

## **Press Release**

## Happiness with the state of selected areas of public life – January 2017

- People show the most happiness with the availability of goods and services (three-quarters of respondents), followed in second place by culture (three-fifths of respondents), and the living environment in third (almost one-half of respondents).
- People show the most unhappiness with the level of corruption (70% of respondents), followed by economic crime and the immigration situation (threefifths are unhappy).
- In 12 of the 29 areas of public life surveyed, there is more happiness than unhappiness with the situation.
- The overall level of happiness has increased since the last survey, primarily owing to increased happiness with the low rate of unemployment, and happiness with the functioning of the economy and a calmer situation in the area of migration and the related area of national security.

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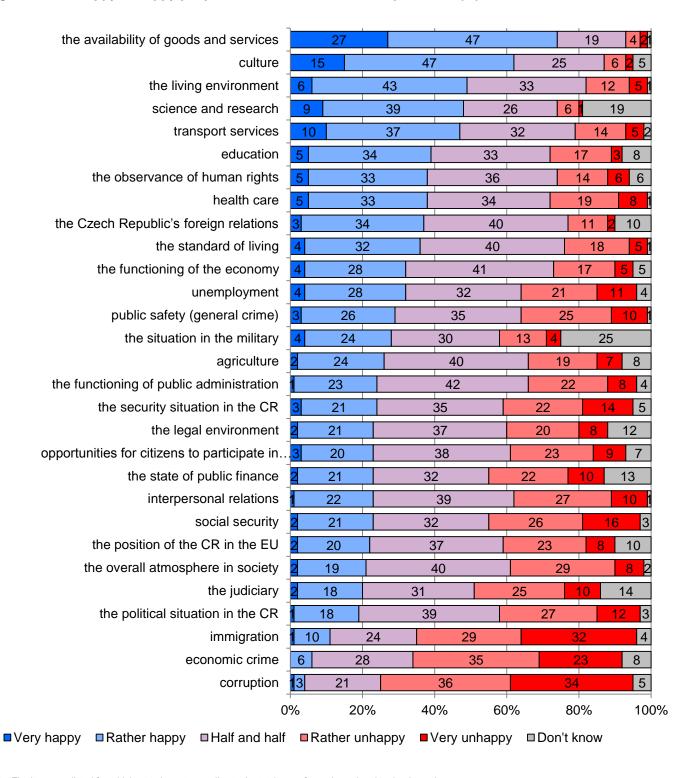
In January of this year the Public Opinion Research Centre included in its regular surveys a question in which citizens of the Czech Republic were asked to comment on how happy or unhappy they are with the state of selected areas of public life. The last time these questions were posed was in February of the previous year.

Figure 1 presents a very clear overview of the degree to which the public is happy or unhappy with different areas of public life. There is greater happiness than unhappiness with twelve areas of public life (the first 11 rows of the figure, i.e. from 'the availability of goods and services' through to 'the functioning of the economy' and 'the situation in the military'), and for the first five items this prevalence is substantial (by more than 25 percentage points). Conversely, a significantly absolute majority of respondents are unhappy with three areas of public life: immigration (61%), economic crime (58%), and corruption (70%).

As shown in the attached series of graphs presenting the results over more than a ten-year period show (some areas were added to the battery of items later – for example, the last four items were only introduced in 2012), the degree to which people are happy or unhappy with different areas has not changed much. There are logical explanations that suggest themselves for the observed trends and fluctuations. The public reacts sensitively to changes in politics and economics, and it is also responding to the situation connected with the migration crisis, etc. The areas that since the last survey have seen the biggest shifts in opinion are presented at the end of this text.

The question read: 'How happy or unhappy are you with the current state of the following areas [of public life] in the Czech Republic: a) the living environment, b) health care, c) the Czech Republic's foreign relations, d) education, e) the functioning of the economy, f) public safety, i.e. general crime, g) culture, h) the situation in the military, i) the functioning of public administration, j) social security, k) unemployment, l) the judiciary, m) immigration, n) corruption, o) economic crime, p) agriculture, q) the political situation in the Czech Republic, r) opportunities for citizens to participate in decision-making on public affairs, s) the standard of living, t) science and research, u) the position of the Czech Republic in the EU, v) transport services, w) the availability of goods and services, x) the observance of human rights, z) the legal environment, aa) the overall atmosphere in society, ab) interpersonal relations, ac) the state of public finance, ad) the security situation in the Czech Republic, e.g. the risk of war, a terrorist attack?' The response options were: very happy, rather happy, half and half, rather unhappy, very unhappy.

Figure 1. How happy/unhappy people are with selected areas of public life (%)



Note: The items are listed from highest to lowest according to the total sum of 'very happy' and 'rather happy' responses.

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.

