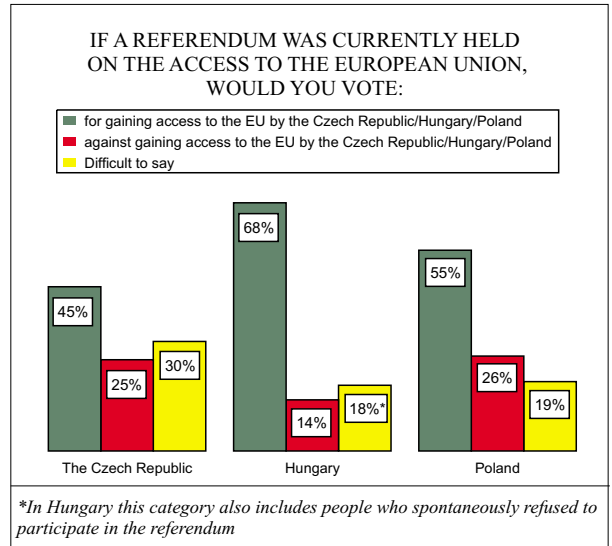


**IN THIS ISSUE:**

- NEW NATO MEMBERS ON INTEGRATION WITH THE EUROPEAN UNION
- OPINIONS ON THE INTERNATIONAL POSITION OF POLAND
- LESS FAVOURABLE OPINIONS ON KEY AUTHORITIES
- POLES, CZECHS AND HUNGARIANS ON THE CONDITION OF THEIR EMPLOYERS AND JOB SECURITY

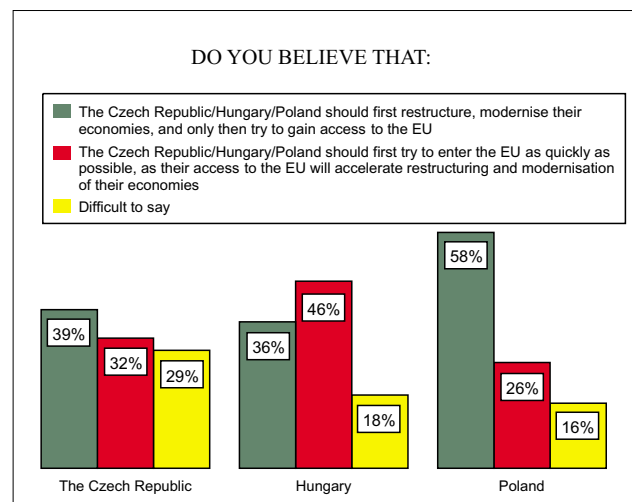
## NEW NATO MEMBERS ON INTEGRATION WITH THE EUROPEAN UNION

The access of the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland to NATO is a significant step towards reintegration of these countries with the West. Although the event is very important for these countries in terms of their feeling of security, it will probably have a minor impact on everyday life of their citizens. For the public, their living standards and, indirectly, the sustainability of the democratic order, economic and political integration with West European states within the European Union will be much more important. In May, three research centres (IVVM, TARKI, CBOS) held a poll on public reactions to the integration with the European Union.



The results of the research show that there are mixed feelings about integration with the EU in Czech, Hungarian and Polish societies. The Hungarians are decidedly the most integration-minded. Public support for integration in a hypothetical referendum is highest in Hungary. Hungarians also express the strongest opinion that their access to the EU will accelerate modernisation of the economy. They are also the most positive about the quick pace of integration processes. Poland seems to be second in this respect. In the Czech Republic, support for integration is lower than in Poland. Like Poles, Czechs believe that their economy should be modernised before joining the EU. The majority of both Poles and Czechs

are dissatisfied with the relations between their countries and the EU to date. The level of optimism in respect of gaining access to the organisation is also noticeably lower in these two countries than in Hungary. However, despite some similarities between Polish and Czech public opinion on the integration, the Czechs seem to be less comfortable with this idea than Poles and Hungarians. Moreover, many of them have not yet formed their opinions on particular issues related to the EU and to the integration with it.



