dismissed. The results from the first half of 2025 remained in line with those recorded at the end of 2024.

At the same time, 59% of respondents reported a labour shortage in their field of employment – an increase of 3 p.p. quarter-on-quarter.

Figure 6. What is the share of the unemployed?
I lost my job and some of my acquaintances did (percentage of those reporting a job loss)



Household incomes

The share of individuals who reported a decline in their income over the past month remained at the 2024 average in May 2025, accounting for 25%.

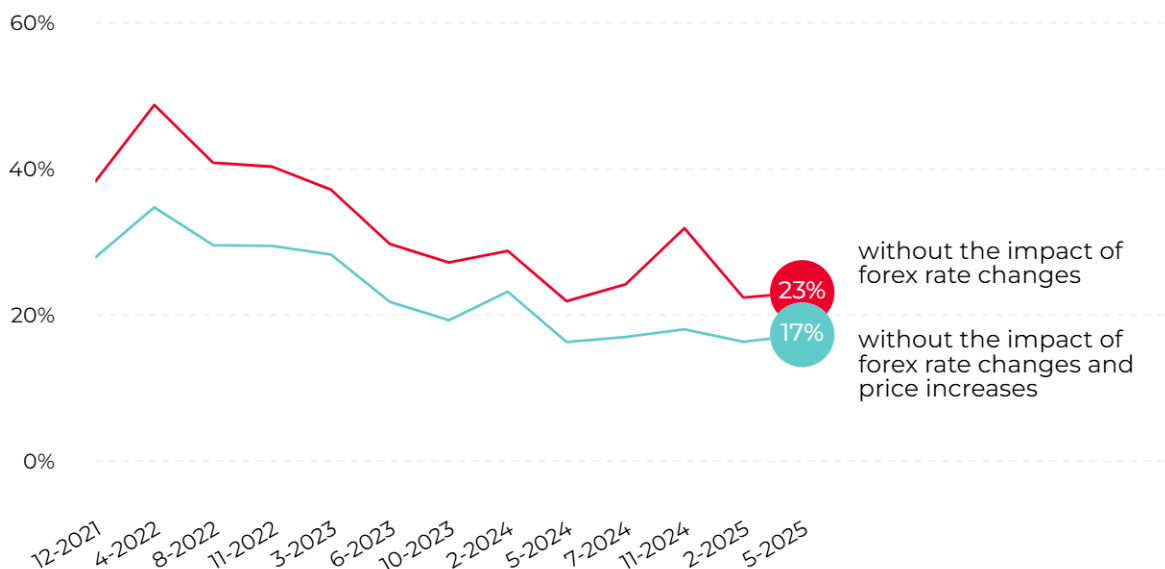
When excluding respondents who attributed the decrease solely to exchange rate fluctuations, the share of those facing income reductions dropped to 23%, with changes in the Belarusian ruble exchange rate cited as a significant factor by only 13% of respondents. The primary driver of income decline continues to be rising prices, identified by 54% of survey participants. However, when both price increases and exchange rate effects are excluded, the share of those whose income fell due to other factors stands at 17% (see Figure 5A).

The highest rates of income decline – excluding the impact of currency fluctuations and inflation – were observed among the following groups:

- individuals with initially low income,
- entrepreneurs and the self-employed,
- those employed in the industrial sector.

Figure 5. Share of population reporting an income decline (%)

