



# Weekly Briefing

## **Poland Social briefing:**

### **Polish citizens' approaches and attitudes towards politics**

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Regarding the social development this week Poland Briefing discusses three important issues:

1. public opinion approaches towards the current Law and Justice government,
2. the social assessments on the current political and economic situation in Poland and Poles' attitude towards politics,
3. Polish citizens' approaches towards politics.

In November the number of the Law and Justice government has decreased for four percents (from 44% to 40%), while at the same time the number of opponents has grown from 27% to 31%. The percentage of people declaring indifference has not changed substantially and remained at 27%. The current government is supported by the older respondents, living in smaller towns, less educated, less satisfied with the material conditions of their households. What is even more important the government supporters include 60% of respondents aged 65 and more, 45% of rural residents, 48% of respondents with primary or lower secondary education and 47% of respondents who are unhappy with their own material conditions. On the other hand, in the socio-occupational groups, the opponents of the government most often include managers and specialists with higher education (53%) and self-employed (51%).

Compared with October, the proportion of respondents who have positively assessed the government's performance dropped by 5 percentage points and declined to 53%, while the percentage of those who perceive them negatively has grown by 4 points, and reached 35% (compare chart no 2). The important issues is that the differing view of the world affairs and political views as well as religious activities are the most important in the perception of the result of Beata Szydlo's cabinet. Respondents who are more likely to participate in religious practices are more likely to be satisfied with the effects of undertaken actions by the government (71% of those who practice it a few times a week). Better-than-

expected results of the government's work are seen by respondents with right-wing political views (80%). Contrary to above mentioned statement more than half of respondents who do not participate in religious practices (54%) and most of the people who identify with the left (64%) perceive the government in the negative way. In the potential party electors, the voters of the Civic Platform and the Nowoczesna Party are often criticized for government work.

The belief that the policy of the current government creates opportunities for improvement of the economic situation is more often expressed by the oldest respondents (59%), the rural population (57%), the respondents with primary or lower secondary education (61%) and households with the lowest income per capita (64%). The economic policy of Beata Szydlo is more pronounced than the others (52% of negative opinions versus 31% positive), university graduates (47% negative versus 43% positive) and households with a per capita income of at least 2000 zloty (app. 3800 RMB) (45% negative marks against 49% positive), and in the socio-occupational groups - self-employed (61% against 34% respectively).

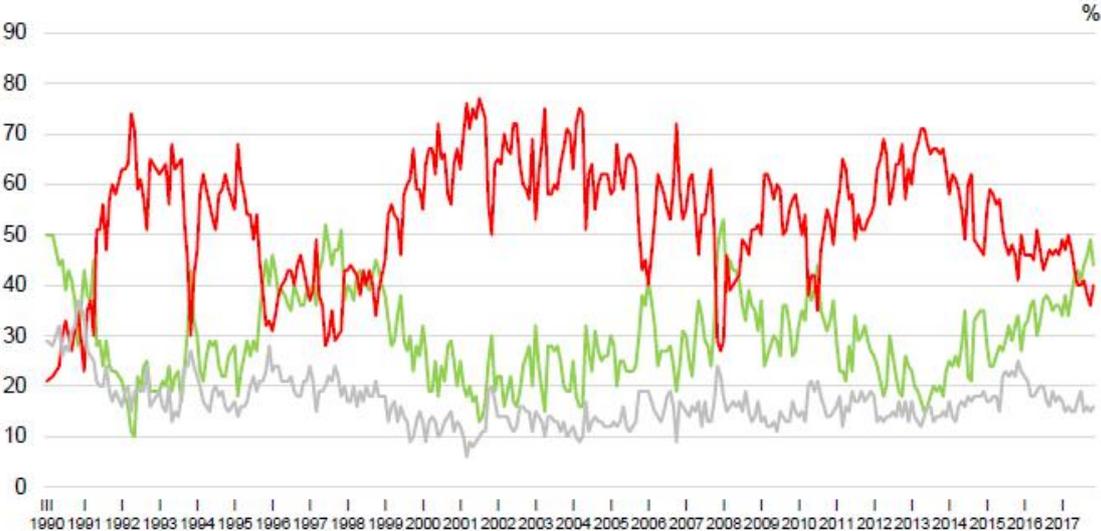
**Chart no 1. The social assessments of the government**



**Red colour: bad, green colour: good.**

The second important issues measured by the CBOS is related to the common feeling of Polish inhabitants. In November, the good general assessments of the situation in the country (now 44%) and 4 points increased the percentage of bad grades (40%). This is a breakdown of the upward trend observed since July this year and the return to values recorded in August (Compare chart no 1).

**Chart no 2. Is the situation in Poland heading in the good direction?**



**Red colour: in the bad direction, green colour: in the good direction, grey colour: not good, not bad**

In the view of respondents, compared to October, the political situation in Poland has deteriorated. We are also seeing further declines in economic assessments but still there are good feeling among Polish citizens. Compared to October 47% of respondents mentioned that economy decreased and 35% called it was average. The percentage of respondents who assess the economic situation as bad remains at a similar level as in October (13%).

