

# State – Memory – History

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On memory of Poles and Ukrainians  
in the lights of surveys from 2018





## About

Research project „Historical Cultures in Transition: Negotiating Memory, History and Identity in the Contemporary Central and Eastern Europe” is financed by Polish National Science Centre and implemented by consortium of two institutions from Poland:

Institute of Political Studies  
Polish Academy of Sciences



INSTYTUT STUDIÓW POLITYCZNYCH  
POLSKIEJ AKADEMII NAUK

Private university

! Collegium Civitas  
*Więcej niż studia!*

Our Ukrainian partner is:



**Centre of Urban History  
of East Central Europe**



NARODOWE CENTRUM NAUKI

End of the project: March 2020



## About survey data

In both countries surveys were representative for the adult population.

In Ukraine – random sample 2500 respondents;  
in Poland random-quota sample 1500 respondents.

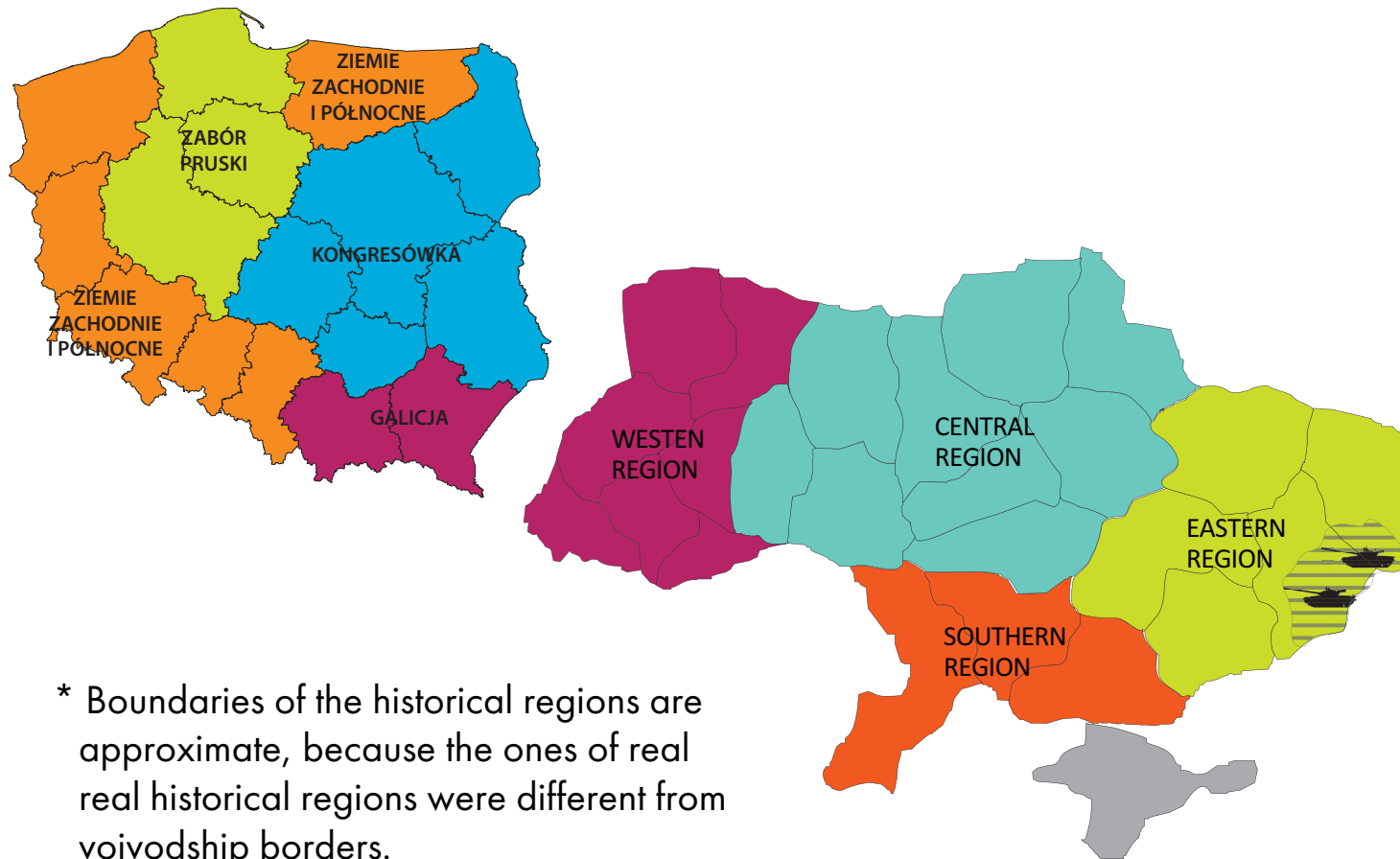




# About the analyses

Results of our analyses are presented most often in regional and generational groups

## Regional division \*



\* Boundaries of the historical regions are approximate, because the ones of real real historical regions were different from voivodship borders.

## Generational divisions:

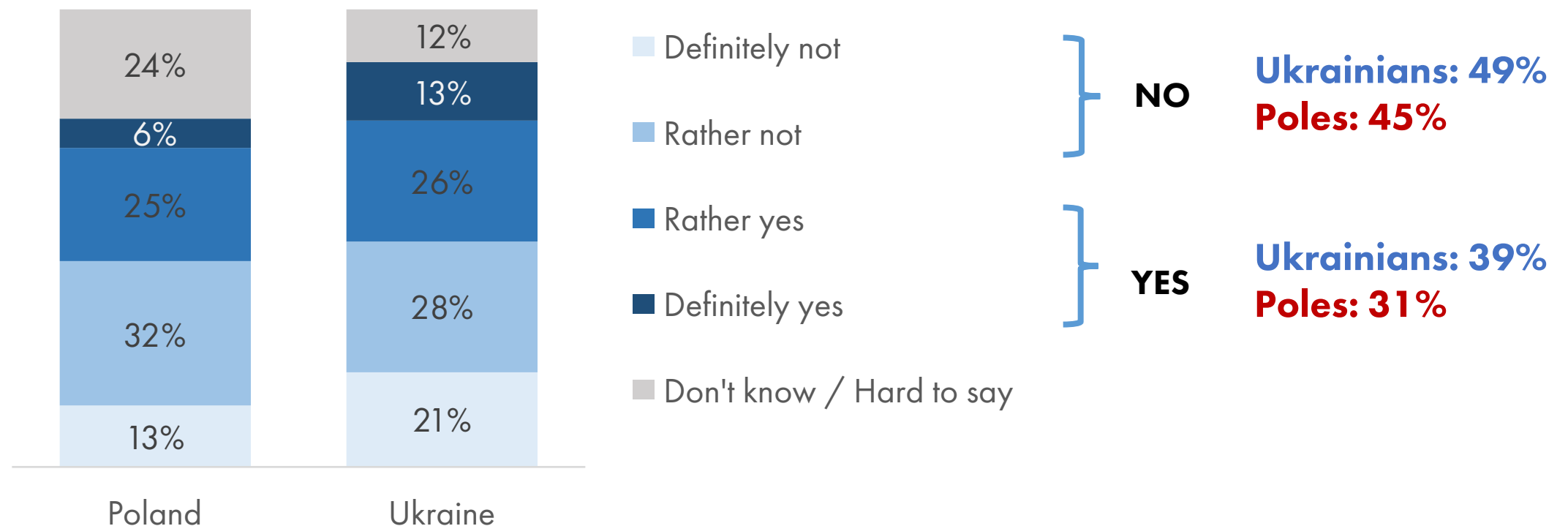
1. Born before 1945
2. 1945-1970 (in Poland: 1970 the end of Gomulka's leadership) and 1945-1972 (in Ukraine: 1972 the end of Shelest leadership)
3. 1971-1989 (Poland) and 1973-1990 (Ukraine)
4. Born after 1990 (in Poland – including 1990, in Ukraine – from 1991)