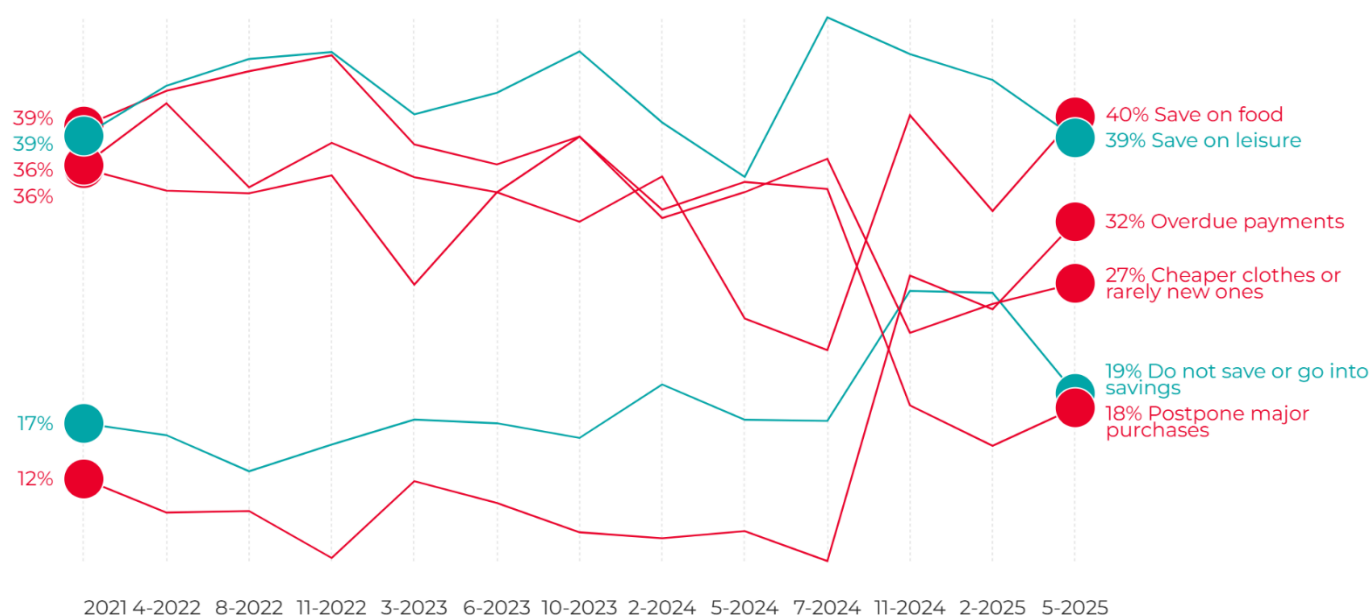
5A. Change in share, since late 2021



Examining coping strategies in response to income decline (see Figure 5B), May 2025 showed a rather negative trend regarding saving behaviours. Respondents reported saving less often on leisure activities and using savings, but more frequently economized on food, postponed mandatory payments, and delayed major purchases. There was also a slight increase in purchasing cheaper clothing. The diversity of observed adaptation strategies to income reduction may be explained by a decrease in the share of respondents overall reporting a decline in total income in previous quarters (this indicator has stabilized at around one quarter of all respondents).

5B. How do households cope with falling incomes? (out of those 25% who have experienced an income decline)

