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HUNGARY, POLAND AND SLOVAKIA IN THE EU: **HIGH AGREEMENT WITH MEMBERSHIP**

In November 2004, in the framework of monthly CEORG omnibus research, representative samples of Hungarians, Poles and Slovaks were asked to express their opinion on membership of their country in the European Union. The following question was asked:

- Do you agree with the membership of your country in the European Union?

The choice of answers was “definitely agree”, “rather agree”, “rather disagree”, “definitely disagree”, “don’t know”.

Methodology of the research

Face-to-face interviews, representative samples

Country	Hungary	Poland	Slovakia
Institute	TARKI	CBOS	FOCUS
Fieldwork	09.11.-30.11.	5.11.-11.11.	03.11.-10.11.
Representation	Hungarian population age 18+	Polish population age 18+	Slovak population age 18+
Sample selection	Probability sample	Random address	Quota sample
Sample size	992	988	1036

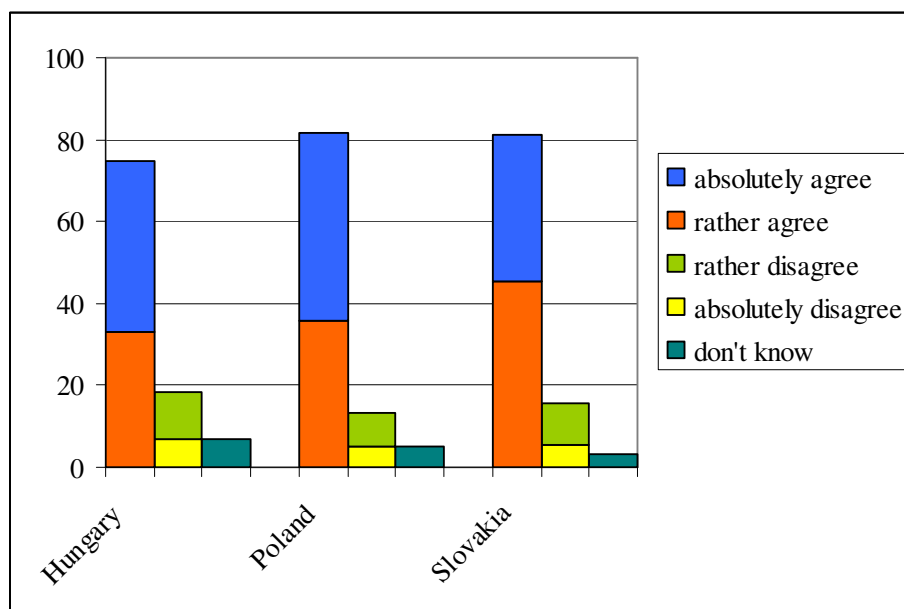
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When referring to the results, please quote CEORG as source.

DO YOU AGREE WITH THE MEMBERSHIP OF YOUR COUNTRY IN THE EU?

Answers in %	Hungary	Poland	Slovakia
Definitely agree	41,5	45,7	35,8
Rather agree	33,2	35,9	45,4
Rather disagree	11,8	8,3	10,3
Definitely disagree	6,7	5,0	5,5
Don't know	6,7	5,1	3,0



Generally, agreement with EU membership in the three new Member States from Central Europe remains remarkably high; slightly over 80% in Poland and Slovakia, and around 75% in Hungary. In none of the countries the share of citizens who disagree with their countries' EU membership reaches more than 20%.

These data are generally in line with the results of the referenda on EU membership that took place in all accession countries last year.¹ That time too, despite relatively low participation (around 50%) citizens showed great enthusiasm about their countries' membership in the EU. It was Slovakia who

¹

Answers in %	Hungary	Poland	Slovakia
Date of the referendum	12 April 2003	7-8 June 2003	16-17 May 2003
Participation	45,6	58,9	52,2
Yes	83,8	77,5	92,5
No	16,2	22,6	6,2



expressed the greatest support for EU accession (92,5%), followed by Hungary (83,8%) and Poland (77,5%). Since then, only a slight change of preferences can be observed. At present, two tendencies can be identified – slow fall of support for the EU membership in Slovakia and Hungary and the opposite tendency in Poland.

Martin Slosiarik of Slovak FOCUS explains: *“The data reveal that the Slovak society does not experience any significant after-accession frustration. It is probably linked to the fact, which has been signalled by polls from the beginning – Slovak citizens have expected that the membership benefits would be visible mainly on national level, and only to a significantly lower extent the EU membership was expected to influence the family and personal life.”*

“The observed post-referendum tendency in the support of EU membership of Hungarian population fits our anticipation. The difference between the referendum's outcome and present attitudes could be explained mainly by the failure of high and immediate positive expectations in the everyday life of Hungarian people,” says Gabor Andras, analyst of Hungarian TARKI.

