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THE POLES, CZECHS AND HUNGARIANS ON NATO MEMBERSHIP

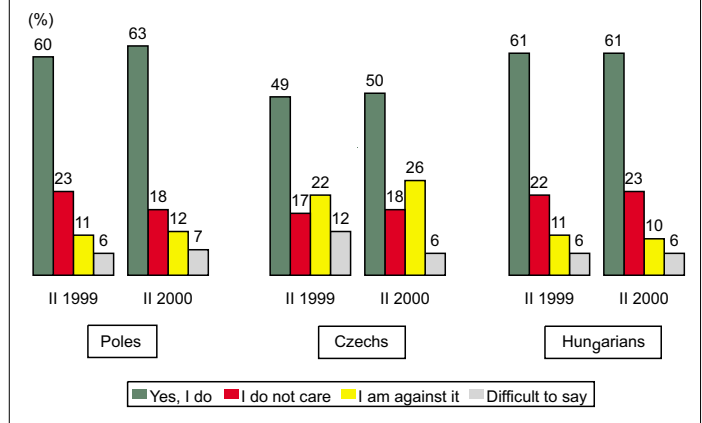
Since the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland joined NATO, the attitude of the societies of these three countries to this organisation has basically remained unchanged. As with a year ago, the support for NATO membership is the lowest in the Czech Republic. The number of opponents to NATO is also the greatest there. This group is even slightly bigger now than last year. Furthermore, the belief that NATO membership strengthens the position of a country on the international scene and secures peace and safety for the country is significantly weaker in the Czech Republic than in Poland and Hungary. As compared to the others, the Czechs are particularly frequently afraid that their membership in NATO will increase the possibility that their country may become involved in an armed conflict.

During the last year we have noted a visible change of the opinion of Poles concerning political aspects of NATO membership. A year ago the Poles' opinion on consequences of joining NATO was divided and the percentage of respondents who believed that NATO membership was a guarantee of our independence was equal to the percentage of those who regarded it as a new form of submission to a foreign power.

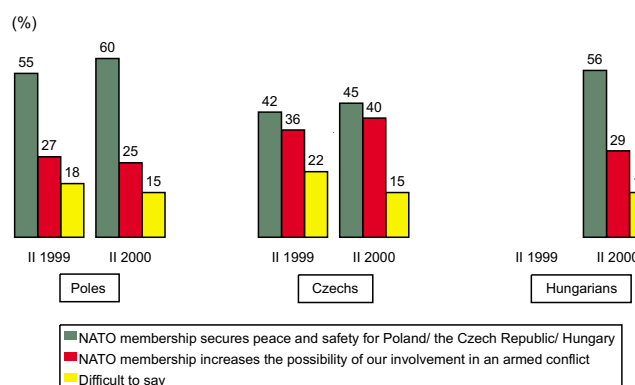
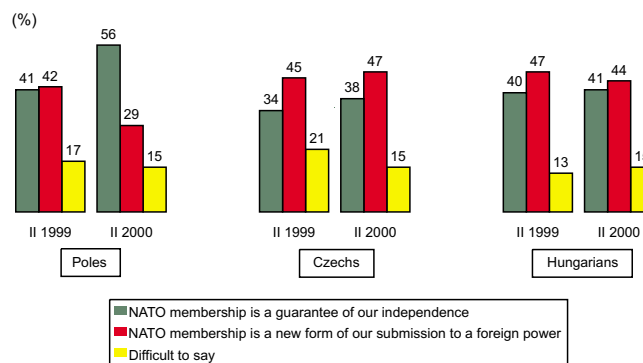
Now most respondents share the former view. A similar change of opinion, although on a much smaller scale, may be noticed in Hungary, while in the Czech Republic the evaluations are even more polarised now than before. The evolution of opinion in Poland and Hungary seems to be connected first and foremost to the perception of the goals of Russian politics. A definite majority of Poles (60%) and a large proportion of Hungarians (44%) believe that Russia will try to rebuild its sphere of influence in our part of Europe in the near future.

Most respondents in Poland (55%), the Czech Republic (59%) and Hungary (54%) share the opinion that the troops of other NATO

DO YOU PERSONALLY SUPPORT THE MEMBERSHIP OF POLAND/THE CZECH REPUBLIC/HUNGARY IN NATO OR NOT?