■ Decrease ■ Increase

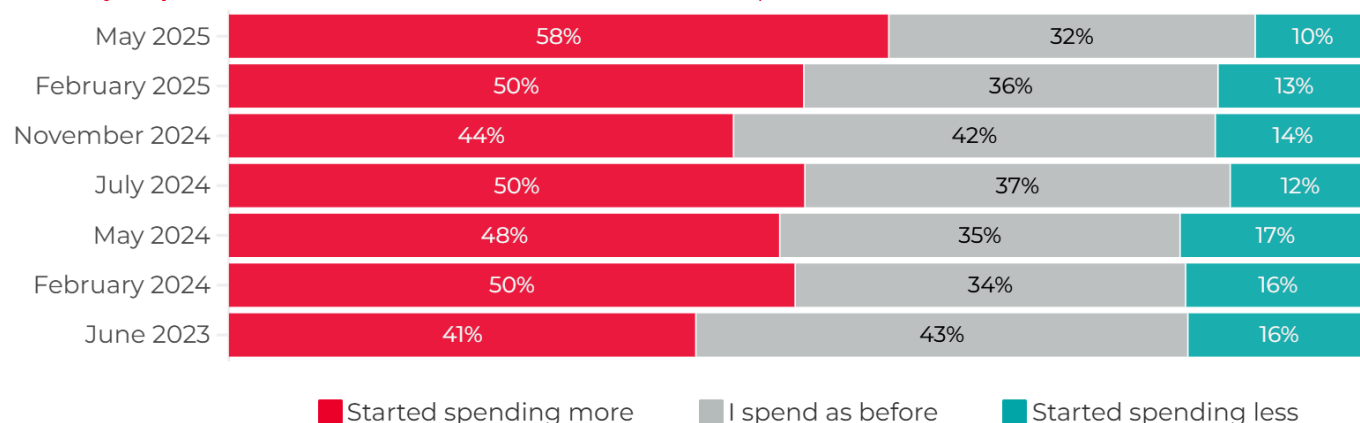


Saving behaviour

Despite the recorded increase in wages in the statistics, households did not increase their savings. On the contrary, the share of respondents who reported higher spending over the past six months rose to a record 58% in May 2025, while only 10% of urban residents reported reduced expenditures (see Figure 7A).

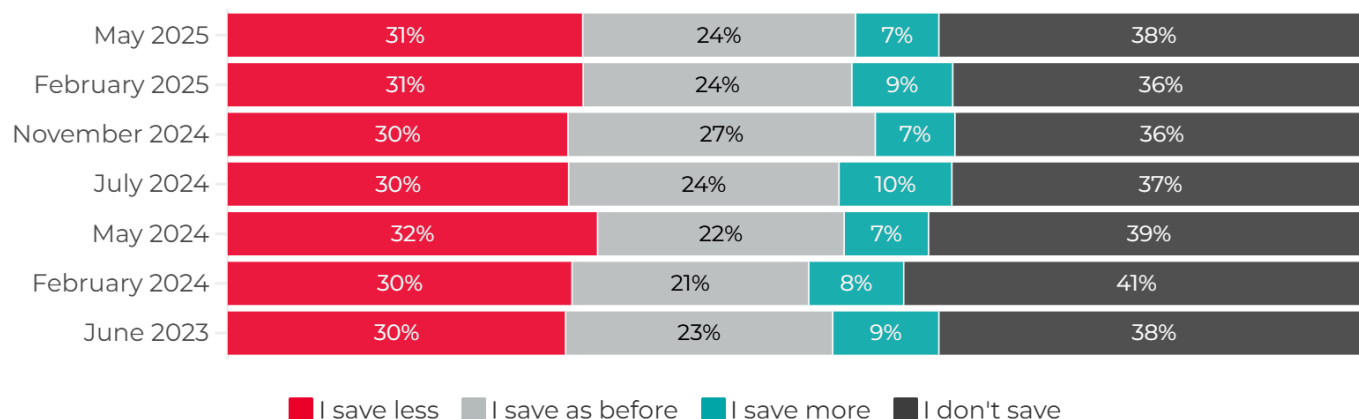
Figure 7. Do you prefer spending or saving?

7A. Have you **spent** more, less, or the same amount as before over the past six months?



Compared to 2024, saving behaviour in the first half of 2025 did not undergo significant changes: only 7% of respondents reported saving more, 55% saved at the same level or less, and 38% did not save at all (see Figure 7B). Thus, the desire to spend still prevails over the willingness or ability to save, and the risk of losing savings concerns 71% of respondents.