# Can the state interpret the past?

UA: Does the state have a right to decide about interpretation of the past events?

PL: Should Sejm and Senate adopt legal acts that establish the interpretation of the historical events from World War II and communist times?

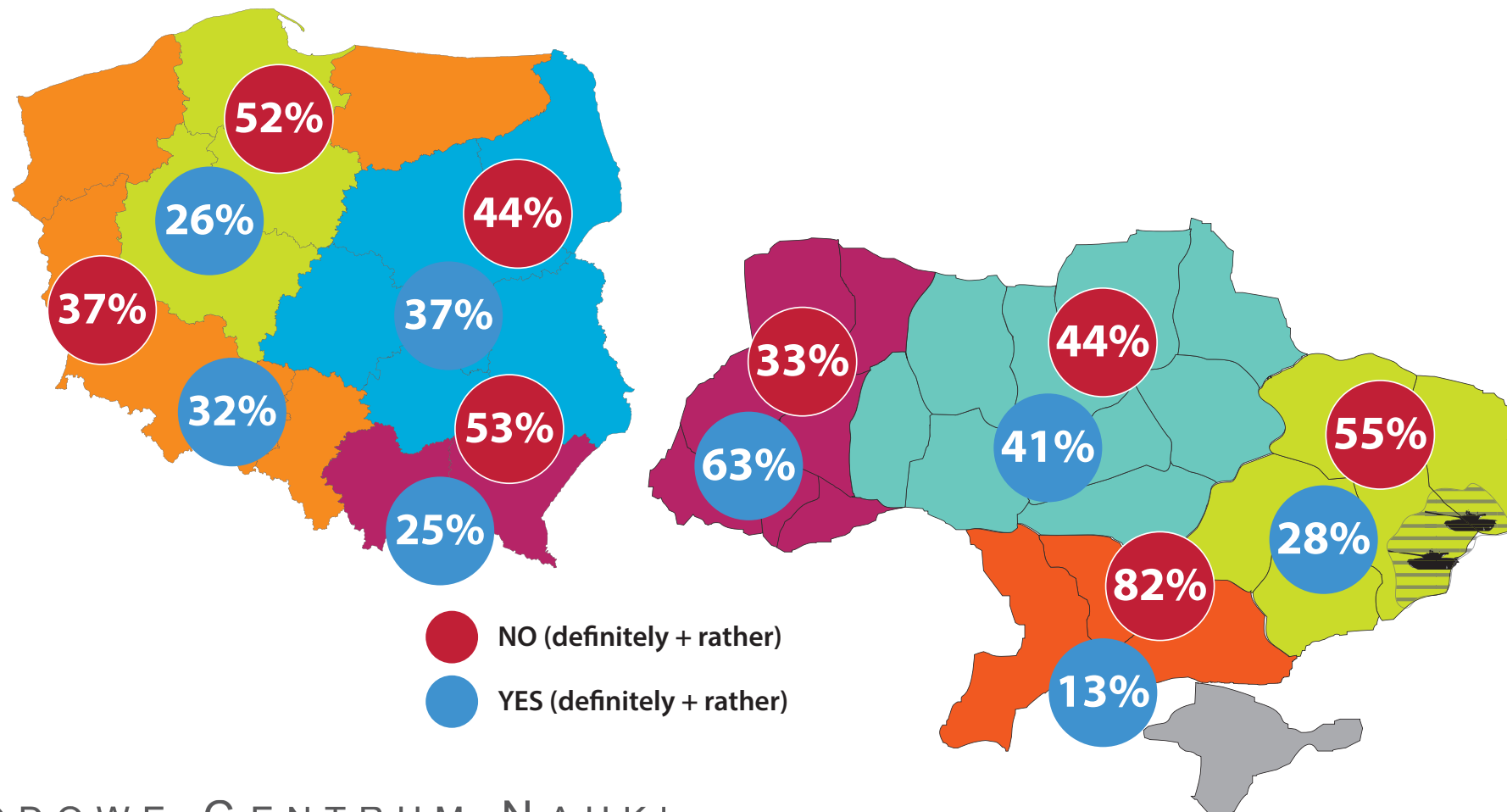