The support for entering the EU has fallen significantly in Poland

during less than six months (from December '98 to May '99) and is steadily declining since 1996. If a referendum was held recently, 55% of respondents would vote for (9 points less than at the end of the previous year), and 26% would vote against (7 points more). With the declining support for integration, the percentage of people convinced that Poland is not economically prepared to join the EU has increased from 50% to 58%. There is a growing conviction that Poland will have to wait a long time for being officially accepted as one of the EU member states. The perspective of joining the EU was clearly getting closer in Polish public opinion in the period '94-'96, while the last survey shows that the number of people who believe that our membership is very far off has currently increased.

PUBLIC OPINION RESEARCH CENTER - CBOS -

4a Żurawia  
00-503 Warszawa  
POLAND

Ph: (48 22) 629 35 69  
(48 22) 628 37 04  
(48 22) 693 58 94

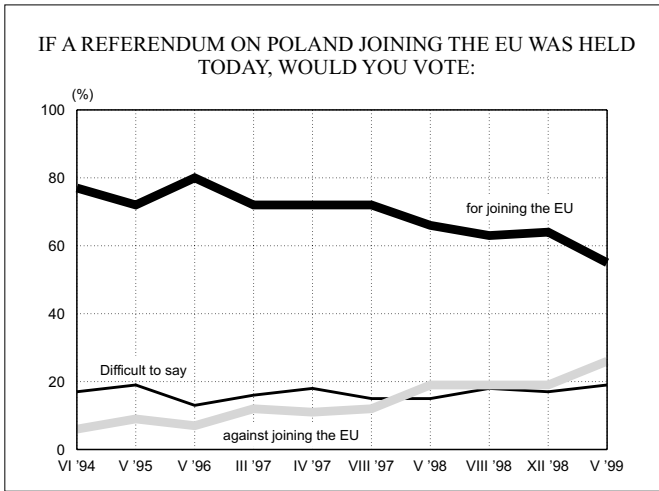
Fax: (48 22) 629 40 89

E-mail: [cbos@pol.pl](mailto:cbos@pol.pl)

<http://www.cbos.pl>

© COPYRIGHT BY CBOS 1999

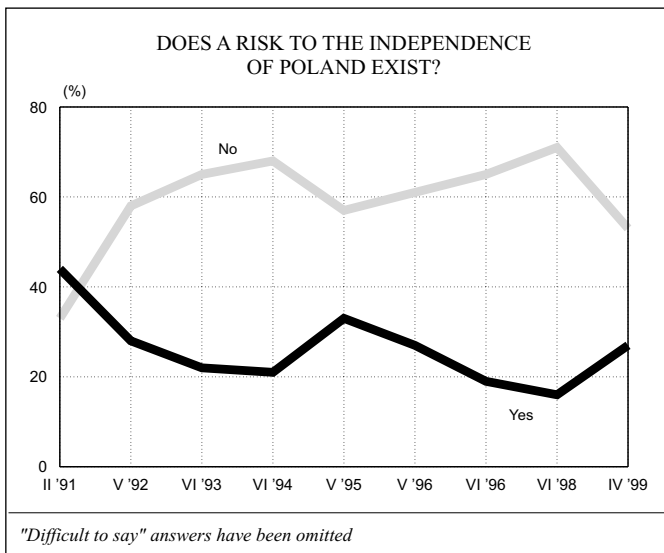
ALL SOURCES MUST BE CREDITED WHEN ANY PART OF THIS PUBLICATION IS REPRODUCED



You will find more information on the subject in CBOS bulletin, "Poles, Czechs, Hungarians on integration with the European Union", June '99.

