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**Poland's rural dwellers  
on European integration:  
opinions, knowledge and information**

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## **Poland's rural dwellers on European integration: opinions, knowledge and information**

The research project on the *Awareness of European integration among the rural population* has been prepared and implemented by the Institute of Public Affairs (IPA). The authors of the research concept and subsequent parts of this study are: Professor Lena Kolarska-Bobińska, Barbara Fedyszak-Radziejowska, PhD, Professor Jerzy Wilkin, Krzysztof Pankowski, and Beata Roguska. The research was commissioned and funded by the Agro-Info Programme on behalf of the Office of the Committee for European Integration. The survey was based on representative samples of farmers and inhabitants of rural areas and carried out between 26<sup>th</sup> April and 6<sup>th</sup> May 2002. Information on the survey methodology is presented at the end of this report.

## I. Main conclusions and recommendations

- The general atmosphere amongst the rural population has improved slightly compared to that of three years ago. However, a pessimistic view of future developments is still prevalent.
- This latest study of the rural population shows that country dwellers are taking a more active approach to the search for alternative sources of income. They are also more willing to improve their qualifications and to cooperate with others in order to improve their conditions. The experience of the last ten years has convinced a large part of the rural population that many issues of immediate concern to them and their direct neighbourhood (family, village, commune - *gmina* in Polish) depend on their own initiative and the actions they undertake jointly. The previously prevalent approach of “relying on the State” is still quite strong but has diminished considerably. It would be highly desirable to disseminate the “success patterns” of individuals and groups in rural areas to determine how the situation could be improved under difficult Polish circumstances. As would the implementation in practice of the subsidiarity principle. The promotion of various patterns of joint action amongst Polish farmers and the rural population is of great importance as such joint action patterns are indispensable not only to improve the situation of local communities, but to enable them to apply for, and benefit from, various types of aid designed to support rural development from the EU funds as well.
- The threat of unemployment combined with a fall in the number of jobs available outside of farming has resulted in a trend to “return to agriculture”. The survey shows that 60 % of farmers want to pursue farming in the future (compared to 40 % three years ago). This will make it more difficult to reduce the number of farmers covered by the EU policy to between 400,000 and 500,000.
- The rural population, including farmers, has changed its attitude towards ownership of land. Land holding or possession is currently valued more highly than before. This is demonstrated by a reluctance to sell or lease- out land and

a greater readiness to purchase more land. This trend is observed despite the current difficulties in agriculture and the low social status attached to farming. The increased importance attached to land ownership results not only from its significance as a safety net, but also from the forthcoming integration of Poland with the EU and the ongoing discussion regarding direct payments. These are linked to the area of arable land held and the expected increase in land prices following the Polish accession to the EU. A programme for the development of the agricultural and rural sectors in Poland would need to take into account the assumption that a large share of the rural population will still be “tied to the land” in the future. It follows that the diversification of economic activity on farms as well as the creation of opportunities for generating more income in non-farming sectors in rural areas is going to be of great importance. In this respect, Poland will diverge considerably from the current EU Member States and most other candidate countries .

- Two thirds of farmers and inhabitants of rural areas are concerned about Polish integration with the EU. They expect their economic situation to deteriorate and many farm holdings to go bankrupt. They predict both greater difficulties in finding outlets for agricultural products and the imposition of production quotas. Both survey groups are concerned about growing unemployment and continued impoverishment of the rural population.
- According to survey respondents, the most important benefits of EU integration are access to modern technologies in agriculture and improved opportunities for the younger generation in the countryside. Respondents are also convinced that Poland’s standing and that of the Polish people in Europe will improve.
- Compared to research carried out in 1999 there is a slight decline in prejudices and concerns about the European Union, particularly amongst farmers.
- Inhabitants of rural areas are now more concerned about limits on production than they were three years ago. Their previous conviction that it would be possible to obtain the same level of aid as is currently available to EU member states has also weakened.

- Survey respondents perceive the impact of the flow of EU funds into rural areas negatively. They fear that income differences in the rural population will become even more pronounced and that consequently, tension and conflicts are bound to grow. They doubt whether new jobs will be created as a result of such funding. Neither do they believe the money will help to reduce poverty in rural areas. However, the funds may stimulate greater interaction between the inhabitants of rural areas.
- In the three years up to May 2002 the rural population and farmers have become more interested in the issue of Polish accession to the EU. Over half of the rural population (53% of the total) and 2/3 of all farmers (68% of the total) declared an interest in EU integration.
- Farmers and the inhabitants of rural areas feel that they are still poorly informed about EU integration even though their sense of being informed has slightly improved in the last three years.
- Many respondents who declared substantial interest in the planned Polish accession into the EU feel insufficiently informed on that matter. The gap between the demand for information based on respondents' interest in EU integration, and the level of information available is quite wide, particularly amongst farmers. This suggests that there is an urgent need to develop effective information channels for the rural population on integration issues, which would guarantee that anyone who is interested would be provided with adequate knowledge.
- The rural population's self-assessment that their level of awareness of EU integration matters is quite poor appears justified. Immediately prior to Polish accession EU awareness amongst farmers and the rural population is very low. In both survey groups, respondents have been exposed to such terms as "direct payments/surcharges for farmers", "Common Agricultural Policy", "free flow of goods, services, people and capital", "production quotas and production quota limits" and "structural funds". However, relatively few respondents

