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## CENTRAL EUROPEANS ABOUT IMMIGRANTS AND REFUGEES

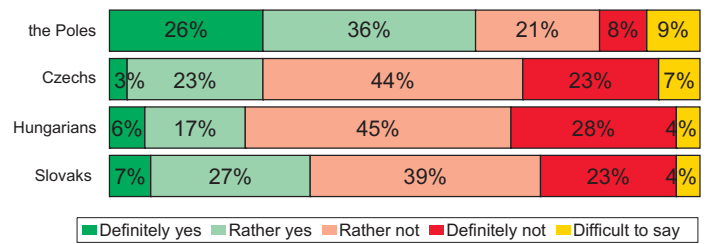
Historically, Central Europe was a melting pot of different nationalities, cultures and religions. However, World War II and the communist regime significantly changed the region's multicultural nature by eliminating some minorities, assimilating others and putting barriers to migrations. Many persons have had no contact at all with people brought up in another culture, having another skin colour or a different religion. The political transformation and the European integration have reduced the barriers to migration. The inflow of people brought up in other cultures to Central Europe, so far been rather limited, is growing.

Among the societies of the Visegrad Group countries, the Poles are the most open to the immigrants. A majority of adult Poles (62%) support the idea of open borders for immigrants - the majority believe that everyone who wants to settle in Poland should be given such an opportunity. In the other three countries, the support for open borders policy is significantly lower.

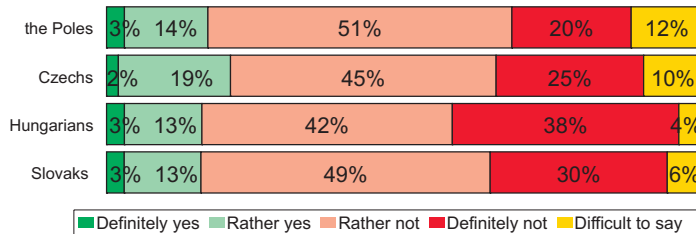
There are no major differences between the citizens of the four countries as far as their opinions on the usefulness of immigrants for their countries is concerned. In all the countries, most respondents believe that their country does not need foreigners who come there to stay. Thus, there is a discrepancy between the perception of immigration in terms of values and in terms of interests in Poland. The Poles accept an idea of open borders despite seeing no benefits from it. The majorities of the Czechs, Slovaks and Hungarians do not notice any positive results of the immigrants' presence, either. However, unlike the Poles, they are against their arrival.

In all four countries, the opinions about giving shelter to political refugees are ambivalent. Few respondents believe that all refugees should be granted asylum. Quite large

IN YOUR OPINION, SHOULD EVERY FOREIGNER WHO WANTS TO COME TO POLAND (THE CZECH REPUBLIC/HUNGARY/SLOVAKIA) AND SETTLE HERE BE ALLOWED TO DO SO OR NOT?



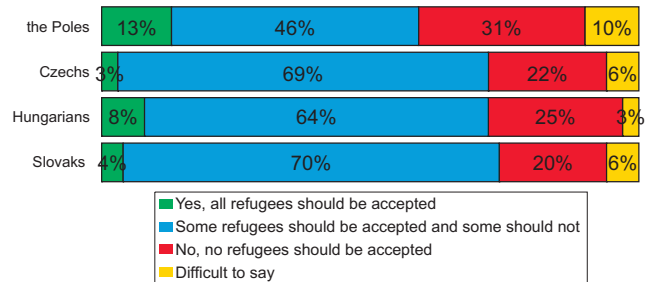
IN YOUR OPINION, DOES POLAND (THE CZECH REPUBLIC/HUNGARY/SLOVAKIA) NEED IMMIGRANTS, I.E. PEOPLE WHO COME TO POLAND (THE CZECH REPUBLIC/HUNGARY/SLOVAKIA) TO SETTLE, OR NOT?



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IN YOUR OPINION, SHOULD POLAND (THE CZECH REPUBLIC/HUNGARY/SLOVAKIA) ACCEPT POLITICAL REFUGEES?