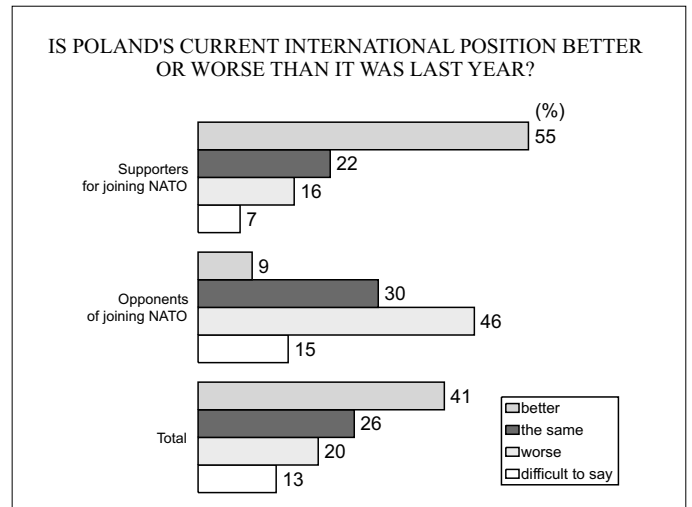
## OPINIONS OF THE INTERNATIONAL POSITION OF POLAND

Most Poles see no risks to our independence. However, the Kosovo conflict and related tensions have increased the fear for the country's safety. Growing concern is a risk of the global conflict and an anticipated threat from Russia. Most of the polled who believe that the Polish independence is in danger (44% of the believers in such a danger and 12% of all polled individuals) are of the opinion that the source of it is the war in Yugoslavia; almost as many (43%) believe that the risk comes from Russia.

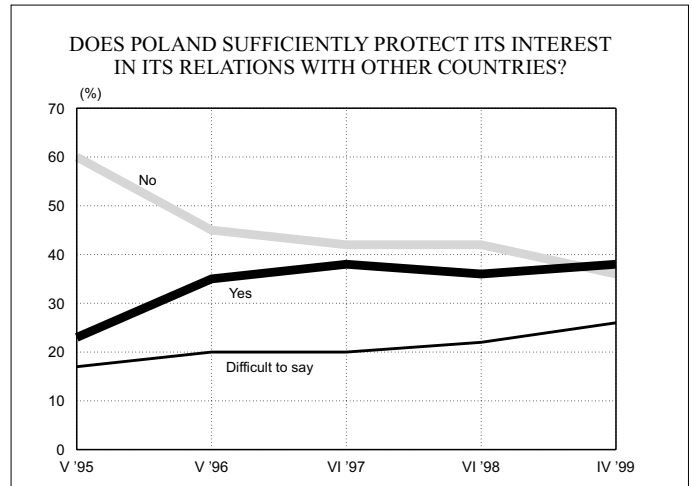


Despite increased concern with the nation's security, the opinion on changes in the geopolitical position of Poland is optimistic. Most respondents (over four-fifths) believe that the Poland's international position has improved during the last year, and only one-fifth is of the opinion that it has deteriorated. Those in favour of

Poland joining the NATO evaluate Polish international position much better than the opponents of this step.



