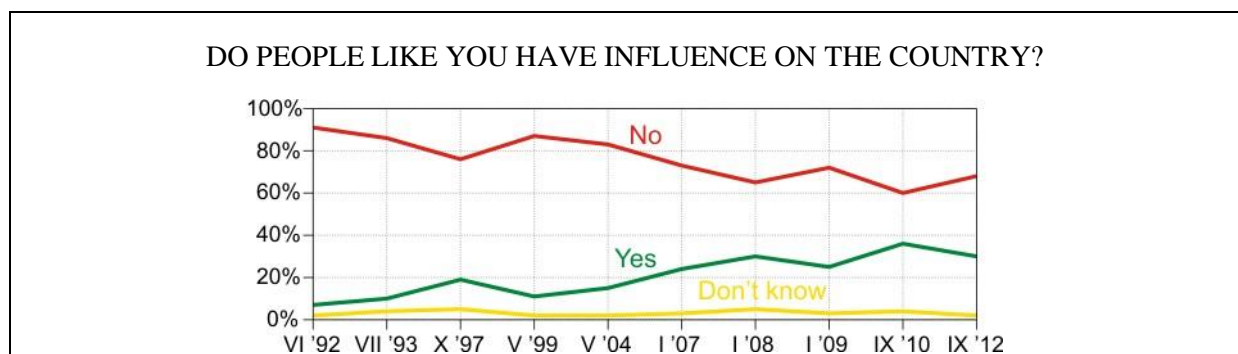
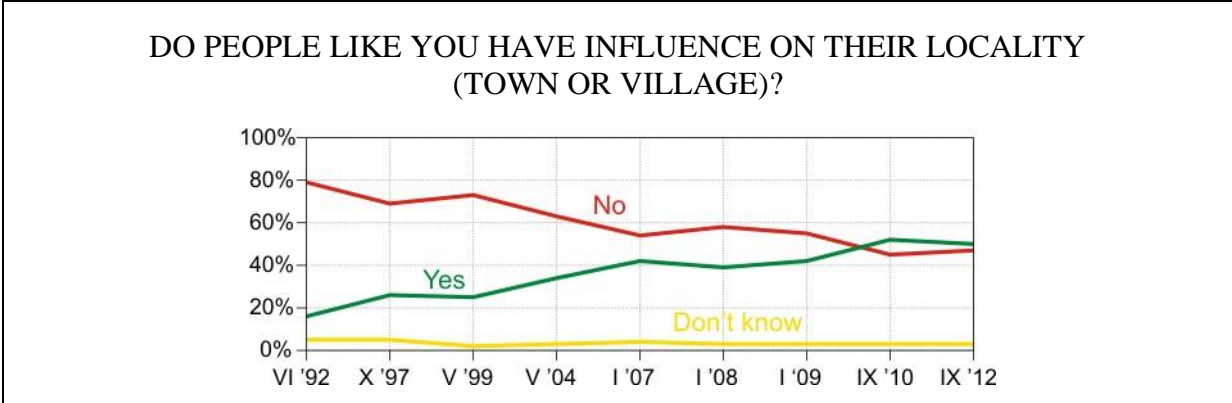


SUBJECTIVE INFLUENCE ON PUBLIC AFFAIRS AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Systemic transformation has increased the civic awareness of the Polish people. The perception of influence on public affairs increased systematically from early 1990s to 2008. In recent years, between one-fourth and one-third of respondents declared having such a feeling. At present, a smaller group than two years ago (30%) claim that what happens in the country depends on their will. In spite of the increase in civic subjectivity, the majority of Poles (68%) still believe that people such as them have no influence on the state affairs.



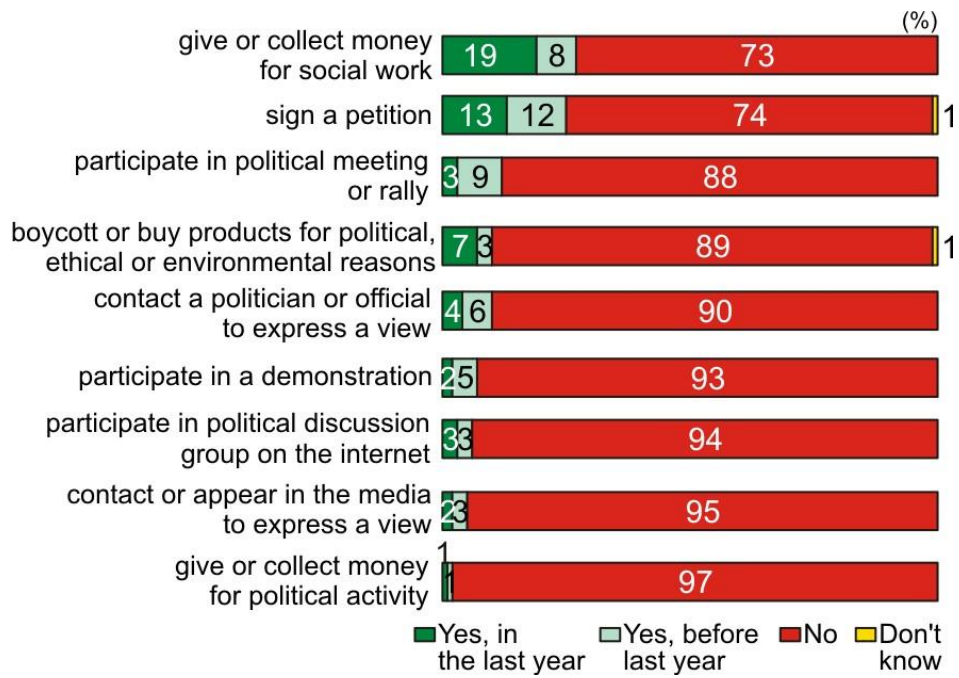
The situation is much better on the local level. Half of adult Poles (50%) think that they have influence on the local affairs, i.e. their town or village. In the last two years this proportion has not changed, but it has increased spectacularly since the 1990s.



The perception of influence on the national affairs is related to the participation in parliamentary elections. Citizens who declare having voted in the last parliamentary elections have a higher level of subjective influence than non-voters. The conviction that ordinary people have a say in the affairs of the country and locality is also related other forms of civic and social activity.

In general, Poles are not very keen on participating in the political community. Compared with other democratic countries, electoral turnout is low. Other forms of civic activity are not very popular, either. According to declarations, a relatively large group (27%) gave or collected money for social activities, in which 19% have done this in the last year. A quarter (25%) have signed a petition; half of them (13%) in the last year. One-eighth (12%) of respondents have participated in a political meeting or rally. One in ten (10%) boycotted or bought certain products because of political, ethical or environmental reasons. The same proportion (10%) have contacted a politician or official in public administration to express their views. A smaller group participated in a demonstration (7%), took part in an internet forum on political topics (6%), contacted or appeared in the media to voice an opinion on an issue (5%). Only very few respondents (2%) gave or collected money for political activity.

DID YOU EVER...



More information about this topic can be found in CBOS report in Polish: *"Subjective influence on public affairs and civic engagement"*, October 2012. Fieldwork for national sample: September 2012, N=985. The random address sample is representative for adult population of Poland.