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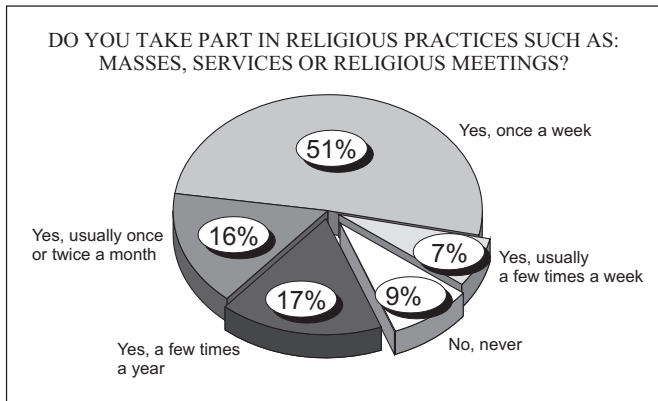
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groups of respondents believe that their country should not accept political refugees at all, and the biggest proportions are for accepting only some of them. The Poles express extreme opinions more frequently than the other polled societies. On the one hand, they support opening the borders for all refugees relatively frequently, whereas on the other they are totally against granting them asylum more frequently than the respondents from the other countries.

More information about this subject can be found in the CBOS report (in Polish): *Opinions of Central Europeans about immigrants and refugees*, March 2005. Survey executed in February 2005. A representative random sample of adult Poles. N =1070. In the Czech Republic, the survey was conducted by CVVM - Sociological Institute) on a sample N=967; in Hungary (TARKI) on a sample N=1101; in Slovakia (FOCUS) on a sample of N=1079.

## THE POLES' TIES WITH THEIR PARISH

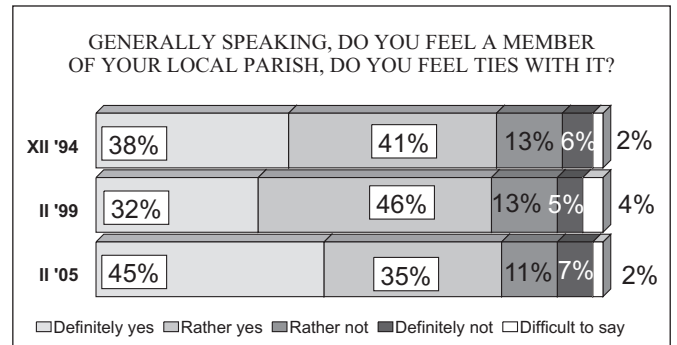
Almost all Poles describe themselves as believers (97%) and more than half (58%) declare participating in religious practices at least once a week. The declared level of participation in religious practices remains stable during the last nineteen years. Despite the fundamental changes in many areas of life, the secularisation processes which have caused mass exodus from the Church in many countries of Western Europe, have not affected Poland.



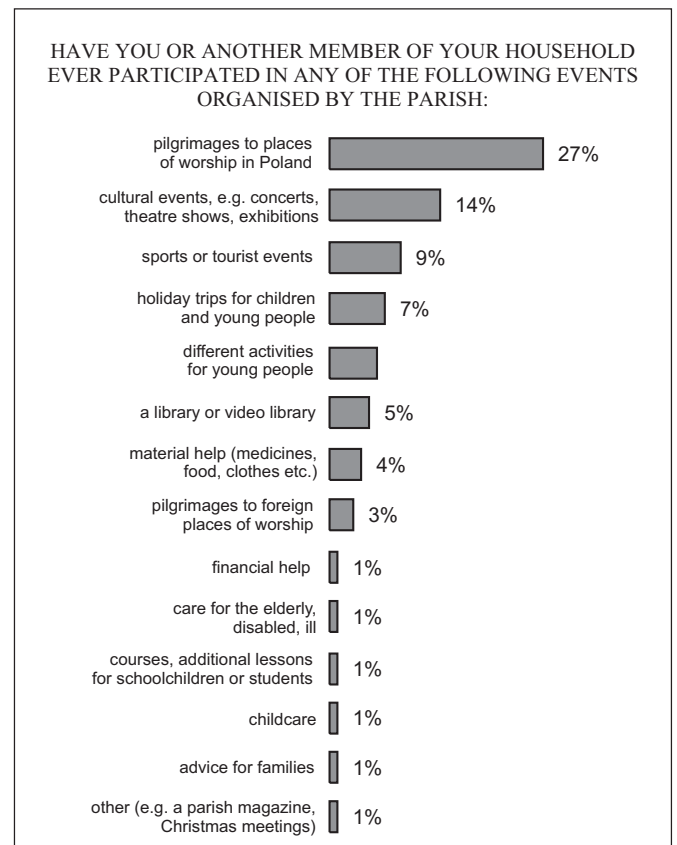
Strong institutional base of the Polish religiousness is reflected not only in religious practices, but also in the feeling of ties with the Church. More than half of the Poles (58%) select the following self-identification: *I am a believer and I follow the teachings of the Church*. Almost two-fifths of the Poles (39%) prefer to say about themselves: *I believe in my own way*, stressing a more subjective nature of their faith and its independence from the Church. Three in one hundred respondents (3%) consider themselves non-believers, undecided or describe themselves in still another way.