declared an understanding of these terms with most admitting to only a vague awareness of the concepts. The phrase “Direct payments for farmers” appears to be the most recognised. In the rural population, 88% of the total have heard it and among farmers, the share is 93%. Regarding understanding of what this term means, the share is 31% and 37%, respectively. Most farmers and rural areas inhabitants are unaware of acronyms like IACS and SAPARD, and less than one in ten of those who are aware of them understand their meaning.

- The level of awareness of matters concerning Polish accession to the EU does not directly affect attitudes towards integration (in the case of farmers) or does so only to a very limited extent (in the case of the rural population).
- Information campaigns targeted at rural communities need to account for the diverse information needs amongst the general rural population and farmers. For example the rural population as a whole is very interested in matters unrelated to agriculture, whereas farmers are much more focused on agricultural issues.
- Farmers and the rural population are mainly interested in the eligibility criteria for and the level of direct payments, market outlets for agricultural produce, the impact of EU integration on small farm holdings or EU standards and regulations on agriculture. In matters unrelated to agriculture, the impact of EU integration on the unemployment rate and Polish living standards generate the most interest.
- Information dissemination activities should make use of variety of channels. These ought to be slightly different in the case of farmers as compared to the general rural public. Television has been and should continue to be one of the major sources of information on EU integration. Farmers expect to find EU information in agricultural tv programmes, whereas the inhabitants of rural areas in the programmes targeting the general audience. Meetings devoted to EU integration, newspapers and magazines, brochures, information leaflets and radio are other preferred information sources.

- The information and education campaign on TV should be supplemented by information from other media sources to a greater extent than before. Direct methods of disseminating information on EU integration need to play a more significant role. This is true for all kinds of meetings, information dissemination events and training sessions concerning matters related to future EU membership. Evidently, such events should be initiated by local self-government authorities as well as agricultural chambers, agricultural advisory centres and farmers' trade unions. Leaflets, brochures and information bulletins need to be circulated much more widely. Many more European integration information centres or points should be established at the government bodies in *gminas* (communes) or *powiats* (counties).

## II. Social and economic characteristics of rural population

### 1. Rural population's sources of income

The main sources of income of the rural population are: work outside the farming sector, benefits, old-age pensions and allowances and then farming and this situation has not changed substantially since 1999. Some farmers (8%) have “returned” to their farms and now treat farming as the main source of their income. This does not mean however that the process of diversification of farmers' income has halted. The number of families that own plots of land of below 1 ha has increased by 4%.

**Table 1**  
Sources of rural population's income  
(percentage)

What is the main source of your (family's) income?				
Source of income	Rural population		Farmers	
	2002	1999	2002	1999
Work on own farm	23	24	60	53.5
Work outside farm	36	35	22	20
Own business	5	6	3	6
Pension, old-age pension or allowance	31	34	14	20
Others	5	1	1	0.5

Source: IPA and Agro-Info data

More than half the rural population owns land, with 52% of respondents being members of families that have at least 1 ha and 14% of village families owning plots of land of up to 1 ha. Only 46% of respondents questioned about their area of arable land own more than 1 ha. It follows that slightly more than 50% of rural families own land but less than half cultivate their land themselves. It is interesting that still fewer village dwellers (18%) describe themselves as farmers.

**Table 2**

Social and professional structure of rural population  
(percentage)

How would you characterise your situation?						
Professional category	Family's source of income					
	Work at farm	Work outside of farm	Own business	Pension, old-age pension or allowance	Other	Total
Managers, specialists, administration and office employees	5	82	12		2	8
Skilled workers and employees	7	86	1	2	4	13
Unskilled workers	3	85		6	6	5
Farmers	79	15		6		18
Owners of companies	4		88	8		3
Pensioners	8	6		86		37
Unemployed	10	31	1	34	23	9
Others, incl. school students, trainees, housewives etc.	9	29	5	32	25	8

Source: IPA and Agro-Info data

It is worth noting that almost all social and professional groups in Poland have diversified sources of income. Among farms owners, additional work is performed by specialists, workers, small business owners, the unemployed and pensioners. Farmers also perform additional work, mainly outside their farms. The "financial elite" of the villages comprises of managers, specialists, skilled employees, workers and small business owners, i.e. persons whose monthly income exceeds PLN 1,500 net per household.