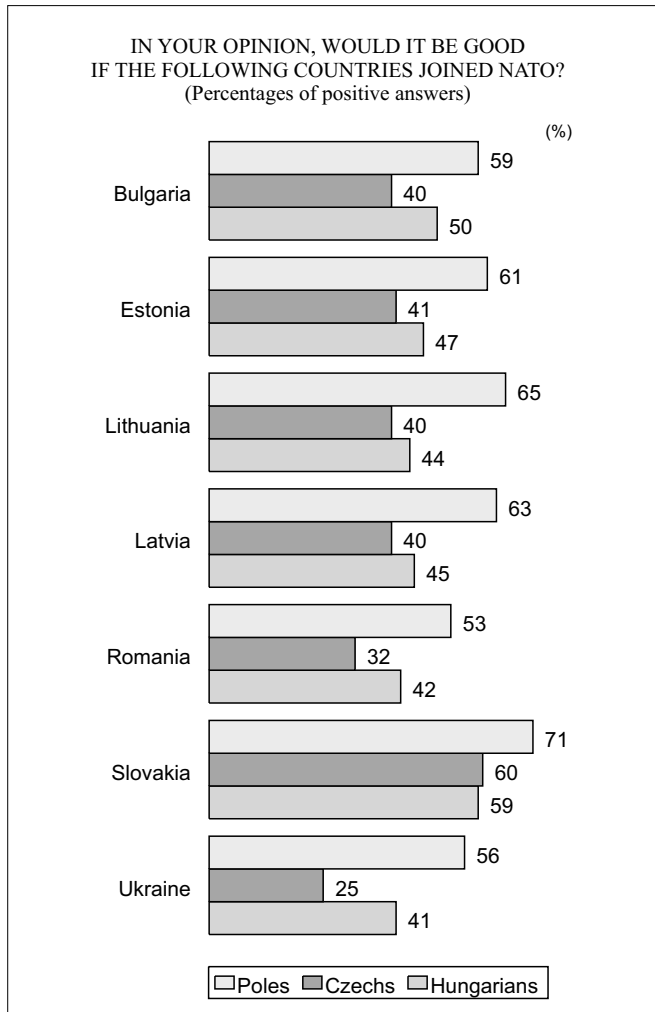


WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS IS CLOSEST TO YOUR VIEW ON THE MEMBERSHIP OF POLAND/ THE CZECH REPUBLIC/ HUNGARY IN NATO?



member states should not be stationed in their own countries. The Hungarians would accept the presence of the allied troops on their territory the most frequently (40%).

The Poles are the strongest supporters of further NATO extension to the East. Over half of respondents support the admission of other Central and Eastern European countries that emerged after the collapse of the former socialist bloc. The possible admission of Slovakia and Lithuania enjoys the widest support among Poles.



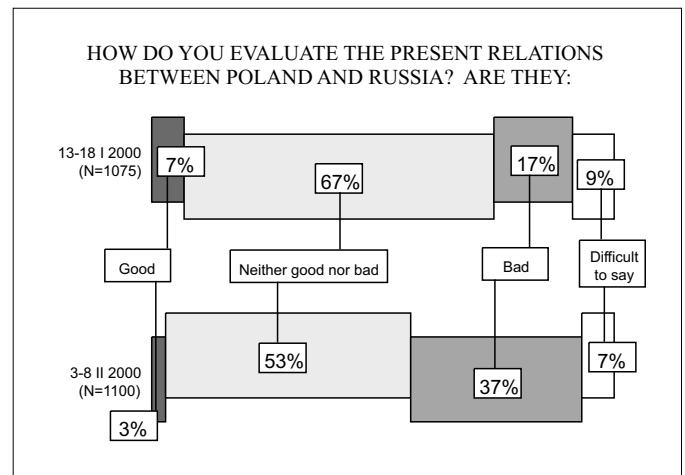
Hungarians are less enthusiastic than Poles about the prospect of further extension of NATO, but the supporters of its extension outnumber the opponents in that country as well. The Czechs are the least in favour of the admission of other countries in our region to NATO. Only the admission of Slovakia is accepted by most of them.

An additional question was asked in Poland, whether it would be good if two currently neutral countries, namely Austria and Finland, join NATO. The support for possible Finnish membership (69%) is much stronger than for the Austrian one (51%).