The overall level of (un)happiness among the public is reflected in how many areas respondents stated they are happy (very + rather) or unhappy (very + rather) with.

Table 1: How many areas of public life respondents are happy with – a comparison of 2016 and 2017 (%)

	2016	2017
Zero to 3 areas	25.1	27.5
4-7 areas	28.3	21.1
8-11 areas	20.8	19.2
12-16 areas	14.3	16.9
17 – 29 areas	11.5	15.3

Source: Public Opinion Research Centre, Institute of Sociology CAS (CVVM SOÚ AV ČR, v.v.i.), Czech Society (Naše společnost 2/2016), 1080 respondents, 1/2017 1039 respondents.

The distribution of percentages indicates that approximately one-third (32.2%) of respondents are happy with 12 or more areas of public life. In last year's survey it was one-quarter of respondents (25.8). The level of happiness has thus increased by a statistically significant amount from the previous year. As Table 3 and, in more detail, the series of graphs below show, this was due to the greater level of happiness with items associated with positive economic development and a calming of the migration crisis. The level of overall happiness is significantly influenced by age, education, declared standard of living, and overall happiness with life (see Table 2).

Table 2: The effect of age, education, standard of living, and happiness with life on the overall level of happiness (%)

Number of areas respondents are happy with	0-3 areas	4-7 areas	8-11 areas	12-16 areas	17-29 areas
Age					
15-19	21	24	17	17	21
60+	27	22	21	17	13
Education					
Vocational	31	23	18	16	12
Tertiary	21	12	24	22	21
Living standard					
Good	16	20	19	22	23
So half and half	34	23	21	13	9
Poor	56	18	13	10	3
Happiness with life					
Нарру	20	19	20	21	20
Unhappy	54	21	19	5	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.

The oldest generation, people with lower education, and above all people with a poor standard of living are far less happy than people at the opposite end of the pole in these categories. The strongest association was observed with overall happiness in life, where happiness with different areas of public life seems to be determined by happiness in life generally.

A factor analysis revealed five independent dimensions (factors) that account for 54% of the overall variance in responses. Given that there were a significant number of 'don't know' responses to some items (the situation in the military – 25%, science and research – 19%), we decided to replace these responses with averages (an option offered by the SPSS program for conducting factor analysis).

1st factor: the legal environment, the judiciary, interpersonal relations, the atmosphere in society, human rights, the position of the Czech Republic in the EU, public participation in decision-making, the functioning of public administration, the state of public finance, the political situation

2nd factor: unemployment, the functioning of the economy, public safety, social security, health care, the standard of living

3rd factor: the situation in the military, education, the Czech Republic's foreign relations, the living environment, agriculture, culture, science and research

4th factor: corruption, economic crime, immigration, the security situation in the Czech Republic

5th factor: goods and services, transport services

It is worth noting what is associated with 'the atmosphere in society' in the first factor: on the one hand, politics, law, state administration, and on the other hand, participation in decision-making. The second factor connects social security and the standard of living with the functioning of the economy and connects safety and health with the standard of living. The third factor encompasses a (horizontal) breakdown of areas of society ('ministries'). The fourth factor unites immigration with pathological criminal phenomena. The fifth factor unites areas of consumption, where there is a clear level of satisfaction.

To conclude we'll focus on the areas in which the biggest shifts in opinion were observed since the last survey in February 2016 (see Table 3). There was an end to the trend of rising unhappiness with 'immigration' and 'the security situation' that had been under way since 2014 (see the graphs below). There was an increase in the level of happiness with 'immigration' by three percentage points, but there was also a substantial decrease in the level of unhappiness with immigration (by 13 percentage points, which instead moved into the 'half and half' response category). There was an increase in the level of happiness with the security situation by 8 percentage points. Conversely, there is a trend of rising unhappiness with 'unemployment', which, similarly, has been under way since 2014. Both shifts in opinion indicate that the public perceives the dynamics of the migration crisis in relation to national security on one hand and the decrease in unemployment on the other. The level of unemployment is understandably linked to the level of happiness with social security and generally with how the functioning of the economy is rated.

Table 3: A comparison of the distribution of responses to selected items in this year's and last year's surveys (%)

	Survey	Very happy	Rather happy	Half and half	Rather unhappy	Very unhappy
Immigration	II/2016	1	7	15	29	45
	I/2017	1	10	24	29	32
Security situation	II/2016	2	14	33	27	17
	1/2017	3	21	35	22	14
Unemployment	II/2016	2	16	29	30	19
	I/2017	4	28	32	21	11
Social security	II/2016	1	16	30	30	21
	I/2017	2	21	32	26	16
Functioning of the economy	II/2016	2	26	39	22	6
	I/2017	4	28	41	17	5

Note: The difference to 100% in the rows is made up of 'don't know' responses.