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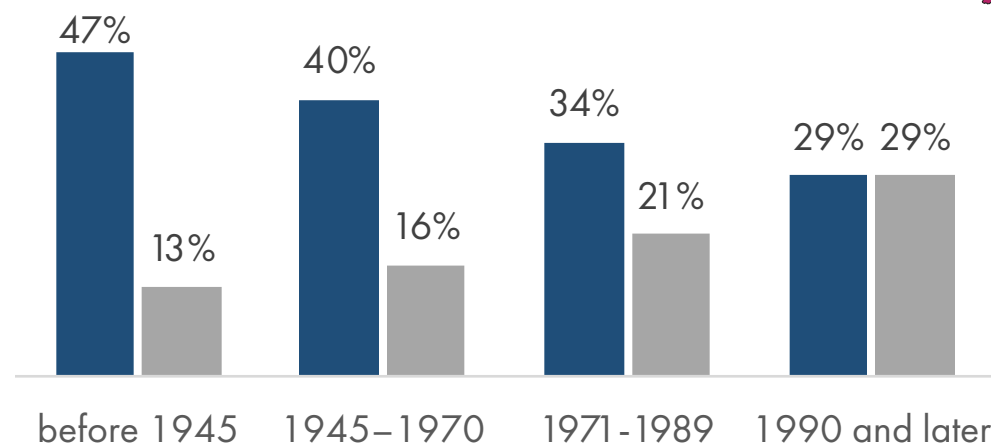
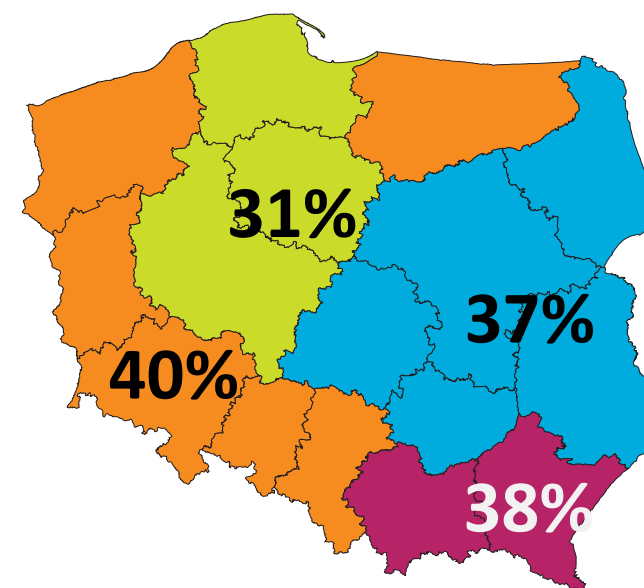
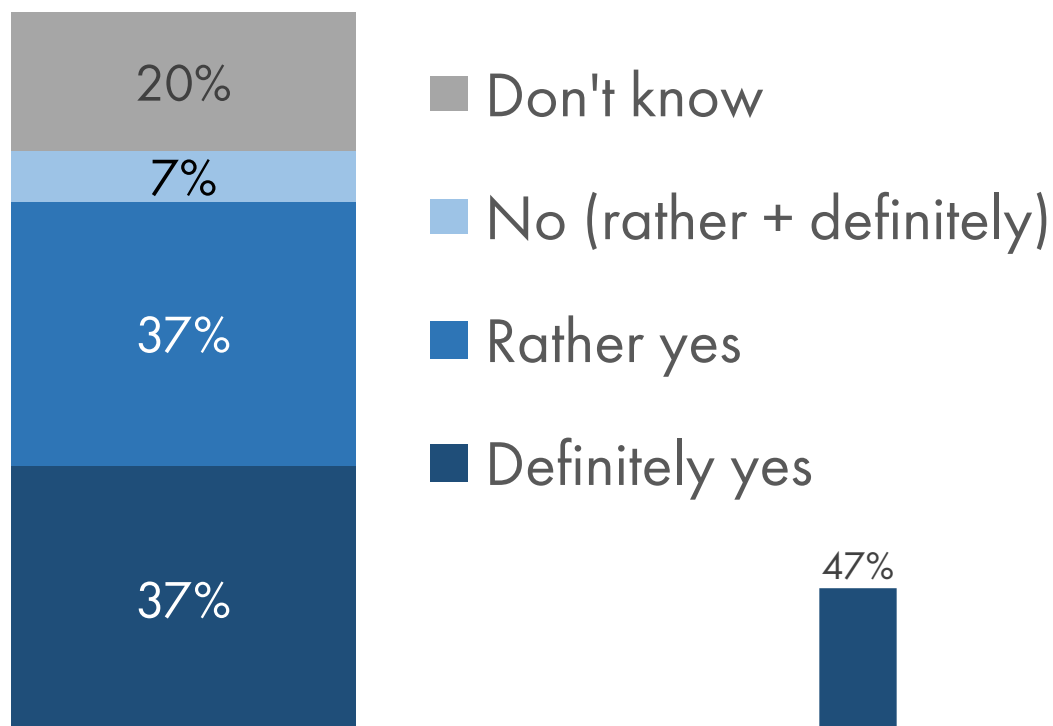
PL: Should Sejm and Senate adopt legal acts that establish the interpretation of the historical events from World War II and communist times?





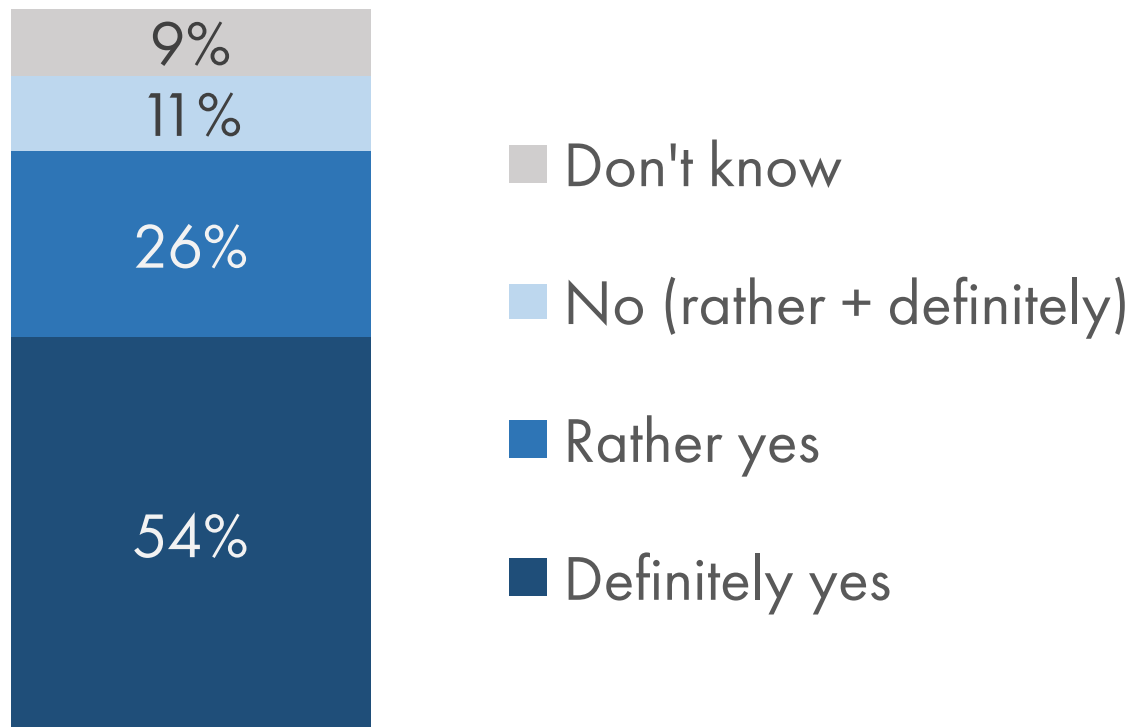
# Can the state interpret the past?

