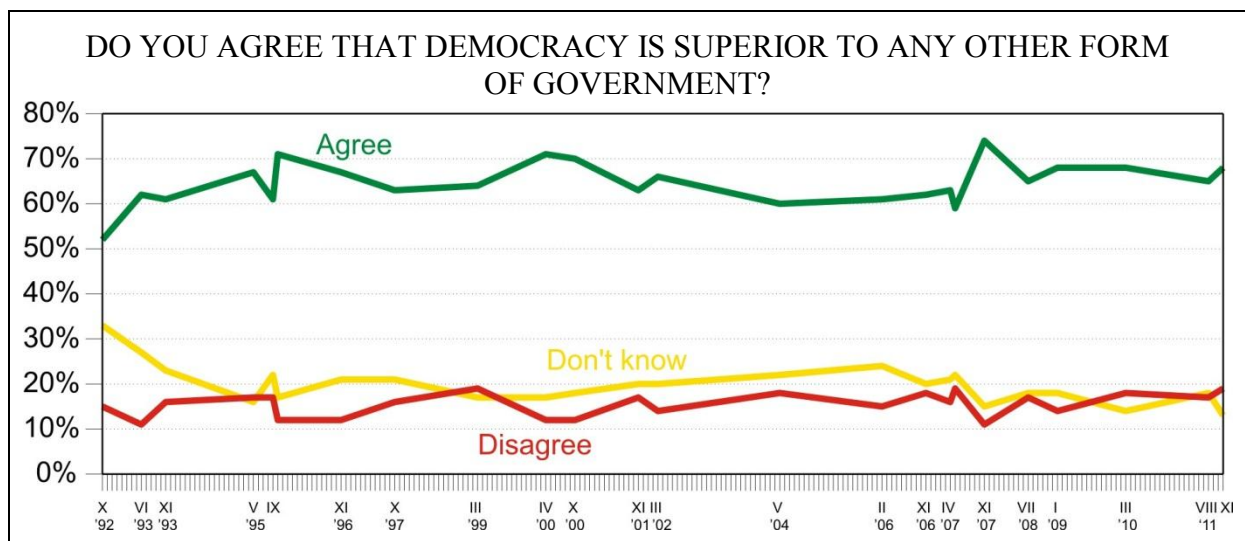
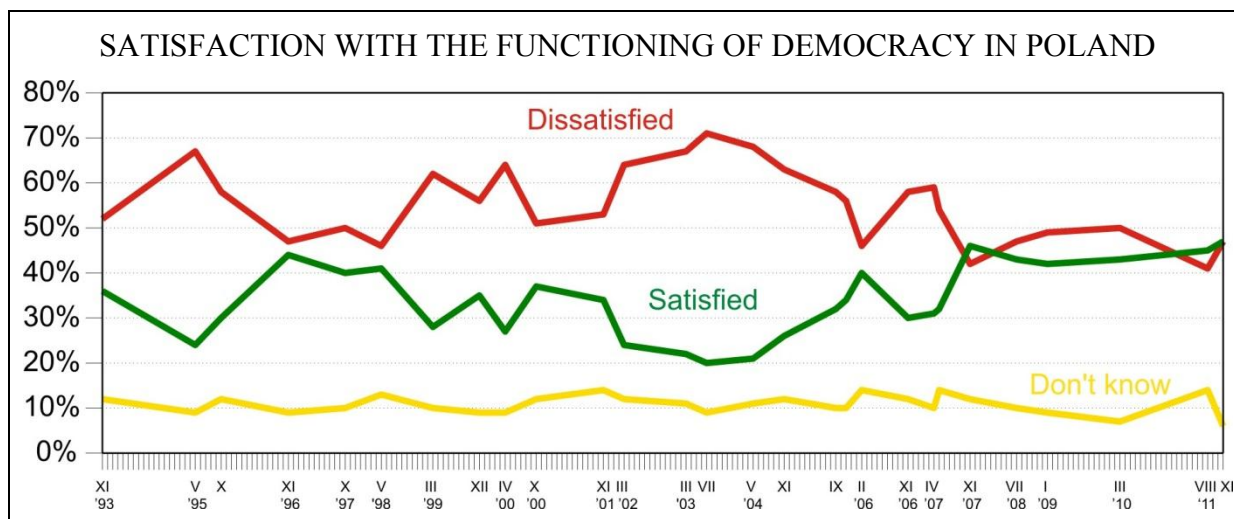


