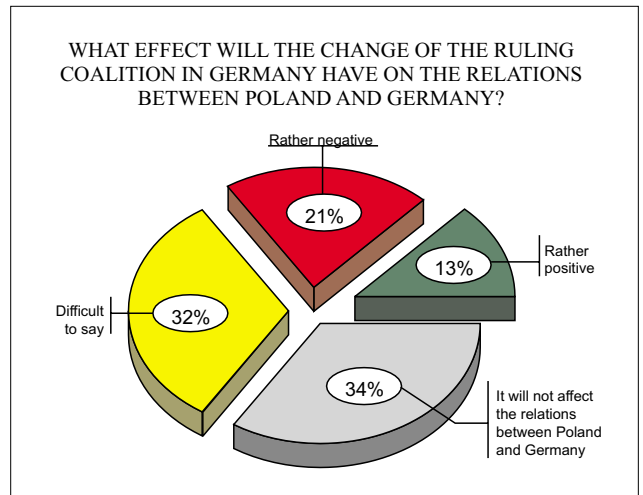


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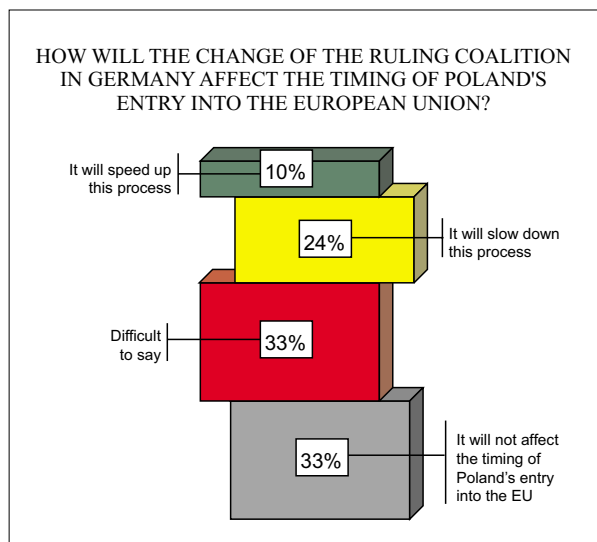
- WILL THE CHANGE OF GERMAN GOVERNMENT AFFECT RELATIONS BETWEEN POLAND AND GERMANY?
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## WILL THE CHANGE OF GERMAN GOVERNMENT AFFECT RELATIONS BETWEEN POLAND AND GERMANY?

The change of government in Germany and the resignation of Chancellor Kohl aroused numerous comments on the implications of this event for relations between Poland and Germany and the process of Poland's integration with the European Union. How do Poles perceive the political changes in Germany? Do Poles perceive the moderate declarations of the new Chancellor regarding the timing of the admission of new members to the EU as a change in the position of Germany and an indication that this process might be delayed? These were the questions we asked in our December survey.

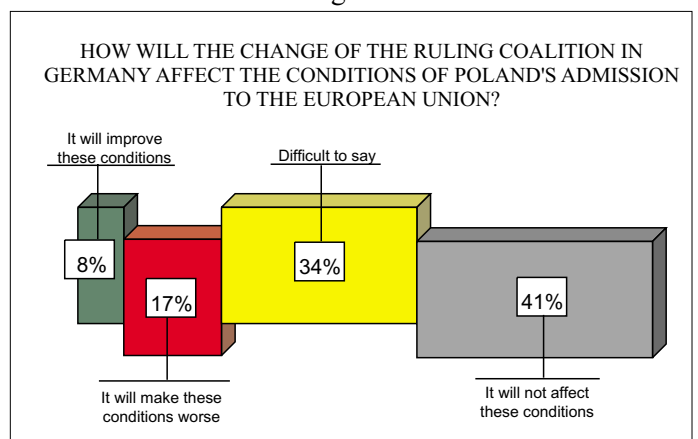


Among respondents who are interested in politics and follow news on this subject, the prevailing opinion is that the new political arrangement in Germany will affect the relations between our countries. The greater part of this group believe that this effect will be rather negative.



