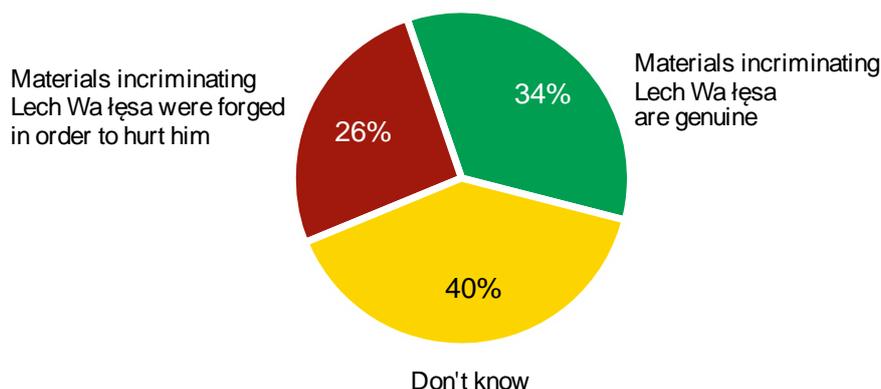


## Opinions about Lech Wałęsa

In recent weeks the Institute of National Remembrance released to journalists and historians documents found in the home of general Czesław Kiszczak, minister of internal affairs in 1981-1990. This brought back into public debate the question of cooperation of Lech Wałęsa with secret police. The documents purportedly prove that Lech Wałęsa was in the years 1970-1976 a secret collaborator of the security police with the codename “Bolek”. They would confirm information contained e.g. in a book Secret police and Lech Wałęsa. A contribution to biography published in 2008 by Sławomir Cenckiewicz and Piotr Gontarczyk. The release of these materials and the debate accompanying them covered not only the biography of Lech Wałęsa, but also the evaluation of the Polish model of systemic transition and became another field of political conflict. Committee for Defence of Democracy defended Lech Wałęsa as the legend of “Solidarity” movement and a symbol of Polish transformation.

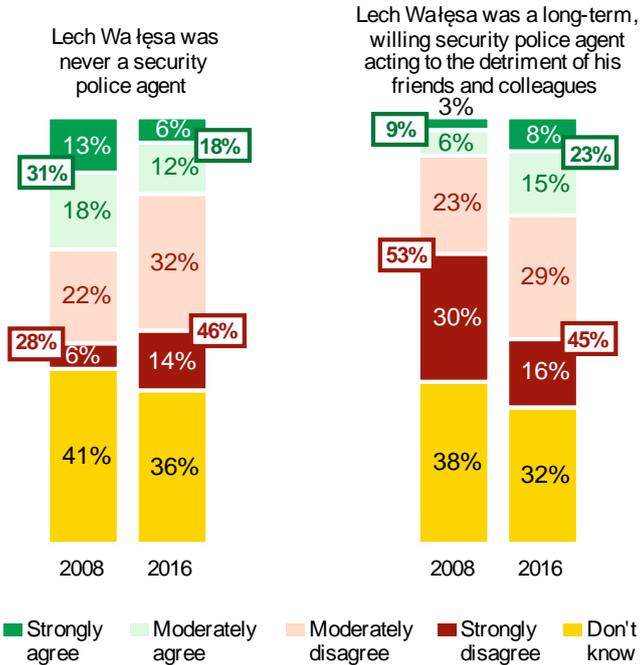
### Which view is closer to your own opinion?



Reliability of materials incriminating Lech Wałęsa is evaluated equivocally. A large part of the public opinion (40%) is disoriented and does not know how to judge them. A third of respondents (34%) consider them as genuine, while a fourth (26%) doubt their authenticity.

In spite of doubts regarding the reliability of materials related to Lech Wałęsa, their release apparently convinced a part of the public opinion that accusations levelled at the first leader of “Solidarity” had some grounding. Since 2008 the proportion of people believing that he had been a secret police agent increased markedly (from 28% to 46%). Moreover, whereas eight years ago only 9% of respondents believed that Lech Wałęsa, as a conscious and long-term collaborator acted to the detriment of his friends and colleagues, at present almost a quarter (23%) share this opinion. In spite of the fact that presently the opinions about Lech Wałęsa's past are better crystallized than in 2008, many people leave the question of alleged collaboration of Lecha Wałęsa with security police open and refrain from taking a clear position.