**Table 3**  
 Monthly income in social and professional groups  
 (percentage)

Which group best describes your situation?				
Professional category	Monthly net income			
	Up to PLN 750	PLN 751–1,500	Above PLN 1,501	'Hard to say'
Managers, specialists, administration and office employees	0	15	73	12
Skilled workers and employees	8	28	53	11
Unskilled workers	9	38	50	3
Farmers	12	28	25	35
Business owner	4	37	46	13
Pensioners	29	39	21	11
Unemployed	31	31	20	18
Others, incl. school students, trainees, housewives etc.	14	34	34	18

Source: IPA and Agro-Info data

Farmers, pensioners and the unemployed earn comparatively little but it is noteworthy that a significant proportion of them, i.e. 35%, are unable to quote their income precisely. Moreover, incomes of farmers are polarised: one in seven of the farmers who responded estimates his or her net monthly income at below PLN 750 and one in ten (like 10% of rural population) above PLN 2,251 per household.

In the period 1999-2002, the education level attained by the rural population improved. The number of persons with a secondary education increased, mainly among farmers rather than other village dwellers.

**Table 4**  
Education of rural population  
(percentage)

Level of education	Rural population		Farmers	
	2002	1999	2002	1999
Primary	34	38	31	38
Basic vocational and partial secondary	34	34	41	41
Secondary	25	22	24	18
Higher (also post-secondary, bachelor)	7	6	4	3

Source: IPA and Agro-Info data

## 2. Farmers and their farms

Over the last three years (1999-2002), the size of farms belonging to the farmers we surveyed has not changed substantially. The number of farms that were too large to be treated only as a source of additional income, i.e. from 6 to 10 ha, slightly decreased, while the number of larger farms (of above 10 ha), with the potential for improvements in agricultural production and therefore profitability increased.

**Table 5**  
Change in the area of farms in 1999 and 2002  
(percentage)

Area of farm	2002	1999
Up to 2 ha	35	34
From 3 to 5 ha	28	28
6 to 10 ha	19	23
Above 10 ha	18	15

Source: IPA and Agro-Info data

The “back to the land” move can be also be observed in a comparison of changes that took place among farmers who live from farming. The number of persons for whom the farm is the exclusive or the primary source of income

increased while the group that treats the farm as an additional source of family income decreased.

**Table 6**  
Farms as a primary or additional source of income  
(data in %)

Source of income	2002	1999
Exclusively farm	30	27
Primarily farm	32	26
Farmers with additional source of income	22	32
Only formally farmers <sup>b</sup>	16	15

a. Farmers are broken down into four groups according to the role of their farms as sources of income, based on *The Future of Polish Agriculture and Rural Areas in view of European integration*, Institute of Public Affairs, Warsaw, 2000. ([www.isp.org.pl](http://www.isp.org.pl))

b. Farmers who claim that they do not generate any income from their farms.

Farmers whose main activity is farming own the largest farms, whereas those who treat their farms as an additional source of income own the smallest ones. Farmers declaring that they do not derive any income from farming activities as well as those who have other sources of income in addition to farming appear to present a “transitional “ group. The farms owned by the first group are too large to fail to generate any income, those owned by the latter are too small to provide sufficient means to earn a living for the whole family.

**Table 7**  
Farms as a source of income in relation to the size of farms  
(percentage)

Source of income	Farm area (in conversion hectares)			
	Up to 2 ha	3-5 ha	6–10 ha	Over 10 ha
Exclusively farm	16	25	29	30
Primarily farm	23	36	24	17
Farmers with additional sources of income	70	20	5	5
Only formally farmers	58	26	7	9

Source: IPA data

The category of “only formally farmers” contains slightly more women and young people, both highly and very poorly educated, whose income, however, is higher than that of other groups. It is worth noting that the education level of the rural population has improved, mainly in the category of farmers with additional sources of income.

**Table 8**  
Education level of farmers surveyed  
(data in %)

Education level	Source of income			
	Exclusively farm	Primarily farm	Farmers with additional sources of income	Only formally farmers
Elementary	31	24	24	21
Basic vocational	34	38	17	11
Secondary and higher	24	32	26	18

Source: IPA and Agro-Info data

Farmers treating their farms as an additional source of income are an interesting case. They are relatively young, well educated, more likely to quit farming, and, as in the case of the category of "only formally farmers" they do not intend to expand their farms. The youngest farmers are those who treat their farms as an addition, or perhaps as a necessity because other sources of income are not available to them.

