

IN THIS ISSUE:

- THE ATTITUDE TO THE GOVERNMENT AND OPPOSITION IN POLAND AND OTHER COUNTRIES OF CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE
- EVALUATIONS OF THE MATERIAL CONDITIONS OF LIVING AND THE ECONOMIC SITUATION
- EXPECTATIONS RELATED TO INFLATION IN POLAND, THE CZECH REPUBLIC, LITHUANIA, RUSSIA AND HUNGARY
- A TWO-PARTY OR MULTIPARTY SYSTEM?
- WHAT DO WE OWE TO OUR GRANDPARENTS

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 58 94
Fax: (48 22) 629 40 89

E-mail: sekretariat@cbos.pl

<http://www.cbos.pl>

© COPYRIGHT BY CBOS 2001

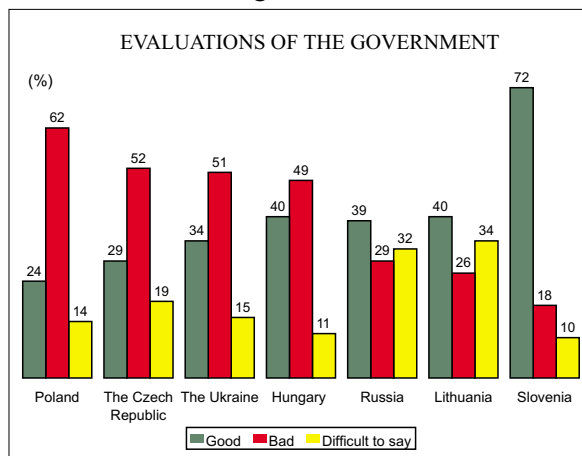
ALL SOURCES MUST BE CREDITED WHEN ANY PART OF THIS PUBLICATION IS REPRODUCED

THE ATTITUDE TO THE GOVERNMENT AND OPPOSITION IN POLAND AND OTHER COUNTRIES OF CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE

In January, public opinion research institutions from Lithuania (VILMORUS), Russia (WCIOM), Slovenia (University of Ljubljana) and the Ukraine (KIIS) decided to join the monthly public opinion research conducted by CBOS and its partners from the Czech Republic (CVVM) and Hungary (TARKI), i.e. the founders of Central European Opinion Research Group (CEORG).

Respondents were asked to evaluate the activities of the government and opposition in their countries. Since present governments have been in power for different periods of time, in some countries the public opinion on the cabinet is more crystallised than in others. In the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland the same cabinets have been in power for a relatively long time. In Slovenia and in former Soviet republics participating in the study, the present governments have been in power for less than a year.

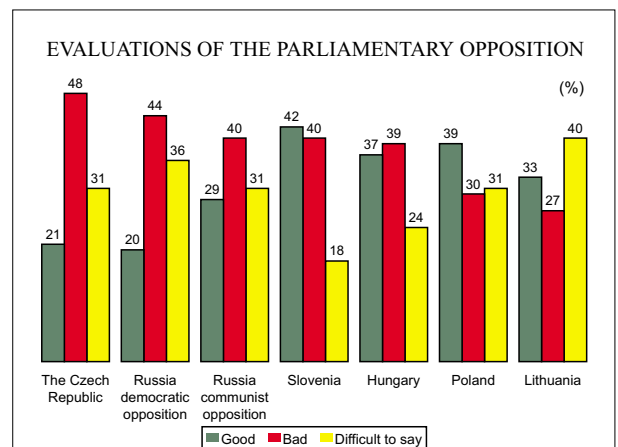
The long lasting Czech, Hungarian and Polish governments are criticised by the respondents: in each of those countries negative evaluations outnumber positive ones. The Hungarian government of Victor Orban is evaluated relatively high of the three (two-fifths of opinions are positive). Milos Zeman's government in the Czech Republic and Jerzy Buzek's government in Poland obtained much more critical evaluations. During the last year the opinions on the Hungarian and the Czech government improved a little, while the evaluations of Polish government deteriorated.



A new Slovenian government of a long-standing prime minister Janez Drnovsek enjoys very good evaluations. A small number of Slovenians have no opinion in this respect. The situation is slightly different in the former Soviet republics. The governments of Russia and Lithuania, which have been in power for a relatively short time, are evaluated rather positively. At the same time, a high percentage of respondents do not have any opinion on these cabinets. It is not true about the Ukraine, though. Negative opinions on the government of Viktor Yushchenko markedly outnumber positive ones

albeit not as much as in the Czech Republic and Poland. Bad evaluations of the Ukrainian government are probably a result of a rather poor political situation of the Ukraine, as well as the public accusations against ministers.