A vast majority of the Poles feel attached to their local parish and almost half feel strong ties with it. The proportion of the respondents declaring a close

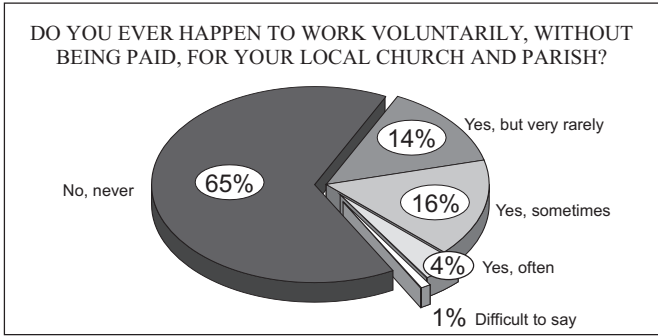
relationship with their parish has increased significantly during the last few years.



More than two-fifths of the Poles (41%) declare that they or a member of their immediate family take part in some events organised by their parish. The biggest proportion of the respondents (27%) take part in pilgrimages to the places of worship in Poland organised by their parish. One in seven persons take part in the cultural events organised by their parish. The parishioners also declare their or their family members' participation in sports and tourist events, holiday trips for children and young people and other activities for the young generation organised by parish.



Traditionally, a Polish parish has been a school of social work for the benefit of the religious and local community. At present, one in three respondents declare voluntary, unpaid work for the Church and the parishioners.

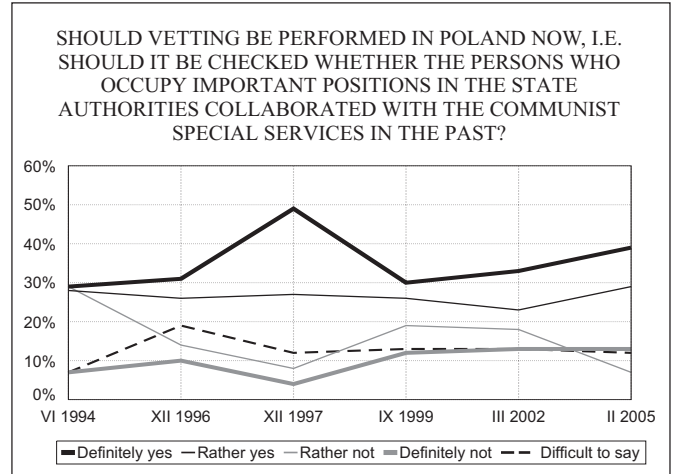


The respondents who do voluntary work in their parish usually do things directly connected with the church and liturgy. Activities which benefit directly other members of the parish are much less popular. The parish volunteers usually do various maintenance works in and around the church (79%), collect money for the church (28%) and help organise religious ceremonies (16%). They also, although much less frequently, help building the church (6%). Much fewer persons participate in the organisation of financial help for the poor (10%), pilgrimages (8%), cultural, sports and tourist events (5% each). Few organise holidays for children and young people, other activities for young people or childcare (3% in each case) or care for the old or disabled (2%). Equally rarely volunteers help in the libraries renting books or videos. Only one in one hundred respondents participated in the organisation of vocational or educational courses and none participated in providing family advice.

