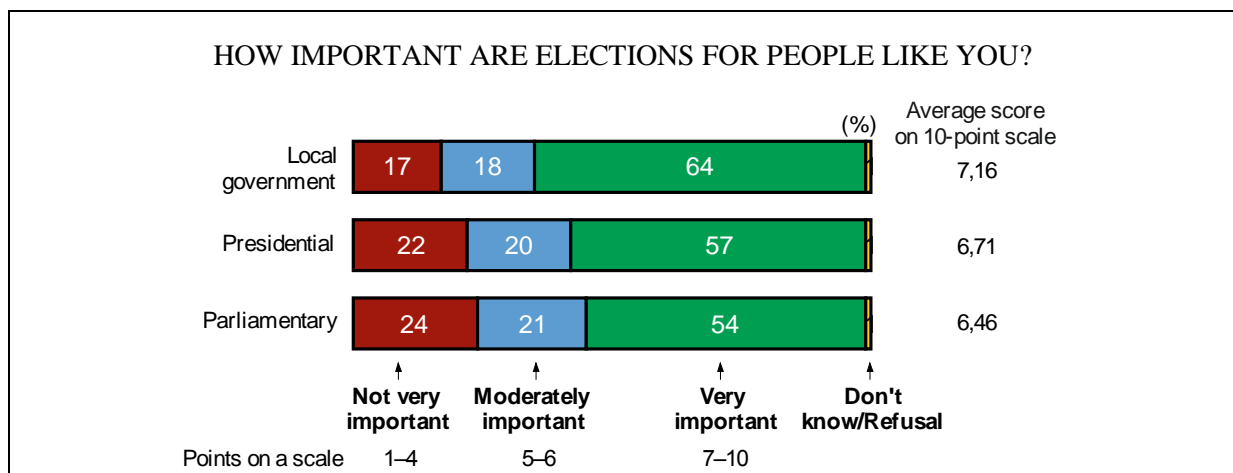
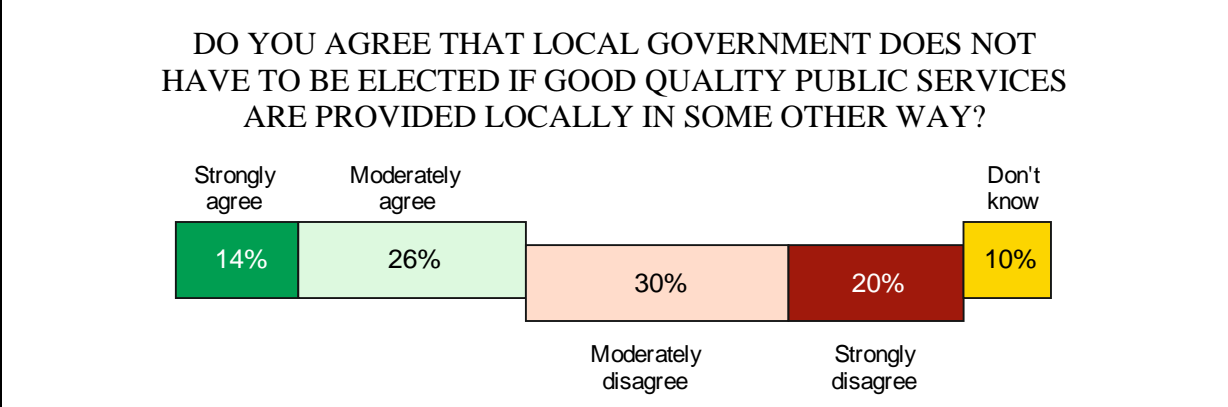


LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS

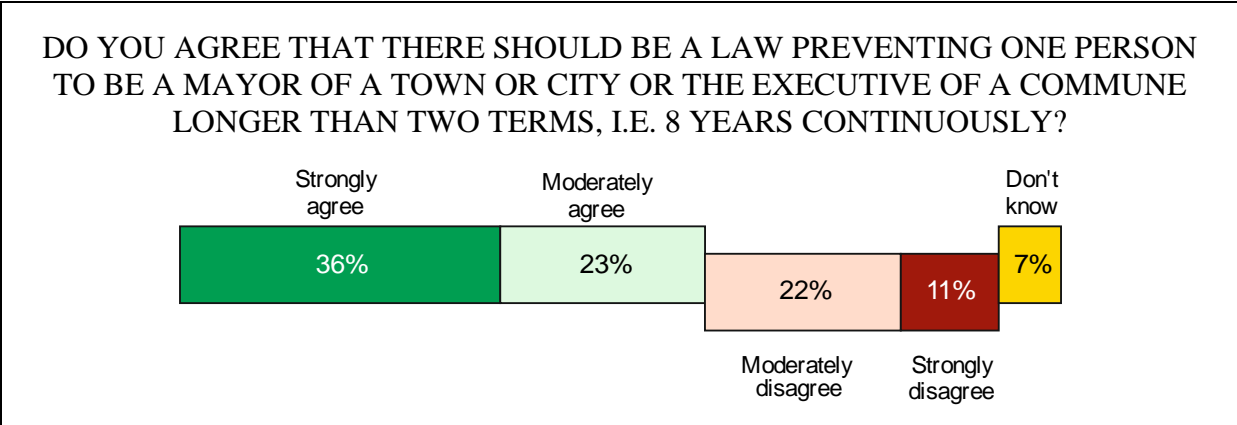
In November, local government elections were held in Poland. In practice, it means that several different votes were held in each unit of local government. Citizens elected executives of the communes (gmina), mayors of towns and cities, and councillors in communes, counties (powiat) and voivodships. According to the survey, these elections are at least as important as parliamentary and presidential elections: 64% of respondents consider them as very important. Local and regional elections are significantly more important for people living in small towns (up to 20 thousand inhabitants) and villages than for residents of the biggest cities.



Although Poles think that local government elections (especially the vote for the executive in towns and communes) are important, 40% of respondents would be willing to abolish them if good quality public services were provided to them in some other way. However, the prevailing opinion opposes abolishing local government elections.



Local government in Poland is evaluated relatively well and it is often re-elected. Mayors in towns and cities and commune executives sometimes remain in office several terms, for a very long period of time. Some commentators consider this as evidence of stability of power, which is a positive factor for development. Others, however, see this as a proof that local government is monopolized and there is no effective political competition, causing the atrophy of democracy. In public debate, term limits for mayors and commune executives were proposed. The majority of Poles (59%) would like term limits to be obligatory.



More information about this topic can be found in CBOS reports in Polish: "Opinions about elections to local government" and "Rank of local government elections and interest in decisions of different levels of government", November 2014. Fieldwork for national sample: October 2014, N=919. The random address sample is representative for adult population of Poland.