**Table 9**  
Groups of farmers and their age  
(percentage)

Age	Source of income			
	Exclusively farm	Primarily farm	Farmers with additional sources of income	Only formally farmers
Up to 34 years	1	21	43	35
35–54	28	31	23	18
Over 55 years	33	33	20	14

Source: IPA and Agro-Info data

It is not surprising that the oldest farmers earn their living exclusively from farming. This is not necessarily by choice; it may be the only alternative for them at a time of high unemployment.

**Table 10**  
Self-identification as farmers versus plans concerning farms  
(percentage)

Methods and plans of identification	Exclusively farm	Primarily farm	Farmers with additional sources of income	Only formally farmers	Total
KRUS [Farmers' Social Security Office] contribution payers	91	83	44	38	69
Self-identified as farmers <sup>a</sup>	99	96	64	52	85
Members of social organisations and self-government	12	15	11	16	14
Unable to earn a living from farming	52	58	78	85	65
Willing to sell land	11	11	17	12	12
Intending to expand farms	41	39	10	10	36
Concerned about unemployment	41	26	31	33	33

Source: IPA and Agro-Info data

- a. In 2002, 76% out of the total number of farmers and 85% of farmers grouped according to their income in agriculture identified themselves as farmers.

The tendency to “return to farming” mentioned earlier is confirmed by the increase in the number of farmers paying their social security contribution to the Farmers' Social Security Office (KRUS) which has risen from 55% in 1999 to 69% in 2002. Moreover, the number of farmers paying social security contributions to the Social Security Office (ZUS), i.e. those who work outside agriculture, has decreased from 27% in 1999 to 19% in 2002. Also self-identification of farmers has increased significantly in that period – from 60% in 1999 to 85% in 2002. It is worth noting that farmers who have several additional sources of income outside of farming, have

become active in farmers' associations, which is evident from them holding certain official positions (inter alia, local government councillors and representatives of chambers of agriculture).

In 1999 up to 75% of farmers were unable to sustain their families by means of their income from farming. Today this number has decreased by 10%. In 2002 farmers are less willing to sell their land. In 1999, 28% of farmers who responded to the survey, declared such willingness compared to only 12% in 2002. A parallel phenomenon observed in rural areas is a significant fear of unemployment which still reaches 33%. Paradoxically it is the farmers who rely exclusively on farming and have no additional sources of income who are most anxious about unemployment. This may indicate that they are afraid of "being forced to abandon farming".

### **III. Adaptation strategies for the rural population, including farmers**

#### **1. How to improve the present living conditions of the rural population and who is the decisive force?**

Residents of rural areas are convinced that the key to improving the situation of Polish agriculture is the Government's agricultural policy; however many of them indicate that the macroeconomic situation of the country and the conditions of Poland's accession to the European Union are also significant influences.

Both the active participation of farmers and local government policy are considered to be less important factors. The overall view of the rural population that the state of agriculture is dependent on government agricultural policy has remained consistent since 1999.<sup>1</sup>

The investment priorities of the rural population have also scarcely changed since 1999. The proportion of residents in rural areas choosing to invest available funds in construction or household equipment is identical in both years (56%). It is worth stressing that as far as investment priorities are concerned, the purchase or tenure of additional land was very rare (6% among rural residents and 14% among farmers). Assisting children is considered to be an important priority : helping them to set themselves up in a profession and/or by providing for their education. Farmers are even more willing to invest than other residents of rural areas in this latter category.

It should be noted that farmers and their families are becoming more aware of the role of education in farming and its impact on living conditions. New subjects such as ecology, the law or the functioning of the European Union are subject to a growing demand.

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. *The Future of Polish Agriculture and Rural Areas in view of European integration*, Institute of Public Affairs, Warsaw, 2000. ([www.isp.org.pl](http://www.isp.org.pl))

**Table 1**  
Allocation of spare financial means  
(percentage)

If you had spare or extra money (e.g. lottery prize), how would you invest it?		
Investment preferences	Rural population	Farmers
- Construction or furnishing of a house	56	51
- Assistance for children with setting themselves up	48	51
- Childrens' education	38	45
- Establishment of own business	28	20
- Savings scheme	26	20
- Purchase of machinery or investments in the farm	20	46

Source: IPA and Agro-Info data

It should be noted that farmers and their families are becoming more aware of the role of education in farming and its impact on living conditions. New subjects such as ecology, the law or the functioning of the European Union are subject to a growing demand.

