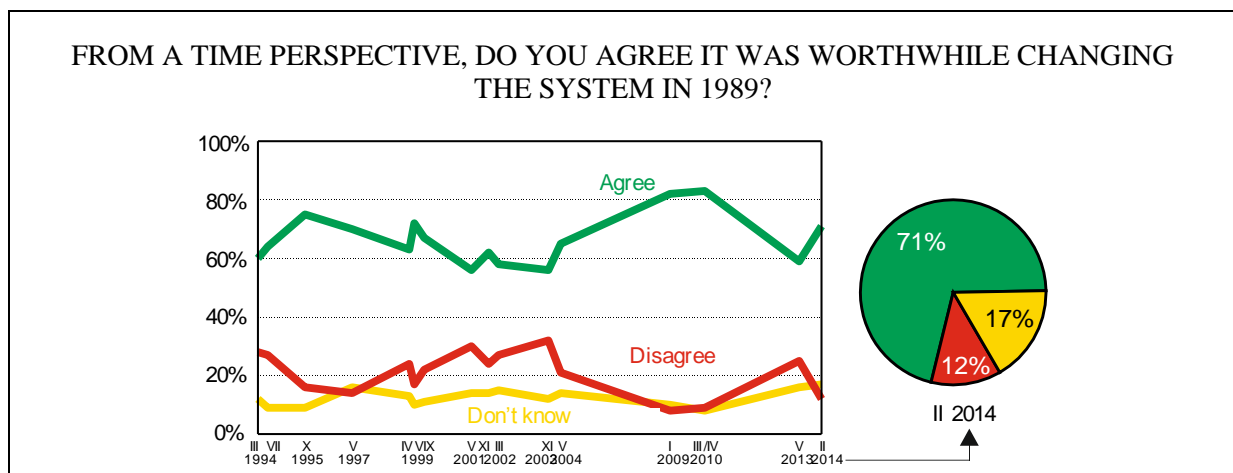


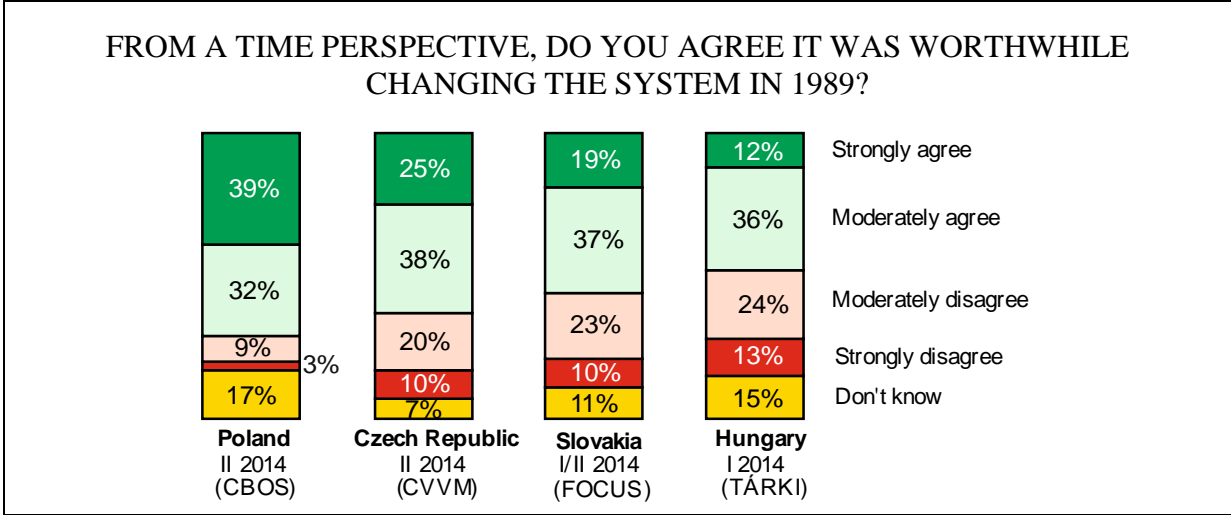
EVALUATION OF SYSTEMIC CHANGE

A quarter of a century ago, on 4 June 1989, as result of the Round Table agreement, semi-free parliamentary elections took place. The government of Tadeusz Mazowiecki was formed after these elections. He was the first non-communist prime minister after WWII and his government started the systemic change in Poland.