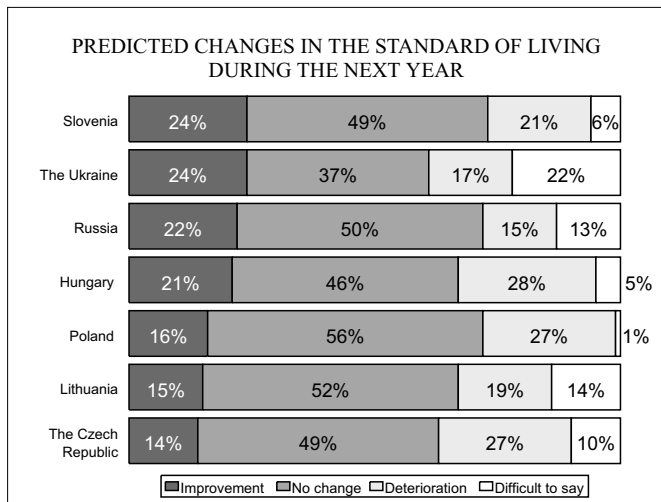
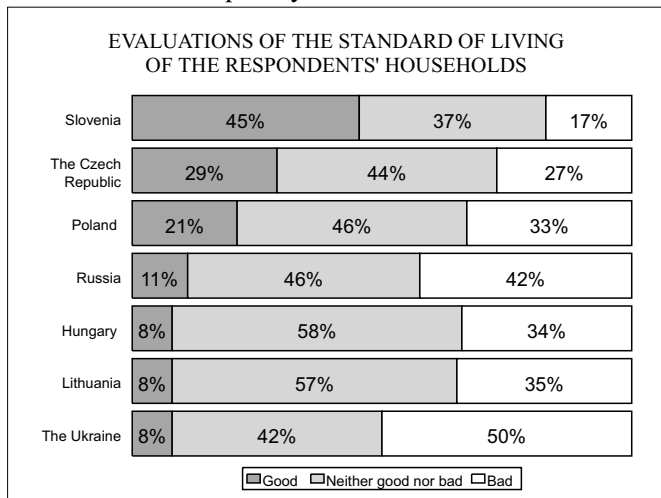
The evaluations of the opposition also differ from country to country. In Slovenia, Poland and Lithuania positive evaluations outnumber negative ones. In Hungary the number of good opinions is more or less equal to the number of bad ones. It should be noted that the Czech Republic is the only country where both the government and the opposition are evaluated negatively, while both are evaluated positively in Slovenia.



More information on this subject can be found in the CBOS report "Evaluations of the activity of the government and opposition in some Central and Eastern European countries", February 2001.

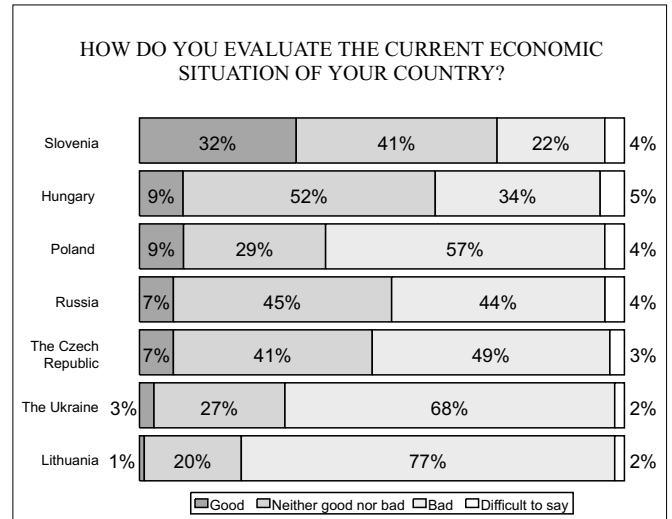
EVALUATIONS OF THE MATERIAL CONDITIONS OF LIVING AND THE ECONOMIC SITUATION

Subjective evaluations of living conditions are related to the wealth of the society. In the countries with higher GDP per capita the respondents' evaluations of their standard of living are often better, though this is not always true. Among the nations taking part in the survey, Slovenians are the most satisfied with the standard of living of their households. About half of the Czechs, Hungarians, Poles and Lithuanians believe that their standard of living is average, neither good nor bad. The Ukrainians and Russians describe their living conditions as bad the most frequently.