The situation in Poland is commented by Michal Wenzel of CBOS Poland: *“Entry of Poland into the EU has contributed to the rise of support for the Polish membership in this organization. It is due to the fall of uncertainty which had mounted in the months pending the accession. Polish people have been relieved to find out that no dramatic change occurred after accession. The majority has not experienced benefits from the integration, but the black scenarios have not come true either.*

When analysing the socio-demographic breakdown of those groups of citizens who express the highest and the lowest support, we can confirm outcomes of previous analyses – the support for EU membership is strongest among young male citizens with high education and a “white collar” job, who are living in a relatively big city.

Generally, women tend to be more sceptical and more undecided about the EU than men. With age the support decreases and the number of those who “do not know” increases. Among those who have a higher education, the support for EU membership is significantly greater than among those without (the difference between support for EU membership of those with primary education and those with university education is on average 20%). The support for EU membership is also higher in larger towns than in rural areas. Hungary has the biggest difference in the EU support throughout the country. The support in the cities with 100 000 – 499 999 inhabitants is up to 89%, while in rural areas only 64,5% agree.

Generally, employed citizens declare stronger support for the EU membership, mainly those with a “white collar” job (close to 90% in all three countries). The gap between the support among white and blue collar workers is widest in Hungary (13,9%). In Slovakia, the highest support for EU membership is among entrepreneurs and self-employed (88,5%). Among non-employed respondents, support is significantly lower, with the exception of students. Unemployed citizens are rather pessimistic about EU membership, for example in Hungary 36,5% of them disagree with membership. Retired citizens remain another important eurosceptic group; the highest disapproval within this group is in Slovakia, where 28,1% of retired respondents are not in favour of EU membership.



Answers in %	Hungary			Poland			Slovakia			
	Agree	Disagree	Don't know	Agree	Disagree	Don't know	Agree	Disagree	Don't know	
Gender										
Male	76,8	19,8	3,4	85,0	11,5	3,5	83,1	14,9	2,0	
Female	72,9	17,4	9,7	78,5	14,9	6,6	79,5	16,6	3,9	
Age										
18-24	87,9	10,1	2,0	80,0	16,0	4,0	89,5	7,9	2,6	
25-34	75,9	20,1	3,9	89,7	6,6	3,7	90,9	8,7	0,5	
35-44	79,4	15,0	5,6	89,8	8,4	1,8	84,8	12,6	2,5	
45-54	72,3	23,4	4,3	81,8	14,7	3,5	79,6	19,2	1,2	
55-64	71,9	21,3	6,9	79,8	14,5	5,7	72,8	22,7	4,5	
Over 65	65,9	17,6	16,5	68,2	19,7	12,2	60,9	29,6	9,5	
Education										
Primary	68,8	22,0	9,1	71,2	18,9	9,9	67,9	23,8	8,3	
Secondary	83,1	13,7	3,2	84,8	11,5	3,7	85,1	13,5	1,4	
Tertiary	87,3	10,8	2,0	92,2	7,9	3,1	87,0	12,0	1,0	
Residence										
Rural	64,5	25,6	9,9	74,2	17,1	8,6	77,8	19,1	3,1	
Up to 19 999	78,4	17,5	4,1	84,0	12,0	4,1	80,3	15,6	4,1	
20 000 - 49 999	71,7	16,4	11,9	88,3	10,2	1,5	84,5	12,2	3,3	
50 000 - 99 999	78,3	15,9	5,8	79,7	14,9	5,3	85,7	12,8	1,5	
100 000 - 499 999	89,0	8,8	2,2	88,8	8,8	2,4	85,5	12,2	2,4	
Over 500 000	83,7	14,2	2,2	85,7	11,3	2,9	-	-	-	
Economic activity										
Employed	Blue collar	76,4	20,8	2,8	88,7	10,1	1,2	81,0	16,5	2,4
	White collar	90,3	8,3	1,4	89,4	7,5	3,1	91,1	7,8	1,1
	Entrepreneur, self-employed	79,1	17,7	3,2	75,7	17,9	6,5	88,5	10,0	1,5
Not employed	Unemployed	58,7	36,5	4,8	74,8	14,3	10,9	84,8	13,6	1,6
	Student	90,3	5,8	3,8	82,8	12,7	4,5	91,8	5,2	3,0
	Retired	65,1	20,8	14,1	82,8	13,8	3,5	64,9	28,1	7,0
	Other inactive	77,0	16,4	6,6	74,6	20,2	5,3	80,8	19,2	0
Total	74,7	18,5	6,7	81,6	13,3	5,1	81,2	15,8	3,0	