

**CONTENTS:**

- PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS IN THE USA AND THE POLISH-AMERICAN RELATIONS
- FOREIGN TRAVEL AND KNOWLEDGE OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES
- WORK ABROAD
- SAVINGS AND LOANS

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 46 91

Fax: (48 22) 629 40 89

E-mail: sekretariat@cbos.pl  
<http://www.cbos.pl>

Editor:  
Beata Roguska

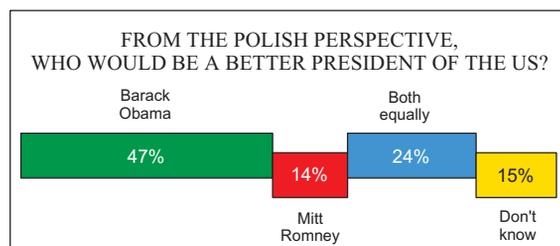
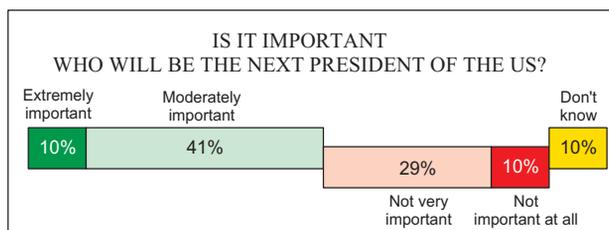
Translated by  
Michał Wenzel

© COPYRIGHT BY CBOS 2012

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

## PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS IN THE USA AND THE POLISH-AMERICAN RELATIONS

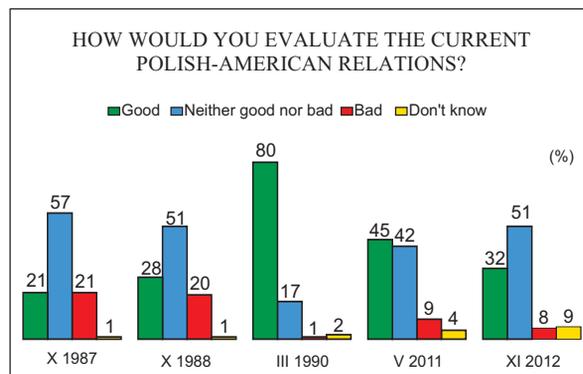
The majority of Poles (51%) share the opinion that it is important who will be in office as president of the United States. A smaller group (39%) believe that the outcome of the last US elections is not important.



From the Polish perspective, Barack Obama from the Democratic Party, who won the election, would be a better alternative than his opponent from the Republican Party (47% to 14%). Almost a quarter (24%) think that it would not make any difference.

Polish-American relations have been the topic of CBOS research for a long time. Before 1989, the majority of Poles evaluated the relations between these two countries as average: neither good nor bad. Although the People's Republic was a part of the political bloc subordinated to the USSR, at the end of the former system (towards the end of the 1980s) relations with the US, the key member of NATO, were more often described as good than bad. The crucial moment in international relations was the period of systemic transition in Eastern Europe. It was reflected in the public opinion on Polish-American relations. The US not only supported the democratic transition, but also maintained intensive contacts with Poland on the highest level. In July 1989, president George H.W. Bush visited Poland, meeting both the Communist government and the leaders of Solidarity movement, whose candidates were successful in the first parliamentary elections after the Round Table agreement, held on 4 June 1989. Subsequently, Lech Wałęsa, the leader of Solidarity, was enthusiastically received in the USA. As the third person in US history, he addressed a joint session of both chambers of Congress. In March 1990, Tadeusz Mazowiecki, the Prime Minister, paid a visit to the USA. In a survey conducted during that time, a vast majority (80%) considered the Polish-American relations as good, a small group (17%) had mixed emotions, and only 1% thought they were bad. The extremely positive opinions can be attributed to the formal change in alliances and to the hopes pinned on the US.

Subsequent years brought disappointment. One of the contentious issues which clearly deteriorated bilateral relations was the lingering requirement for Polish citizens to obtain visas to travel to the USA. At present, the public opinion on bilateral relations is only slightly better than



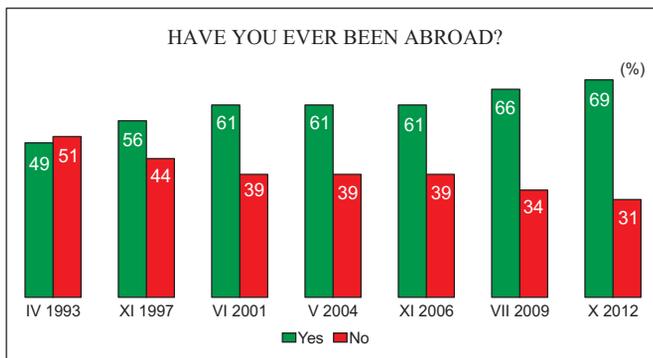
before systemic transformation in Poland. The Polish-American relations are usually evaluated ambivalently: the majority (51%) think they are neither good nor bad. About a third (32%) consider them good, while 8% think they are bad.