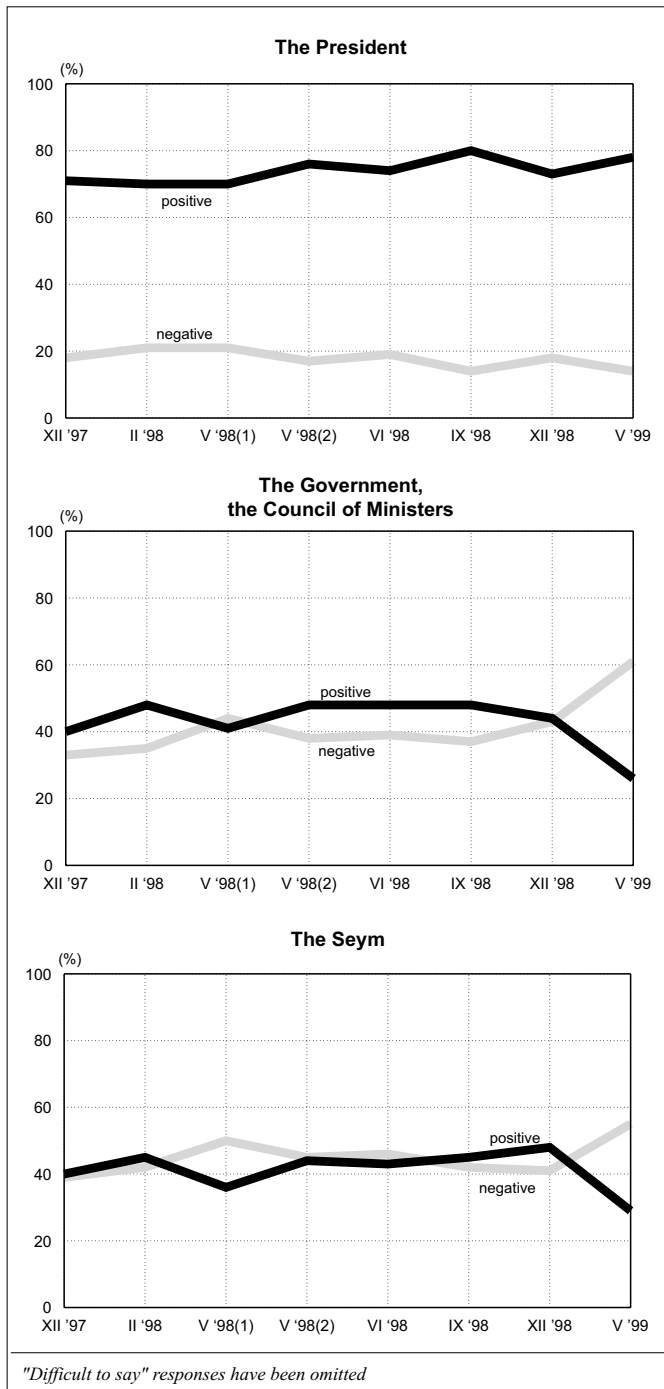
Most of those polled (56%) believe that in the current situation Poland's fate depends more on the structure of international powers than on her newly reclaimed identity and foreign policy (27%). However, a steady decrease in pessimistic views on Poland's ability to take care of itself in pursuing its foreign policy was noted. Despite the improvement, opinions are divided on whether Polish politicians are able to sufficiently protect our interests in relations with other countries.



For more information on this topic, see CBOS bulletin, "Opinions on Poland's international position", June '99.

## LESS FAVOURABLE OPINIONS ON KEY AUTHORITIES

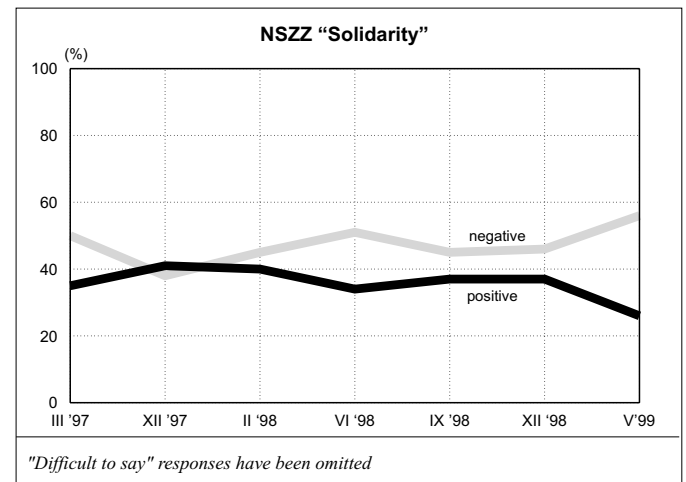
The first six months of this year were a politically difficult period in Poland. Many occupational groups (specially the farmers) expressed discontent with their situation and with the Government policy. Public dissatisfaction influenced the perceptions and opinions on Poland's key authorities - during the last five months we have witnessed mostly a deterioration in opinions on their functioning.