Most farmers and the majority of the rural residents are under pressure to seek new sources of income as the income they derive from farming is insufficient. Two thirds of the rural population are active in this area. On the other hand 30% of the rural population and farmers do not plan any additional activities and are determined to wait for "better times" ahead. It is notable that the number of people with such an attitude is much lower than in the 1999 survey when it amounted to 61%. This suggests that the rural population has become more economically active. Among farmers, the most frequently indicated source of income is an additional job outside farming (46%) and activities of various kinds to improve efficiency on the farm: increase of production, change of production type, reduction of costs or change of sale methods (altogether 31%). Among the rural population a job outside farming is also perceived as the best method (35%) to improve the financial situation of the family. Further options include setting up own business or shop (15%) and the sale or tenure of land (8%).

## 2. The rural residents' attitude to land.

The question of land ownership among the rural residents surveyed revealed the following: 66% lived in agricultural holdings owning arable land, 51% owned farms, the size of which exceeded 1 ha. Would the residents of rural areas be willing to sell or lease-out land, if they were able to find a job elsewhere? Around 60% of the rural population are willing to lease the land they own (58% of residents and 63% of farmers), although only 24% and 20% respectively would sell it. When compared with the 1999, the proportion of farmers willing to sell or lease their land has dropped substantially. In 1999, 44% of farmers declared their willingness to sell and 76% to lease out their land<sup>2</sup>.

**Table 3**  
Willingness to sell land  
(percentage)

Would you personally be ready to sell your land?			
Willingness to sell land	Rural population (2002)	Rural population (1999)	Farmers (2002)
Yes	13	26	12
No	77	63	84
'Hard to say'	10	12	4

Source: IPA and Agro-Info data

The proportion of rural residents willing to sell their land decreased considerably between the surveys. Such reluctance to give up land may be the consequence of growing unemployment, which can be observed in both urban and rural areas. Moreover, farmers may also expect the price of land to rise after Poland's accession to the European Union. However the survey did not provide sufficient data to examine such a hypotheses.

<sup>2</sup> See op. cit. , p. 142.

Altogether only a limited number of farmers and rural residents would like to sell or lease out their land in order to improve the financial standing of their families. In the case of rural residents this option is listed as the fourth, whereas in case of farmers as the sixth choice. The purchase or tenure of land is not considered as a priority when allocating spare financial resources. Rural residents place it as their tenth choice (the first being house construction) and farmers position it as the seventh option.

More than one third of respondents from the group of farmers (36%) intend to expand their farms in the future, mainly by purchasing more land<sup>3</sup>. The number is 50% higher than it was in the early nineties. Land tenure is also becoming more and more popular despite the decline of income in agriculture observed over the last years and the very difficult condition of agriculture in general. This phenomenon may be partially justified by the limitation of job opportunities outside farming and possibly by the expectation that the situation in agriculture will improve when Poland becomes an EU member.

Farmers are willing to sell their land:

- for health reasons – 41%;
- to invest outside the farming sector, provided that it generates higher income – 36%;
- to help set their children up – 36%;
- when they are able to make a substantial profit – 33%.

More than a half of respondents (rural residents and farmers) are aware of the existence of the draft Act on the purchase of arable land proposed by the Ministry of Agriculture, but only 18% of them say they know what it contains. Those who are familiar with the assumptions of the Act have opposing opinions as to its effects.

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<sup>3</sup> In the surveys conducted in 1992, only 22% of respondents-farmers declared the will to expand their farms. M. Duczkowska-Piasecka Trends in changes of farm areas in A. Rosner, ed.: Farmers '92, Warsaw, 1993, p. 100.

**Table 4**  
Opinions expressed by persons familiar with the assumptions of the Ministry of  
Agriculture concerning the Act on the purchase of arable land  
(percentage)

Opinions on the draft Act	Rural population	farmers
Protects the interests of Polish farmers	43	44
Renders the purchase of land to small farms difficult	51	49
Stops the expansion of farms over 100 or 300 ha	56	56
Renders the circulation of land to Polish farmers difficult	47	47
Improves the agrarian structure in Poland	50	47

Source: IPA and Agro-Info data

Respondents are equally divided as to whether this Act will have either a negative or a positive effect on Polish agriculture. The survey also included a question which examined the respondents' knowledge of future rules governing the sale of land to EU farmers and their familiarity with this subject appears to be relatively poor.

### **3. Development of rural areas and farming in the context of Poland's integration with the European Union**

Both farmers and the rural residents agree that all farmers, regardless of their financial status, should receive EU funds.

The rural population presented a wider variety of opinions in respect to the granting of direct payments.

