



Globální konflikty a lokální souvislosti

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Press Release

Agreement with statements about the EU – April 2017

- ⊙ Respondents agree most with the statement about the increased bureaucracy and the creation of pointless administrative departments that have resulted from the Czech Republic's membership in the European Union (84%).
- ⊙ A similar share of respondents agree that EU membership provides more opportunities to work, study, and generally to live in EU countries (82%).
- ⊙ Conversely, three-fifths of respondents do not think that the Czech Republic has better laws as a result of its membership in the EU (26% agree, 60% disagree).

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In April 2017 respondents in a representative survey fielded by the Public Opinion Research Centre were asked how much they agreed or disagreed with several statements about the European Union.¹ Surveying public opinion on the European Union is a regular part of the Czech Society survey and from the survey results it is possible to observe opinion trends in a long-term perspective.

Figure 1 presents the public's opinions on the positive and negative aspects of the Czech Republic's membership in the EU based on responses to a question that has been included repeatedly in the survey asking how much people agree or disagree with a selection of statements about some possible impacts EU membership may have had on the Czech Republic.

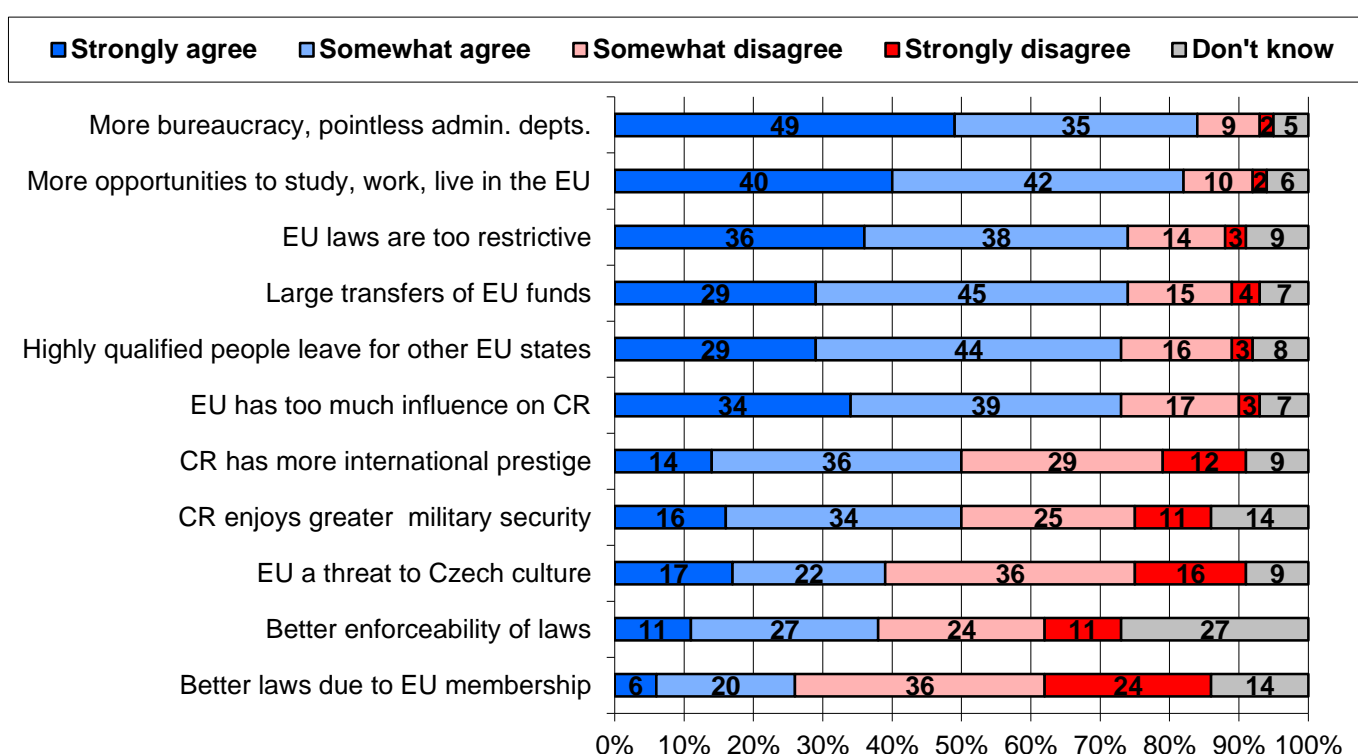
Respondents were presented with a set of negative statements, among which the strongest agreement was with the statement that the Czech Republic's membership in the EU resulted in more bureaucracy and the creation of pointless administrative departments, with 84% agreeing with this statement (49% of them strongly and 35% somewhat). Respondents also agreed with the statement that European laws are too restrictive, with 74% agreeing with this statement (36% strongly and 38% somewhat). Almost three-quarters of respondents also agreed that because of the Czech Republic's membership in the EU well-qualified people are leaving to find work in other EU countries – 73% agreed (29% of them strongly and 44% somewhat) – and they also agreed that the Czech Republic's membership in the EU gives the EU too much influence on politics and decision-making in the CR – 73% agreed (34% of them strongly and 39% somewhat). On the other hand, respondents did not feel that EU membership represents any significant threat to Czech culture. A full 52% of respondents disagreed with the statement that it does pose a threat (39% agreed with the statement).