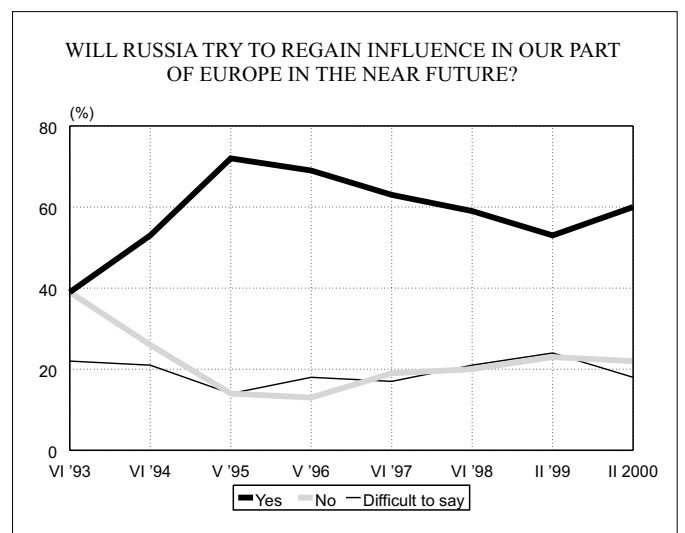
More information on this subject can be found in the CBOS report: "The Poles, Czechs and Hungarians on NATO", March 2000. Sample sizes: TARKI (Hungary) N=1511; IVVM (the Czech Republic) N=1036; CBOS (Poland) N=1100.

EVALUATIONS OF THE RELATIONS BETWEEN POLAND AND RUSSIA

The relations between Poland and Russia have cooled since Poland joined NATO. At the end of January Poland expelled some Russian diplomats accused of espionage. In response, a group of Polish diplomats were expelled from Moscow. That took place in the mids of our survey.



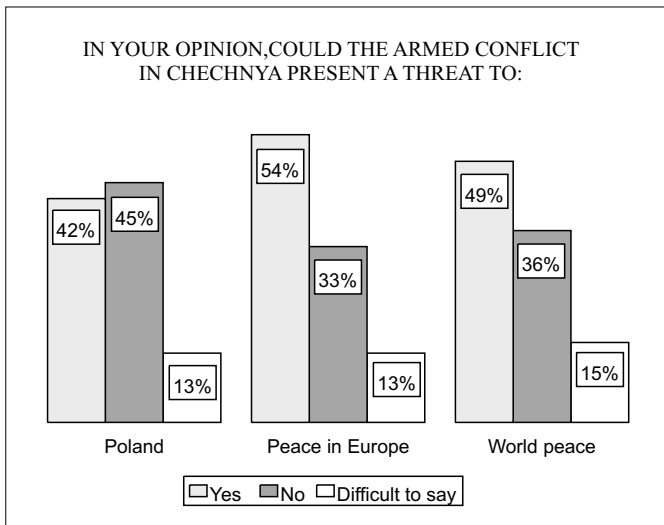
The expulsion of Russian diplomats from Poland caused a visible deterioration of the evaluations of Polish-Russian relations by Poles. Currently almost two-fifths of respondents evaluate these relations as bad.



In the opinion of the majority of respondents, the political changes in Russia are a cause for concern. Most Poles believe that the situation in Russia evolves in a bad direction and tends towards dictatorship (57%) rather than democracy (11%). Although a large part of respondents (45%) think that the relations between Poland and Russia will not change as a result of Mr Putin's accession to the office of Prime Minister, most of the remaining respondents expect that these relations will change for the worse (17%) rather than for the better (8%).

The Poles seem to evaluate potentially neo-imperial tendencies emerging in Russian domestic policy very critically and anxiously. Recently the fears that Russia may indeed sooner or later try to regain lost influence in our part of Europe have increased again.

The conflict in North Caucasia is treated by the international community as a domestic conflict inside the Russian state. However, the methods of solving this conflict raise concerns all over the world, including Poland. As with the first Chechen war in 1995, almost every other respondent perceives these methods as a potential threat to world peace. Over half of respondents see them as a threat to the peace in Europe. At the same time, respondents see this conflict as a direct threat to our country a little less frequently than five years ago.



