

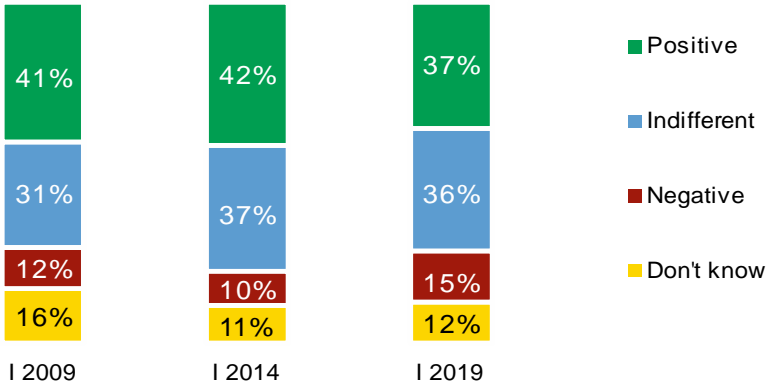
Thirtieth anniversary of the Round Table negotiations

Thirty years ago, on 6 Feb. 1989, the Round Table negotiations began. They were part of the process that ultimately led to the transformation of the Polish People's Republic into the present system. The talks between the government and the opposition were held for two months, until 5 Apr. 1989, in three main negotiating teams (economy and social policy, political reforms and trade union pluralism). They resulted in decisions concerning, inter alia, holding partly free elections to the Sejm in June 1989, establishing the Senate and the office of the President of Poland, as well as changes in the law enabling the opposition to access the media and the official registration of "Solidarity". This event has become an essential component of the founding myth of the democratic Polish state.

Research shows that the perception of the symbolic importance of talks between the government and the opposition sides in the first months of 1989 is changing. Ten years ago, 40% of respondents asked to indicate the moment marking the end of communism in Poland chose the Round Table negotiations. Currently, this percentage is clearly lower at 22%. In turn, the significance attributed to the first completely free parliamentary election of 1991 increased. In 2009, 9% of respondents recognized it as the end of communism in Poland, and today 25% do. In this year's study, it was the most often chosen answer.

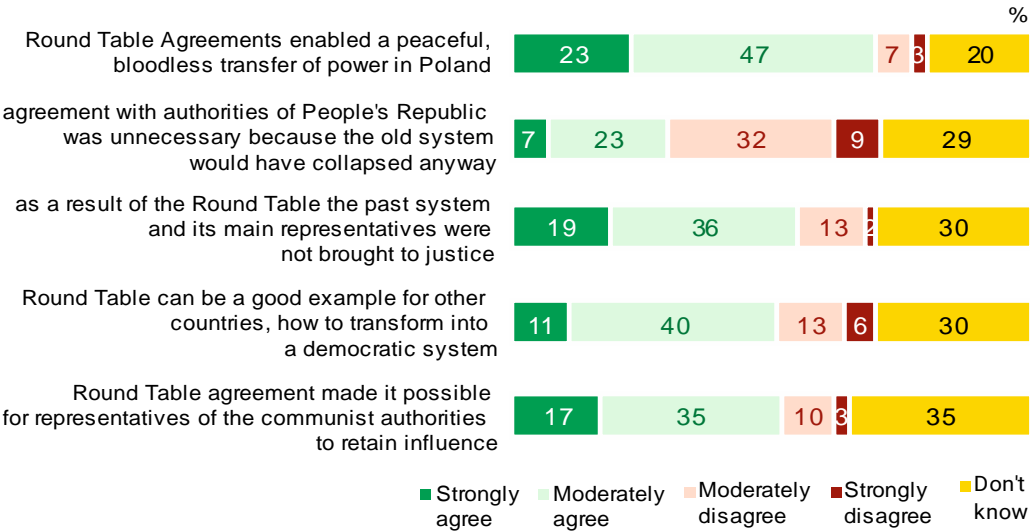
Currently, 37% of respondents describe their attitude to the agreements concluded at the Round Table as positive, almost the same (36%) as indifferent, and 15% describe it as negative. Although the declared attitude to the agreements has not changed in recent years in a fundamental way, there is a slight decrease in positive ratings (by 5 percentage points compared to 2014), and a corresponding rise in negative attitudes (by 5 points compared to 2014).

What is your present attitude to the agreements concluded at the Round Table?



Over two-thirds of respondents (70%) agree that the Round Table agreements allowed a peaceful, bloodless transfer of power in Poland. Half of them (51%) also think that the Round Table may be a good example for other countries, how to transform into a democratic system. At the same time, a large proportion of respondents see the costs of agreement between the opposition and the government side. Slightly more than half believe that, as a result of the Round Table in Poland, the previous system and its main representatives were not brought to justice (55%), and that these agreements made it possible for the representatives of the communist authorities to retain influence (52%). A relatively small percentage of respondents (30%) agree with the statement that the agreement with the authorities of the People's Republic was unnecessary, because the old system would have collapsed anyway; 41% of respondents are of the opposite opinion.

Do you agree with the following statements:



More information about this topic can be found in CBOS report in Polish: "30th Anniversary of Round Table Agreement ", January 2019. Fieldwork for national sample: January 2019, N=928. The random address sample is representative for adult population of Poland.