

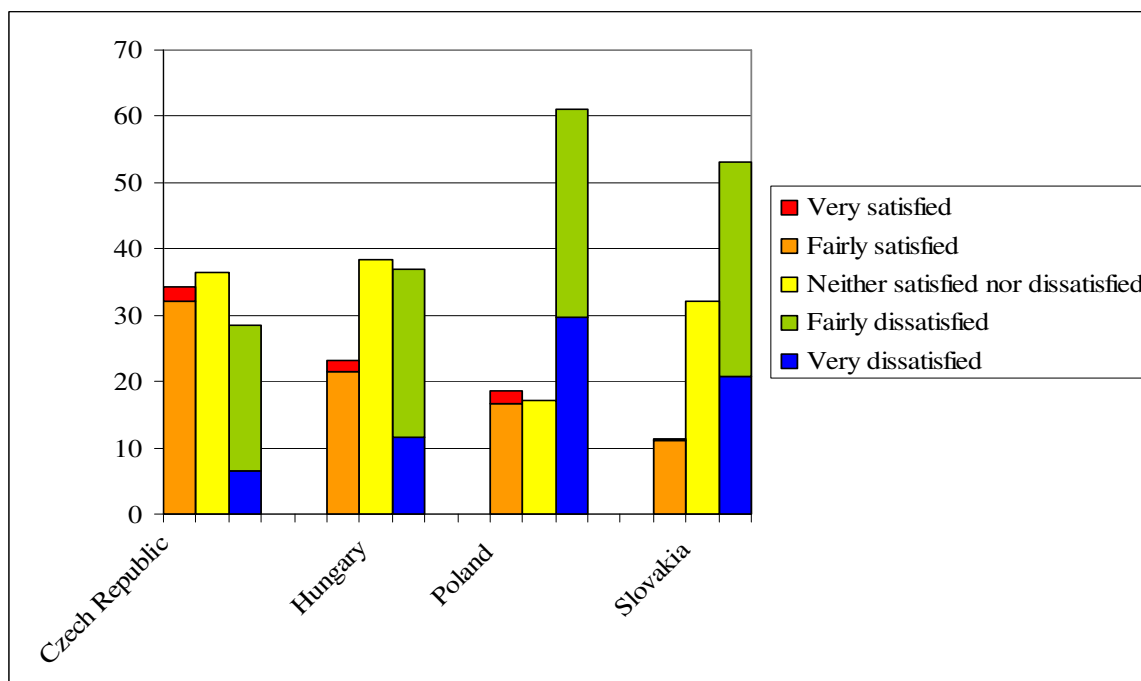
Brussels, 6th January 2005

HEALTHCARE IN CENTRAL EUROPE: CZECHS RELATIVELY SATISFIED, POLES AND SLOVAKS STRONGLY DISPLEASED

In December 2004, in the framework of monthly CEORG omnibus research, representative samples of Czechs, Hungarians, Poles and Slovaks were asked to indicate the level of their satisfaction with the healthcare system in their country.

**OVERALL, HOW SATISFIED OF DISSATISFIED ARE YOU WITH THE HEALTH SYSTEM
 IN YOUR COUNTRY?**

Answers in %	Czech Republic	Hungary	Poland	Slovakia
Very satisfied	2,1	1,7	1,9	0,4
Fairly satisfied	32,1	21,4	16,6	11,0
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	36,5	38,4	17,2	32,2
Fairly dissatisfied	22,0	25,3	31,3	32,5
Very dissatisfied	6,5	11,7	29,8	20,7
Don't know	0,8	1,6	3,3	3,1

