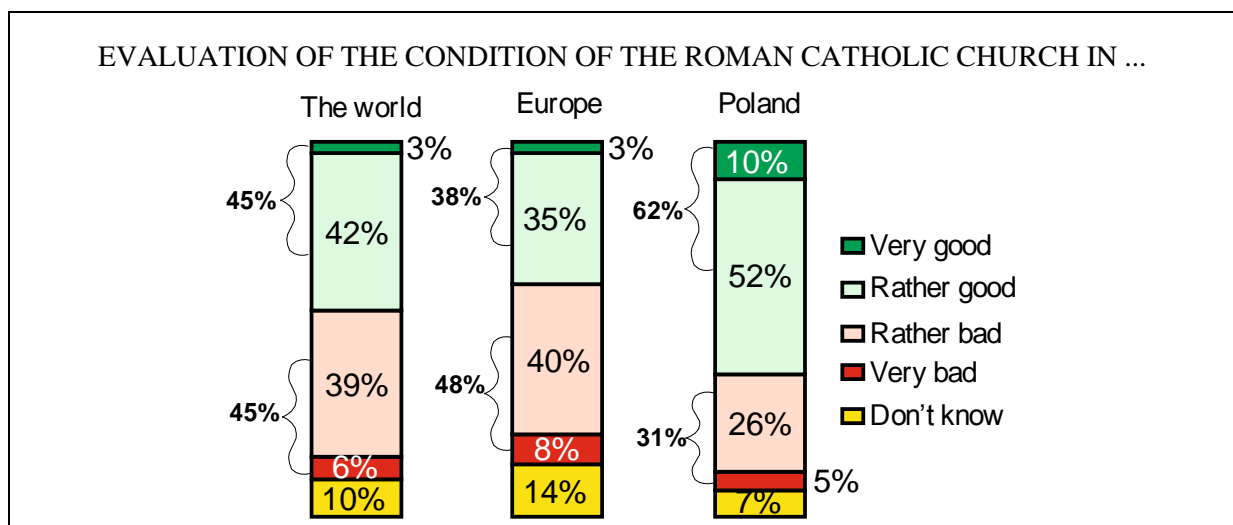


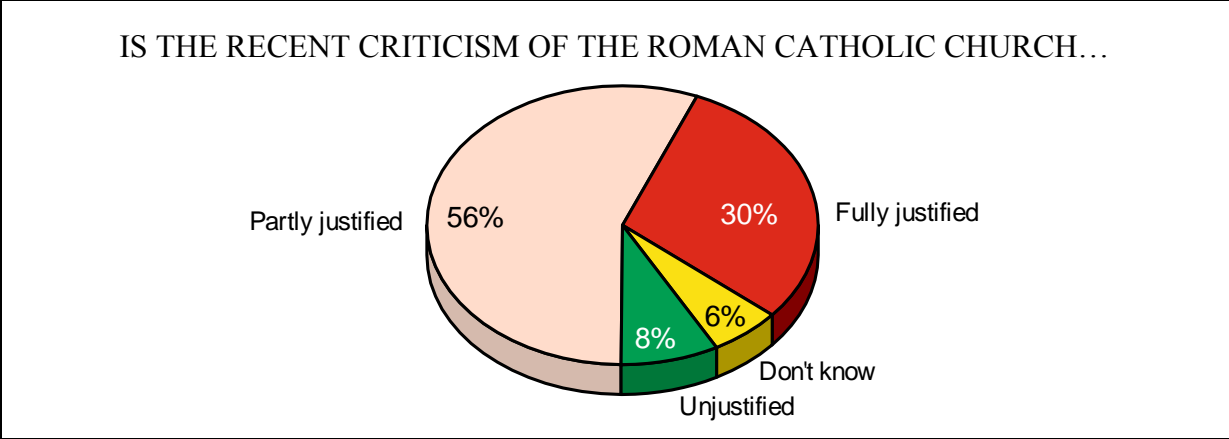
EVALUATION OF THE STATE OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH AND EXPECTATIONS FROM THE NEW POPE

Poles' opinions about the current state of the Roman Catholic Church are strongly divided and the opinion differs depending on where the Church is evaluated. The notes are best for the state of the Church in Poland: almost two-thirds of respondents (62%) think it is good, while one-third (31%) are critical. The global state of the Catholic Church receives mixed evaluations. The proportion giving good and bad notes is equal (45% each). On the other hand, the condition of the Catholic Church in Europe receives more negative evaluations (48%) than positive (38%).