Poles have mixed feelings about the implications of the change in the political alignment of power in Germany for the timing of our integration with the European Union. One in four respondents thinks that the resignation of Chancellor Kohl and his party from power in Germany will slow down the process of our entry into the EU. Slightly more - one third of respondents - believe that the changes in Germany will not affect the timing of our integration with the EU.

At the same time most respondents are aware that Germany is the state which gives the strongest support for Poland in her attempts to gain membership of this organisation. As many as 59% of respondents pointed to Germany as one of the states that support us in this process. France was also frequently mentioned as a state that supports us (21%). As far as other states that support our attempts are concerned, the



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following were mentioned, although significantly less frequently: the United Kingdom (4%), Italy (3%) and Austria (2%).

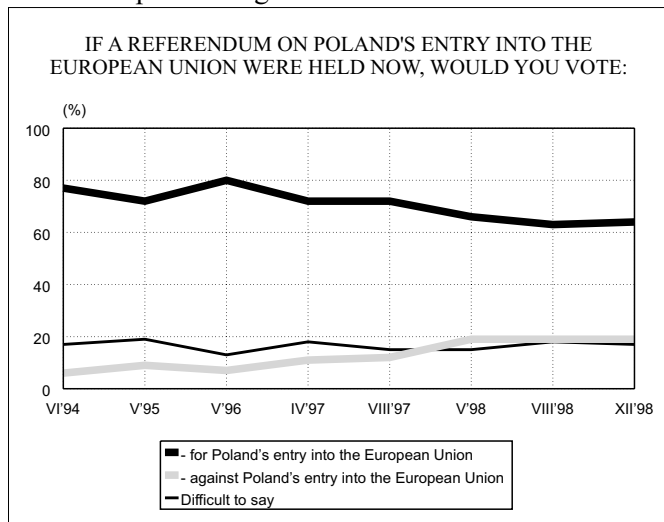
As far as the effect of the political changes in Germany on the conditions of Poland's admission into the EU is concerned, the prevailing opinion is that the new situation on the German political scene will have no effect on these conditions. However, a substantial group of respondents (17%) are afraid that after the change of government in Germany, Poland may encounter additional difficulties in her attempts to obtain membership of the EU.

More information on this subject can be found in the CBOS report *"Will the change of the government in Germany affect the relations between Poland and Germany?"*, January '99.

## ON THE WAY TO THE EUROPEAN UNION

Poland formally moved closer to the European Union during the last year, because negotiations on this matter commenced. However, at the same time we became aware that the route to our membership may be longer and more difficult than we had until recently thought.

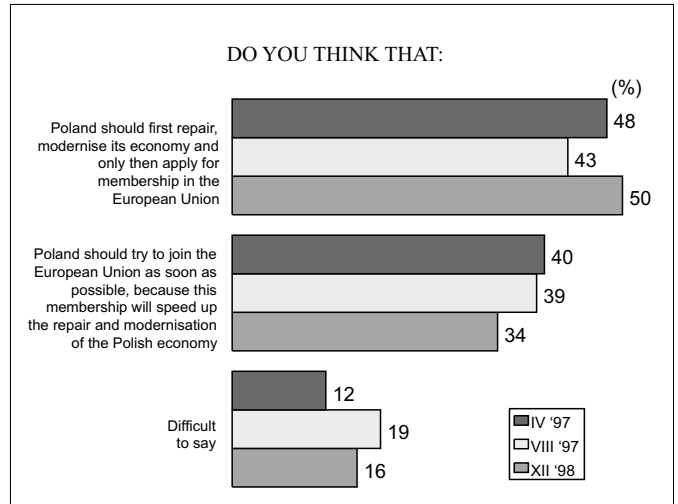
As in the previous years, the largest share of respondents (51%) believe that at the moment we are not farther than halfway to full integration with the European Union. The distance that in the respondents' opinion separates us from the admission to the European Union was reduced rather significantly in the period from June '94 to May '96. However, according to the respondents' answers, we have been stuck in the same place for over two years or we have even moved back on our way to membership of this organisation.