In May, before the visit of Pope John Paul II to Poland, we noted a major drop in positive opinions on the Government (by 18 percentage points as compared to December '98), the Sejm (Lower House of Parliament) (by 19 percentage points) and the Senate (by 17 points). Opinions on local authorities also worsened, though not so radically (a 4-point drop). Only the President noted a slight increase in positive opinions about his activities (a 5 percentage points increase).

In May, only one of four of those polled had a positive opinion on the Government's activities, and three-fifths had a negative opinion. The decline in positive opinions was most noticeable in small and average towns (up to 100 thousand citizens) and in the rural areas. It was less conspicuous in large cities. The deterioration of

opinions on actions undertaken by the Government is most noticeable among individuals with both elementary and university level education, and among unskilled workers as well as management and intelligentsia. These are the groups who had best opinions on government activities at the end of last year. Another interesting finding is that whereas the opinions on the Government activities were loosely related to declared income in the respondents' families the last year, today this relationship is much stronger. Positive opinions on the Government are more rare when the declared income is lower.



As compared to last December, criticism of activities of the two largest trade union associations has grown. In May, over two-thirds of the polled population gave negative evaluations of the NSZZ "Solidarity", only one of four respondents had a positive opinion on activities taken by this union. Currently, the "net" disapproval of the "Solidarity" (the difference between negative and positive opinions) amounts to 30 percentage points and is the highest since March '89. It seems that except for the general downward trend in opinions on most of other important social and political institutions, such bad attitudes to the "Solidarity" may partly result from political concern. Despite the efforts to depoliticize the union, it remains the key supporter of the current coalition Government. Unfavourable opinions may be also caused by the inability of the union to resolve current social problems, to be more precise by its inefficiency in representing the demands of some forceful occupational groups (e.g. the miners) and helplessness as well as the lack of action in respect of the others (e.g. the nurses).

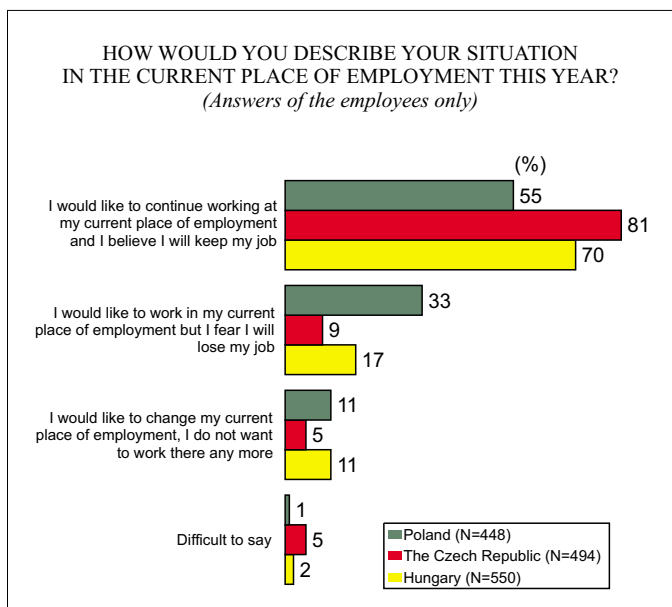
The opinions concerning another major trade union association, namely the "OPZZ", deteriorated to a smaller extent. However, even in this case negative opinions exceeded positive ones almost twice.

The Polish radio and the public television remain the best rated non-political institutions in polls. Similarly, the army has good ratings. Activities of the National Bank of Poland and the Church also rate high in the public opinion. Negative opinions prevail on institutions of justice such as the courts and the public prosecutor's office. It must be noted that the difference between the numbers of negative and positive opinions on these two institutions is currently the largest.

For more information on this topic, see CBOS bulletin, "Ratings of public institutions", June '99.