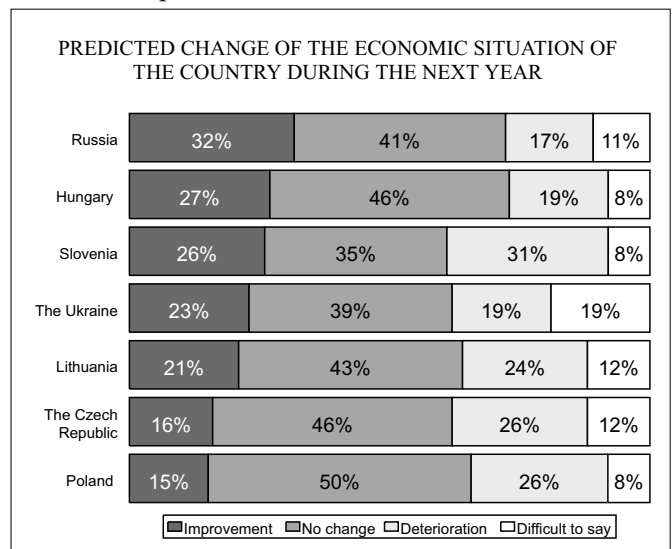


The evaluations of the economic situation of the countries of Central Europe and the former USSR are rather negative. Slovenians are the only ones to express a rather positive opinion on the condition of their economy. Good evaluations outnumber negative ones in Slovenia, but nevertheless ambivalent opinions are the most frequent there. On the other hand, half of the Czechs and almost three-fifths of the Poles evaluate the economic situation of their country negatively. In Hungary

ambivalent opinions prevail, but positive evaluations are as rare as in the Czech Republic or Poland. The Russians have a relatively negative opinion on the economic situation of their country. The Ukrainians and Lithuanians criticise the condition of their economies the most: three quarters of Lithuanians and two-thirds of Ukrainians believe that the economic situation of their country is bad. Very few respondents believe the opposite.



As far as short-term economic forecasts are concerned, the Russians are the most optimistic. Also Hungarians are more frequently optimistic than pessimistic. In Lithuania and the Ukraine similar proportions of respondents evaluate the economic perspectives positively and negatively, although in the Ukraine optimistic forecasts slightly outnumber pessimistic ones, while in Lithuania the number of pessimistic projections is slightly higher. In the Czech Republic, Slovenia and Poland pessimistic forecasts outnumber optimistic ones.

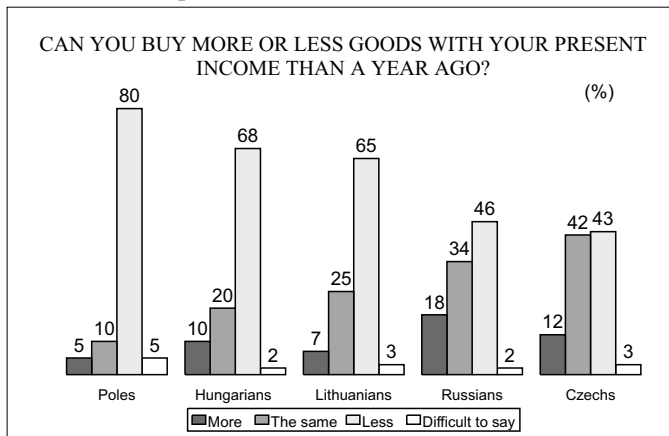


More information on this subject can be found in the CBOS report "Evaluations of the living conditions and the economic situation in the selected Central and Eastern European countries", February 2001. Surveys conducted by: CBOS, CVVM, KIIS, TARKI, VILMORUS and WCIOM.

EXPECTATIONS RELATED TO INFLATION IN POLAND, THE CZECH REPUBLIC, LITHUANIA, RUSSIA AND HUNGARY

According to official data, the last year inflation in Poland was lower than expected. Furthermore, according to the publicly announced optimistic projections, this year the value of the wages and pensions of Poles should not decrease. Nevertheless, the Poles express the most critical opinions of the five countries on the last year's devaluation. As many as four-fifths of Poles declare that they can buy less goods with their income than a year ago. Of this group, over two-fifths (44%) believe that they can buy much less than a year ago. Only one in twenty Poles believes that the value of the Polish zloty has increased and one in ten says that the purchasing power of the Polish currency has not changed.

