

democracy» emerged, caused by the Libero Veto, which paralyzed the state. Belarusian territories were prevented from defending their interests. In addition, The Union of Brest (1596) imposed the Uniate Church, further extractivizing religious life as an institution.

After the partitions of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (1772, 1793, 1795), the Belarusian territories were incorporated into the Russian Empire, leading to even more extractiveness. The tsarist regime suppressed national identity and controlled the market. While some historical peculiarities, like promises of autonomy (Oginsky plan, 1812) and railway construction, existed, they were primarily served to integrate Belarus into the Russian market.

During the Soviet period (1919–1991), Belarus was ruled by fully extractive institutions: a one-party state, planned economy and ideological control. However, the brief establishment of the Belarusian People’s Republic showed an aspiration for inclusive statehood, even without international recognition.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union (1991) Belarus gained sovereignty and began to develop inclusive institutes, such as referendum, election, local self-government and private business ones. However, at this point, they can’t be considered predominant.

To summarize, Belarus’s institutional history shows almost univocal dominance of extractiveness. According to Acemoglu and Robinson, the historical legacy, both economic and mental, makes it really difficult to leap to inclusiveness. But the international and historical experience show that it’s reachable by human capital investment, integration into the international market and reduction of state political control. Thus, targeted work of Belarusian society and consistent democratisation are set to lead Belarus to prosperity in the long run.

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## **YOLO MENTALITY: A DISEASE OF ZOOMER GENERATION. THE PHENOMENON’S IMPACT ON BELARUSIAN YOUTH**

**Менталитет YOLO: болезнь поколения зумеров.  
Влияние этого феномена на белорусскую молодежь**

The YOLO mentality of Generation Z, shaped by the digital era and global instability, is fundamentally transforming approaches to careers and consumption. The aim of this study is to analyse this phenomenon as a complex worldview construct that transcends simplified interpretations and to determine its impact on the economic behaviour and value orientations of young people.

In this study, YOLO mentality is understood as a worldview grounded in the awareness of life's finitude and the desire to make the most of the present moment. Unlike traditional approaches focused on long-term planning and accumulation, the YOLO mentality emphasises the value of present time and the priority of personal experience as a form of capital.

From a scientific perspective, this phenomenon can be viewed as an adaptive behavioural strategy emerging under conditions of uncertainty and economic instability. For Generation Z, who came of age amid social transformation and the rise of the digital economy, YOLO represents not a manifestation of irresponsibility but a rational response to a rapidly changing environment.

In the Belarusian context, the YOLO mentality acquires particular significance. The socio-economic and political uncertainty of recent years has fostered among young people a sense of instability and limited life prospects. In response, they develop strategies of short-term yet conscious planning, grounded in flexibility, self-development, and digital engagement.

To understand why Zoomers tend to adopt this strategy instead of saving for the long term – as previous generations did – let us consider the example of purchasing real estate among young Belarusians.

According to official data from Belstat, the average salary in Minsk in 2025 is about 3,500 Belarusian rubles. The average cost of a one-bedroom apartment, according to Realt.by, is approximately around 204,000 BYN. The average monthly rent for such an apartment, based on T-S analytics, is about 900–1,000 BYN.

Let us imagine a typical young Minsk resident – Artyom, 26 years old. He earns the city's average salary – 3,500 BYN (around 3,000 BYN after taxes). His monthly expenses amount to about 2,350 BYN, including rent. Thus, even with careful budgeting, he can save roughly 650 BYN per month.

If Artyom saves 650 BYN each month, it would take him about 26 years to accumulate 204,000 BYN – the cost of an average one-bedroom apartment in Minsk. This calculation excludes inflation, rising housing prices, or potential financial crises. Even assuming he lives with a partner and together they save 1,200 BYN monthly, it would still take around 14 years – all while continuing to pay rent.

In sum, for a young person in Belarus to afford housing, they would need to save their entire salary for about five years without spending a single ruble. In reality, this process takes 15–25 years, accounting for rent and living expenses. Meanwhile, property prices continue to rise, making homeownership an increasingly distant goal.

Summarizing the results, the phenomenon of the YOLO mentality in fact represents an adaptive economic strategy developed in response to contemporary realities. It reflects not the rejection of responsibility, but the transformation of rational behaviour in an unpredictable world, where the ability to live meaningfully in the present becomes a new form of resilience and competence.