More information about this topic can be found in CBOS report in Polish: *"Presidential elections in the USA, Polish-American relations and the global influence of the USA"*, November 2012. Fieldwork for national sample: November 2012, N=952. The random address sample is representative for adult population of Poland.

## FOREIGN TRAVEL AND KNOWLEDGE OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Foreign travel is becoming increasingly popular. It is made easy by low-cost airlines and a broad supply from travel agencies, offering foreign holidays at prices comparable with domestic travel. Foreign excursions often come with guaranteed sunshine, which for many tourists is an important component of satisfactory holiday. Another factor increasing foreign mobility is economic migration.

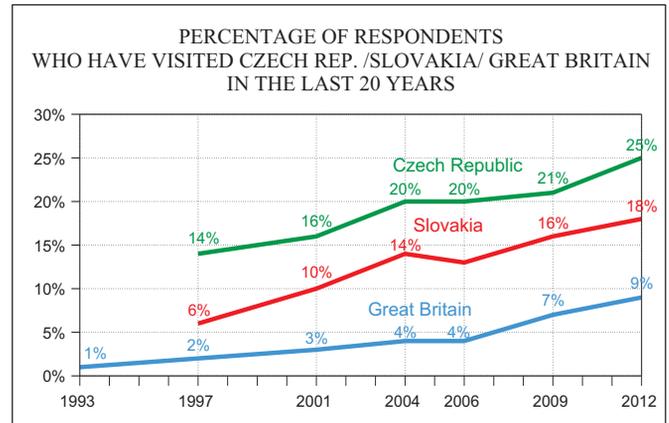
Since 1993, the proportion of people with experience of foreign travel has increased systematically (20 pct. points in total). At present, over two-thirds of Poles (69%) declare having been abroad at least once, while less than one-third (31%) have never left the country.



The most popular destinations do not change very much. The most commonly visited country is Germany: over one-third of respondents (36%) have been there in the last 20 years. Next are the Czech Republic (25%) and Slovakia (18%). The countries to the east of Poland are visited much less frequently: 6% have been to Ukraine, 3% went to Russia and Lithuania, and 2% visited Belarus.

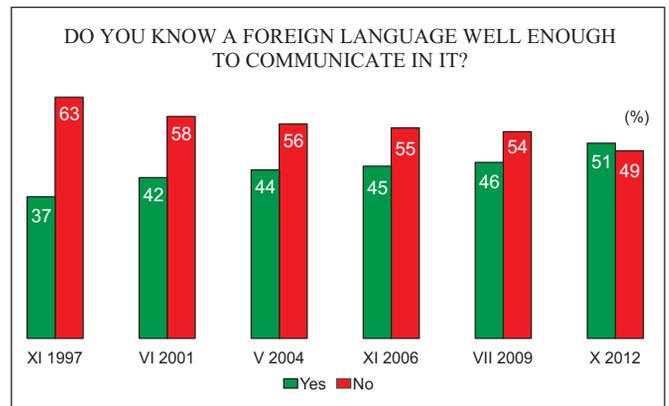
Considering countries not bordering Poland, Italy remains the most popular, being the destination of 12% of respondents. Next in order are: Great Britain (9%), France (8%), Austria, Spain, Hungary (7% each),

Greece, Netherlands, Croatia (6% each), and Sweden (5%). Other countries were mentioned only occasionally. Looking at the countries on top of the list, it can be noted that travel to Germany remains on the constant level, whereas the number of visitors to the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Great Britain has increased systematically.