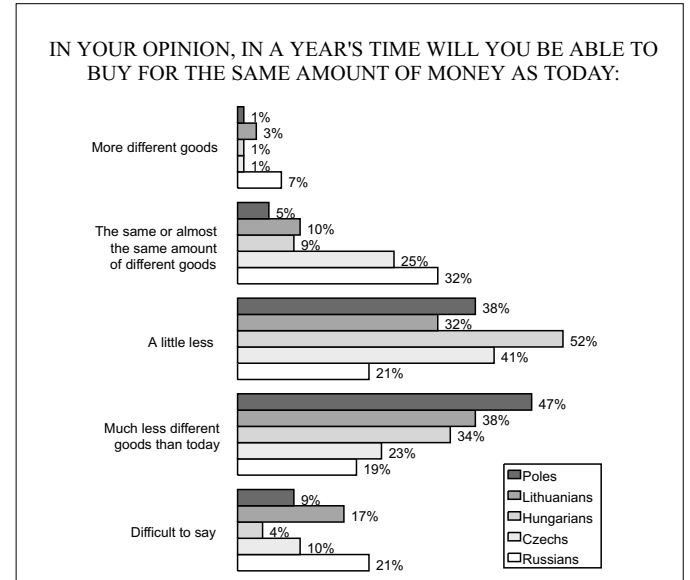
Hungarians are the closest to Poles in this respect. In fact, Poland and Hungary had similar inflation rates in 2000 (8.5% and 10%, respectively). The Czechs and Russians have a stronger feeling of stability of the purchasing power of their money. It concerns both the evaluations of the last year's inflation and the expectations for the current year. The opinions of the Czechs and Russians are similar, but they are based on different grounds. In the Czech Republic, the actual level of inflation (4.4% last year) justifies optimistic opinions. In the case of Russians, the main reason for their optimism may be the fact that the hyperinflation they had experienced not long ago was finally overcome and the inflation rate decreased by tens of percentage points in a short time. In this context, the inflation rate planned for the year 2001 (12%) not only does not cause concern, but may in fact arouse optimism.



Poles are the most pessimistic in their expectations concerning this year's inflation. Almost half of Poles are afraid that in a year time they will be able to buy much less goods than today for the same amount of money. Very few of them do not expect devaluation of the Polish zloty. The Hungarians are the closest to Poles in this respect. They also believe that the purchasing power of their currency will decrease during the year.

The Russians are the most optimistic in this respect. They are the least afraid of the evaluation of the

rouble and the most frequently believe that in a year's time they will be able to buy at least the same amount of different goods for the same amount of money. In the Czech Republic and Lithuania, similar proportions of respondents are afraid of devaluation of their currency, although those two nations significantly differ in their evaluations of the inflation level. Two-fifths of the Czechs (41%) expect a small inflation and a little more than one-fifth (23%) believe that the purchasing power of the Czech koruna will decrease significantly. In Lithuania, the percentages of respondents expecting a high and moderate level of inflation are similar (38% and 32%, respectively).



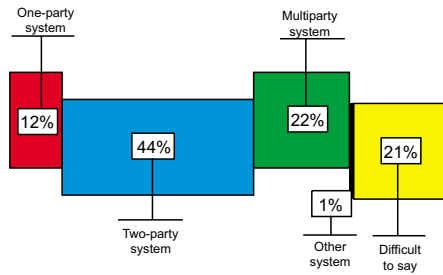
More information on this subject can be found in the CBOS report "The Poles, Czechs, Lithuanians, Russians and Hungarians on inflation", January 2001. Surveys conducted by CBOS, CVVM, TARKI and VILMORUS.

A TWO-PARTY OR MULTIPARTY SYSTEM?

When asked about their preferred system of government, over two-fifths of Poles opt for two-party system, while a little more than a fifth believe that the multiparty system, i.e. one that Poland has now, is the best for Poland. Only about a tenth are logging for the past one-party system, while twice as many have no opinion whatsoever.

