

CONTENTS:

- SUBJECTIVE INFLUENCE ON PUBLIC AFFAIRS
- ATTITUDE TO DEMOCRACY
- OPINIONS ABOUT LOBBYING
- PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

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

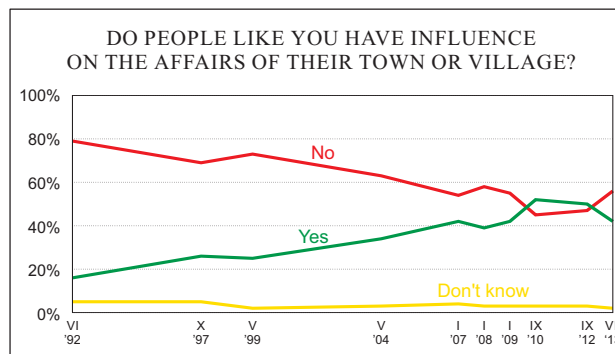
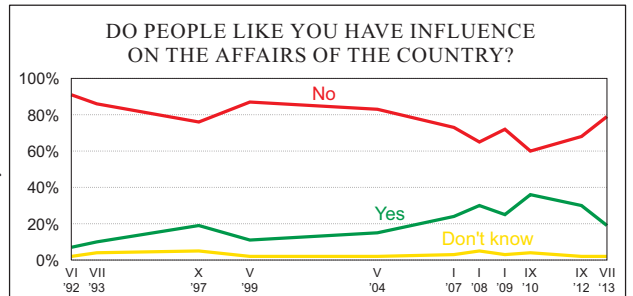
© COPYRIGHT BY CBOS 2013

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

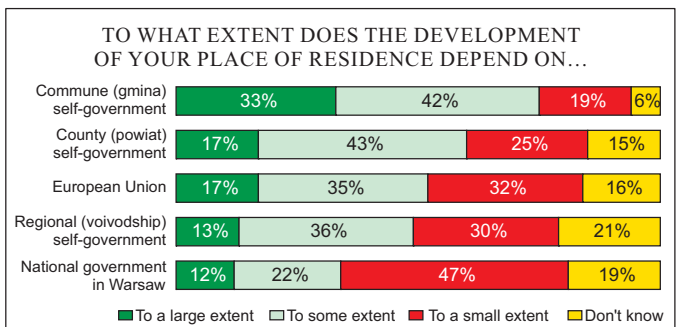
SUBJECTIVE INFLUENCE ON PUBLIC AFFAIRS

The subjective influence on the affairs of the country continuously rose from the beginning of the systemic change until 2008. In the years 2009-2012 between one-fourth and one-third of respondents felt empowered, which meant a substantial improvement relative to the 1992-1999 period.

However, in recent years the proportion of people convinced that citizens can influence the political decisions declined markedly. At present, 19% of Poles (an 11-point drop from 2012) think that they have influence on public life in the country.



In public opinion, local development depends primarily on the self-government of the commune (gmina), indicated by 75% as having a significant role. The second level (powiat) self-government is mentioned by 60% of respondents. Over half (52%) appreciate the influence of the European Union on the situation of the locality. Almost half (49%) mention regional (voivodship) self-government, while one-third (34%) see the role of the national government. Attributing bigger influence to the EU than the Warsaw government is probably driven by the perception of the importance of the investment co-financed by the EU funds for the local development.

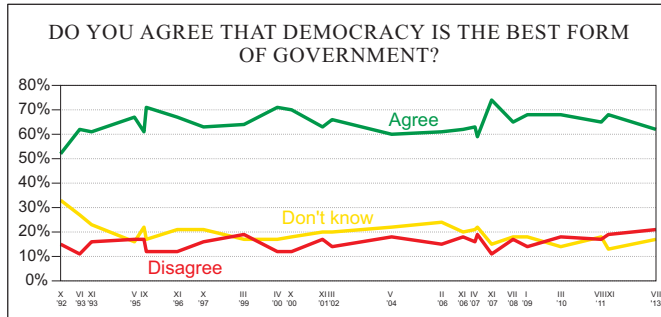


More information about this topic can be found in CBOS report in Polish: "Subjective influence on public affairs", September 2013. Fieldwork for national sample: July 2013, N=1005. The random address sample is representative for adult population of Poland.