More information on the trends in (un)happiness with the various areas of public life examined in the survey are presented in Figures 2a to 2ad. We merged the categories 'very' and 'rather happy' and 'very' and 'rather unhappy' to provide a clearer illustration.

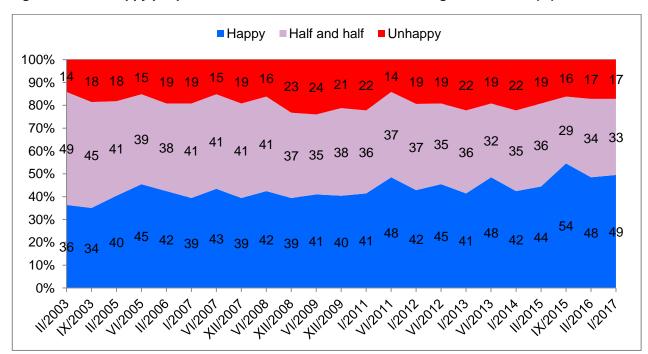


Figure 2a: How happy people are with the current state of – the living environment (%)

Note: The numbers represent the sums of 'very happy' + 'rather happy' and 'very unhappy' + 'rather unhappy' responses. The difference to 100% is made up of 'don't know' responses.

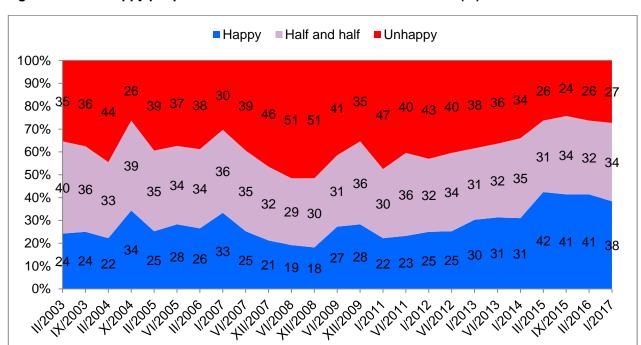
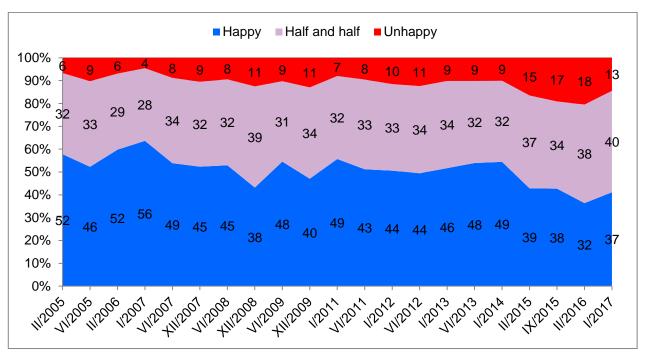


Figure 2b: How happy people are with the current state of – health care (%)

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

Figure 2c: How happy people are with the current state of - the Czech Republic's foreign relations (%)



Note: The numbers represent the sums of 'very happy' + 'rather happy' and 'very unhappy' + 'rather unhappy' responses. The difference to 100% is made up of 'don't know' responses.

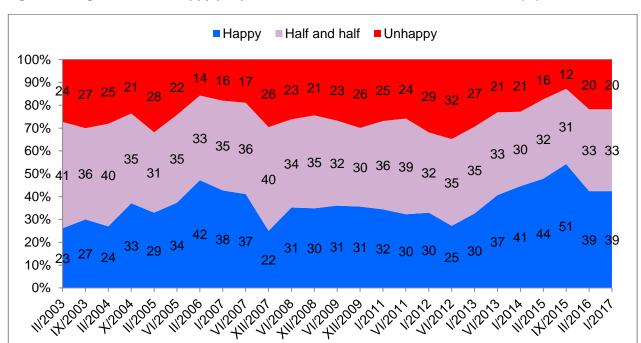


Figure 2d: Figure 2a: How happy people are with the current state of - education (%)

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

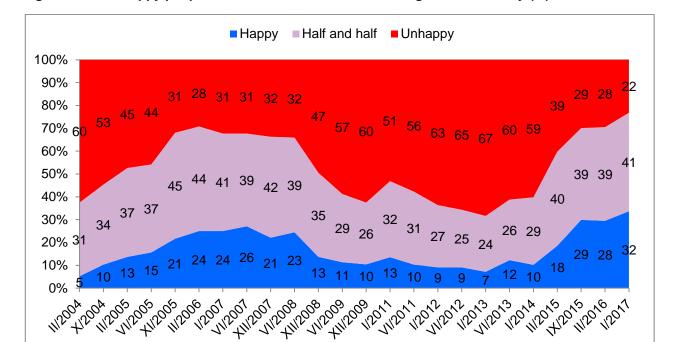


Figure 2e: How happy people are with the current - functioning of the economy (%)

Note: The numbers represent the sums of 'very happy' + 'rather happy' and 'very unhappy' + 'rather unhappy' responses. The difference to 100% is made up of 'don't know' responses.