## Was the Volhynia crime of 1943-1944 a genocide?





# Can the state interpret the past? Was the Holodomor a genocide?



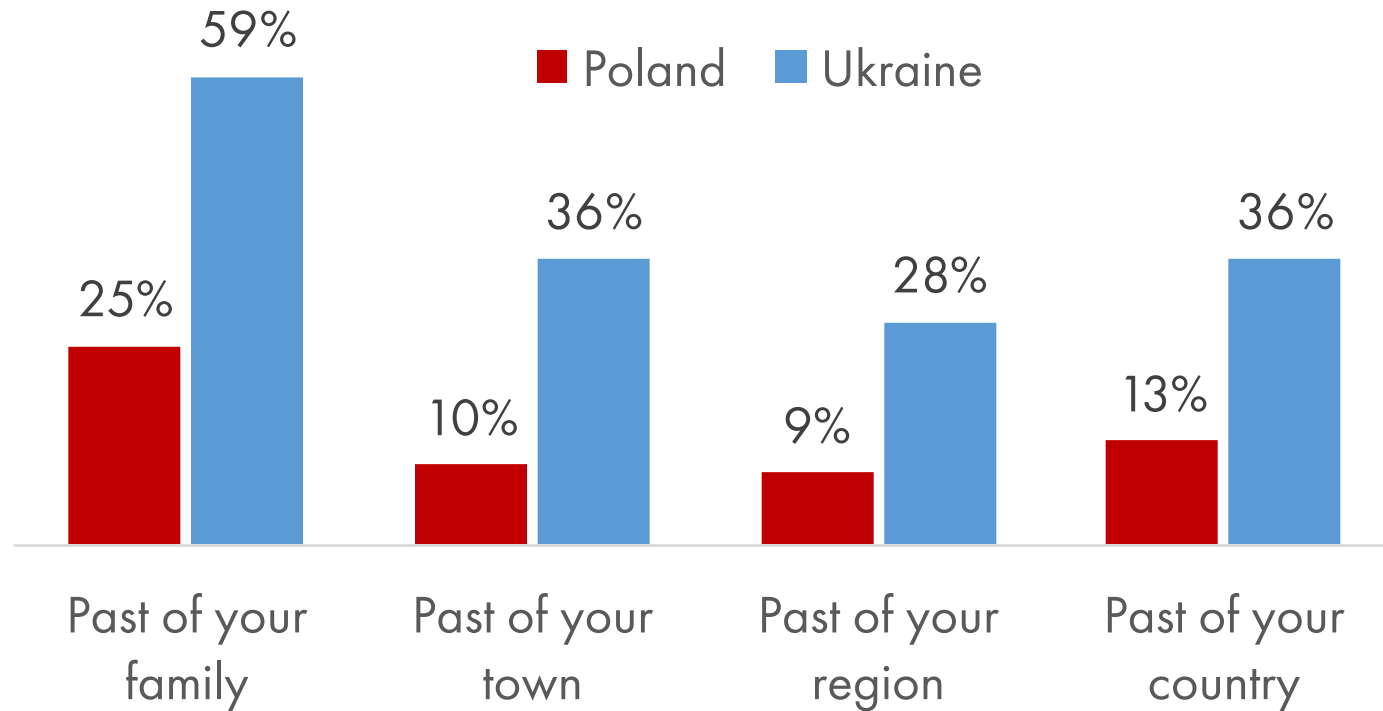
„definitely yes”  
and „**definitely no**”  
In Ukrainian regions







## Citizens' interest in the past

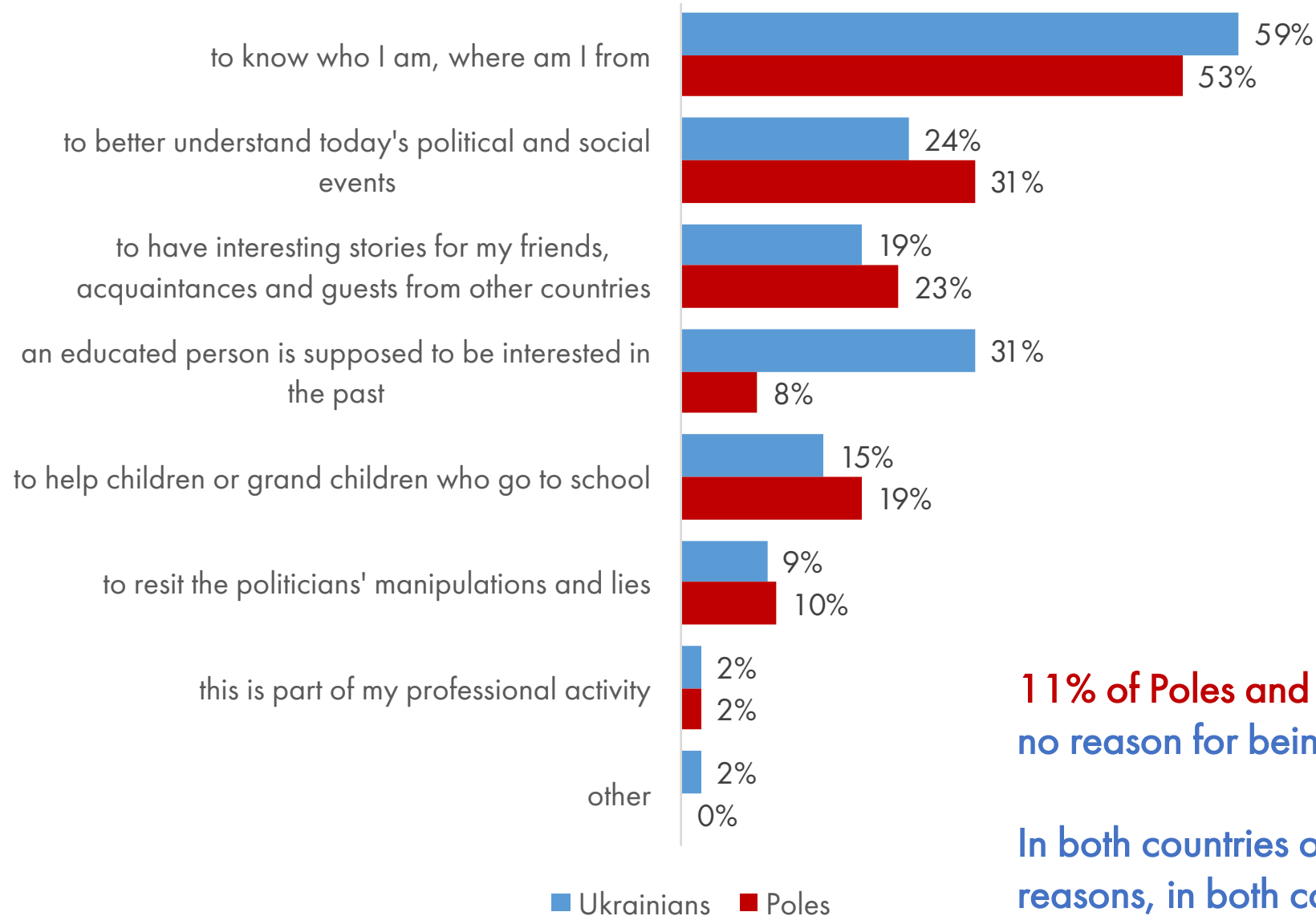


← Percentages of those „definitely interested” in the indicated aspects of the past