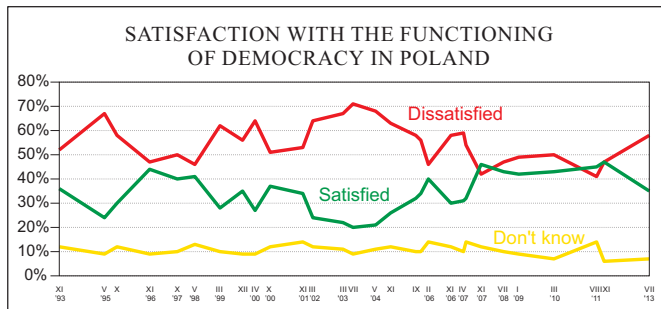
ATTITUDE TO DEMOCRACY

Since the early 1990s, when attitudes to democracy started being measured, the majority consider it to be the best form of government. At present, over three-fifths (62%)

believe it to be superior to other forms of rule. Attitudes to democracy are relatively stable, but some variation can be noted. In the last two years, the number of respondents unequivocally convinced about the superiority of democracy declined.



Although the majority consider democracy to be the best political system, the evaluation of its functioning in Poland is ambivalent and less positive. At present, almost three-fifths (58%) are dissatisfied with democratic practice. This means that, in the last two years, the criticism has increased markedly, which is probably a partial result of disenchantment with the current coalition government led by the Civic Platform.