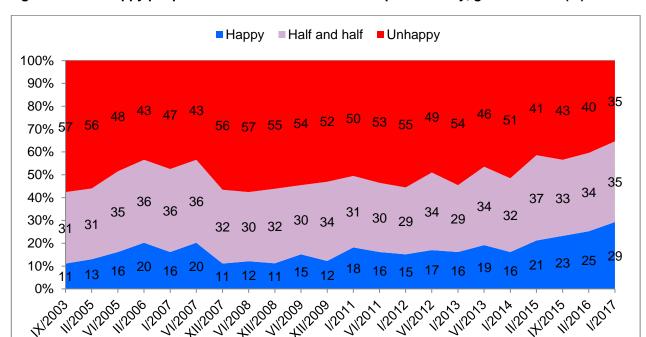


Figure 2f: How happy people are with the current state of - public safety, general crime (%)

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

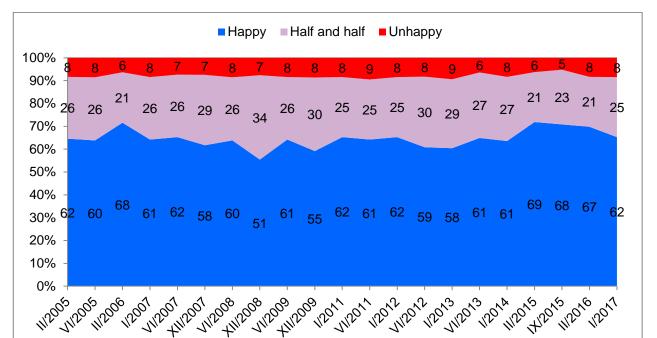


Figure 2g: How happy people are with the current state of – culture (%)

Note: The numbers represent the sums of 'very happy' + 'rather happy' and 'very unhappy' + 'rather unhappy' responses. The difference to 100% is made up of 'don't know' responses.

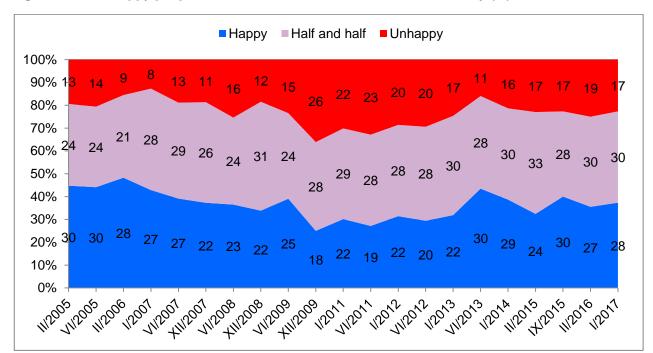
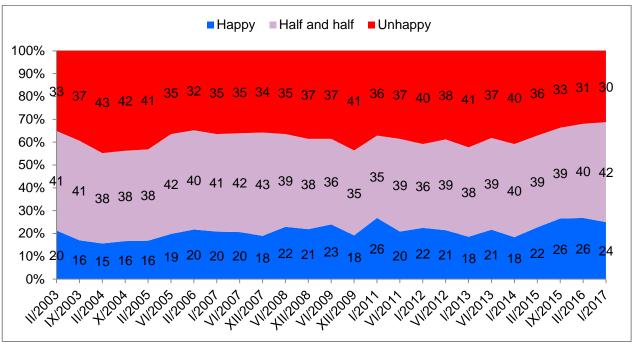


Figure 2h: How happy people are with the current – situation in the military (%)

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

Figure 2i: How happy people are with the current – functioning of public administration (%)



Note: The numbers represent the sums of 'very happy' + 'rather happy' and 'very unhappy' + 'rather unhappy' responses. The difference to 100% is made up of 'don't know' responses.