**5% of Poles and 23% of Ukrainians** are “definitely” interested in all 4 aspects of the past. Taking together “definitely yes” and “rather yes” gives **45% of interested in Poland** and **67% – in Ukraine**.



# Interest in the past – why is this important?



**11% of Poles and 6% of Ukrainians** indicated no reason for being interested in the past.

In both countries one could indicate up to 2 reasons, in both countries the most frequent behaviour was indicating the most popular reason as the only one.



## Interest in the past – why is this important?

Ukrainians feel they live in the times of historical meaning. Over half of the sample (57%) declared that “yes, one of the historical events had a direct impact on the life of their family”. Substantial number of indicated events were from the near past: Maidan (2013/2014), orange revolution (2004) etc.

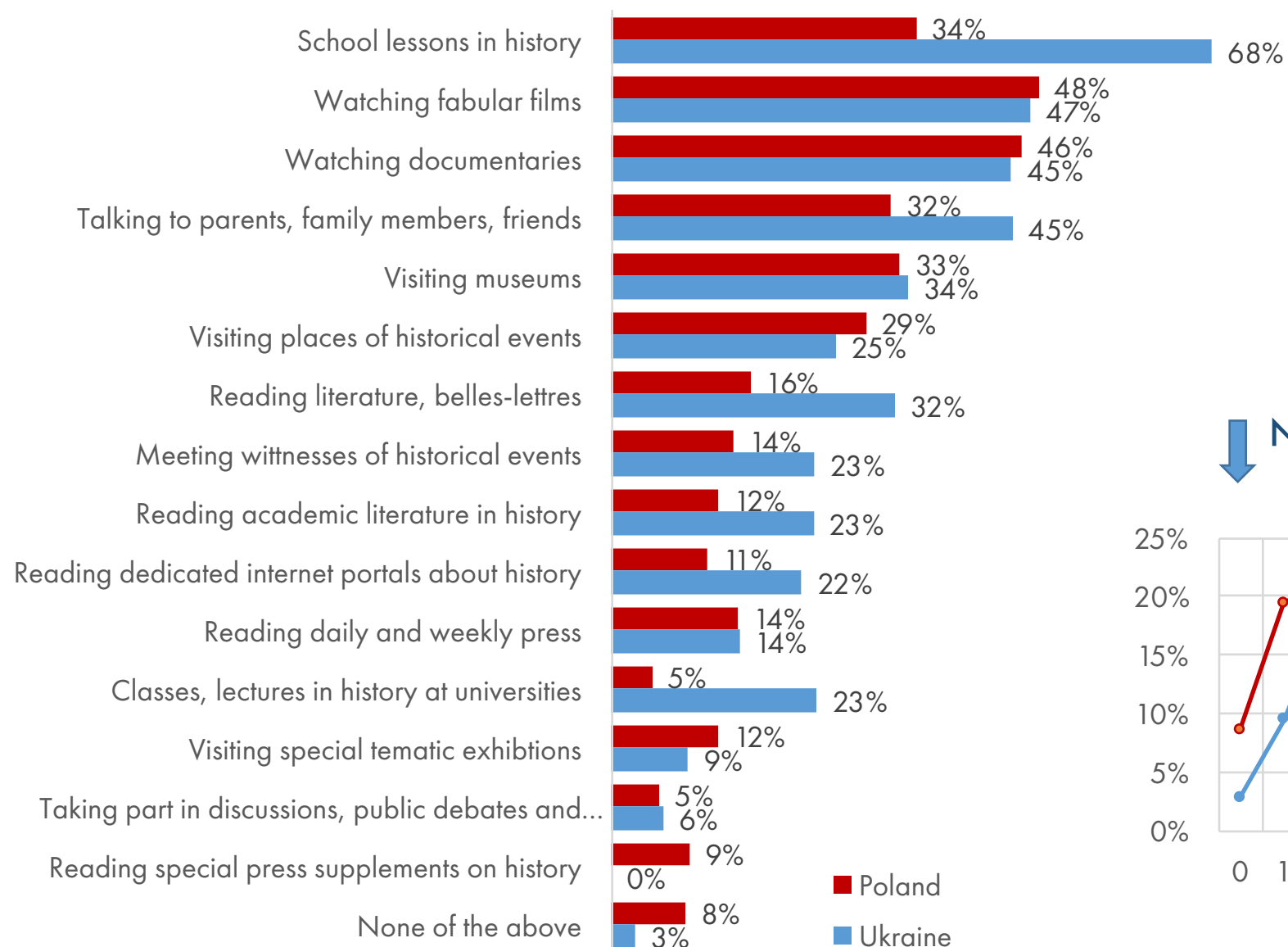
The most frequently mentioned historical period was, however, World War II.

In Poland only 29% said, history had entered their families’ life. The most frequently mentioned events were (as in Ukraine) the ones from World War II. The most contemporary event was martial law (1981).