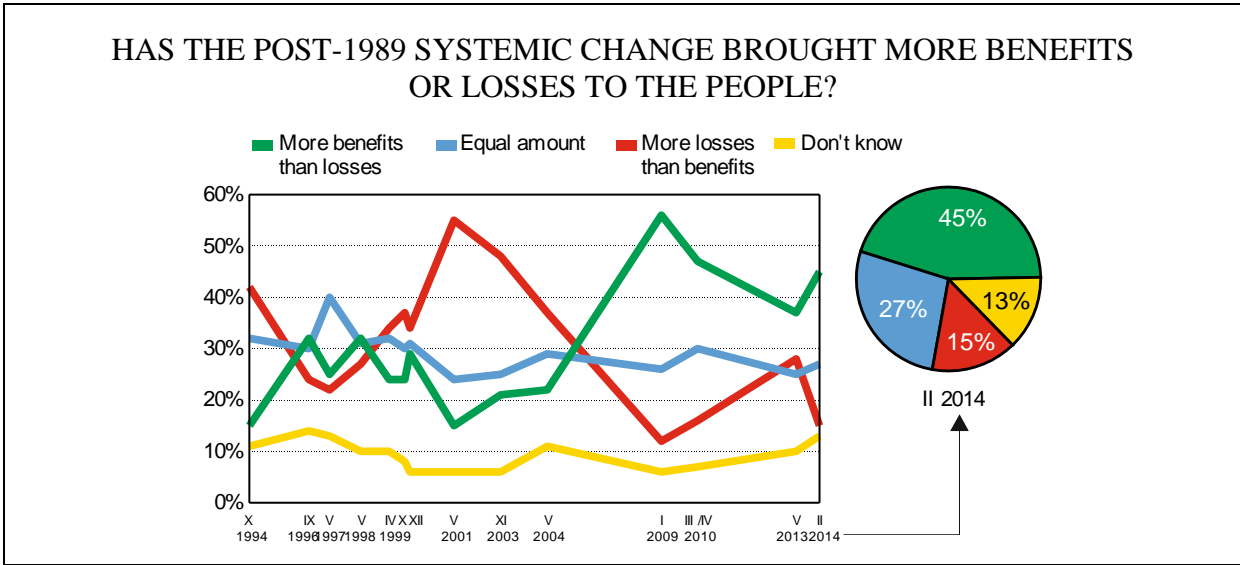
A large majority (71%) think that 25 years ago it was worthwhile changing the system, while 12% disagree. It is worth noting that the level of acceptance of systemic change in Poland never fell below 56%, and in 2009-2010 it was on the level of 82%-83%.



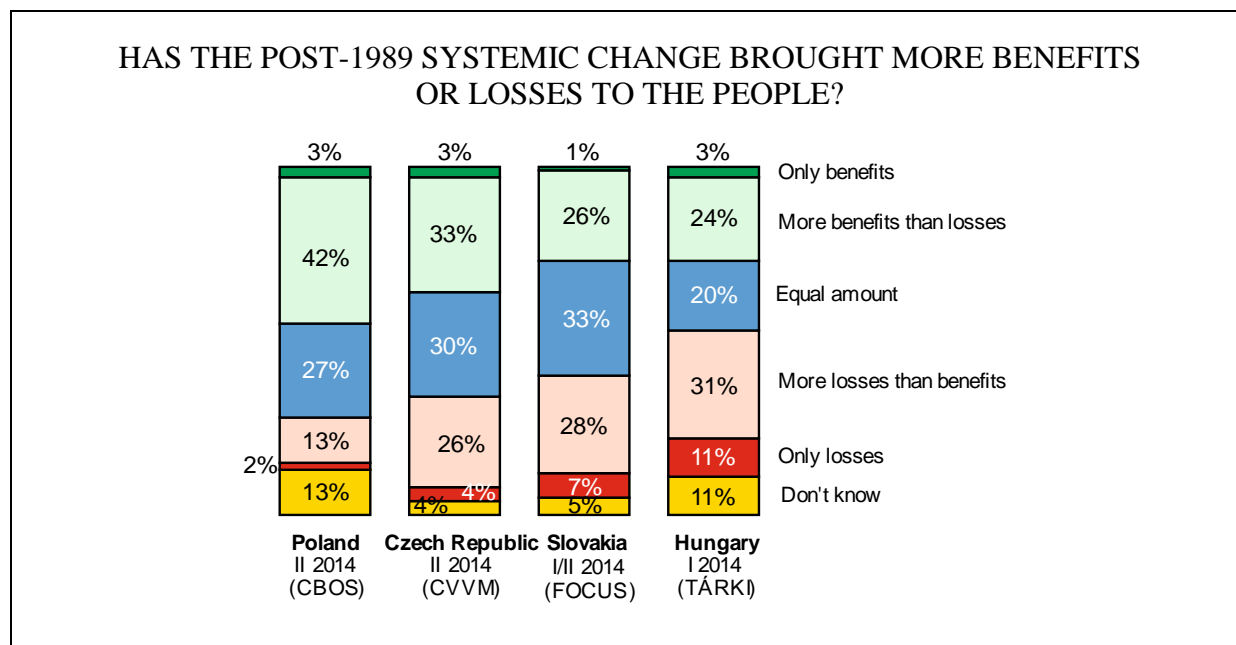
The conviction that system needed to be changed is more widespread in Poland than in the other countries of the Visegrad Four. Hungarians are least happy about the systemic change.