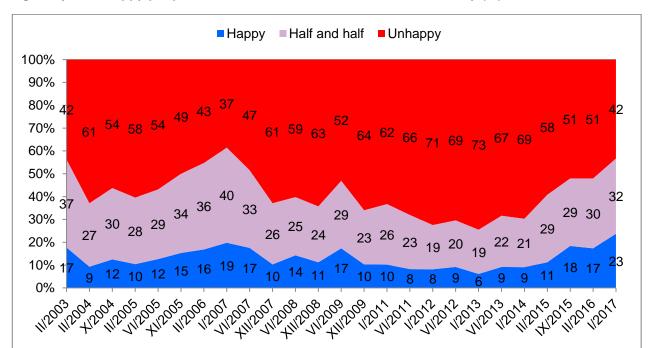


Figure 2j: How happy people are with the current state of – social security (%)

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

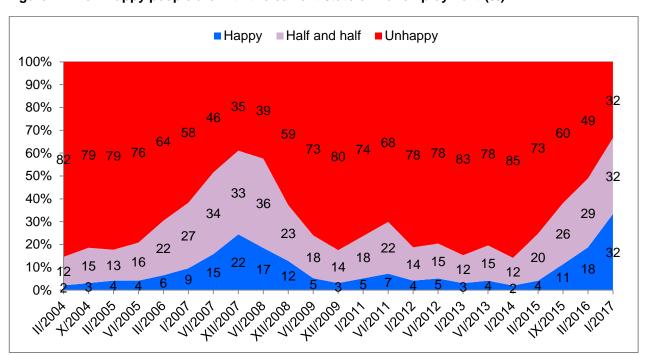


Figure 2k: How happy people are with the current state of - unemployment (%)

Note: The numbers represent the sums of 'very happy' + 'rather happy' and 'very unhappy' + 'rather unhappy' responses. The difference to 100% is made up of 'don't know' responses.

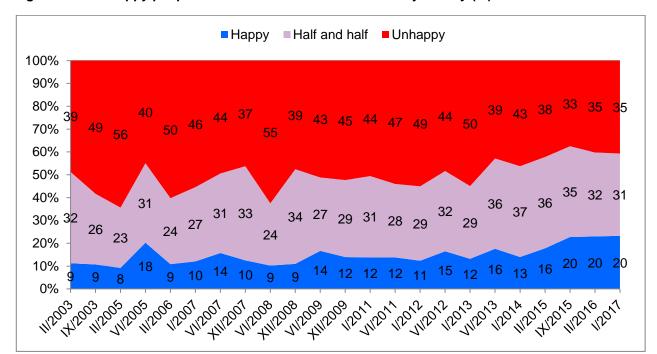
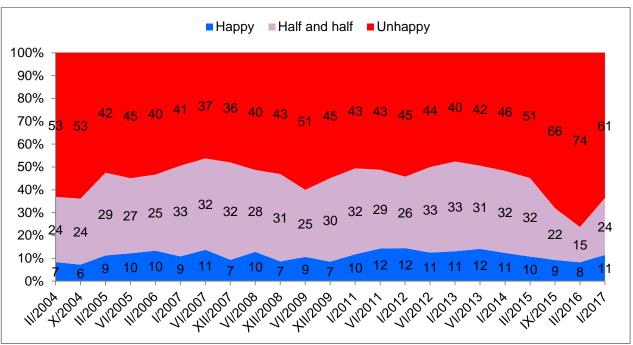


Figure 2I: How happy people are with the current state of – the judiciary (%)

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

Figure 2m: How happy people are with the current state of – immigration (%)



Note: The numbers represent the sums of 'very happy' + 'rather happy' and 'very unhappy' + 'rather unhappy' responses. The difference to 100% is made up of 'don't know' responses.

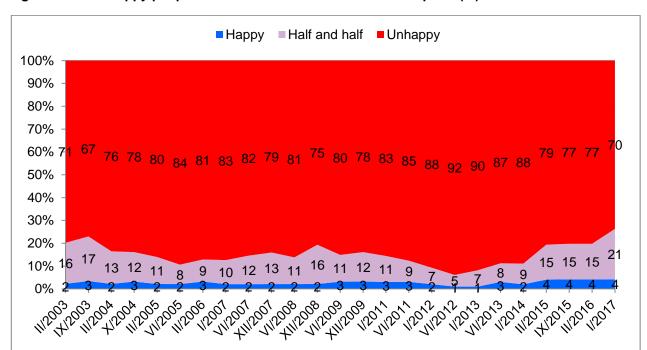


Figure 2n: How happy people are with the current state of - corruption (%)

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

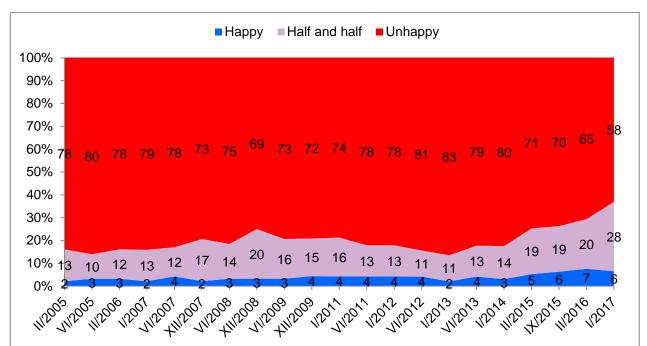


Figure 2o: How happy people are with the current state of – economic crime (%)

Note: The numbers represent the sums of 'very happy' + 'rather happy' and 'very unhappy' + 'rather unhappy' responses. The difference to 100% is made up of 'don't know' responses.

