

Press Release

Czech citizens on the Czech Republic's membership in NATO – January 2017

- ⊙ 57% of respondents support the Czech Republic's membership in the North American Treaty Organization.
- ⊙ According to approximately two-thirds of respondents (64%) the Czech Republic's membership in NATO enhances peace and stability in Europe.
- ⊙ There has been no significant change in Czechs' relationship to NATO since last year.

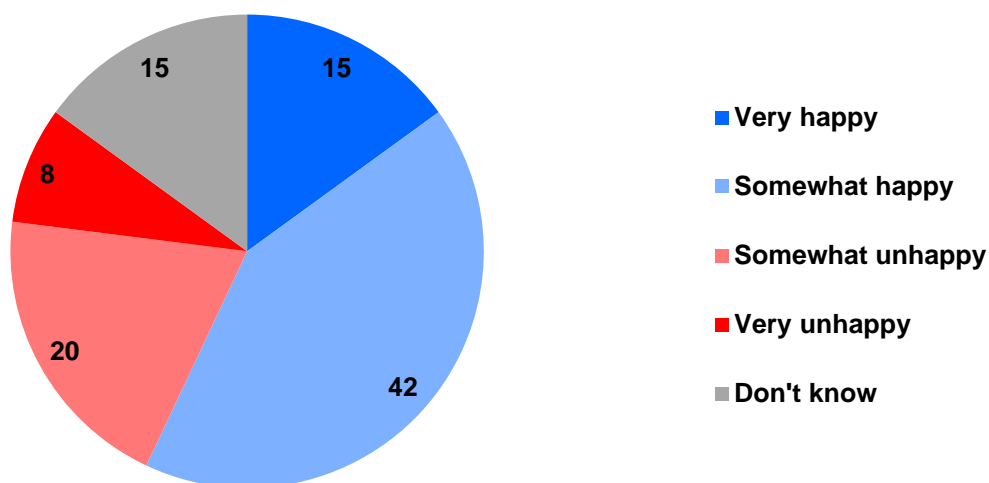
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In its January survey the Public Opinion Research Centre focused on the public's view of membership in NATO.

Czechs were asked how much they support the Czech Republic's membership in the North American Treaty Organization (see Figure 1). Approximately one-sixth of respondents (15%) are very happy and another 42% are somewhat happy that the CR is a NATO member. One-fifth of respondents (20%) are somewhat unhappy and 8% are very unhappy. The remaining 15% of respondents stated that they did not know their answer this question.

Figure 1. How happy/unhappy Czechs are that the Czech Republic is a member of NATO (%)¹



Source: Public Opinion Research Centre, Institute of Sociology CAS (CVVM SOÚ AV ČR, v.v.i.), Czech Society (Naše společnost) 9–22 January 2017, 1039 respondents over the age of 15, face-to-face interviews.

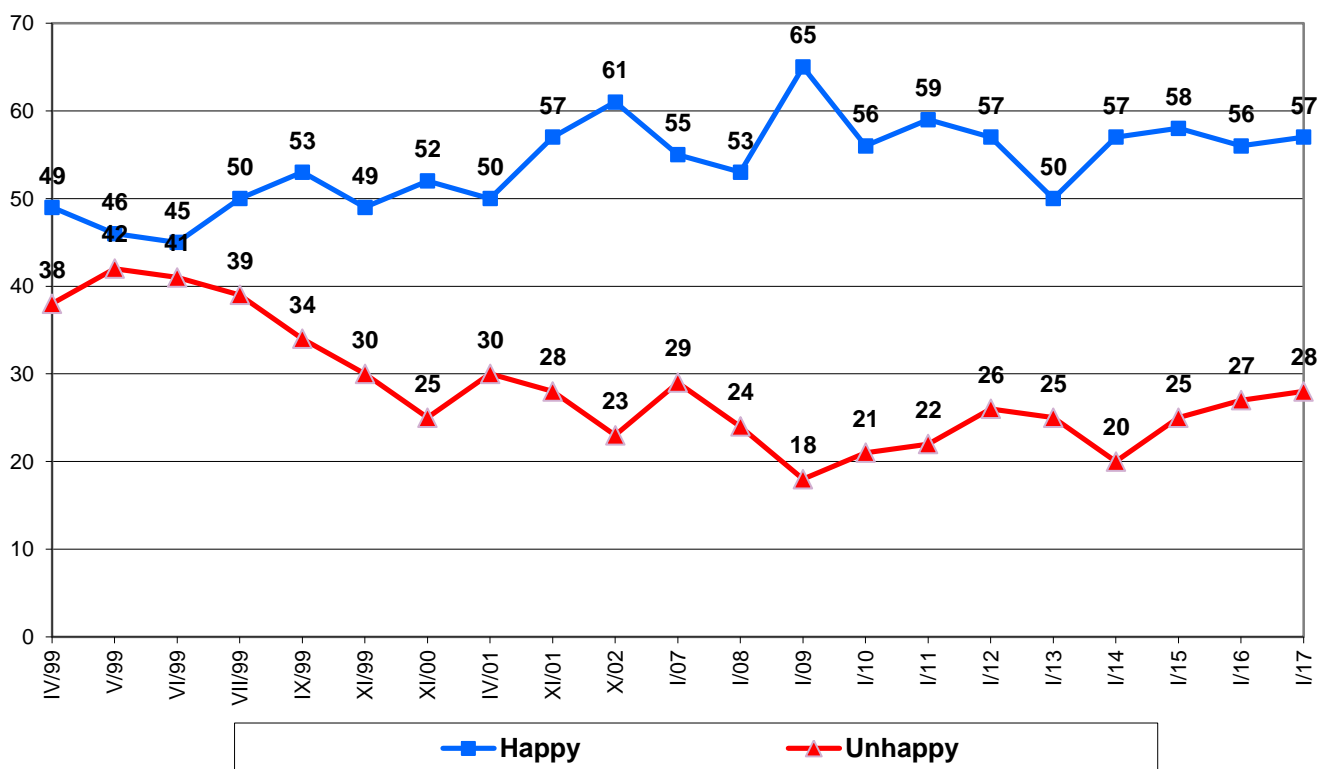
¹ The wording of the question was: 'Are you happy or unhappy that the Czech Republic is a member of NATO?' The response options were: very happy, somewhat happy, somewhat unhappy, very unhappy.