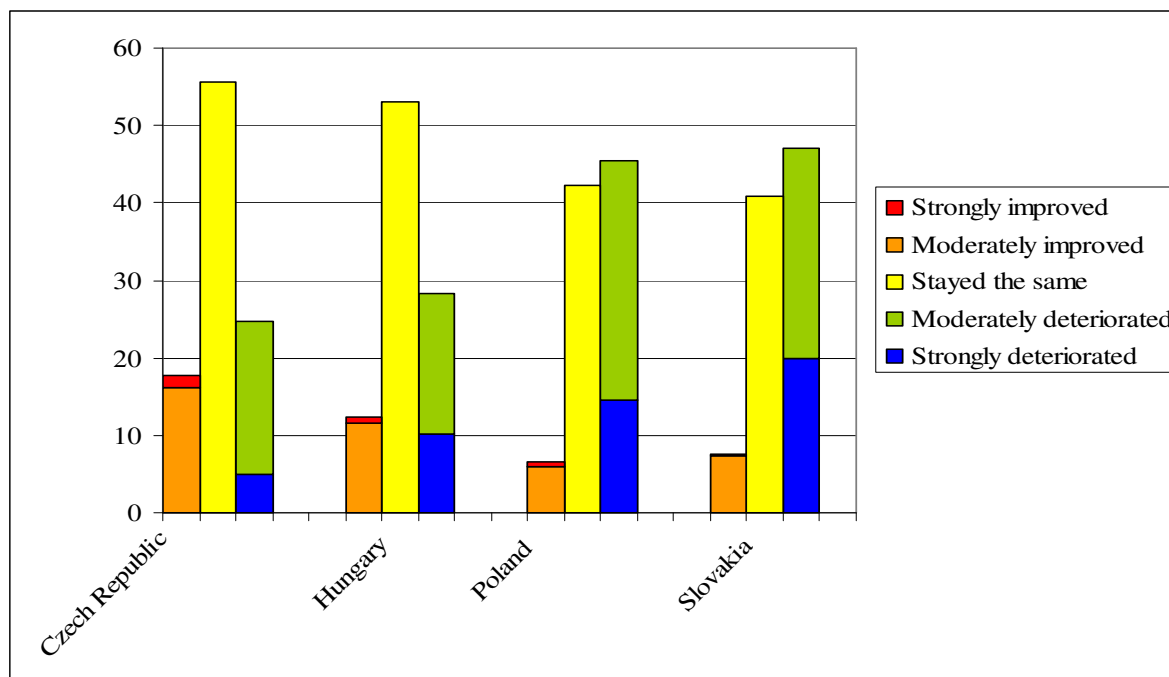


According to the results of the research, Czech citizens express the biggest satisfaction (more than one third of them are very or fairly satisfied). The Czech Republic is also the only country where the number of satisfied respondents outweighs those who are dissatisfied (by 5,7%). Possible reasons behind the big improvement of public opinion on healthcare system in Czech Republic over last two years, is commented by Jan Cervenka, analyst of the Czech CVVM: *“These relatively good results*

reflect a significant advance in the sphere of the healthcare in the Czech Republic during last 15 years. In spite of hard situation within the economy and in spite of restrictions of real or even nominal social expenditures, since the year 1990 per capita expenditure on health service has been permanently increasing faster than consumer price index in this branch,” In all other surveyed countries, the evaluation is rather negative. In Hungary, the largest group of respondents are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (38,4%), while in Slovakia those who are dissatisfied are the most numerous (53,2%). The gap between dissatisfied and satisfied is the biggest in Poland (difference of 42,6%), as more than 60% of respondents give negative evaluation of the situation in healthcare system and only 18,5% of them are satisfied. “Critical evaluations of the healthcare system in Poland have been noted for many years. The negative opinions increased after the reform in 1999, perceived as failed in public opinion. Since last two years, financial and organisational problems have appeared, which meant limiting services and long waiting lists. Medias cover the problem extensively, which also has a certain influence on the public opinion. Additionally, high unemployment and bad evaluations of current economic situation increase critical opinions. The deterioration was significant in 2003 in comparison with 2002, whereas the data from 2004 are similar to those from a year ago,” says Wlodzimierz Derczynski of CBOS in Poland.

IN YOUR OPINION, HAS THE QUALITY OF HEALTH CARE IN YOUR COUNTRY IN THE LAST YEAR...

Answers in %	Czech Republic	Hungary	Poland	Slovakia
Strongly improved	1,6	0,9	0,6	0,3
Moderately improved	16,1	11,5	5,9	7,3
Stayed the same	55,7	53,0	42,3	40,8
Moderately deteriorated	19,8	18,2	30,8	27,1
Strongly deteriorated	5,0	10,2	14,6	20,0
Don't know	1,9	6,2	5,8	4,4





When considering the change in the quality of the system over the last year, Czechs are again the most satisfied nation – almost 18% of them think that the situation has more or less improved. However, the group of those who think that it stayed the same is substantially greater (55,7%). In Poland, the most significant group of respondents think that the situation has moderately or strongly deteriorated (45,4%), but their number decreased in comparison with the previous year. Also in Slovakia, the largest group of respondents thinks that the situation has deteriorated (47,1%). A similarly large group says that the situation is the same as last year (40,8%). *“The year 2004 was a breakthrough in the sphere of healthcare in Slovakia. Six key laws were approved which substantially changed the nature of healthcare in Slovakia and which should be helpful in achieving financial balance of the system. However, citizens have, already for longer time, perceived negatively also the partial changes realised in the framework of the healthcare reform, because they meant a financial burden while transferring higher level of responsibility from the state on the citizen. Majority of the approved laws however entered into force on 1st January 2005, which implies that the citizens will only experience their impact intensively later throughout this year, which can even strengthen the negative mood of citizens,”* explains Martin Slosiarik of Slovak FOCUS.

Methodology of the research

Face-to-face interviews, representative samples

Country	Czech Republic	Hungary	Poland	Slovakia
Institute	CVVM	TARKI	CBOS	FOCUS
Fieldwork	29.11.-6.12.	07.12.-15.12.	03.12.-06.12.	01.12.-06.12.
Representation	Czech population age 18+	Hungarian population age 18+	Polish population age 18+	Slovak population age 18+
Sample selection	Quota sample	Probability sample	Random address	Quota sample
Sample size	1071	1035	973	1041

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