The remaining statements were directed at the positive aspects of EU membership. The biggest agreement was with the statement that EU membership provides more opportunities to work, study, and generally live in other EU

¹ The question read: 'I will now read you several statements about the Czech Republic's membership in the European Union and you please tell me how much you agree or disagree with them: a) The Czech Republic's membership in the EU has enhanced its international prestige; b) The Czech Republic's membership in the EU has led to increased bureaucracy and the creation of pointless administrative departments; c) The Czech Republic's EU membership poses a threat to Czech culture; d) The Czech Republic's membership in the EU is accompanied by large transfers of subsidies from EU funds; e) The Czech Republic has better laws as a result of its membership in the EU; f) Because of the Czech Republic's membership in the EU well-qualified people are leaving to find work in other EU countries; g) The Czech Republic's membership in the EU gives the EU too much influence on politics and decision-making in the CR; h) The Czech Republic enjoys greater military security owing to its membership in the EU; i) The Czech Republic's membership in the EU is accompanied by too many restrictions as a result of European laws; j) The Czech Republic's membership in the EU provides us with better opportunities to study, work and live in EU countries; k) The Czech Republic's membership in the EU has increased the enforceability of the law.'

countries, with 82% of respondents agreeing with this statement (40% strongly and 42% somewhat). People are also aware of the advantages of subsidies from EU funds, as almost three-quarters of respondents agreed with the statement about the large transfers of subsidies to the CR – 74% agreed (29% strongly and 45% somewhat). Respondents also largely agreed that the Czech Republic enjoys greater international prestige because of its membership in the EU (50% agreed, 41% disagreed). People also agreed that EU membership means greater military security for the CR (50% agreed, 36% disagreed). Conversely, three-fifths of respondents did not think that the Czech Republic has better laws as a result of being a member of the EU (26% agreed, 60% disagreed). On the question of the enforceability of the law, respondents were uncertain: 38% agreed with the statement, 35% disagreed, and more than one-quarter of them answered ‘don’t know’ (27%).

Figure 1. Agree/disagree with statements about the Czech Republic’s membership in the EU (%)



Source: Public Opinion Research Centre, Institute of Sociology CAS (CVVM SOÚ AV ČR, v.v.i.), Czech Society (Naše společnost) 3–13 April 2017, 1033 respondents aged 15 and over, face-to-face interviews.

Table 1 presents the current results compared to past years’ results. The figures in bold indicate a change from the measure in the preceding survey fielded in April 2016, when respondents were asked to react to the same statement. Green highlighting indicates an increase and red highlighting a decrease in the recorded percentage.

Respondents agree more than they did last year that the Czech Republic’s membership in the EU increases its international prestige. Last year 45% of respondents agreed with this statement, while now 50% do. The number of respondents who disagree with this statement also decreased, from 46% last year to the current 41%. In both cases there is a difference of 5 percentage points since last year. However, it should be noted that in 2015, the number of people who agreed with this statement surged to 55%, which means that the decrease in 2016 was only temporary and support for the statement has fluctuated over the years. People are also more aware of the subsidies from EU funds, as last year 69% of respondents agreed with the statement that is an feature of EU membership, while this year 74% agree, which is the highest percentage recorded so far. Here again there is a decrease in disagreement, from 23% to the current 19% who disagree, which is the lowest percentage of disagreement recorded over the years. More respondents also agree with the statement that EU membership provides more opportunities to study, work, and live in the EU. Compared to last year’s 77%, now 82% of respondents agree with this statement, which is again an increase

of 5 percentage points, and the current 82% is the highest percentage of agreement in recent years. Here again it is possible to observe a decrease in the number of respondents who disagree with this statement, which declined from 16% to the current 12%, which is again the lowest percentage of disagreement in the observed period.

Fewer respondents agree with the statement that the Czech Republic's membership in the EU has resulted in an increase in bureaucracy and the creation of pointless administrative departments than the number who agreed in 2016. Disagreement decreased from 15% to the current 11% and the current percentage is the same as that recorded in 2014.

More respondents disagree that EU membership is a threat to Czech culture. Disagreement with this statement increased from 48% last year to the current 52%. The table shows however that disagreement with this statement has been higher in the past (e.g. in 2009 and 2014).