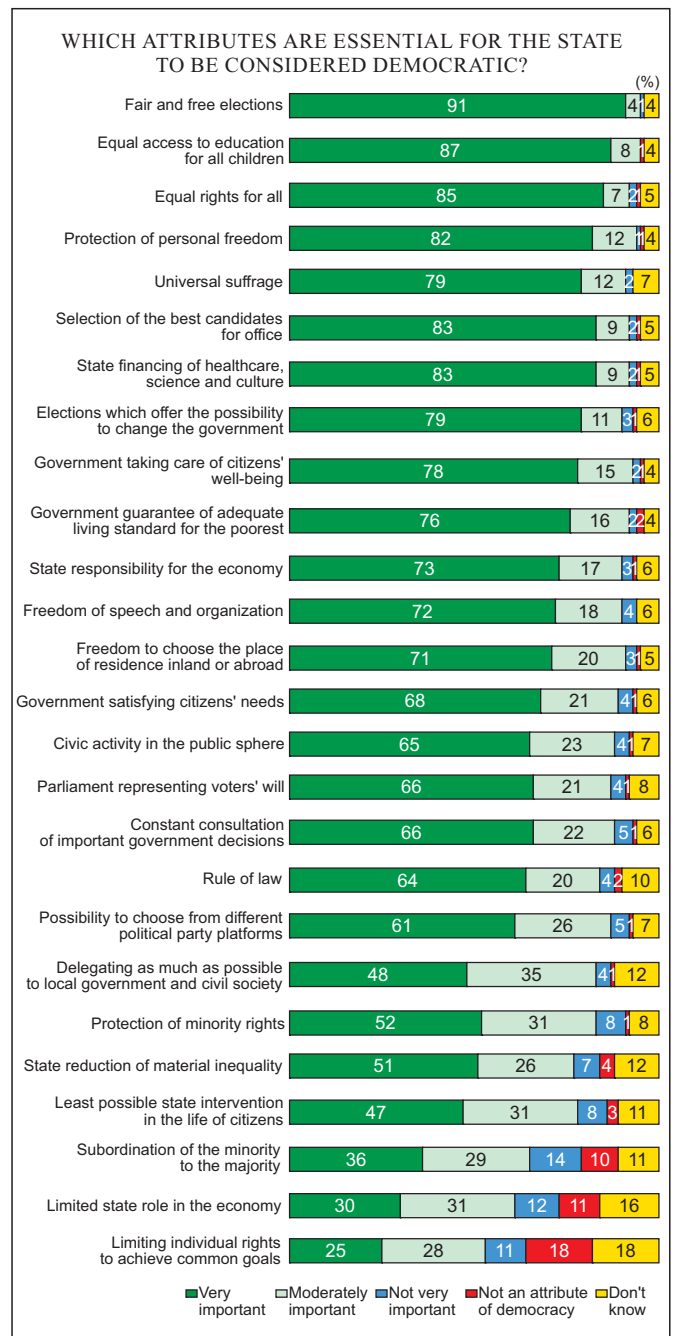


In the narrow sense, democracy means that there are competitive elections of political representatives. However, it is usually understood more broadly, as a set of socio-political values and norms. The attributes most commonly associated with democracy are: free and fair elections, universal suffrage, the possibility to replace the government and the selection of the best candidates for office. Respondents also mention different aspects of equality, both equal legal rights and equal access to education, as well as protection of personal freedom. The economic aspects of the functioning of the democratic state are considered as very important: state financing of healthcare, science and culture, protecting the well-being of citizens, providing adequate living standard for the poorest, and state responsibility for the economy. Seven in ten citizens consider it important for democracy to have guarantees of freedom of speech, freedom to organize and the liberty to choose the place of residence inland or abroad.

Two-thirds of Poles consider as fundamental for democracy such qualities as: government satisfying the needs of all citizens, constant social consultation of major policies, parliamentary representation of the will of

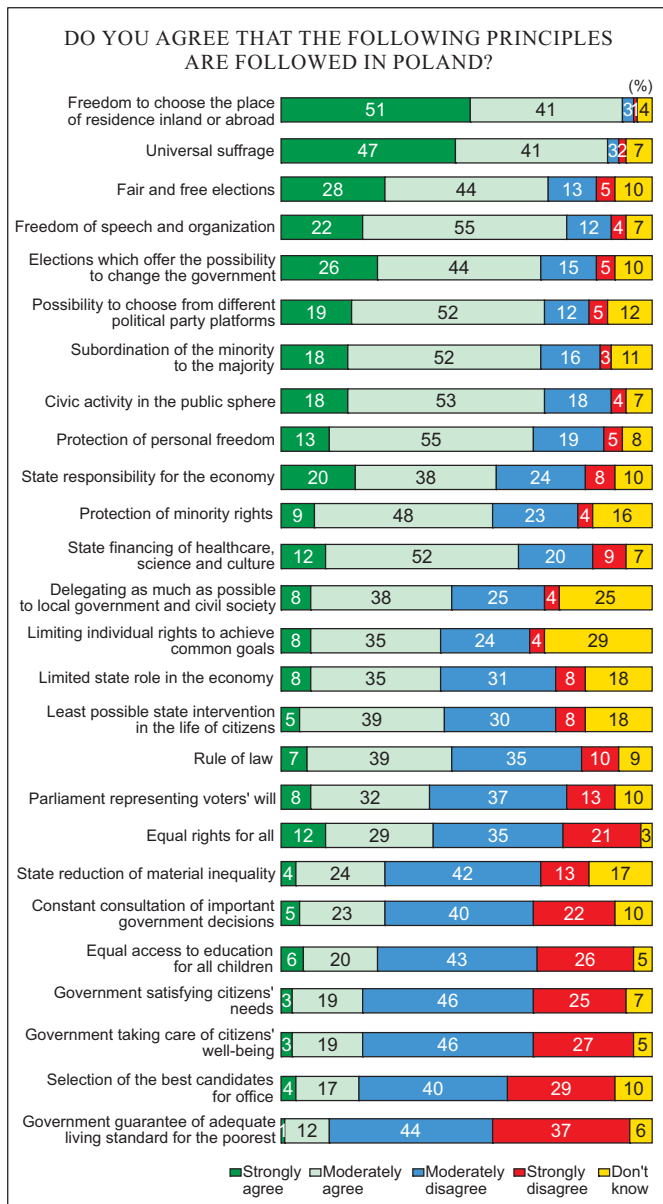
voters, rule of law and civic activity in the public sphere. A slightly smaller group mention the possibility to choose between competing electoral party platforms.

The aspects of democracy related to the constraints on the power of the state are seen as less important. They include such qualities as delegating as much as possible to the local government and reducing state intervention in the people's life and in the economy. Half of respondents consider as important the protection of minority rights and reducing inequality in living standard. If democracy implies restricting certain liberties, as in subordinating the minority to the will of the majority or the individual to the political community, it is far less frequently considered as crucial.