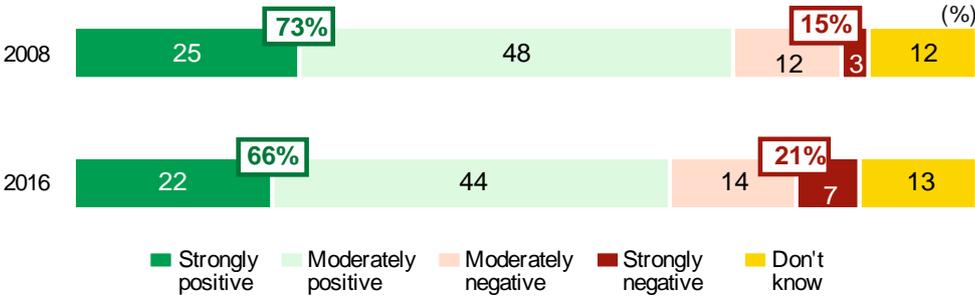
**Do you agree with the following statement?**



Although accusations levelled at Lech Wałęsa about his alleged involvement with the security police have now gained credibility, they have only limited effect on the perception of his role in Polish history. While the proportion of respondents critical towards Lech Wałęsa has increased since 2008, his historical achievements are appreciated by the

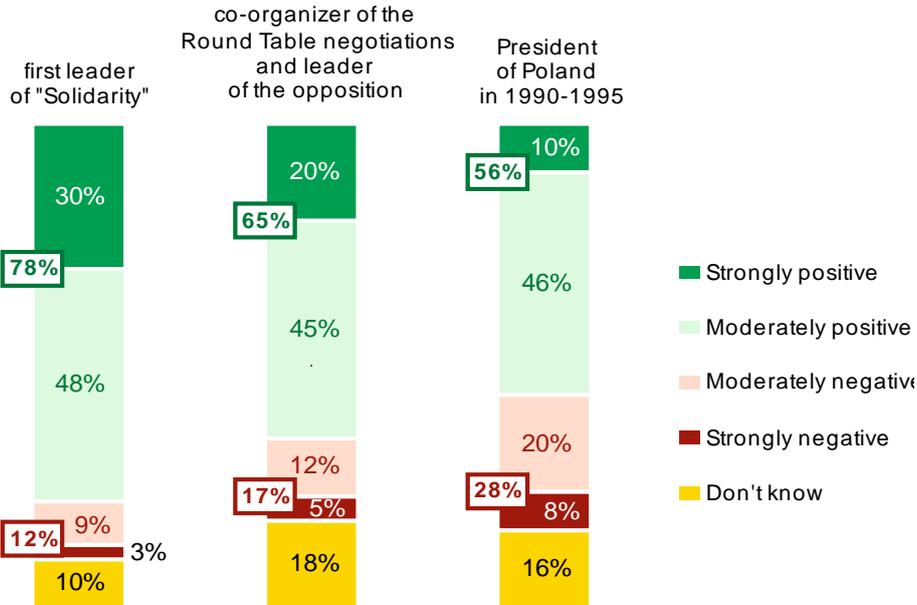
majority of Polish society. Two-thirds of respondents (66%) think that, in general, Lech Wałęsa played a positive role in the history of Poland. The opposite view is shared by about a fifth of respondents (21%).

**Evaluation of the role of Lech Wałęsa in recent history of Poland**



The role of Lech Wałęsa as the first leader of “Solidarity” is evaluated very well (78% approval). Almost two-thirds of respondents (65%) think that Lech Wałęsa served Poland well as the co-organizer of the Round Table negotiations and the leader of the opposition at that time. His presidency is evaluated slightly worse, but, nevertheless, the majority (56%) give it a positive note. The evaluation of Lech Wałęsa as president from a long-term perspective is better than recorded during his term in office.

**Evaluation of the role of Lech Wałęsa as...**



More information about this topic can be found in CBOS report in Polish: "Opinions on Lech Wałęsa, His Past and Historic Role", March 2016. Fieldwork for national sample: March 2016, N=1034. The random address sample is representative for adult population of Poland.