The opinion that the two-party system would be the best for Poland is particularly popular among persons with higher education (57%), managers and the intelligentsia (52%). Half of respondents with centre (52%) and left-wing (50%) views and two-fifths of those with right-wing views (44%) opt for that system. The two-party system has the most supporters among those who vote for the SLD (the Democratic Left Alliance 59%). 49% of the supporters of the PSL (the Polish Peasant Party) and the AWS (the Solidarity Election Action) also prefer the two-party system. Among those who vote for the UW (the Freedom Union), more persons believe that the multiparty system is the best for Poland (45% vis a vis 41% supporters prefer the two-party system).

DIFFERENT COUNTRIES HAVE DIFFERENT SYSTEMS OF ELECTING AND EXERCISING POWER. IN DEMOCRATIC SYSTEMS, GOVERNMENTS ARE ELECTED FROM THE REPRESENTATIVES OF DIFFERENT PARTIES IN GENERAL ELECTIONS. IN YOUR OPINION, WHAT SYSTEM WOULD BE THE BEST FOR POLAND?



Most respondents (62%) believe that it is better for Poland if the ruling party has a strong opposition controlling its activities in the Sejm and Senate.

More information on this subject can be found in the CBOS report "The preferred political party system", January 2001.

WHAT DO WE OWE TO OUR GRANDPARENTS?

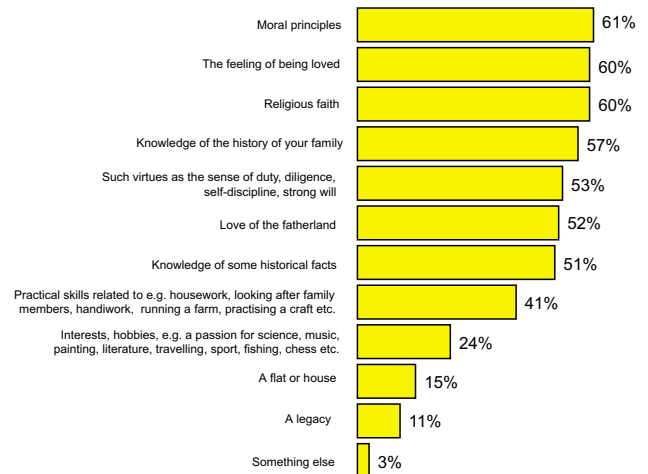
Most Poles are aware of the ties between them and their grandparents. Almost three-fifths of respondents (59%) declare that they owe something to their grandmothers and grandfathers, compared to over one-fifth (22%) of those who do not believe that they owe them anything. Almost every sixth respondent (16%) does not know or remember his or her grandparents.

In the respondents' opinion, the most important things that Polish grandparents give their grandchildren is a set of moral values that help them find a way through life, and the faith in God. The grandparents also give their grandchildren their love. They act as guardians of tradition over half of grandchildren learn about the past of their family from their grandparents and half of them obtain historical knowledge in that way. Over half of Poles are taught by their grandparents to love their country. A similar proportion declare that they owe to their

grandparents such virtues as the sense of duty, diligence, self-discipline and strong will. Furthermore, two-fifths of respondents have obtained their practical knowledge related to housework, running a farm, looking after family members, handiwork or certain crafts from their grandparents. A quarter of all respondents inherited their interests or hobbies, e.g. a passion for science, art or sport, from their grandfather or grandmother. Grandparents much less frequently satisfy the material needs of their grandchildren a relatively small proportion of the respondents received from them a flat, house or another legacy, such as a farm, land or money. That certainly reflects poor economic conditions and a socialist system in which the grandparents lived.

It should be stressed that the influence of grandparents on their grandchildren is so significant due to the fact that almost half of all adult Poles (47%) were looked after and brought up to a significant extent by their grandmothers or grandfathers.

DO YOU OWE THE FOLLOWING TO YOUR GRANDMOTHER OR GRANDFATHER:
(Percentage of positive answers)



More information on this subject can be found in the CBOS report "What we owe to our grandmothers and grandfathers", January 2001.

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

- ◆ Trust in public institutions in Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary
- ◆ Opinions on the health care at the end of the second year of the reform
- ◆ Evaluations of the past year and projections for the year 2001
- ◆ The frame of mind of Poles at the beginning of the new millennium
- ◆ Opinions on the provisions of the electoral law and the representativeness of the Sejm
- ◆ Social moods in January
- ◆ Nurses' strikes and protests
- ◆ Social image of politicians at the beginning of the year
- ◆ Four reforms in the social opinion
- ◆ The Poles' attitudes to the media a regional outlook

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

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