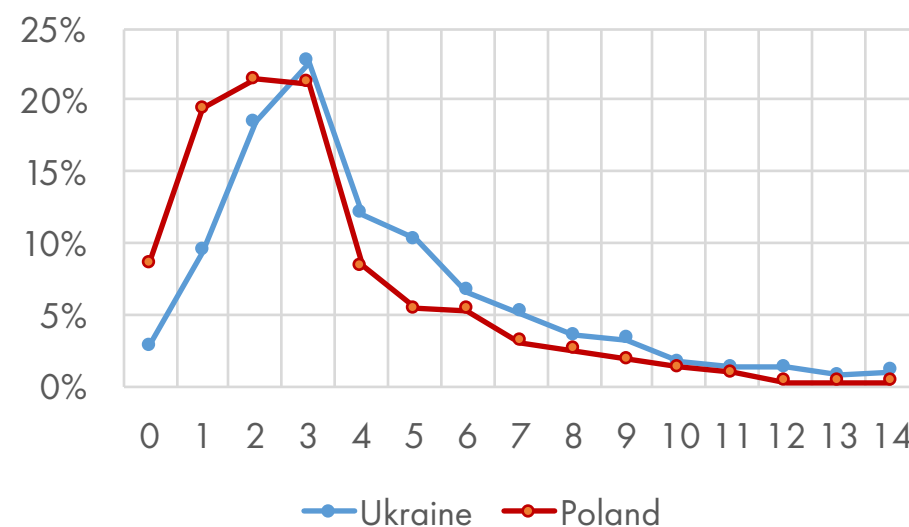




# Sources of information



↓ Number of information sources

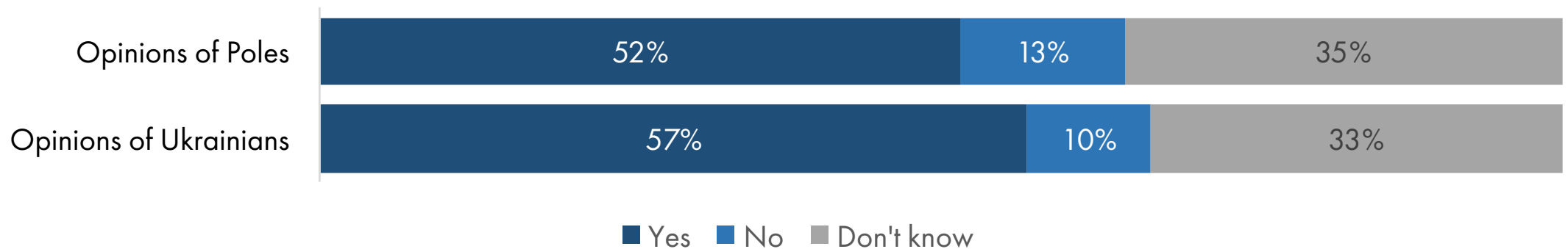




# Common perception of the past

Were there any events important for the history of Poland in the period of 1918-1921?

Were there any events important for the history of Ukraine in the period of 1917-1921?



## Events mentioned by Poles:

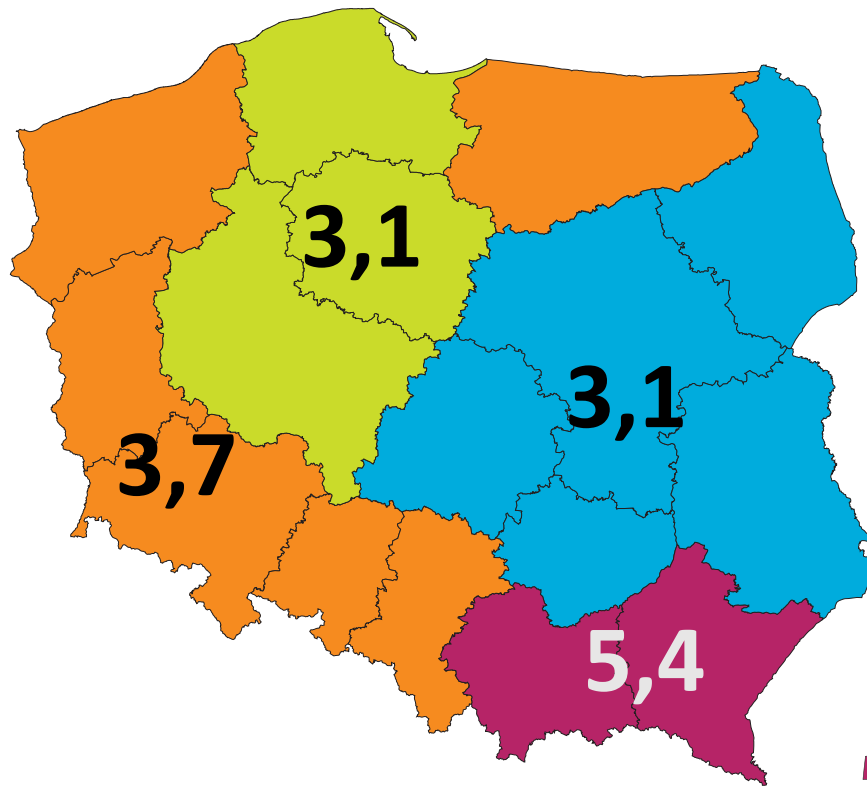
- Regaining independence, beginning of the independence of Poland – **55% indications**;
- War between Poland and Bolsheviks, Warsaw battle of 1920, "miracle on Vistula" – **24% of indications**;
- The end of World War I – **19% indications**;
- Uprisings (in Greater Poland, in Silesia) – **15% indications**.

## Events mentioned by Ukrainians:

- October revolution – **47% indications**;
- Civil war – **10% indications**;
- ZUNR, UNR, „Akt Zluki” (Act of reunion), IV Universal – **9% indications**;
- The end of World War I – **7% indications**;
- Struggle for the independence of Ukraine, Kruty battle – **4% indications**.