In public opinion, some of the most important principles of the democratic system are reflected in reality. This applies in particular to guarantees of personal freedom, freedom of speech and organization, the procedural aspects of democracy (elections), and state responsibility for the economy.

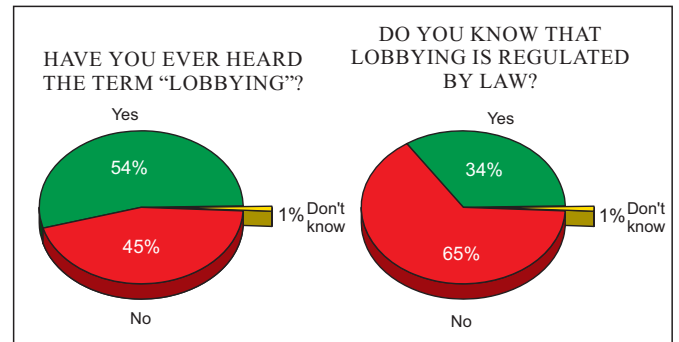
The majority of respondents think that such fundamental democratic principles as representing voters' opinion by parliament and giving the citizens voice through public consultations are not fulfilled. Respondents tend to question the existence of equal rights for everyone, equal access to education, the qualifications of the ruling elites, government's concern about the well-being of all citizens, and for the poorest in particular.



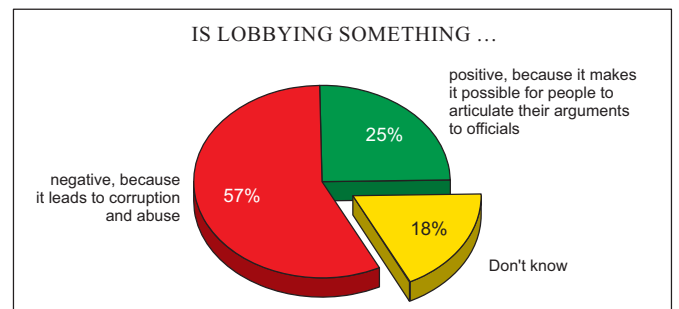
More information about this topic can be found in CBOS report in Polish: "Attitude to democracy", September 2013. Fieldwork for national sample: July 2013, N=1005. The random address sample is representative for adult population of Poland.

OPINIONS ABOUT LOBBYING

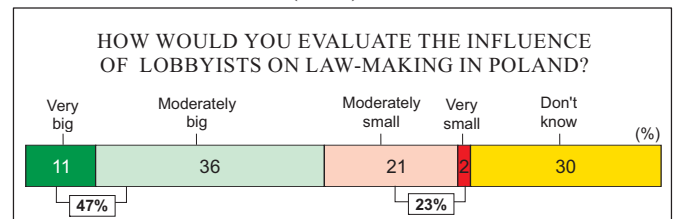
Lobbying is a relatively new term in Poland which describes actions aimed at influencing the decisions of public officials. According to the Polish law, a lobbyist has to be registered to act legally. A little more than half (54%) of Poles have heard this term, while about one-third (34%) know that it is regulated by law.



Although we preceded the evaluation of lobbying with a definition stressing its legality, the majority of Poles (57%) consider it to be a negative phenomenon leading to corruption and abuse. A quarter (25%) believe that lobbying is good because it lets people present their arguments to officials, while 18% have no opinion.



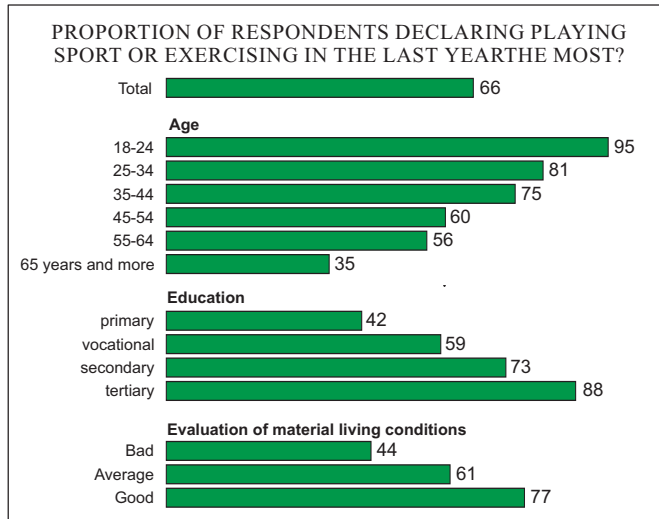
The negative evaluation of lobbying is related to the conviction that lobbyists have too much influence on political decision making. Almost half of Poles (47%) consider the influence of lobbyists on law-making as far-reaching, while less than a quarter (23%) think it is small and almost a third (30%) cannot evaluate its scale.