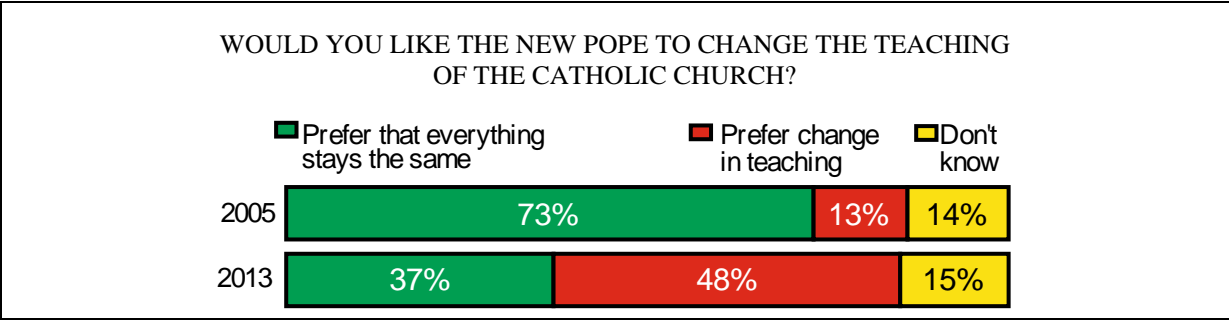


In public opinion, the criticism of the Catholic Church is not without cause. A vast majority of respondents (86%) believe there is at least partial justification for the recently

intense criticism of the Catholic Church and its priests; within this group, one third (30%) think the Church fully deserves the criticism. Only one in twelve Poles (8%) thinks that the criticism is unfounded.



As a consequence of widespread critical attitude of Poles to the Catholic Church, almost half of respondents (48%) would like the new pope to introduce modifications in its teaching, whereas only 37% opt for maintain the status quo in this respect. The desire for reform is stronger than at the beginning of the pontificate of Benedict XVI. In the last 8 years, the number of respondents convinced that the Church teaching needs no modifications fell by half (73% to 37%), while the proportion of those expecting change rose four times (from 13% to 48%).



People who expect the pope to introduce changes in Church teaching elaborated on the postulated modifications in an open-ended question. The most frequent expectation is modernisation and liberalisation of the church, expressed by over one-third (37%) of respondents demanding reforms in the Catholic Church. Usually there are general suggestions that the Church should adjust to the modern world, modernise and become more open (12%). Some specific suggestions are: liberalising views on contraception (7%), IVF (7%), civil partnerships (5%), abortion (5%) and divorce (2%).

Secondly, there are demands regarding the doctrine, customs and traditions (28% in total). The most common expectation in this group is abolishing the celibate (21%). Other suggestions are: changing the service of confession from private to open (3%) and increased influence of women in the Church affairs, including ordination of women (3%).

The third important dimension of expected changes concerns the behaviour of priests (26% in total). The most common demand is effective eradication of paedophilia among them (11%) and general improvement of the morality of priests, exposing transgressions and imposing strict sanctions against priests breaking moral code (7%). Another frequently mentioned issue is changing the priorities in Church activities. Over a quarter of respondents expecting reform would like the Church to move towards spirituality and introduce new forms of evangelism and ecumenism (21%). Over one-seventh of the reform-minded count on the pope to introduce structural and organisational reforms (15%). The most frequent specific issues mentioned in this context are: greater transparency of Church financial affairs (7%) and changes in the model of religious education, such as moving it from school to the parish (5%).

More information about this topic can be found in CBOS report in Polish: *"Evaluation of the state of the Roman Catholic Church and expectations from the new pope"*, March 2013. Fieldwork for national sample: March 2013, N=1060. The random address sample is representative for adult population of Poland.