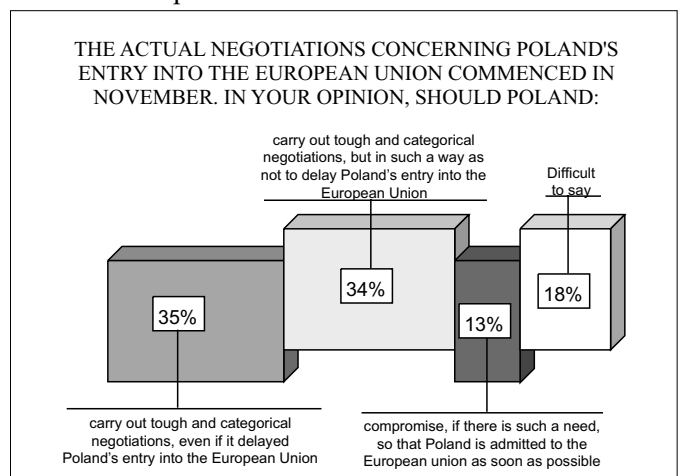
Although a majority of Poles opt for our country joining the European union, a large and growing part of the society seem to have doubts as to whether we should rush into it. As compared with 1996, the opinion that Poland is not ready for integration yet and this process should be preceded by further modernisation of our economy has become stronger.

Support for the idea that the Polish economy should be made stronger before joining European

Structures prevails in almost all social groups, even among those who several months ago opted for the fastest possible integration, i.e. inhabitants of big cities, persons with higher education, managers and white-collar workers. This belief also prevails among the electorates of all political groupings which have the biggest social support, even among the UW (Freedom Union) supporters, the majority of whom last year opted for the fastest possible entry of our country into the Union.



As compared with the situation of over two years ago, social understanding of the motives that make the EU countries try to build closer relations with Poland has also changed. Significantly less people (12%) notice their wish to support Poland in building a market economy. At the same time the percentage of respondents who see the process of integration as an attempt by stronger countries to dominate the weaker ones has increased. It may indicate growing fears connected with integration, following from the belief that as yet Poland is too weak economically to sustain Western competition. Those respondents who believe that the desire of the strongest European countries to subordinate the weaker ones is one of the motives behind the tightening of cooperation between Poland and the European Union, particularly often opt for delaying integration until more economic reforms are in place.



More information on this subject can be found in the CBOS report *"On the way to the European Union"*, January '99.

## GEOGRAPHICAL DIFFERENCES IN THE SUPPORT FOR THE GOVERNMENT AND THE PRESIDENT

Both public opinion polls and real elections show that there are quite large differences among inhabitants of different regions of our country as far as their political preferences are concerned. In order to estimate these differences, we have aggregated data from the last four months and performed an analysis of support for the government and the President by geographical location.