More information on this subject can be found in the CBOS reports: "The relations between Poland and Russia after the changes in Russia", "Poles on the war in Chechnya", February 2000. Sample size 1100

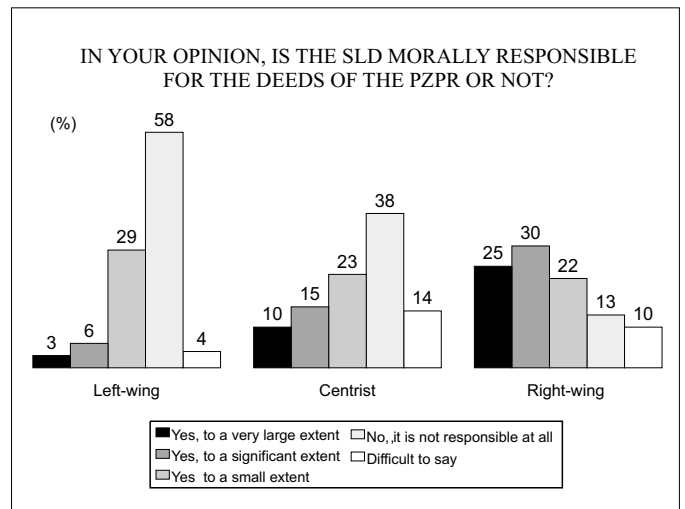
THE DEMOCRATIC LEFT ALLIANCE - SOCIAL DEMOCRATS OR EX-COMMUNISTS?

It has been a year since public support for the players on the Polish political scene changed. The most important grouping of the opposition - the Democratic Left Alliance (SLD), which was established on the foundation and with the use of the assets of the former communist party, enjoys the greatest social support, while the ruling post-Solidarity groups have experienced a significant loss of popularity. The SLD congress held in December completed the process of transformation of a number of organisations which originated in the old system or are associated with it, into one political party. It is a good moment to raise the subject of the political identity of the SLD and its perception by Poles.

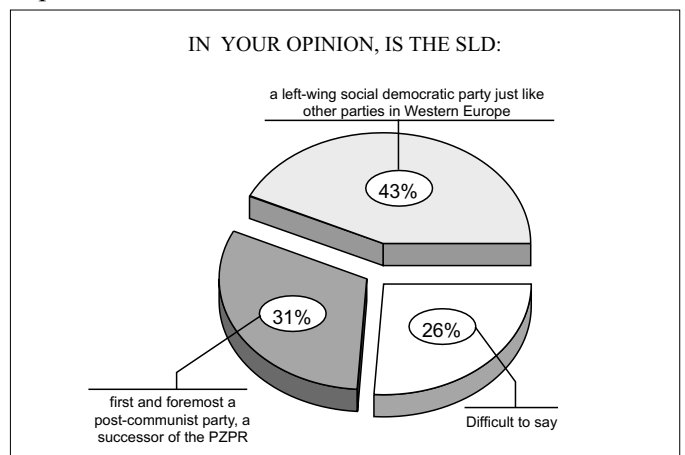
Respondents' opinions show that the origin of the SLD still affects its social perception. Although respondents do not agree as to the extent to which SLD party may be regarded as a successor to the tradition of

the PZPR (the Polish communist party ruling before 1989), most of them have no doubts that the SLD is indeed such a successor (70%) in one way or another. One of the factors that connects the SLD with the PZPR in the Poles' minds is its membership composition. In the opinion of almost half of respondents, most members of the Alliance are former PZPR members.

However, the awareness of a historical continuity between those two parties does not directly imply the belief that the SLD is responsible for the deeds of its predecessor. Half of all respondents tend to believe that the Democratic Left Alliance, to a greater or lesser extent, bears such responsibility. However, over one-third share the opinion that the SLD is not responsible for the deeds of the PZPR at all. Similarly, the largest group of respondents do not see the need for the SLD to square up with the communist past (47%).



Presently, the post-communist heritage of the SLD is not the most important element of the social perception of this party. More people associate it with the social democratic groupings in Western Europe than with its predecessor from the times of the communist rule.