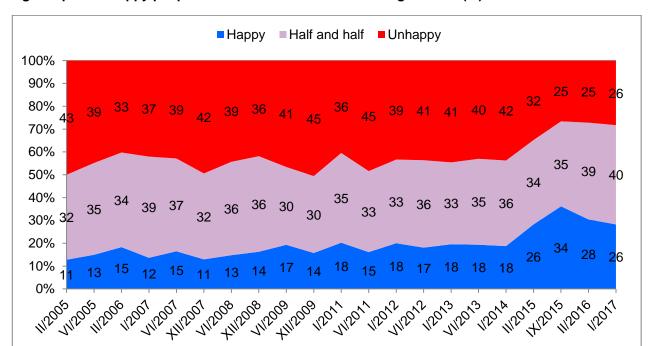


Figure 2p: How happy people are with the current state of – agriculture (%)

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

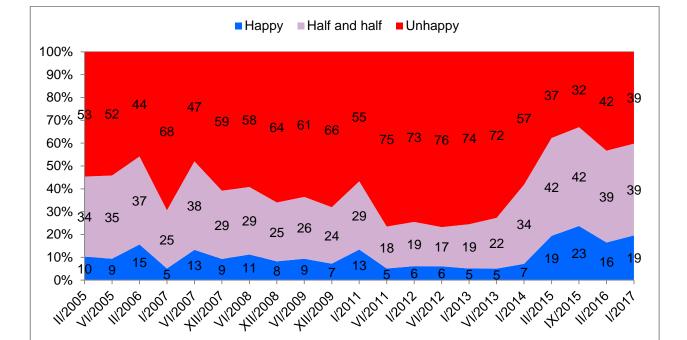
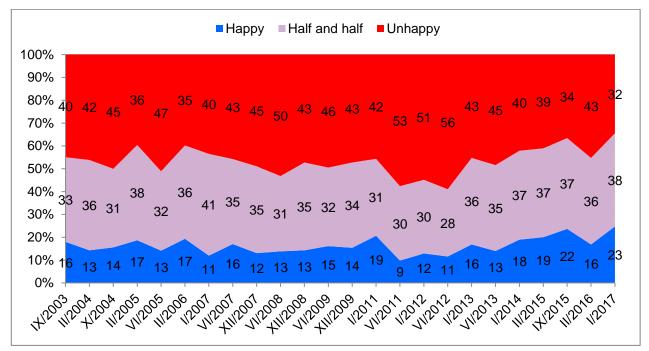


Figure 2q: How happy people are with the current - political situation in the CR (%)

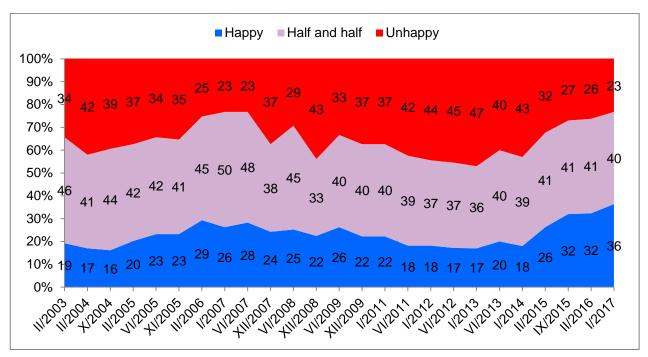
Note: The numbers represent the sums of 'very happy' + 'rather happy' and 'very unhappy' + 'rather unhappy' responses. The difference to 100% is made up of 'don't know' responses.

Figure 2r: How happy people are with the current – opportunities for citizens to participate in decision-making (%)



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

Figure 2s: How happy people are with the current – standard of living (%)



Note: The numbers represent the sums of 'very happy' + 'rather happy' and 'very unhappy' + 'rather unhappy' responses. The difference to 100% is made up of 'don't know' responses.