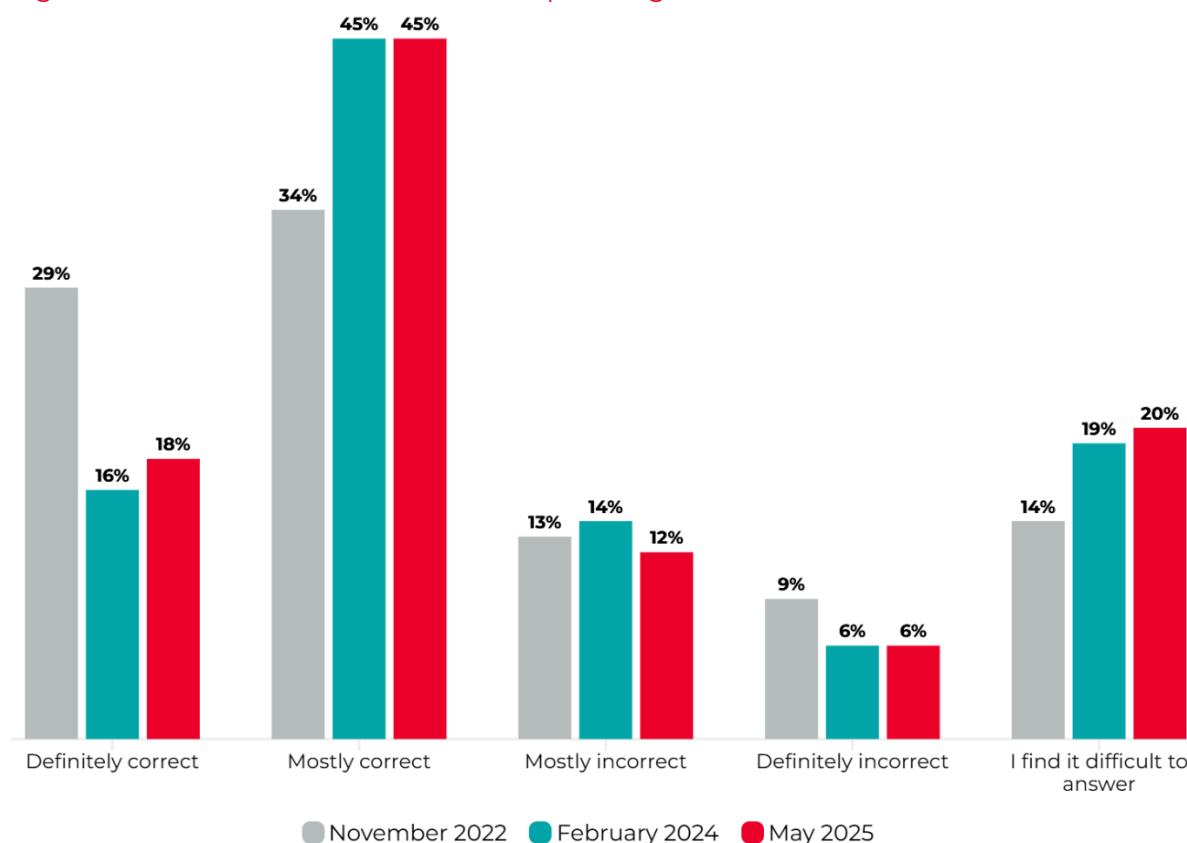
7B. Have you started **saving** more, less, or the same amount as before over the past six months?



Attitude towards price regulation

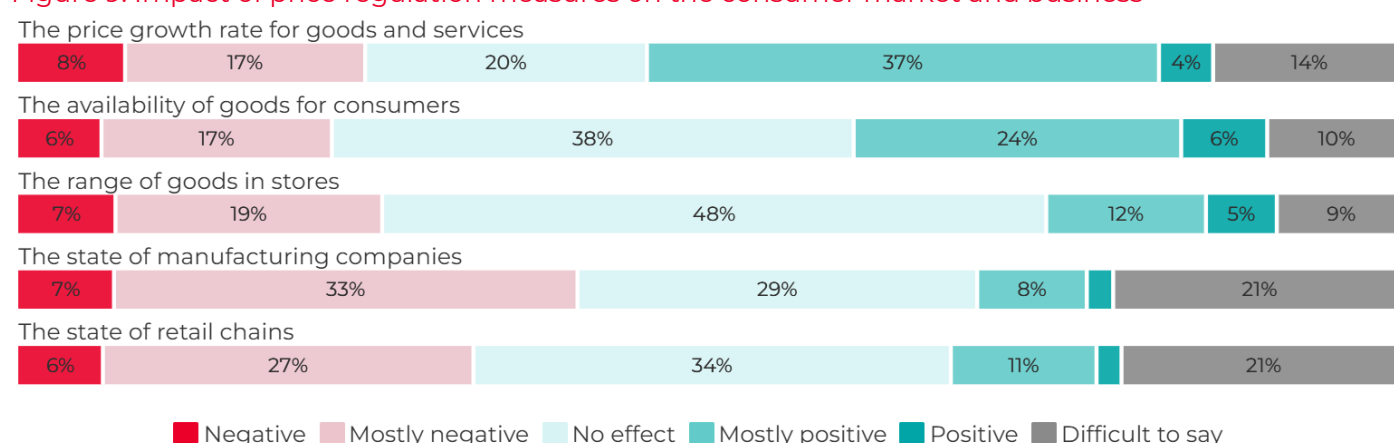
In October 2022, Belarus introduced price controls under Decree No. 713. A month later, in November 2022, the majority of Belarusian households expressed support for this measure: 29% of respondents stated that the decision was definitely the right one, while 34% believed it was *rather* the right one. The share of those uncertain was relatively small, accounting for 14% of respondents (see Figure 8). By February 2024 – 1.3 years later – the overall level of support remained unchanged; however, the composition shifted: the share of “strong supporters” fell by 13 p.p. to 16%, while 45% stated the decision was rather the right one. The proportion of respondents who were unsure increased slightly to 19%. Public opinion among urban residents remained consistent after 2.5 years of price regulation: in May 2025, 63% of respondents expressed a positive view of the price control.