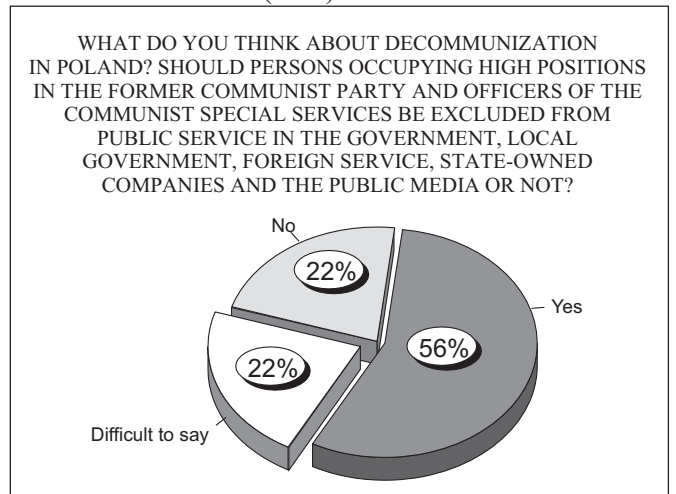
More information about this subject can be found in the CBOS report (in Polish): *What Poles have in common with their parish*, March 2005. Survey executed in February 2005. A representative random sample of adult Poles. N=1070.

## VETTING AND DECOMMUNIZATION

Since the early nineties, the problem of access to important positions in the state authorities for people who collaborated with the communist special services or occupied high positions in the communist party and government during the communist rule, has caused a lot of controversy and dilemmas. This problem manifests itself particularly strongly before each election. Poland has had a vetting law since 1997, but from time to time some amendments are proposed to make the vetting process more effective and settle accounts with the past once and for all. From the very beginning, the idea of vetting has had more supporters than opponents among the Poles. Currently, after disclosing the list of persons who collaborated with special services or were selected for such collaboration, taken from the Institute of National Remembrance by a the journalist, the social support for vetting is higher than a few years ago. More than two-thirds of the Poles (68%) support it.



The Poles opt for a broad scope of the vetting process. It is commonly believed that the vetting procedure should be applied to the Prime Minister and his deputies (90%), the President (89%), the ministers and their deputies (89%), judges and prosecutors (88%), Members of Parliament and Senators (88%), other high state officials (87%). Most Poles believe that vetting should also apply to managers of state-owned companies and enterprises (78%), police officers (76%), army officers (76%), bank managers (72%), public TV managers (72%), all state officials (71%) and members of the local councils (68%). Fewer respondents believe that journalists (60%), priests (56%) and academic teachers (53%) should also undergo vetting procedure. The proportion of supporters of vetting falls below 50% only in the case of teachers (45%).

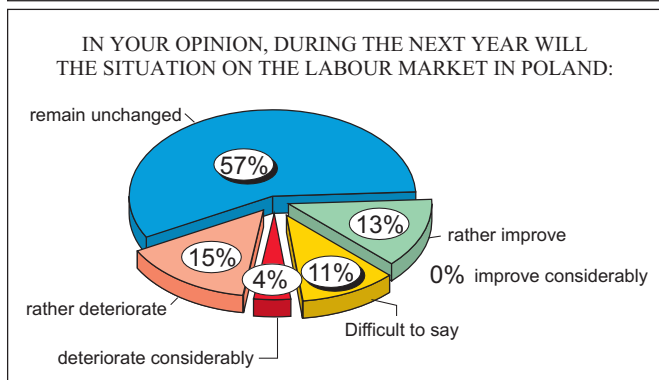
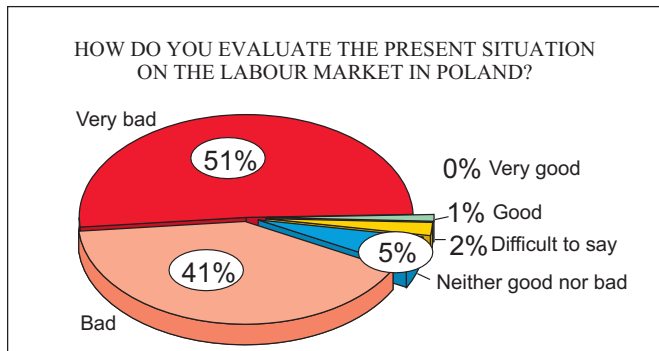


The belief that Poland needs vetting is accompanied by the support for decommunization, i.e. a temporary exclusion of persons occupying high positions in the former communist party and officers of the communist special services from public service.

