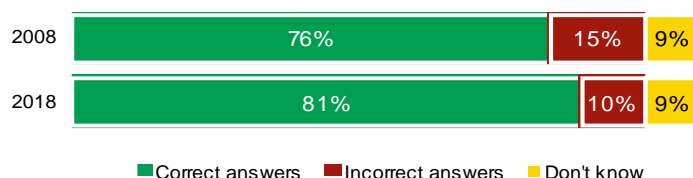


Opinions about the National Independence Day and the politics of memory

The National Independence Day commemorating the rebirth of the Polish state in 1918, after 123 years of absence from the maps of Europe, has a special place in the calendar of Polish public holidays. After the Second World War, in the period of the People's Republic, the date of November 11 was condemned to oblivion. The policy of negation of the achievements of the interwar republic retained influence on the shape of the collective memory of Poles. Back in the second half of the 1990s, only a few were able to answer the question about what was celebrated on November 11 and why.

Currently, the vast majority of respondents (81%) correctly identify the date of 11 November. In comparison to 2008, the percentage of people correctly identifying this date increased by 5 percentage points.

November 11 is a public holiday. What anniversary do we celebrate on this day?



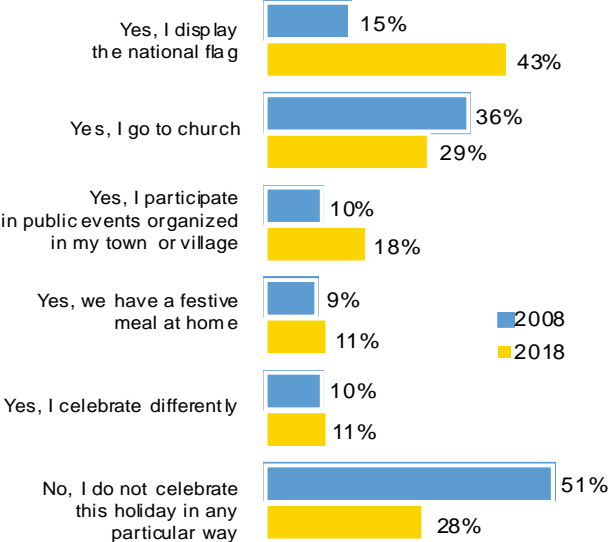
Currently, unlike a decade ago, the majority of Poles (72%) declare celebrating the Independence Day in some way (an increase by 23 percentage points). The most popular

ways of celebrating 11 November are displaying the national flag (43%) and attending a mass (29%). Less often respondents declare that they take part in public celebrations (18%), celebrate the anniversary at home with a festive meal or in another way (11% each).

Compared to 2008, there has been an increase in the percentage of respondents who display the national flag and participate in public celebrations in their place of residence. There has been a decrease in participation in religious services.

November 11 is regarded by the public as the most important of the Polish anniversaries. Most respondents, when asked to indicate the dates that deserve a special commemoration, mention the National Independence Day (76%).

Do you personally celebrate the Independence Day on November 11?



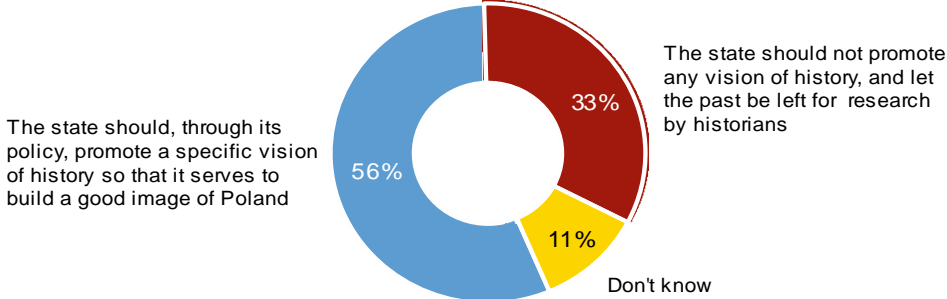
Respondents could choose more than one answer.

The Independence Day celebrations are part of the broadly understood historical policy (or politics of memory). This term covers all kinds of tools at the disposal of the state serving the creation of historical awareness, ranging from the content of school programs to the calendar of national holidays. It can be an instrument of strengthening the unity of the community, but it can also serve to build an image of the state and its position on the international arena.

Public opinion about the need to conduct historical policy are ambiguous. Clearly, however, proponents of the view that the state, through its policy, should promote a specific vision of history so that it would serve to build a good image of Poland prevail numerically (56%). A

third of respondents (33%) are of the opinion that the state should not promote any vision of history, and let the past be left for research and discussion to historians.

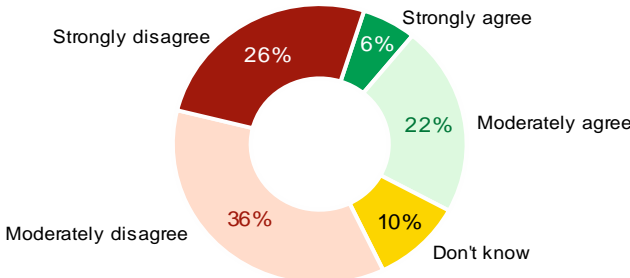
Which view is closer to your own opinion?



The politics of memory or historical policy can be pursued not only at the level of national states. An example of an attempt to build a common European memory is the House of European History opened in 2017: a museum dedicated to the history of Europe. For years, there have also been ideas for creating a common European textbook (strictly speaking: a handbook addressed to the citizens of the European Union).

The possibility of agreeing on one version of historical events in the form of a common European textbook arouses scepticism. Most respondents (62%) think that creating such a textbook is not possible, whereas 28% of respondents believe in the possibility of creating a common history textbook that would present the past in a way accepted by all countries.

Do you agree that it is possible in Europe to create a common history textbook that would present the past in a way that is acceptable to all states?



More information about this topic can be found in CBOS report in Polish: "National Independence Day and Politics of Memory", October 2018. Fieldwork for national sample: September 2018, N=1023. The random address sample is representative for adult population of Poland.