

**Feedback from staff members of the Republic of Belarus  
Republican Hydrometeorological Centre  
on the usefulness of the  
“Summary Guide to Survey Design and Delivery”**

The “Summary Guide to Survey Design and Delivery” prepared by the expert team within the framework of the Public Weather Services Programme presents a big interest for the Republic of Belarus Hydrometeorological Service’s experts, especially for the experts of those departments which are charged with the organisation and delivery of hydrometeorological information to the population of the country. A detailed mechanism of conducting a successful survey has been laid out in the Guide. In 2008, experts from the Republic of Belarus Hydrometeorological Service for the first time conducted a marketing survey on the population user needs in regards to specific hydrometeorological information; the survey has resulted in verifying the most crucial types of hydrometeorological information for the population. A study and analysis of the sample questionnaires on the provision of services by NMHSs would help to improve the contents of the questionnaire for similar types of survey in the future.

We would like to present you with you some of the findings of the 2008 survey which took place in Minsk and the country’s regional cities. 423 respondents took part in the survey. The sampling was based on the following principle: not less than one respondent per 10 000 people in the cities with the population of up to 1 million people and not less than 150 respondents in the cities with the population of over 1.5 million people. The major social groups of the respondents were reported as follows: office workers (52 %), students (15 %), retirees (14 %) and businessmen (6 %).

The results of the survey have shown that out of various types of hydrometeorological information preference is given to meteorological information, followed by information on the condition of air pollution and, thirdly, to hydrological information. Out of all the forecast data, the population is mostly interested in medical weather forecasts and weather forecasts for the roads. For a certain part of the population, weather forecasts are needed for planning their tourist activities, recreation, and fishing.

The following weather elements have been reported as the most popular ones: air temperature (87 % of the respondents), precipitation (83 % of the respondents), wind characteristics (46 % of the respondents), hazardous weather phenomena (37 % of the respondents), visibility range on the roads (30 % of the respondents), thunderstorms and ground frost (27 % of the respondents).

Although the population uses mostly radio and TV as the major sources of weather information, the Internet, mobile communications and road informants are becoming more and more valuable as sources of information. The most popular Internet web-site has happened to be the Republican Hydrometeorological Centre web-site [www.pogoda.by](http://www.pogoda.by).

More than half of those interviewed (59 %) are generally satisfied with the contents of the weather forecasts, 38 % more often understand the contents of the forecasts and only 14 % of respondents consider the forecasts to be accurate. 40% of respondents want to know the weather forecast for the coming twenty-four hours, 24 % — for the coming three days and 30 % — for the coming week.

A considerable part of the Belarusian population (87 % of the interviewees) is weather-dependent. Most of the people link the poor condition of their personal health to the fluctuations of atmospheric pressure, air temperature, cloudy weather, smog, fog and disturbed geomagnetic conditions.

The results of the conducted survey have formed a basis for the development of new activities aimed at the enhancement of forms and types of hydrometeorological information delivered to the population.