## POLES, CZECHS AND HUNGARIANS ON THE CONDITION OF THEIR EMPLOYERS AND JOB SECURITY

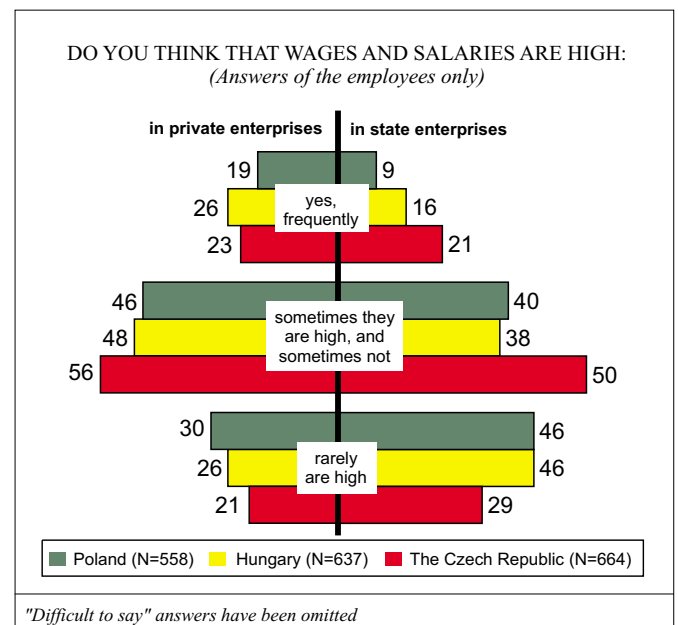
Over two-fifths of gainfully employed Czechs and Hungarians have positive opinions on the condition of their place of employment, whereas people declaring that they feel threatened in this respect are in a minority. In Poland those proportions are opposite: only one in four respondents believes that their place of employment (institution, firm or farm) does not experience difficulties and its further existence and operations are not at risk. Two-fifths of the polled Poles are of the opinion that their companies have grave difficulties or are at risk of bankruptcy. That is the reason why in comparison with the Czechs and Hungarians, Poles feel much more threatened by the potential loss of employment.



The bigger the company, the more concerned are Polish employees. Employees of Polish private firms have a relatively stronger feeling of job security than employees of big state enterprises. The Czech Republic differs in this respect from Poland. The Czechs employed by state enterprises are the least concerned about the potential loss of their jobs. Hungarians employed in public and private sector do not differ in this respect.

In all three countries, the employees asked about general rather than their own job security in public and private sectors believe that work in the former one is more secure and stable. The Hungarians and Czechs have very similar opinions on the issue. The Poles share this opinion but have a general sense of weaker stability of employment in both sectors.

Poles and Hungarians consider the private sector more favourable in terms of salaries and wages, whereas Czechs assess the two sectors to be similar in this respect.



For more information on the subject, see CBOS bulletin, "Poles, Czechs and Hungarians on the condition of their employers and certainty of employment", March '99.

### In addition to the bulletins referred to above, the following have been published recently (in Polish):

- "Poles on the Anti-Collaboration Investigation Act"
- "Housing situation in Poland"
- "Plans, goals and ambitions of the youth"
- "Poles choose candidates for the presidential elections"
- "Satisfaction with life"
- "The youth on sexual life"
- "Party preferences in June"
- "What should the taxes be"
- "Have we listened to the Pope carefully"

For more information on CBOS services and publications please contact:

CBOS POLAND  
4a, Żurawia, 00-503 Warsaw  
Phones: (48 22) 629 35 69, 628 37 04  
Fax: (48 22) 629 40 89

E-mail: sekretariat@cbos.pl

Http://www.cbos.pl

Yearly subscription rate for "Polish Public Opinion" is 80 USD

CBOS expertise in providing professional, accurate and timely research studies has made us the leading authority in political, social, international and consumer research concerning Poland.