In the case of the political situation, residents of the largest cities more often than others find the situation as bad (56%). Regarding the living standards of the Polish citizens and their families remain the same as in October 2017. Currently, three out of five respondents consider it good (58%), and only sixteen

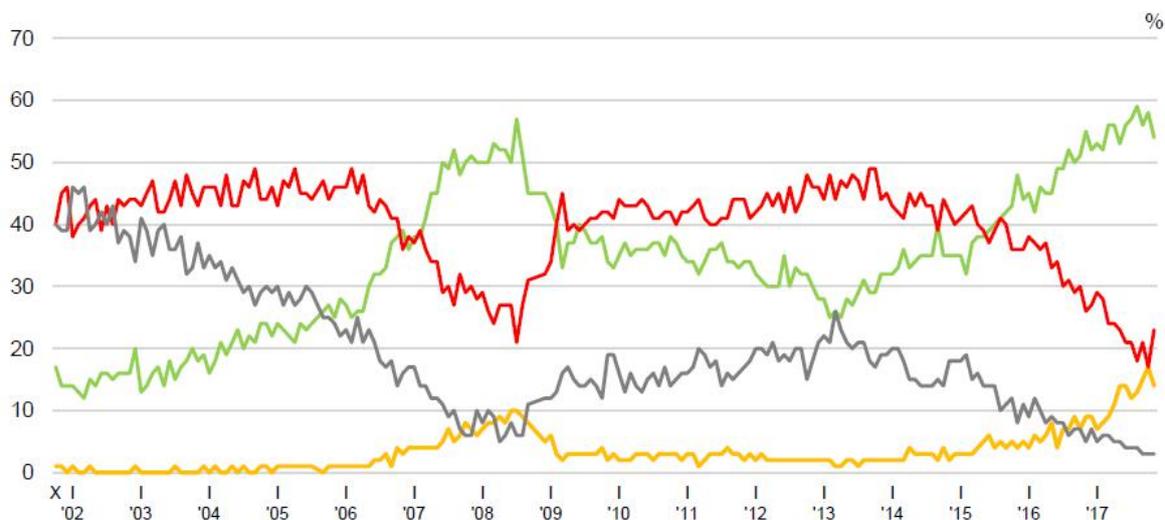
(6%) express dissatisfaction. Just over a third of respondents (36%, up 2 percentage points from October) believe that it is average.

The assessment of material conditions of households has not changed either. More than half of respondents (55%) are satisfied, 38% say their material conditions are average (neither good nor bad), while 7% of the respondents are unhappy with their financial situation. The situation in the workplace has been on a similar level for several months. At present, two thirds of the employees (65%) consider it good, 10% say bad and 23% considers as the average.

After a rise in optimism last month, the percentage of respondents who predicted that the situation will improve in the coming year decreased from 35% to 30%. At the same time, groups of respondents said that they would remain similar (up 3 percentage points to 41%) and that they would be worse (up by 3 percentage points to 22%). Predictions concerning the political situation in the country deteriorated. While it is still common to believe that in the coming year it will remain unchanged (47%), the percentage of respondents who think that the political situation is deteriorating has increased from 19% to 22%, and has reduced those who foresee it improvement from 25% to 22%.

In November, the situation in local labor markets also deteriorated. The respondents claimed that in their area at the local level it is difficult to find any job. This number increased from 17% to 23%. Moreover the respondents believed that they could find the right job (from 17% to 14%) or job satisfaction (from 58% to 54%). Invariably only a few (3%) think that finding a job is completely impossible (check chart no 3).

**Chart no 3. How do you perceive the situation at the local labor market?**



**Red colour: it is difficult to find the job; green colour: I can find a job but not appropriate job; grey colour: it is impossible to find the job, yellow colour: without any problem I can find appropriate job**

The latest public opinion pool on the Polish citizens feeling towards politics gave an interesting outcome. According to the latest CBOS survey conducted in October only 17 percent of the respondents declare that they are closely following events on the political scene. The study shows that the vast majority of polled people talk about politics more than they are sincerely interested in. Those who are interested in politics, according to the study of persons between 55 and 64 years of age and older, as well as those with higher education, well-off residents of the largest cities, including senior management and specialists with higher education, pensioners and self-employed.

Among the party electors are the most interested in politics are Nowoczesna party's supporters. Second place in this respect is the electorate of the ruling party - Law and Justice. In fact two different political polar's supporters discussed the politics the most. What should be noticed that from this perspective Civic Platform electorate is not interested in politics and what might be suggested they present more pragmatic approach. The Polish citizens

discusses the politics most among the family members 63 percent, less often with co-workers 13 percent and finally neighbours 7%. What it is interesting for women, the most common partner for political talks is a husband (17%) while Men are less interested in the political views of their own wives and counts only 9%. The Polish society political views are inherited by male relatives (23%), father (10%), brother (7%) or son and counts for 11%.

### **Conclusions**

Regarding the Polish government's performance after two years since being established is much better than what was reordered at the beginning of its operation, which is very unusual in Poland. In general, the positive assessments of newly formed governments have deteriorated over time. General assessments of the situation in the country, as well as the political and economic situation, have slightly worsened compared to October 2017 but still should be seen as a positive. But what must be observed the forecasts for the future have deteriorated. However, it should be mentioned that, despite these drops, in the long run, the assessment of the situation in Poland is still very high.

Poles are more often than in the previous year in the daily purchase of native origin of the product. This is now the third most important (at price and quality) decision factor. This is mainly due to the conviction that Polish products are of the better quality and because they have a positive influence on the Polish economy, the condition of enterprises and the labor market. The product is more closely related to the company that produced it than to the country of manufacture.