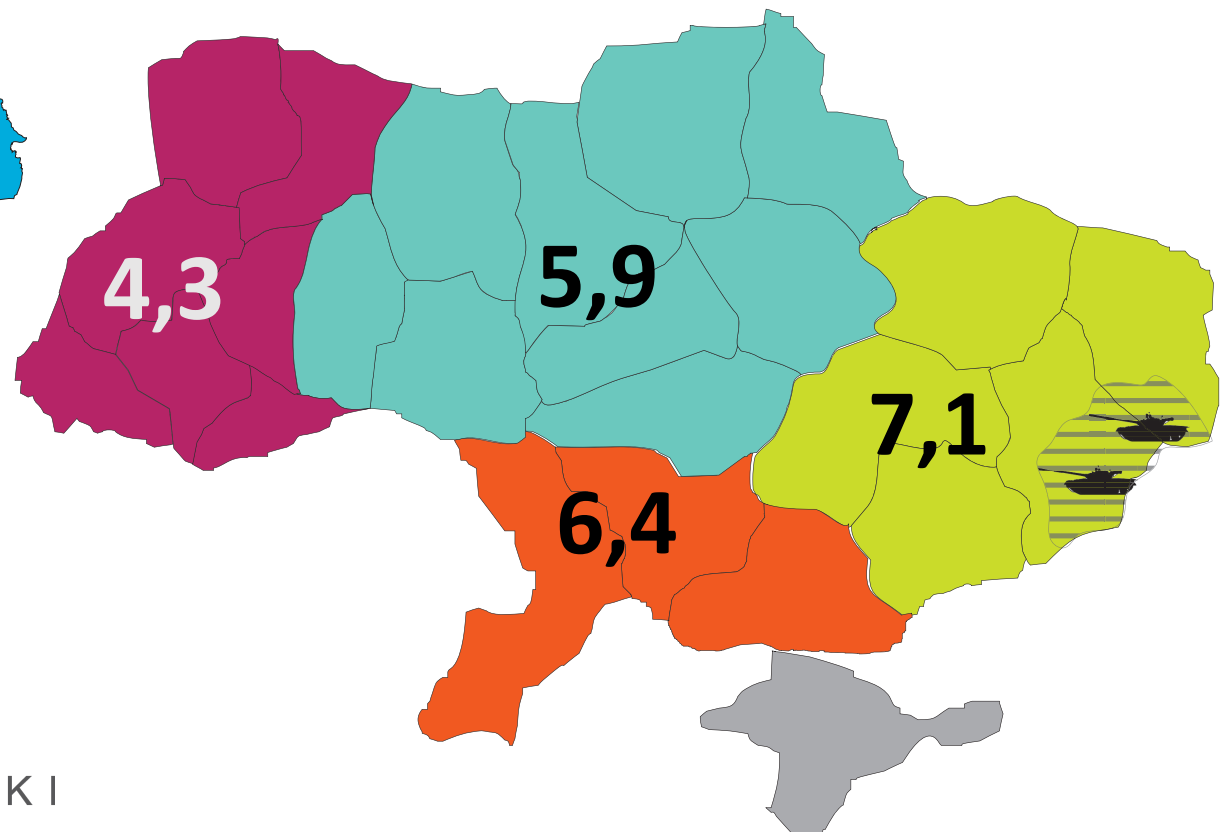


# (Lack of) Knowledge about the past



Average number of unknown figures (out of 27) in regions of Poland and Ukraine.

Generally average number **for Poland was 3,6** of unknown figures and **for Ukraine – 5,9**.

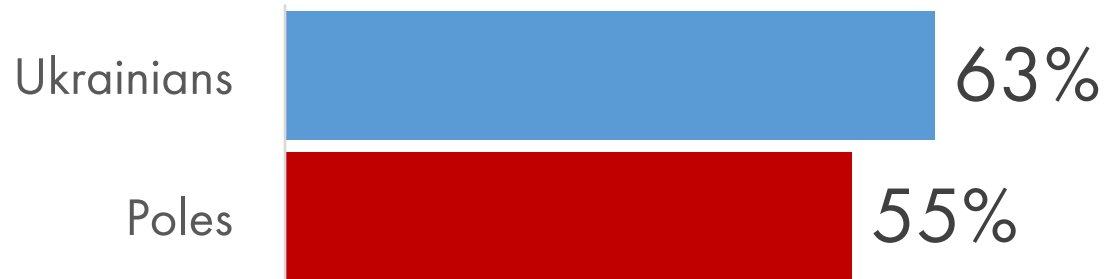




# How to talk about the past?

In history there were both – situations in which Poles / Ukrainians behaved heroically, as well as those in which the behaviour of some of them deserved to be condemned. **One should openly talk about both today in order to draw conclusions from history.**

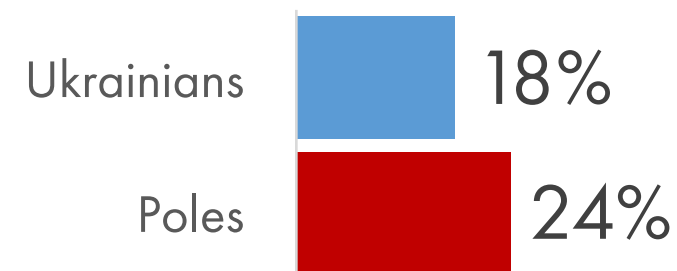
Percentages of those who agreed with this opinion:



Even if in the past there were situations in which the behaviour of some Poles / Ukrainians deserved to be condemned,

**today we should not talk about it publicly, because it weakens our state.**

Percentages of those who agreed with this opinion:

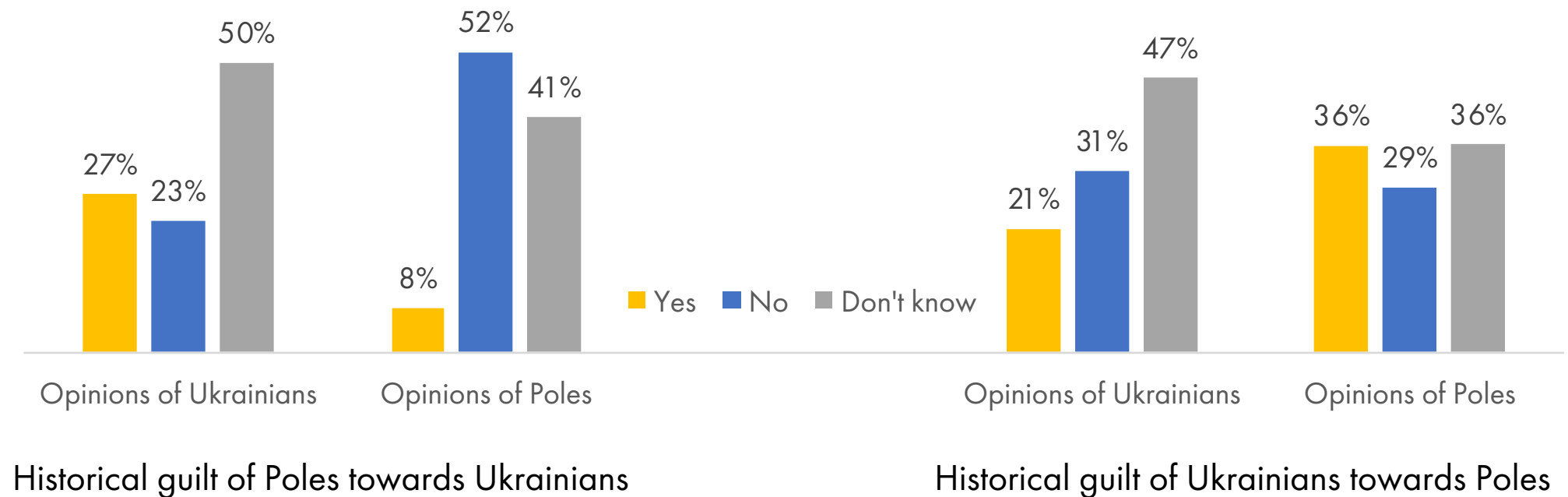




# Polish and Ukrainian view of historical guilt

Were there such events in the history of Polish-Ukrainians relations in the 20th century, about which Ukrainians today should feel guilty towards Poles?