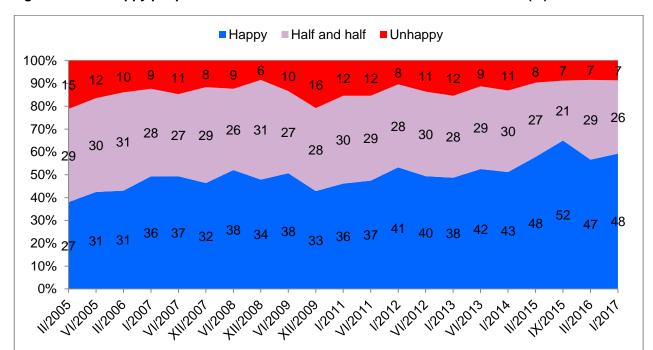
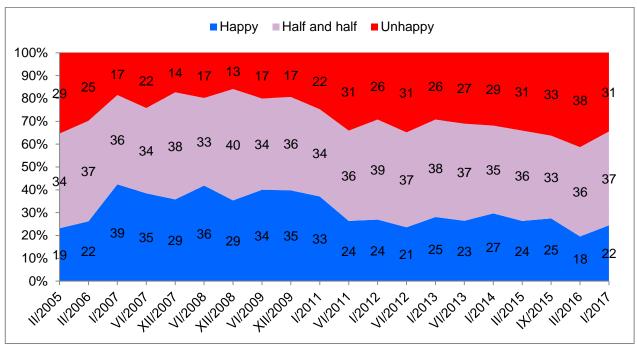


Figure 2t: How happy people are with the current state of - science and research (%)

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

Figure 2u: How happy people are with – the Czech Republic's current position in the EU (%)



Note: The numbers represent the sums of 'very happy' + 'rather happy' and 'very unhappy' + 'rather unhappy' responses. The difference to 100% is made up of 'don't know' responses.

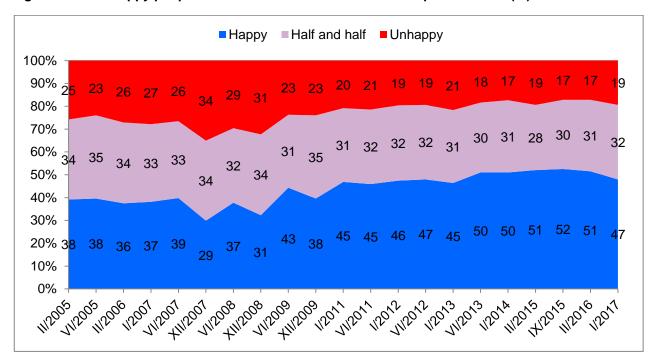
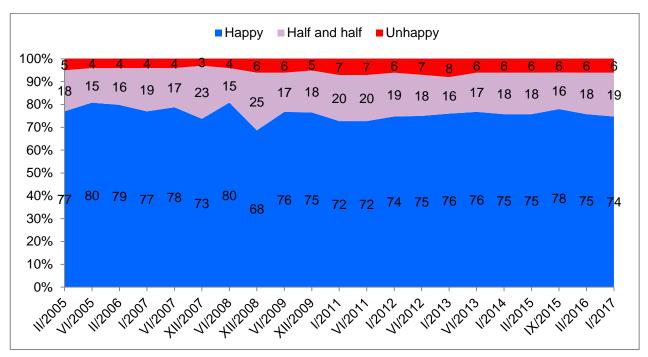


Figure 2v: How happy people are with the current state of - transport services (%)

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

Figure 2w: How happy people are with the current – availability of goods and services (%)



Note: The numbers represent the sums of 'very happy' + 'rather happy' and 'very unhappy' + 'rather unhappy' responses. The difference to 100% is made up of 'don't know' responses.

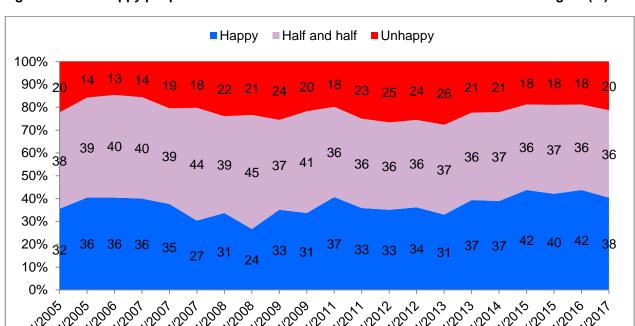
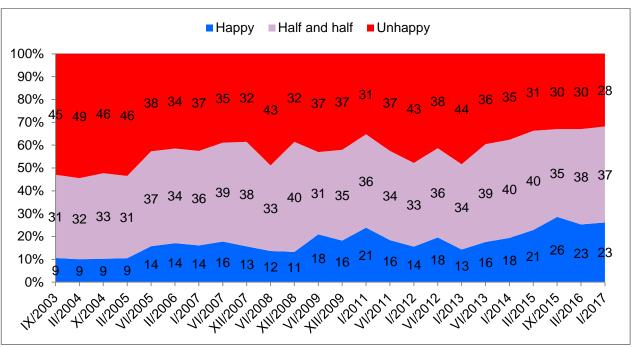


Figure 2x: How happy people are with the current state of – the observance of human rights (%)

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

Figure 2z: How happy people are with the current state of – the legal environment (%)



Note: The numbers represent the sums of 'very happy' + 'rather happy' and 'very unhappy' + 'rather unhappy' responses. The difference to 100% is made up of 'don't know' responses.