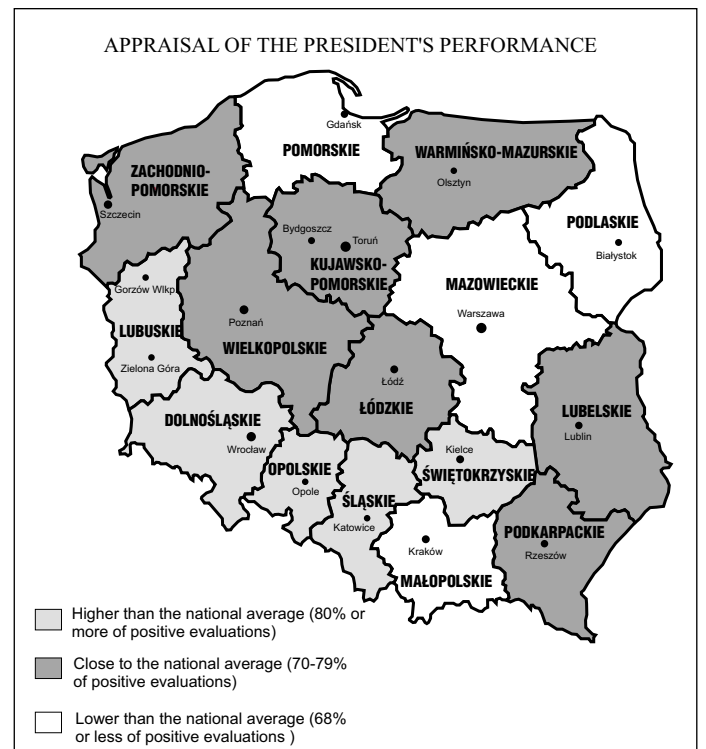
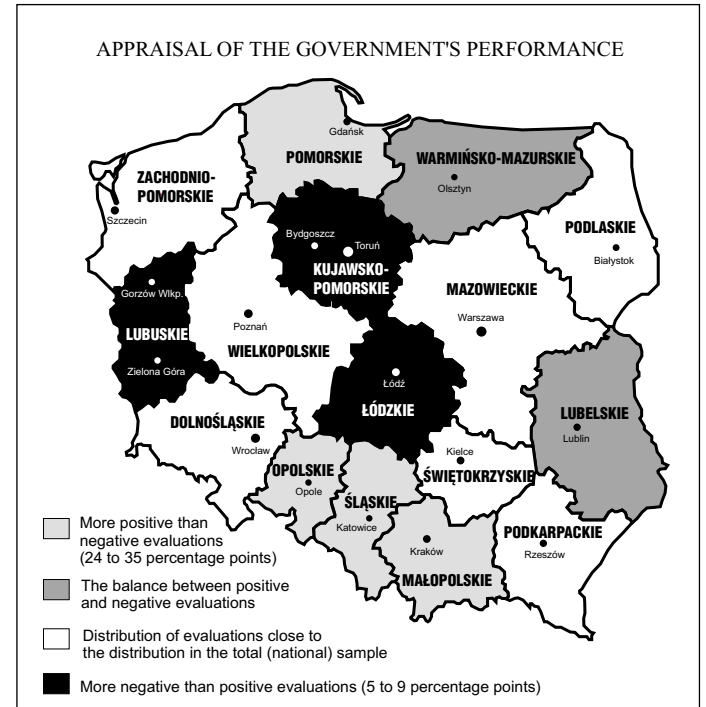


Taking into account the country as a whole, during the last four months the government of Jerzy Buzek had more supporters (37%) than opponents (23%), and the percentage of supporters was comparable to the percentage of persons declaring their indifference to the government (36%).

The government enjoys the relatively highest support in the following voivodships: Opolskie, Pomorskie, Świętokrzyskie, Śląskie and Małopolskie. At least two fifths of respondents are government supporters there (40 - 47% declare their support) and they significantly outnumber the opponents. Supporters of the government outnumber its opponents in the remaining voivodships as well. Lubuskie is the only exception - the proportion is the reverse there and the number of opponents of the government is the highest in Poland (31%). However, those who declare their indifference to the present Cabinet are even there in the majority.

Although geographical differences can also be observed as far as the evaluation of the performance of the President Aleksander Kwaśniewski is concerned, we may conclude that he enjoys almost universal recognition in most voivodships. The highest percentage of respondents expressing their positive opinion of the President's

performance was recorded in Lubuskie voivodship (85%). At the same time the government was evaluated there particularly low. High level of acceptance of the the President's work can also be observed in the following voivodships: Dolnośląskie, Opolskie, Śląskie and Świętokrzyskie. On the other hand, the percentage of positive opinions is lower than average in the following voivodships: Mazowieckie, Podlaskie and Pomorskie. It is still very high, though.