The evaluation of the social consequences of transformation is not unequivocal. The plurality (45%) believe that the post-1989 changes brought more benefits than losses to the people. Compared with the previous year, the percentage of positive opinions markedly increased (an 8-point rise). Moreover, current balance is one of the best ever noted in CBOS surveys. Better evaluations were only noted in 2009, while in 2010 they were similar to today's public opinion. The improvement of societal opinion about the transformation is indicated by the low number of respondents who think it brought more losses than benefits to the people (15%, a 13-point drop from 2013).



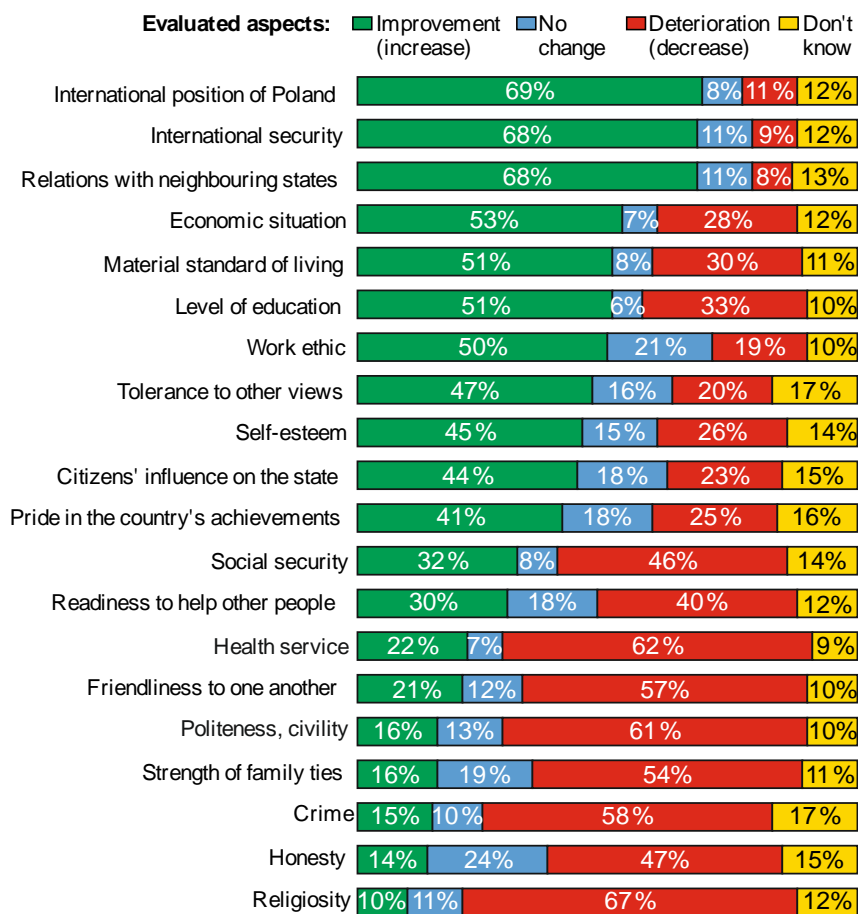
Poles evaluate the social consequences of transformation better than the residents of the other countries of the Visegrad Group.



Ambivalence in the evaluations of the changes in the last 25 years is indicated in detail by the opinions on different dimensions and spheres of life. Poles appreciate, above all, positive changes in the international situation: improvement in international position of the country, improved national security and good relations with neighbouring states. A large number of respondents note the socio-economic consequences of transformation: improvement of the economy and material standard of living, increased levels of education, better work ethic. A slightly smaller group agree that in the last quarter-century there was increase in tolerance to different opinions, self-esteem of Polish people and pride in the country.

On the negative side, Poles note the increase in individualism and weakening of interpersonal ties. A large group see the decrease in religiosity. In prevailing opinion, people are now less friendly to one another, the family ties are weaker, and there is less readiness to help others. Respondents tend to think that people are less honest than at the end of the 1980s, and that crime rate has increased. The perceived negative consequences are also: deterioration of health service and decreased social security (associated with the appearance of unemployment, which was unknown under the former system).

EVALUATION OF THE CHANGES IN POLAND FROM THE END OF 1980S UNTIL TODAY



More information about this topic can be found in CBOS reports in Polish: *"Evaluation of 25 years of systemic transformation"* and *"Opinions in changes in different spheres of life"*, May 2014. Fieldwork for national sample: February 2014, N=1020. The random address sample is representative for adult population of Poland.