**Table 5**

The opinions of rural residents and farmers as to the granting of direct subsidies  
(percentage)

	Rural population	Farmers
A –To land owners, regardless of whether the land is cultivated or not	8	9
B –To all food producing farmers, regardless of it being sold or not	32	36
C – Only to farmers who sell their produce	22	28
D – To farmers marketing their produce but to a limited degree so that a part of financial means may be allocated to the development of rural areas	32	24
E – ‘Hard to say’	7	3

Source: IPA and Agro-Info data

The rural population is equally in favour of options B and D. These options are also supported by the EU, which enable the modulation of direct payments. Modulation refers to the allocation of a part of direct payments to the development of rural areas (although the term “modulation” was not used in the survey).

The opinion of the rural population is that the efficient use of Community funds intended to support the development of rural areas and agriculture is equally dependant on the Government and provincial authorities, and local governments (58% each). They attach great importance to the active participation of farmers and rural residents in this process (40%), whereas the initiative and active participation of agricultural and rural organisations (21%) are less significant.

At the same time a substantial majority of respondents claim that the Community financial assistance will widen the discrepancies in the living conditions of rural residents, and will result in an increase of conflict and tension in the countryside. The respondents state that the only positive aspect of the funding will be the fact that rural populations will be encouraged to undertake common actions in order to be granted Community funding.

**Table 6**  
Influence of Community assistance on the condition of Polish farming  
(percentage)

In your opinion, the influx of Community funding intended to support the development of rural areas and agriculture in our country will result in:		
	Rural population	Farmers
<b>Deepening of the discrepancies in the living conditions among their residents</b>		
Yes	69	72
No	19	16
'Hard to say'	12	12
<b>Conflicts and tensions in the countryside</b>		
Yes	62	70
No	21	17
'Hard to say'	17	13
<b>Encouraging the rural population to a more active participation and common actions in order to be granted Community funding</b>		
Yes	62	64
No	15	18
'Hard to say'	23	18
<b>Increase of unemployment in the countryside</b>		
Yes	44	52
No	37	31
'Hard to say'	19	16
<b>Reduction of poverty in the countryside</b>		
Yes	30	28
No	51	55
'Hard to say'	19	17

Source: IPA and Agro-Info data

Overall, about a half of the rural population adopt a rather passive attitude towards the prospective integration of Poland with the EU. A majority of respondents, who are in favour of preparatory actions, suggest that the actions should aim at the improvement of the state of equipment and the operation of farms. However, they also attach great importance to the acquisition of broader and more reliable information on the EU. The issues of greatest significance in this respect include

education (qualifications, training, learning) and self-organisation by farmers (creation of producers' and pressure groups, as well as other collective actions). Farmers attach far greater importance to the latter elements than other residents of rural areas, which should be acknowledged as a very positive trend.

## IV. The integration process in opinions of rural population

### 1. Support for Poland's integration with the EU

Among possible geopolitical solutions (EU accession, closer co-operation with Russia, deepened relations with the USA, neutrality) Poland's accession to the EU enjoys only limited support on the part of farmers with only 22% of the respondents being in favour of such option.

**Table 1**

The most favourable scenario of the development of Poland versus the support for the integration with the EU (percentage)

What solution would be the most favourable for the development of Poland? Would it be:								
	Rural population				Farmers			
	A	B	C	D	A	B	C	D
Deepening of economic and political relations with the USA	7	4	13	9	7	6	4	8
Accession to the European Union	65	4	12	14	58	6	12	4
Closer co-operation with Russia	8	30	20	15	14	38	20	29
Neutrality	12	52	31	35	12	45	33	36
'Hard to say'	8	11	25	28	10	5	31	23
	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

A – referendum participants voting in favour of integration

B – referendum participants voting against integration

C – referendum participants who still have not made up their minds

D – individuals who do not intend to participate in the referendum

Source: IPA and Agro-Info data

Farmers are more strongly motivated to take part in this referendum than the rural population in general.

**Table 2**  
Readiness to participate in the accession referendum  
(percentage)

Would you take part in the referendum on the accession of Poland to the European Union if it were to take place next Sunday?		
Opinions	Rural population	Farmers
Yes certainly	49	58
Yes probably	19	18
Probably not	12	9
Certainly not	15	10
'Hard to say'	5	4

Source: IPA and Agro-Info data

The rural population as a whole is less keen to participate in a referendum than the group of farmers although, there are more supporters of integration in that group than among farmers.