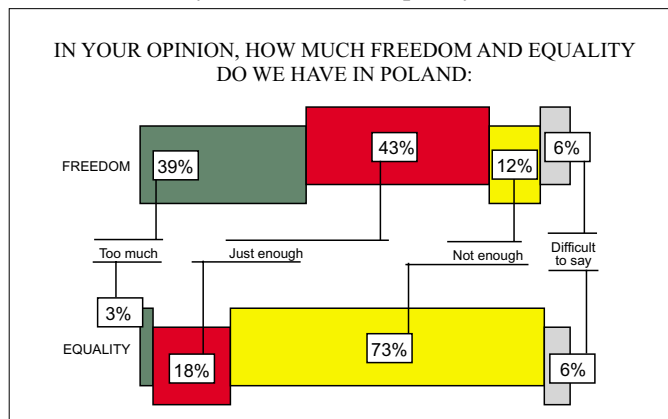
The perception of the relations between the SLD and the PZPR differs very much, depending on the Poles' political inclinations. The SLD as seen by its supporters and the same party in the eyes of the persons with right-wing views or the supporters of the ruling parties (the AWS and the UW) are completely different. The former

see it as a modern social democratic party having little in common with the PZPR and not liable for its actions, while the latter consider it as a post-communist grouping that has not yet cleared up its infamous past.

More information on this subject can be found in the CBOS report "The images of the SLD - about the identity of the new party", February 2000. Sample size 1100

ABOUT FREEDOM AND EQUALITY IN SOCIAL LIFE

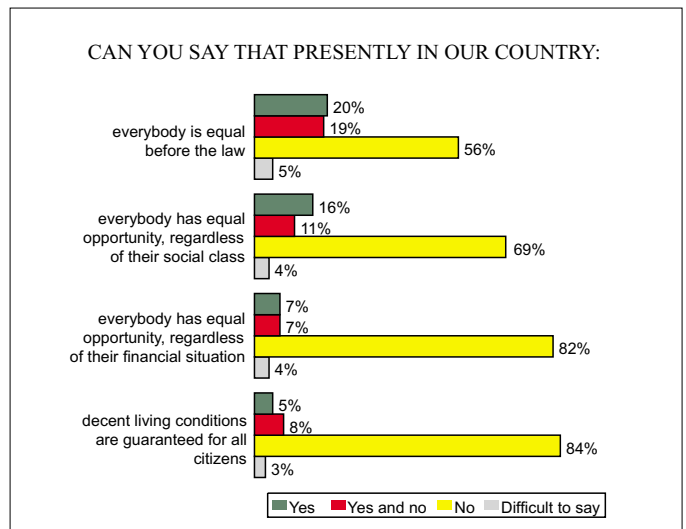
Most Poles put freedom before equality in social life, if facing such a choice (57% and 35%, respectively). The respondents appreciate the importance of freedom, although presently they more frequently complain of its excess than deficit. On the other hand, a vast majority believe that today's Poland lacks equality a lot.



Not all social groups share the opinion that freedom is more important than equality. The evaluation of their importance, first and foremost, depends on the respondent's level of education, which in turn is connected the level of income and satisfaction with the material conditions of living. Such indicators of social status as higher education, high income and satisfaction with the financial situation are clearly associated with the acceptance of "new" socio-economic principles and a positive evaluation of the direction of the development

of democracy in Poland. Those who prefer living in today's Poland, and are satisfied with the functioning of democracy in our country, much more frequently put freedom before equality in social life. On the other hand, respondents who are nostalgic about the communist era and evaluate the development of democracy negatively value equality higher than freedom.

The Poles believe that equality in social life should mean equal rights (92%), equal access of all citizens to education and equal chances for achieving a high social position (88%). However, over half of all respondents (56%) also associate it with similar living conditions of all citizens. In all these respects, perception of the reality is drastically different from social expectations. A definite majority of respondents share the opinion that decent conditions of living are not guaranteed for all citizens and the chances that Poles have in life are determined by their material status and, to a lesser extent, their social class. More than half of respondents also believe that the fundamental principle of equality of all citizens before the law is not followed in Poland.



More information on this subject can be found in the CBOS report "Freedom and equality in social life" February 2000. Sample size 1522.

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

- "Egalitarianism in Polish society"
- "Medical treatment after the implementation of the reform - opinions on the quality of medical services"
- "Opinions on the work of the government and the opposition in Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Lithuania"
- "Military service and alternative service"
- "Political party preferences in February"
- "Social moods in February"
- "Reducing expenditure on health"
- "The attitude to the government in February"
- "Poles on presidential elections"
- "Health care a responsibility of the state or individual"

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