More respondents also agree with the statement about the enforceability of law. Here agreement increased from 34% to the current 38%. A look at past years shows that the increasing trend in agreement was temporarily interrupted in 2016 with a decrease then to 34%.

Table 1. Agreement/disagreement with statements about the Czech Republic's membership in the EU (%) – a time comparison

AGREE / DISAGREE	4/09	4/11	4/12	4/13	4/14	4/15	4/16	4/17
More bureaucracy, pointless admin. depts.	75/16	79/16	82/12	82/13	84/11	80/14	81/15	84/11
More opportunities to study, work, live	76/15	76/18	72/19	75/17	79/15	78/16	77/16	82/12
Too many restrictions due to EU laws	61/24	66/25	73/18	72/19	71/20	71/20	74/18	74/17
Large transfers of EU subsidies	64/23	65/27	61/28	68/24	70/21	71/21	69/23	74/19
Highly qualified people leave for other EU states	62/28	59/35	58/32	64/27	65/28	70/23	72/21	73/19
EU has too much influence on Czech politics	56/31	64/28	67/24	68/25	67/25	66/25	71/22	73/20
CR has more international prestige	61/30	48/46	46/46	49/42	51/42	55/37	45/46	50/41
CR enjoys greater military security	55/28	52/37	46/37	52/31	55/32	55/32	50/38	50/36
EU a threat to Czech culture	28/59	36/56	38/51	39/50	36/57	36/52	42/48	39/52
Better enforceability of laws	31/38	34/44	33/39	36/40	35/40	37/39	34/38	38/35
Better laws due to EU membership	25/56	23/63	22/63	23/61	24/59	28/57	26/59	26/60

Note: The figures in the table represent the sums of responses 'strongly agree' + 'somewhat agree' and 'strongly disagree' + 'somewhat disagree'. The difference to 100% is made up of 'don't know' responses.

Source: Public Opinion Research Centre, Institute of Sociology CAS (CVVM SOÚ AV ČR, v.v.i.), Czech Society (Naše společnost).

Technical parameters of the research

Survey:	<i>Czech Society, v17-04</i>
Survey fielded by:	<i>Public Opinion Research Centre, Institute of Sociology, Czech Academy of Sciences</i>
Project:	<i>Czech Society – Continuous Public Opinion Research Project of the Public Opinion Research Centre, Institute of Sociology, Czech Academy of Sciences</i>
Field survey dates:	<i>3–13 April 2017</i>
Sampling method:	<i>Quota sampling</i>
Quotas:	<i>Region (NUTS 3 Regions), size of place of residence, sex, age, education</i>
Data source for quota sampling:	<i>Czech Statistical Office</i>
Representativeness:	<i>Population of the Czech Republic over the age of 15</i>
Number of respondents:	<i>1033</i>
Number of interviewees:	<i>244</i>
Data collection method:	<i>Face-to-face interviews conducted by interviewers with respondents - combined CAPI and PAPI questioning</i>
Research instrument:	<i>Standardised questionnaire</i>
Questions:	<i>PM.160</i>
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Glossary of terms:

A quota sample replicates the structure of the basic population of the study (in this case the population of the Czech Republic aged 15 and over) by setting quotas for different parameters. In other words, a quota sample is based on the same proportion of persons with the selected characteristics. We used data from the Czech Statistical Office to create the quotas. In our surveys quotas are set for sex, age, education, region, and community size. The sample is thus selected so that the percentage of men and women in the sample corresponds to the share of men and women in each region of the CR. Similarly the sample reflects the corresponding shares of the population in individual regions in the CR, citizens in different age groups, people with different levels of education, and people in different sizes of communities.

A representative sample is a sample from the total population whose characteristics can be validly inferred to apply as the characteristics of the population overall. In our case this means that respondents were selected with a view to generalising the collected data as applicable to the population of the Czech Republic aged 15 and over.

The Public Opinion Research Centre (CVVM) is a research department of the Institute of Sociology, Czech Academy of Sciences. Its history dates back to 1946, when the Czechoslovak Institute for Public Opinion Research began operating as part of the Ministry of Information. The current CVVM emerged in 2001 when its predecessor (IVVM) was transferred from the Czech Statistical Office to the Institute of Sociology. Its incorporation within an academic institution provides a guarantee of high professional standards and quality, and as part of an academic environment the CVVM is required to fulfil criteria that ensure it meets the highest professional standards. The CVVM's work is centred on the Czech Society research project, in the frame of which it examines public opinion by conducting ten surveys annually on a representative sample of the population aged 15 and over, with approximately 1000 respondents participating in each survey. The questionnaire's omnibus format makes it possible to cover a wide array of topics. Political, economic, and other generally social topics are regularly added to the survey. The surveys include both repeat questions, whereby it is possible to observe phenomena over time, and new topics that reflect current events. The long-term and continuous nature of this project focused on surveying public opinion is unique in the Czech Republic.

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