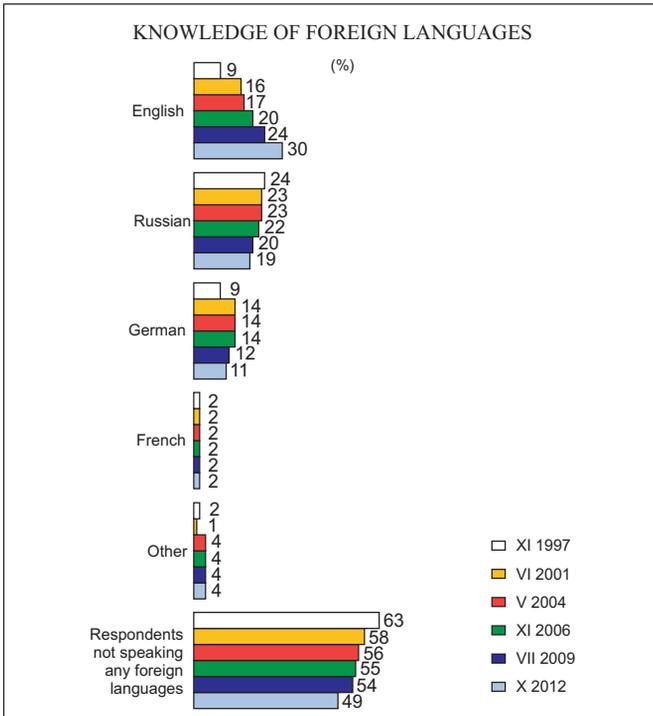


Other destinations increasing in popularity are the holiday spots offered by travel agencies: Spain (7% in the last survey), Greece (6%) Croatia (6%), Egypt (4%), Turkey (4%), and Tunisia (3%).

According to declarations, half of adult Poles (51%) can communicate in a foreign language. The proportion of people who have this skill increases systematically. Since 1997 it has increased by 14 pct. points, and in the last three years the percentage of foreign language speakers climbed from 46% to 51%.



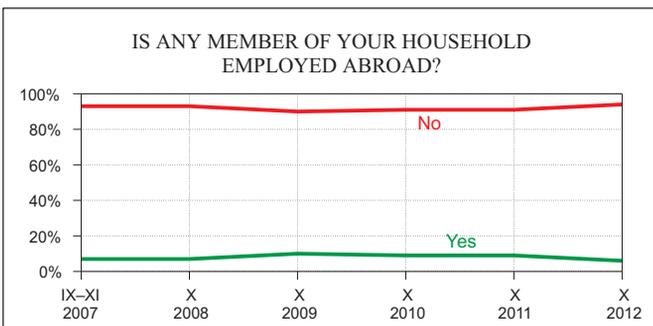
English and Russian remain the most popular foreign languages. Until 2006, Russian was the most commonly mentioned, but since then English has overtaken it as the most commonly spoken foreign language. We can note a trend of increasing number of English speakers (since 1997 a 21-point increase) and a slight decline in the number of Russian speakers (since 1997 a 5-point drop). The level of knowledge of the other popular languages remains generally constant, with a slight drop in popularity of German since 2006.



More information about this topic can be found in CBOS report in Polish: "Poles get to know the world: foreign travel and knowledge of foreign languages", November 2012. Fieldwork for national sample: October 2012, N=1007. The random address sample is representative for adult population of Poland.

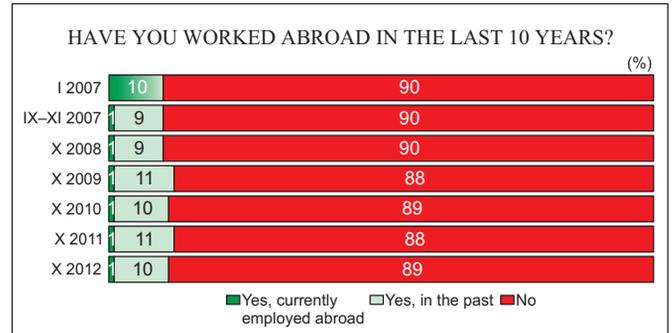
## WORK ABROAD

Recent data indicates that the proportion of households in which a member is employed abroad has declined, which means some economic migrants may have returned to Poland. According to declarations, such households are now 6% of the total. Compared with last year, their number has decreased by 3 pct. points. This is probably a consequence of the economic crisis in the countries of the European Union and declining demand for labour.



During the last 10 years, one in ten Poles has worked abroad. One in a hundred (1%) works abroad now: these people either commute or happened to be at home at the time of the interview. The proportion of

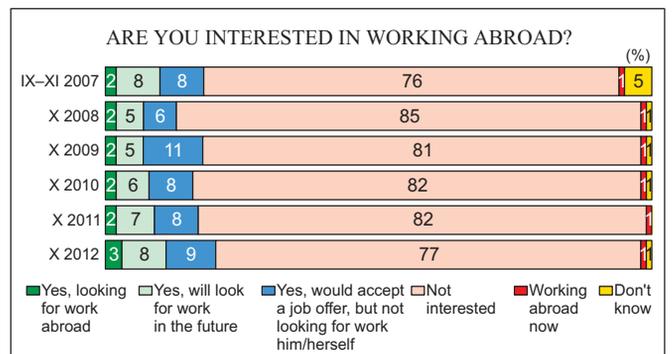
people declaring employment abroad in the last 10 years is similar to the percentage measured last year.