## **2. Ideas concerning the geopolitical strategy**

Rural population and farmers do not have a clear vision of the geopolitical and economic strategy that Poland should adopt. They support a variety of models of international co-operation. Among various possible strategic solutions, the farmers support the accession of Poland to the European Union. Almost one third of the farmers and rural population would like the country to stay outside all political alliances, to avoid entering into closer economic relations and thus remain neutral. Rural residents express a similar level of support for Poland's accession to the European Union. Farmers are divided on the issue – a slightly higher percentage would prefer Poland to co-operate more closely with Russia, and fewer of them opt for EU accession. In both groups the concept of deepened political and economic relations with the USA proves the least preferred concept.

**Table 3**  
Voting in referendum  
(percentage)

How would you vote in the aforementioned referendum?		
Opinions	Rural population N=542	Farmers N=345
In favour of accession to the European Union	49	38
Against accession of Poland to the European Union	29	43
Difficult to say	22	19

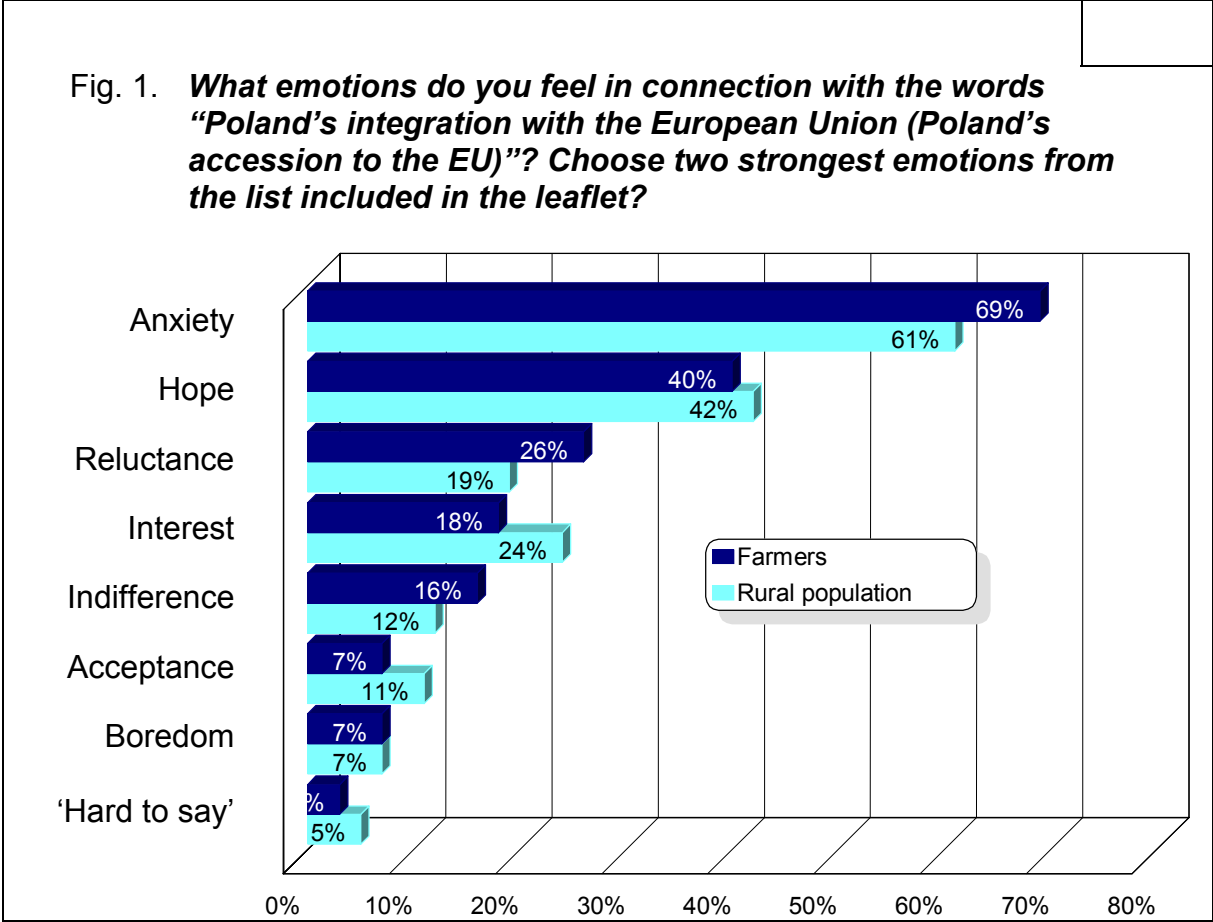
Source: IPA and Agro-Info data

In both groups, the supporters of Poland's accession to the EU, ready to vote in favour in the referendum, select the option of accession to the EU from the possible geopolitical strategies. On the other hand, EU opponents, intending to reject accession in the referendum, would prefer if our country remained neutral or if it deepened its relations with Russia (this solution has many supporters among farmers). Similar preferences are expressed by respondents who are still undecided as to their participation in the referendum. Declarations of that kind suggest that, at present, the undecided participants in the referendum are likely to turn into potential opponents of Poland's integration with the EU. Similarly, farmers who do not intend to participate in the referendum would prefer Poland to remain neutral outside the structures of the EU or to deepen its relations with Russia. Among the rural population in general the largest group supports the concept of neutrality, and relations with Russia and the accession to the EU are considered as equally desirable. It may be assumed that an increase in attendance in the referendum (particularly among farmers) would not strengthen the group of supporters of integration with the EU.

