

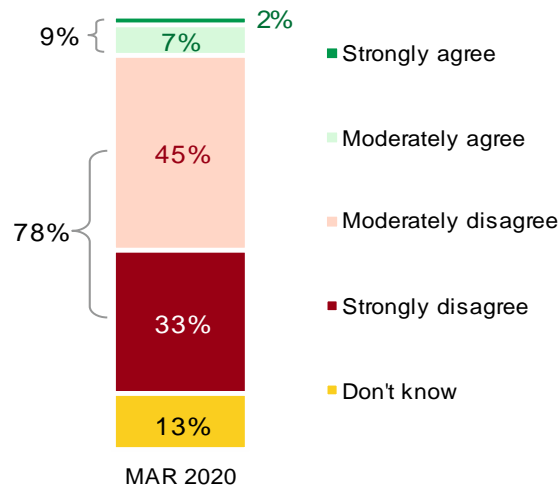
## **Katyń massacre and evaluation of Polish-Russian relations**

The term “Katyń massacre” refers to the mass shooting of Polish citizens, to a large extent officers of the Polish Army, as well as officers of the State Police and the Border Protection Corps, carried out by the NKVD in the spring of 1940 in the east: in Katyń and other locations such as Kalinin (today Tver), Kharkiv, Minsk and Kiev. This year marks the 80th anniversary of these events.

Respondents' declarations show that elementary knowledge of the Katyń massacre is now almost universal (97%). Over half of respondents (56%) know a lot about it, and two-fifths (41%) only heard about it.

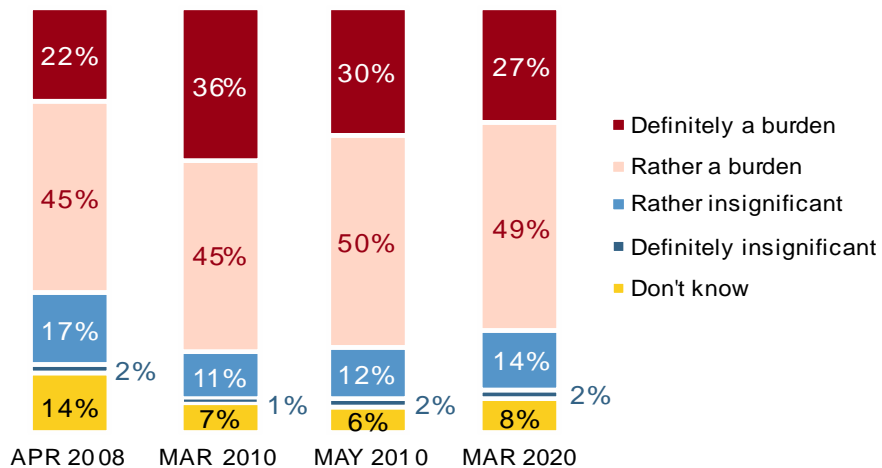
The Katyń massacre is still not fully documented. There are problems with establishing the names of all victims (e.g. the so-called Belarusian Katyń list has not been restored) or their burial sites (e.g. from the so-called Ukrainian Katyń list). There is also lack of access to documents from Russian archives, which would allow Polish historians to better reconstruct the course of events. In the opinion of the vast majority of Poles (78%), Russia has not taken sufficient action to clarify the circumstances of the Katyń massacre. Only nine out of one hundred (9%) respondents believe that the Russian side has done enough in this respect.

**Do you agree that Russia has already done enough to explain the circumstances of the Katyń massacre in 1940?**



Eight out of ten respondents (76%), i.e. slightly fewer than ten years ago, think that the Katyń massacre continues to be a burden on Polish-Russian relations, while roughly one-sixth (16%) claim that it is irrelevant in this context.

**In your opinion, is the Katyń massacre in 1940 still a burden on contemporary Polish-Russian relations or does it currently have no great significance for these relations?**



From the early 1990s on, Polish-Russian relations were generally perceived as bad or average. A noticeable, but short-lived improvement in ratings followed the plane crash near Smoleńsk, while their significant deterioration was noted after the annexation of Crimea by Russia and its military aggression in eastern Ukraine. Currently, more than half of Poles

(52%) assess them badly, i.e. 13 percentage points less than in May 2014. Since then, there have been more respondents who believe that relations between our countries are neither good nor bad (increase from 27% to 33%). Still, only very few (5%) say they are good.