More information about this subject can be found in the CBOS report (in Polish): *Returning dilemmas of vetting and decommunization in Poland*, March 2005. Survey executed in February 2005. A representative random sample of adult Poles. N=1070.

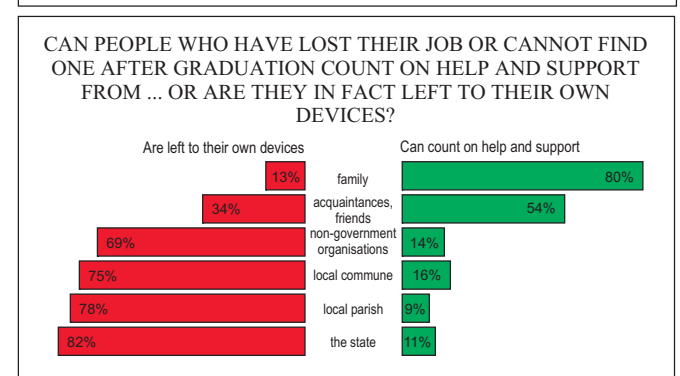
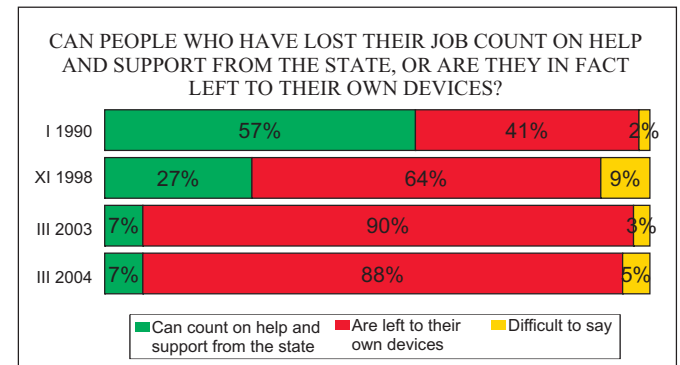
## THE LABOUR MARKET

For more than three years, the unemployment rate in Poland has been very high. In February 2005, it was 19.4%. Almost all Poles criticise the situation on the Polish labour market and describe it as bad or very bad. At the same time, most respondents do not expect any changes for better in the near future.



In 1990, at the onset of the transformation, when unemployment was still low, more than half of the respondents believed that the state will guarantee welfare for the unemployed. Eight years later, after the difficult experience of the first wave of unemployment, only a quarter of the respondents thought that one can count on

the state if unemployed. With the rapid growth of unemployment in the successive years, the opinion that the unemployed are left to their own devices and cannot count on any help from the state became universal. According to the public opinion, jobless persons can not count on any help from their parish, local commune or non-government organisations, either. Friends and acquaintances are seen as quite helpful, although, in the respondents' opinion, the main guarantor of welfare for the unemployed is their family.



More information about this subject can be found in the CBOS report (in Polish): *Opinions about the job market, unemployment and the attitude to the unemployed*, March 2005. Survey executed in March 2005. A representative random sample of adult Poles. N = 1025.

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

- ◆ The Poles about the proposal to hold the parliamentary election in autumn
- ◆ The situation in Iraq after the election
- ◆ The Poles about the situation of the left and the political future of President Aleksander Kwaśniewski
- ◆ After the celebration of the 60th anniversary of the liberalization of Auschwitz-Birkenau - the Polish awareness of the camp in Auschwitz
- ◆ Representativeness of the political parties
- ◆ The public image of Marek Belka
- ◆ The Poles' opinions about their local parish
- ◆ Deterioration in social moods
- ◆ The Poles about the parliamentary investigation committee for the PZU privatisation
- ◆ Worse opinions about the government and the Prime Minister
- ◆ Interest in "Wildstein's list" and the evaluation of the effects of its publication
- ◆ Lent and Easter traditions in Poland
- ◆ Opinions about the work of the Parliament and the President
- ◆ The Poles about the Presidential election
- ◆ Evaluations of the respondents' financial situation

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