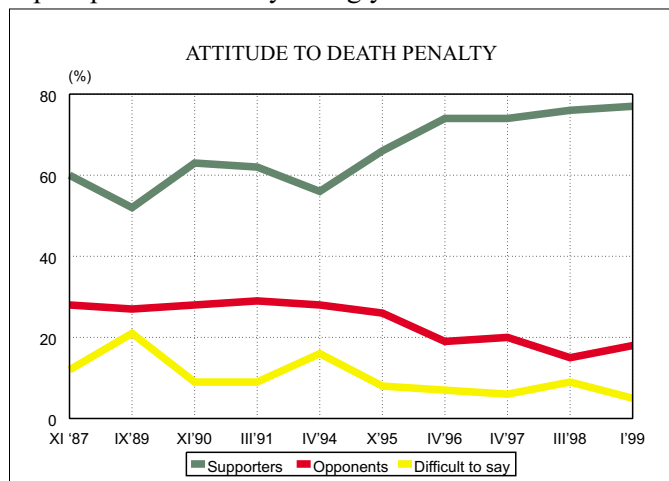


More information on this subject can be found in the CBOS report "The attitude towards the government and the appraisal of the performance of political institutions in new voivodships", January '99.

## POLES ON THE DEATH PENALTY

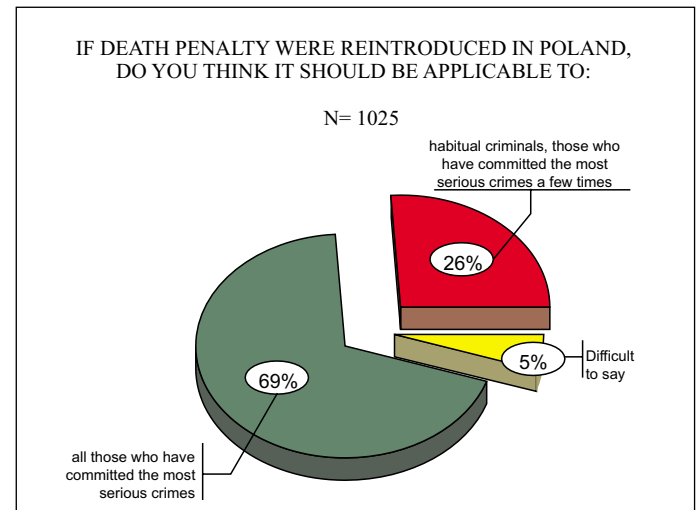
After a few year's moratorium on the use of the death penalty, this penalty was abolished altogether by the new criminal law effective from 1 September 1998. However, in view of some cases of particularly brutal crimes and the general tendency towards rising violent crime which has been observed for some time, the introduction of this law did not put an end to the discussion on whether the death penalty can be justified. A draft amendment to the criminal law, which is currently being prepared by the Sejm, is aimed at making the penal policy stricter. The reintroduction of capital punishment is also being mentioned in this context.

During the last twelve years the supporters of death penalty have invariably outnumbered its opponents. The number of its supporters was relatively the lowest in the crucial year for the recent history of Poland, i.e. 1989. However, the number of death penalty supporters accounted for two thirds of the society in 1995, and since 1996 it has reached at least three quarters of the total sample. Moreover, a vast majority of this group support capital punishment very strongly.



The percentage of supporters of death penalty is lower than in the total sample only among persons with

the highest education, inhabitants of the biggest cities, and as far as socio-occupational groups are concerned, among managers, the intelligentsia, white-collar workers, students and school students. However, even in these groups supporters of the death penalty prevail. The only group distinguished in our survey where the percentages of supporters and opponents of death penalty are equal are deeply religious persons, i.e. those who take part in religious practices a few times a week.



A very strict attitude to crime and faith in the effectiveness of capital punishment as a deterrent discouraging offenders from committing crimes is reflected not only in the scale of social support for this punishment, but also in the expectation that there will be no exceptions as to who can be sentenced to death. In the opinion of a significant majority of death penalty supporters, it should be possible to sentence to death all offenders who have committed the most serious crimes and not only those who have done so a few times. The support for sentencing juvenile perpetrators of the most serious crimes to death is also quite large. In the opinion of almost one third of those who opt for the reintroduction of capital punishment, it should also be possible to sentence persons under 18 to death.

More information on this subject can be found in the CBOS report "The attitude to death penalty", January '99.

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

- The social image of the Prime Minister Jerzy Buzek
- Political party preferences in January
- Opinions on the health service reform in the first days of its implementation
- Social moods in January
- The attitude to the government and the appraisal of the performance of political institutions
- Trust in politicians in January

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