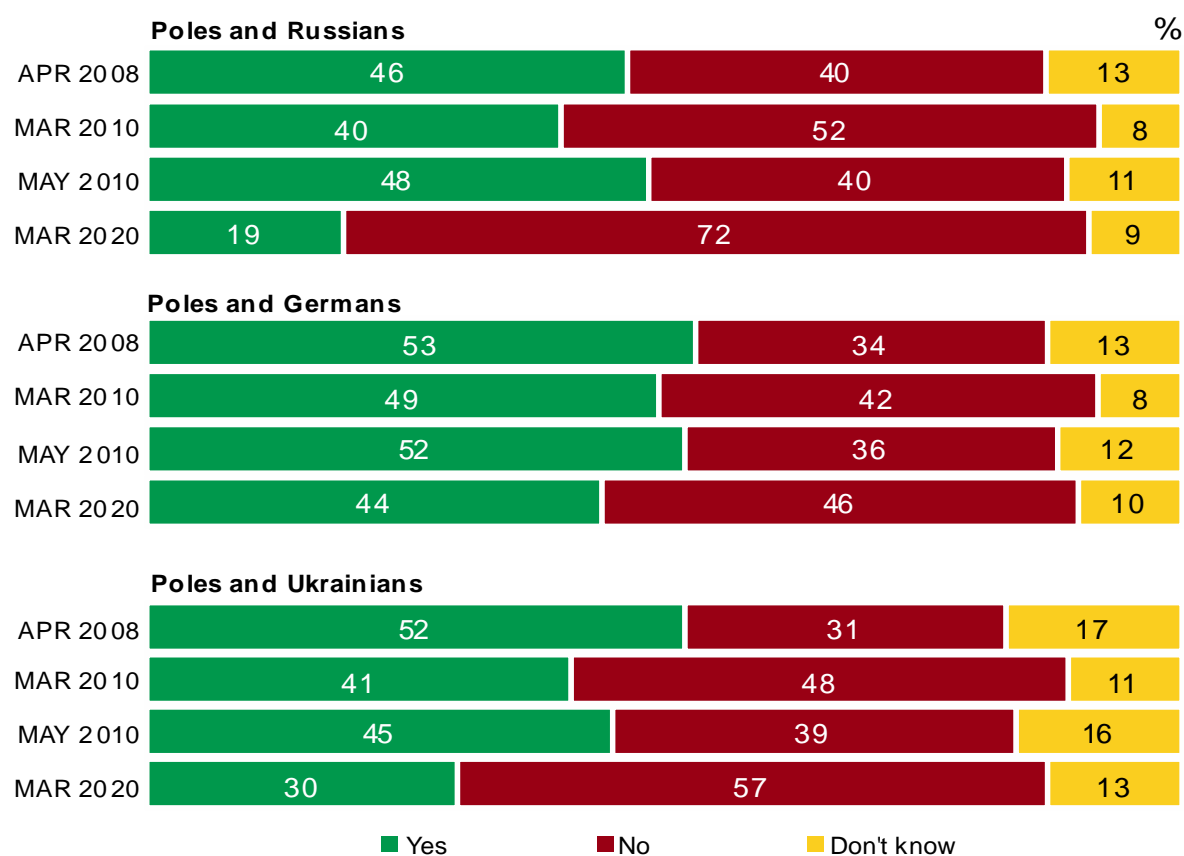
### How do you assess current Polish-Russian relations? \*



\* Until February 1991, the question concerned Polish-Soviet relations. "Don't know" answers were omitted.

One of the indicators of relations between nations may be the belief that it is possible to agree on a common version of events in the history of these nations and, for example, to create one history textbook. According to declarations, it would be most difficult for Poles to create such a hypothetical history textbook with Russians. Almost three-quarters of respondents (72%) consider it impossible, while one-fifth (19%) are optimistic about such an undertaking. Currently, scepticism about establishing a common Polish-Russian version of recent history is much more common than in the previous decade. Also more often than ten years ago, Poles are sceptical about the possibility of agreeing a joint version of the events of recent history together with Ukrainians and Germans. In case of the former, agreement on a textbook for learning history is unrealistic according to more than half (57% doubt it, while 30% think it is possible). Opinions on the Polish-German consensus on recent history are almost equally divided: more than two-fifths (44%) consider it achievable, and slightly more (46%) think it is impossible.

**In your opinion, is it possible to agree on the most important events in recent history and, for example, to create a joint version of a history textbook that would be obligatory in schools in both countries, for:**



More information about this topic can be found in CBOS report in Polish: "Katyn Massacre and Its Significance for Polish-Russians Relations", April 2020. Fieldwork for national sample: March 2020, N=875. The random sample is representative for adult population of Poland.