DEMOCRACY AND POLITICAL PARTIES

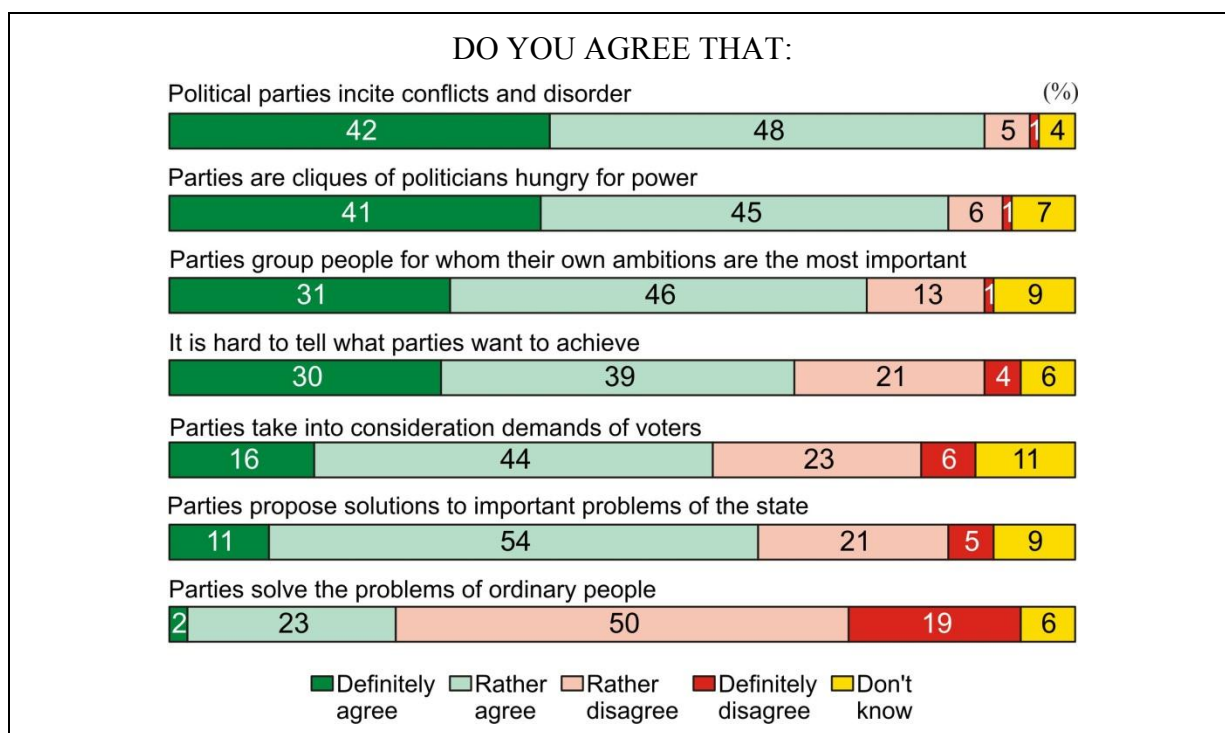
Since the beginning of transformation, Poles consistently declare support for democracy, expressing their conviction that it is superior to any other form of government. In recent years, the acceptance of the democratic order changed to a small extent. In the last survey, two-thirds (68%) agreed that democracy is superior to any other form of government, while almost one-fifth (19%) disagreed.



Democracy as a systemic model is widely accepted in Poland, but its practical functioning is questionable. Until 2007, Poles were critical about functioning of democracy. Since then, however, opinions improved. In our last survey, equal groups of people (47% each) had positive and negative opinion about the functioning of democracy in Poland.



In spite of the widespread acceptance of democracy, Polish people have a largely negative opinion about their political elites. Parties and politicians are criticized for their motives and methods of activity. A vast majority (90%) think that political parties incite conflicts and disorder. A similar group (86%) agree with the statement that parties are cliques of politicians whose goal is to get power. Three quarters (77%) think that fulfilling their own ambition is the most important goal for politicians. Over two-thirds (69%) agree that it is impossible to tell what political parties want to achieve.



On the other hand, the majority believe that parties are a representation of voters which prepares the programme for the country. Almost two-thirds (65%) agree with the opinion that political parties propose solutions for important problems facing the country. Three-fifths (60%) are convinced that parties take into consideration the will of the voters. However, only a quarter of respondents think that parties care about them.

The attitude to politicians and to political parties influences the attitude to democracy. Good evaluation of the political elites strengthens the acceptance of democracy and satisfaction with its functioning. The reverse is also true: negative image of parties and politicians weakens the acceptance of democracy.

More information about this topic can be found in CBOS report in Polish: "*Opinions about democracy after parliamentary elections*" and "*Opinions about political parties*", November 2011. Fieldwork for national sample: October 2011 (N=1051), and November 2011 (N=969) . The random address sample is representative for adult population of Poland