The strongest determinant of economic migration is age. For young people, work abroad has become a generational experience. A quarter of respondents aged 25-34 have worked abroad in the last 10 years. Men aged 25-34 are the most active group: close to two-fifths (38%) have at least short experience of employment outside of Poland.

The most popular destination of economic migrants is Germany. More than a third (36%) of Poles with foreign work experience found a job there. The second most popular destination is Great Britain, where about a fifth (21%) of migrants were employed. The other popular labour markets in the last decade were: Netherlands (12%), Norway (8%), USA (8%), Italy (7%), and France (6%).

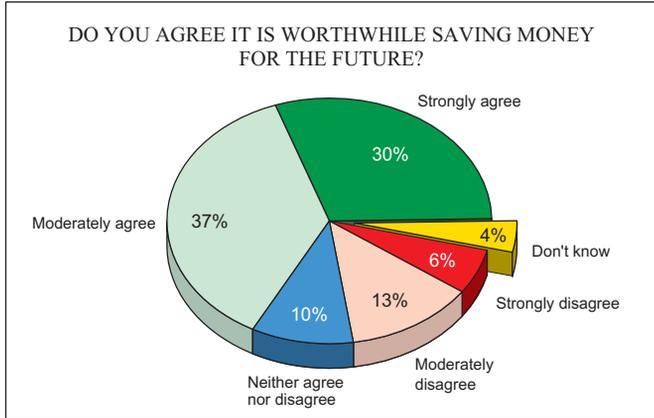
About one-fifth of adult Poles would be interested in working abroad in the future. Half of them (i.e. 11% of all respondents) have already started looking for a job, or are going to do it. The others would be interested in work if they received an offer, but they are not going to look for work themselves. During the last year, interest in work abroad has increased. Young people are particularly keen. According to declarations, over a third of people aged 18-24 (36%) want to look for a job abroad or are already looking for work, while a further 15% would accept a job offer abroad.



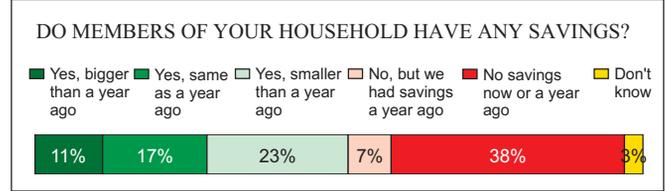
More information about this topic can be found in CBOS report in Polish: "Work abroad", November 2012. Fieldwork for national sample: October 2012, N=1007. The random address sample is representative for adult population of Poland.

**SAVINGS AND LOANS**

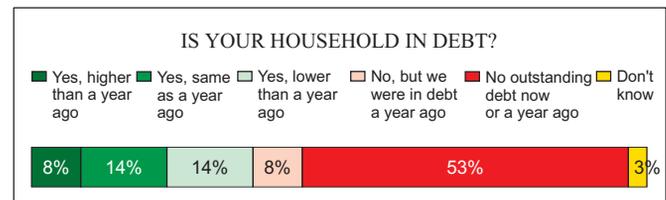
The majority of Polish people (67%) are convinced, to a greater or lesser extent, that it is worthwhile saving money for the future. Only about a fifth (19%) think it does not make sense.



A little over half (51%) of respondents claim that they or members of their household have some savings. Half of them (23% of the total) say the savings are smaller than a year ago, while 17% have kept their savings on the same level and, 11% increased them. Less than half of households (45%) have no savings according to declarations, and for the majority of them (38% of the total) this is a permanent state: they had no savings a year ago either. A sizeable group (30%) are households with diminishing savings: 23% still have some, but 7% spent all savings and now they have none.



Declarations indicate that more than a third of households have some loans to pay back. In most cases the debt is the same (14% of the total) or smaller (14% of the total) than a year ago, but 8% of households have higher debt. Over three-fifths of households (61%) have no outstanding debt. Most of them (53% of the total) had no unpaid loans a year ago either, while 8% managed to pay back their obligations in full.



The comparison of average per capita income of respondents owning savings and those with loans to pay back indicates that both owning savings and being in debt is associated with higher income. It comes as no surprise, as credit rating is a condition of obtaining a loan.

More information about this topic can be found in CBOS report in Polish: "Savings and loans", November 2012. Fieldwork for national sample: October 2012, N=1007. The survey was commissioned by Kozminski University. The random address sample is representative for adult population of Poland.

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

- ◆ Reliability of News and Current Affairs Programs
- ◆ Party Preferences in November
- ◆ Poles About Financial Market
- ◆ Social Moods in November
- ◆ Trust in Politicians in November
- ◆ Common Good and Public Morality
- ◆ Improvement of Government Ratings
- ◆ Opinions About Public Institutions

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

Circulation: 70 copies

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