Figure 8. Assessment of the decision on price regulation



When asked about the areas affected by price controls, respondents most frequently noted that the measures were effective in curbing the rise in prices for goods and services: 41% reported a positive impact, while 25% indicated a negative impact, and 14% were unsure. The effect on product availability was viewed less consistently: 30% considered it positive, 23% negative, 38% observed no changes, and 10% were uncertain. For other aspects – such as product variety, the situation of producers, and retail chains – positive assessments were less pronounced, while negative perceptions outweighed positive ones. The impact on businesses was viewed particularly critically: around 40% of respondents believed that the measures had worsened the situation of manufacturing firms. Unsurprisingly, questions regarding the state of manufacturing companies and retail chains proved more difficult for respondents to assess, with approximately 21% unable to provide a definite answer (see Figure 9).

Figure 9. Impact of price regulation measures on the consumer market and business



An experimental survey was conducted to identify the conditions under which respondents would support price deregulation (see Figure 10).

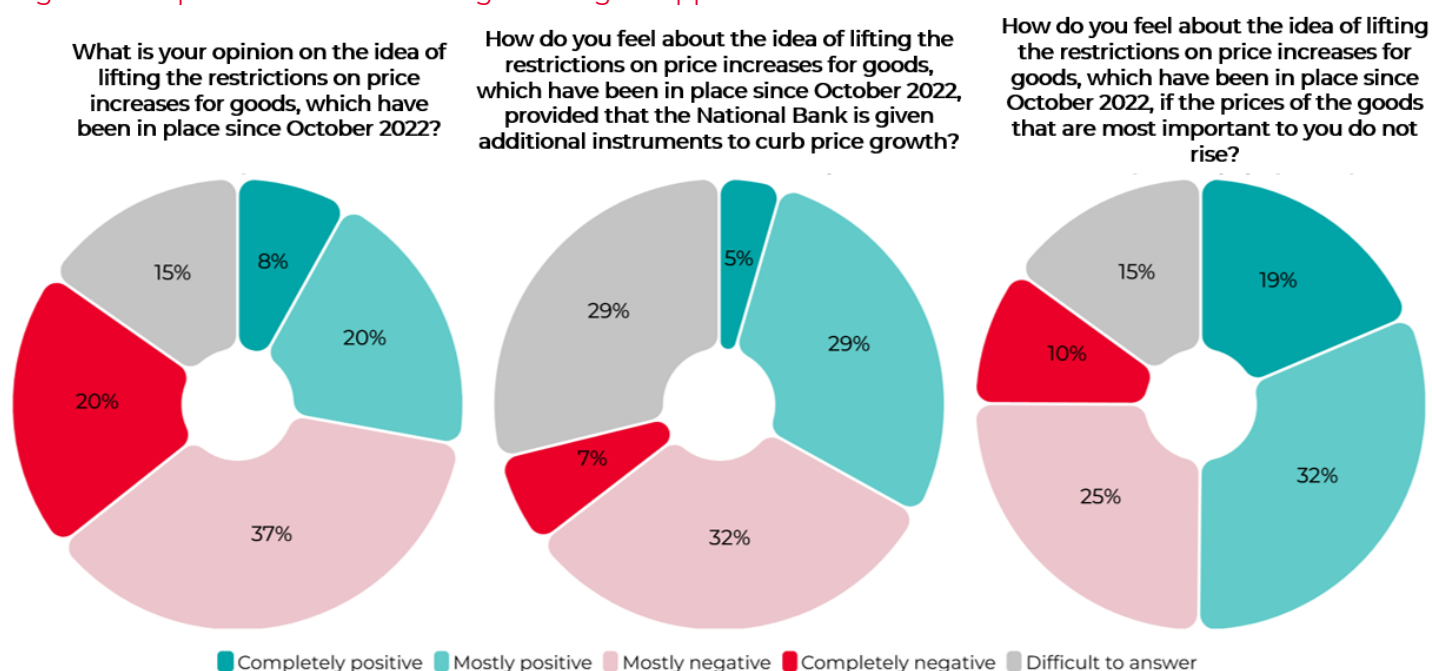
The first third of participants – the baseline comparison group – were asked a general question without any additional context: how they felt about **lifting** the restrictions on price increases introduced in October 2022. A majority (57%) expressed opposition to the idea, while 28% supported it.