Were there such events in the history of Polish-Ukrainians relations in the 20th century, about which Poles today should feel guilty towards Ukrainians?

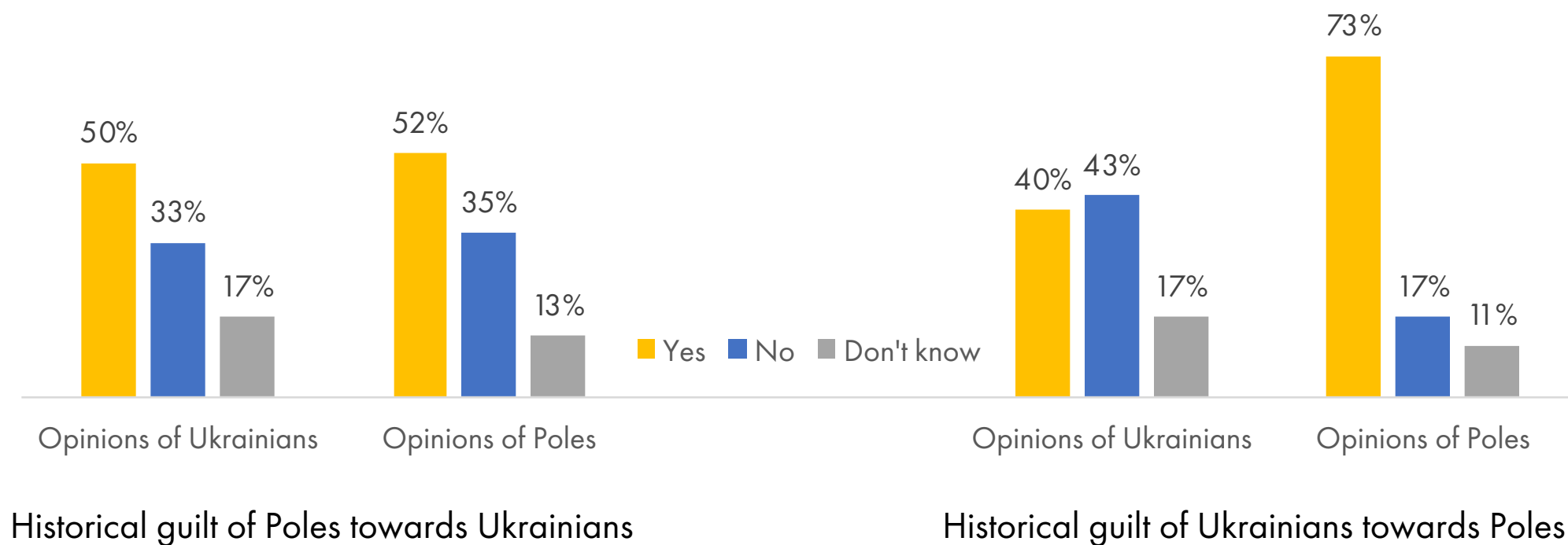






# Polish and Ukrainian view of historical guilt

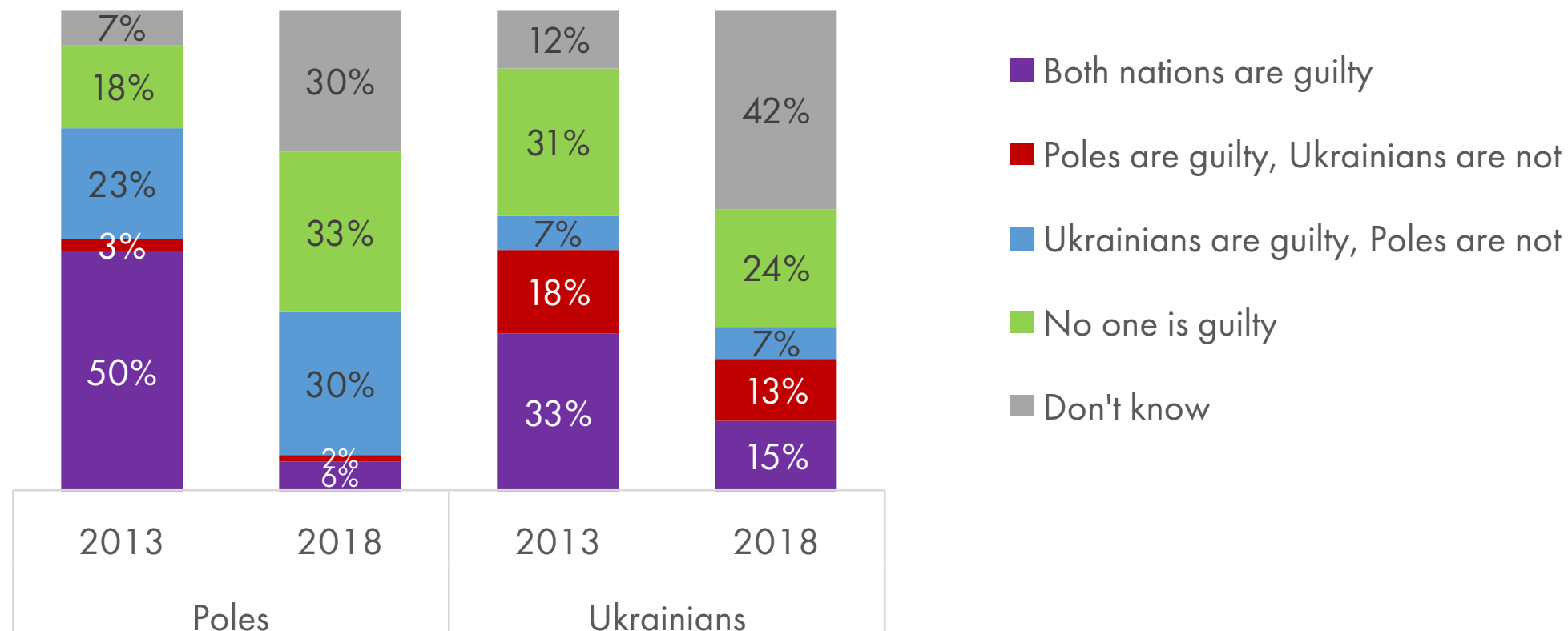
Answers to the same questions in 2013\*





# Polish and Ukrainian view of historical guilt

## Comparison of 2013 and 2018



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# Thank You!

