

## Summary

Looking over quarter of a century of Belarusian and Ukrainian independence, I conclude that Russia remained the main and the most significant political, cultural and economic element of the sovereign Belarus and Ukraine's politics. The presentation of Russian influence in both countries could be easily noticed in such important areas, as choice of model of Belarusian and Ukrainian states, protecting the national interests, shaping the official concepts of national security and foreign policy. Bilateral relations between Russia and Belarus and Ukraine had also a great influence on the international politics, especially the relations between the European Union, the United States and the Russian Federation. The mutual contacts were full of political complications evoked by Russian interferences in Belarus and Ukraine. In foreign, as well as home, domestic politics of Belarus and Ukraine, Russia was described as all-important and strategic partner, which traditional influence showed difficult to be omitted. Historical references, common roots and experiences of many centuries of Russian-Belarusian and Russian-Ukrainian common history, complicated the ethnic and linguistic relations in today's Belarus and Ukraine, traditional Slavic solidarity and postsoviet resentments and sympathies were the reason why the specific kind of connections was impossible to be limited for many years. The analysis of Russian-Belarusian and Russian-Ukrainian relations proves the truth of the research hypotheses adopted at the outset. Relations between the Russian Federation and the Republic of Belarus and Ukraine were asymmetrical. The described dependencies were conditioned by decisions of the authorities of individual sovereign states, defining at the national level the basic directions of foreign policy, defense (security) and economic development. The primacy of Russia, its position in bilateral relations, its dominant position in relation to Belarusian and Ukrainian dependent (to varying degrees) have changed over the period discussed (years 1991-2018), with the last period negating relations with Russia as the only one (Belarus) or the dominant (Ukraine) foreign policy vector. The described relationships had various sources mentioned above (historical conditions, political, military, socio-economic and cultural factors). A detailed description of bilateral relations over the quarter-century that has elapsed since the collapse of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics has allowed the presentation of manifestations and sources of asymmetry in contemporary Russian-Belarusian and Russian-Ukrainian relations. Both countries have shaped their relations differently in the Russian Federation. Vladimir Putin's policy of "economization" of foreign policy has contributed to changing the perception of Russia's role and the deterioration of its image. Within a quarter of a century, since the collapse of the USSR, the statehood of Belarus and Ukraine strengthened.