Membership in NATO is supported more by men (19% very happy, 10% very unhappy) than women (11% very happy, 20% very unhappy). NATO membership is also supported by young people, people with higher education levels, people with a better standard of living, and people on the right of the political spectrum.

The Czech public's relationship to NATO has not changed significantly in the past three years (see Figure 2). Support for membership hovers around 57% and the share of people who do not support membership remains between 25 and 30%. There was even no change since last year in the structure of how many people were very and how many somewhat supportive of membership and how many very and how many somewhat against membership (in 2016, 15% strongly supported and 41% somewhat supported membership, while 19% were somewhat against and 8% were strongly against membership).

In a long-term perspective the Czech public's relationship to NATO has remained relatively stable. The exception was in 2013, when support for membership decreased to 50% from the 57% recorded in 2012. Since 2010 it has also been possible to observe a slightly rising trend in the share of respondents unhappy with NATO membership (with the exception of 2014).

Figure 2. How happy/unhappy Czechs are that the Czech Republic is a member of NATO – 1999–2017 (%)



Note: The 'happy' category represents the sum of responses 'very + somewhat happy' and the category 'unhappy' represents the sum of responses 'very + somewhat unhappy'. The difference to 100% is made up of the spontaneous response 'don't know'.

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

The survey also asked respondents to choose between two statements describing the relationship between the Czech Republic and NATO (see Table 1). Two-fifths of respondents (40%) agree that NATO membership guarantees the Czech Republic's independence. Conversely, around one-half of respondents (53%) chose the response 'The Czech Republic's NATO membership is a form of subordination to foreign powers'. The remaining respondents did not choose either statement.

The second pair of contrasting statements were 'NATO membership is a guarantee of peace and security for the CR' and 'NATO membership increases the risk that the Czech Republic will be drawn into military conflict'. Approximately

one-half of respondents (52%) believe that NATO guarantees the CR's security. More than two-fifths (42%) of respondents in the January survey favoured the second statement.

In Europe as a whole, approximately two-thirds (64%) of respondents see NATO as an institution that increases stability and security, while 27% of respondents take a negative view of NATO's role in Europe in terms of security.

There were no significant changes from last year in which statements respondents agreed with more. For the pair of statements characterising the level of the Czech Republic's dependence on other powers, there was a slight increase in the number of people who see NATO as a guarantee of independence. Similarly, for the pair of statements focusing on security and stability in Europe as a whole, there was a slight increase in the share of people who see the role of NATO as positive. These two shifts partly offset the decrease between 2015 and 2016 in the positive evaluation of the role of NATO.

For all three pairs of contrasting statements it is possible to observe a correlation with similar variables as those identified in the evaluation of the role of NATO as a whole, although in most cases the relationship is not as strong. The role of NATO is viewed more positively by men, younger respondents, people with a better standard of living, and people who rank themselves more on the right side of the political scale.

Table 1: The consequences of the Czech Republic's membership in NATO 2000–2017 (%)²

	2000	2001	2002	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2015	2016	2017
NATO membership guarantees the CR's independence.	38	34	42	41	40	46	40	46	42	43	45	37	40
The CR's NATO membership is a form of subordination to foreign powers.	47	50	50	54	54	48	53	48	52	51	50	56	53
NATO membership is a guarantee of peace and security for the CR.	44	42	49	48	50	58	50	58	51	55	54	51	52
NATO membership increases the risk that the CR will be drawn into military conflict.	40	39	46	47	44	37	44	38	44	40	42	44	42
The CR's membership in NATO enhances peace and stability in Europe.	56	53	71	71	66	74	69	73	67	70	69	61	64
The CR's membership in NATO increases tension and insecurity in Europe.	19	19	21	21	25	19	24	20	25	23	25	30	27

Note: For each pair of statements the difference to 100% is made up of the response 'don't know'.

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

² The question was worded: 'Which of the following statements about the Czech Republic's membership in NATO is closest to your own opinion?

a) Membership in NATO guarantees the Czech Republic's independence. / The Czech Republic's membership in NATO is a form of subordination to foreign powers.
b) NATO membership guarantees peace and security for the CR. / NATO membership increases the risk that the CR will be drawn into military conflict.
c) The CR's membership in NATO enhances peace and stability in Europe. / The CR's membership in NATO increases tension and insecurity in Europe.'

Technical parameters of the research

Survey:	<i>Czech Society, v17-01</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>9 – 22 January 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>1039</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.41, PM.42</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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