More information about this topic can be found in CBOS report in Polish: "Conflict of interests and lobbying: a dilemma for politicians", September 2013. Fieldwork for national sample: August 2013, N=904. The random address sample is representative for adult population of Poland.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

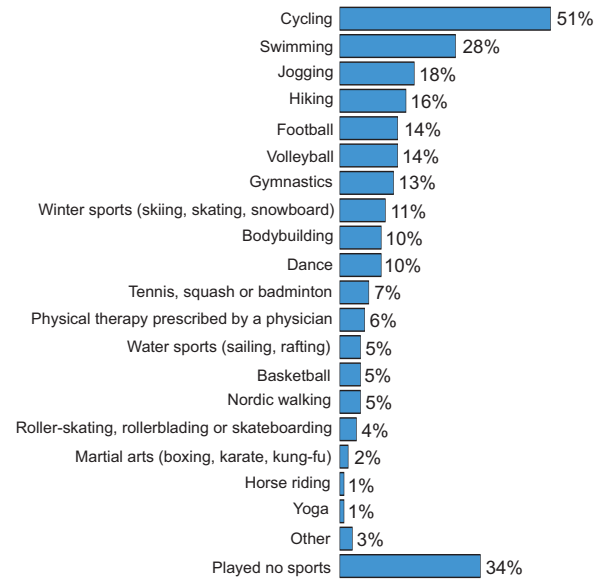
Declarations indicate that two-thirds of respondents (66%) practiced sport during the last year, out of which 40% did it regularly while 26% exercised irregularly. Physical activity depends on age, education and material situation. The younger, better educated and wealthier the respondents, the more active they are.



Cycling is by far the most popular form of physical activity, as every second respondent (51%) rode the bicycle in the previous year. The second most common is swimming (28%). Almost a fifth (18%) jogged, while a slightly smaller group (16%) went hiking in the mountains or on tourist trails. One in nine respondents (11%) did winter sports.

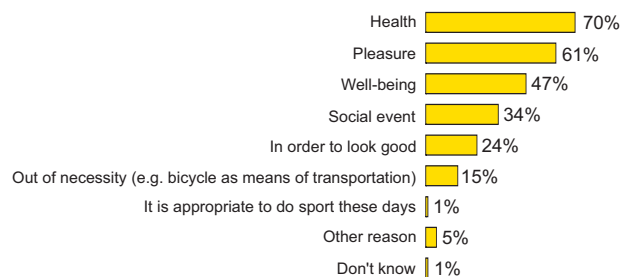
Every tenth respondent indicated dancing as sport activity. Some other less popular sports are tennis, squash and badminton. Relatively few people play water sports, basketball, go Nordic walking, ride on roller-skates, roller-blades, skateboard or do physical therapy exercises prescribed by a physician. Least popular are martial arts, horse riding and yoga.

WHICH SPORTS DID YOU PLAY IN THE LAST YEAR?



The main reason why Poles exercise is health (70%) or pleasure (61%). Almost half of active people (47%) do it to improve their psychological state, relieve stress, while for one-third (34%) sport is a social event, a good occasion to do something with friends or family. A quarter (24%) exercise to look better.

REASONS FOR PLAYING SPORTS:



Responses of people playing sport in the last year (N=593)

More information about this topic can be found in CBOS report in Polish: "Physical activity", September 2013. Fieldwork for national sample: August 2013, N=904. 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):

- ◆ What Kind of Political Party the Poles Need?
- ◆ Party Preferences in September
- ◆ Attitude to Government in September
- ◆ Opinions About Earnings in Different Occupations
- ◆ Support for Hypothetical Party of Jaroslaw Gowin
- ◆ Opinions About Public Institutions
- ◆ Attitude Toward Trade Unions' Protests
- ◆ Trust in Politicians in September
- ◆ Social Moods in September

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.