The second third of respondents were asked a question that included a clarification regarding the role of the National Bank in price regulation: *"How do you feel about **lifting** the restrictions on price increases introduced in October 2022, provided that the National Bank is granted additional instruments to control inflation?"* In this group, the share of those in favor of deregulation rose to 34%, while the proportion of those uncertain increased significantly to 29%, possibly reflecting both the complexity of the formulation and ambiguity in perceptions of the National Bank's role.

The final third of respondents were first asked to select several product categories for which price increases would be particularly critical for them. The most frequently selected categories were: meat, fish, and related products (45%), vegetables (including potatoes) (37%), medicines (35%), clothing and footwear (31%), and fuel (30%).

Respondents were then asked: "How do you feel about **lifting** the restrictions on price increases introduced in October 2022, if prices for the goods most important to you would remain stable?" This condition had the strongest effect: the share of respondents supporting deregulation rose to 51%, while opposition dropped to 35%. Nonetheless, the share of respondents who were unsure remained considerable, at 15%.

Figure 10. Experiment: "When deregulation gets approval"



Respondents were also asked about their preferred approach to price control. They were offered three options: centralized, market-based, or a combined approach. The **market-based** model – described as a system in which "no specific authority is responsible for controlling prices, and enterprises, retailers, and consumers regulate prices effectively through market mechanisms" – received the least support, selected by only 14% of participants. **Centralized** regulation, in which price control is exercised by a specific government body (e.g., the National Bank) with the necessary powers and tools to contain price growth, was favoured by 18% of respondents. The highest level of support was given to the **combined** approach, which involves a mix of government regulation and market mechanisms: 57% of respondents opted for this model.

Conclusions

The consumer confidence index in Belarus remained in the positive zone: it stood at 1% according to the Rosstat methodology and 2% based on the Eurostat methodology. Against the backdrop of EU countries, where the index declined over the past quarter, Belarus stands out due to the growth of this indicator. Additionally, its trajectory has diverged from that of Russia, where the index has remained firmly in negative territory (-11%).

Consumer demand remains overheated, while saving behaviour has changed little: the share of those who do not save remains substantial. The share of respondents who lost their job is minimal, while 56% report a shortage of personnel in their sector, reflecting the current labour market situation. The share of respondents whose income decreased has remained at its lowest level (25%).

The survey revealed that price control measures are perceived as partially effective: the majority believe they helped curb price growth, but also negatively affected producers and retail chains, and did not always improve product availability or variety. An experiment using three alternative phrasings of the question on deregulation showed that support for lifting price restrictions increases when the emphasis is placed on the role of the National Bank or when the protection of “critical” goods is guaranteed. When asked about the preferred approach to price control, most respondents opted for a combined model involving both state and market regulation, whereas purely market-based and fully centralised models received significantly less support.