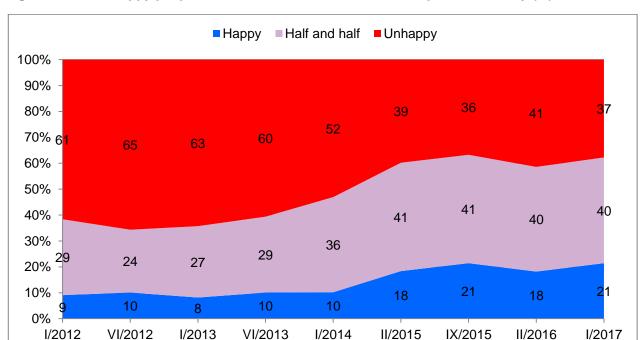
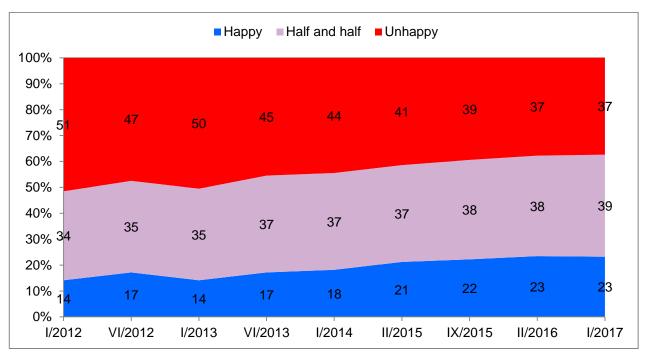


Figure 2aa: How happy people are with the current - overall atmosphere in society (%)

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

Figure 2ab: How happy people are with the current state of – interpersonal relations (%)



Note: The numbers represent the sums of 'very happy' + 'rather happy' and 'very unhappy' + 'rather unhappy' responses. The difference to 100% is made up of 'don't know' responses.

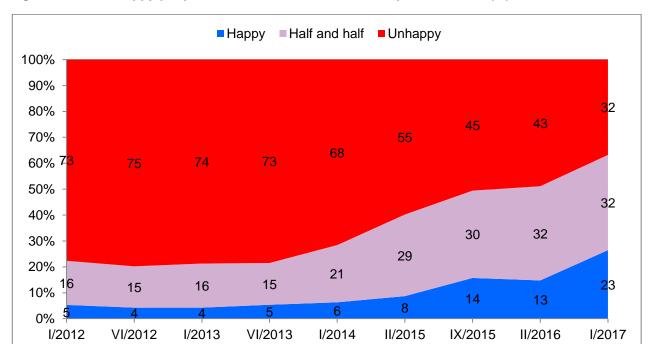
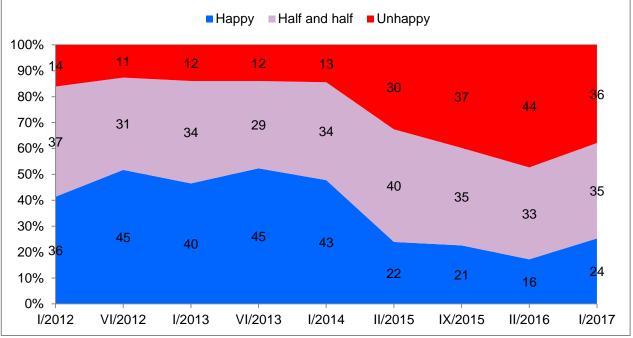


Figure 2ac: How happy people are with the current state of - public finance (%)

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

■ Happy
■ Half and half Unhappy

Figure 2ad: How happy people are with the current – security situation in the CR (%)



Note: The numbers represent the sums of 'very happy' + 'rather happy' and 'very unhappy' + 'rather unhappy' responses. The difference to 100% is made up of 'don't know' responses.

## Technical parameters of the survey

Survey: Czech Society, v17-01

Survey fielded by: Public Opinion Research Centre, Institute of Sociology, Czech Academy of Sciences

Project: Czech Society – Continuous Public Opinion Research Project of the Public Opinion Research

Centre, Institute of Sociology, Czech Academy of Sciences
Field survey dates:
9–22 January 2017
Sampling method:
Quota sampling

Quotas: Region (NUTS 3 Regions), size of place of residence, sex, age, education

Data source for quota sampling: Czech Statistical Office

Representativeness: Population of the Czech Republic over the age of 15

Number of respondents: 1039 Number of interviewees: 244

Data collection method: Face-to-face interviews conducted by interviewers with respondents - combined CAPI and PAPI

questioning

Research instrument: Standardised questionnaire

Questions:ps.5Press release no.:ps170301Published on:1 March 2017Prepared by:Milan Tuček

## 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.