### **3. Anxieties and hopes connected with integration**

Negative attitudes towards integration are predominant. Both rural residents and farmers react with anxiety when faced with the concept of "Poland's integration with the European Union". However these anxieties are also accompanied by hope. Nevertheless, more than one farmer in four and almost every fifth resident of rural

areas express an unequivocally reluctant attitude towards Poland’s accession to the EU. Only a few respondents declare their full acceptance of the integration of Poland with the EU.



Source: IPA and Agro-Info data

Both farmers and rural residents are anxious about the inclusion of Poland into the European Union, as they expect the economic condition of the countryside to deteriorate. They fear that many farms will go bankrupt, that they will have difficulties selling agricultural products whereas at the same time production quotas will be centrally imposed. Anxieties concerning the changes of political (limitation of sovereignty of our country) or cultural nature (weakened patriotism among Poles, fall in religious observance) are not considered to be significant.

**Table 4**  
Anxieties connected with integration (percentage)

Poland's integration with the EU also evokes anxiety. Are you personally anxious that:	Rural residents		Farmers	
	1999	2002	1999	2002
<b>Many farms will go bankrupt</b>				
Yes	84	85	93	90
No	7	8	3	5
'Hard to say'	9	7	4	5
<b>Foreigners will buy out land</b>	1999	2002	1999	2002
Yes	79	80	87	84
No	9	13	5	11
'Hard to say'	12	7	8	5
<b>Polish agricultural products will be difficult to sell</b>	1999	2002	1999	2002
Yes	73	70	84	83
No	14	19	8	10
'Hard to say'	13	11	8	7
<b>Production will be limited</b>	1999	2002	1999	2002
Yes	66	68	76	80
No	15	17	10	10
'Hard to say'	19	15	14	10
<b>Unemployment in rural areas will increase</b>	1999	2002	1999	2002
Yes	72	71	83	77
No	13	20	8	16
'Hard to say'	15	9	9	7
<b>Rural areas will become poorer</b>	1999	2002	1999	2002
Yes	65	68	78	75
No	18	23	12	18
'Hard to say'	17	9	10	7
<b>Poland's sovereignty will be limited</b>	2002			
Yes	44		47	
No	37		40	
'Hard to say'	19		13	
<b>Poles will become less patriotic</b>	1999	2002	1999	2002
Yes	34	41	45	44
No	47	43	40	41
'Hard to say'	19	16	15	15
<b>Poles will become less religious</b>	1999	2002	1999	2002
Yes	22	32	30	29
No	61	55	56	57
'Hard to say'	17	14	14	15

Source: IPA and Agro-Info data

In comparison to the survey carried out in 1999, a slight decline in frequency of the declared anxieties, with a few exceptions, can be noted. The only most significant increase in the level of anxiety is present in the case of control and limitation of production volumes.

These anxieties are accompanied by a far-reaching scepticism towards the effectiveness of the potential assistance that is to be granted to Poland. More than one farmer in three and almost every third resident of rural areas (34% and 29% respectively) claim that despite the support for agriculture that is to be available after Polish accession to the EU, a large group of farmers will have to abandon farming. Less than one farmer in five (18 %) holds the opinion that the support for agriculture will serve as an incentive to remain in this profession and to carry on earning a living from farming.

The benefits resulting from the accession to the EU are, according to the respondents, first of all better access to new technologies in agriculture and better prospects for the young generation of the rural population. The respondents are also convinced that the status of Poland and Poles in Europe will improve.

**Table 6**  
Perception of advantages resulting from integration (percentage)

Rural population has certain anxieties and hopes connected with Poland's accession to the European Union. In your opinion, what hopes and advantages may result from the accession to the EU:	Rural population		Farmers	
	1999	2002	1999	2002
<b>Access to new technologies in agriculture</b>	1999	2002	1999	2002
Yes	63	71	61	71
No	14	10	20	14
'Hard to say'	23	19	19	15
<b>Good prospects for children, contacts with other countries</b>	1999	2002	1999	2002
Yes	51	66	48	65
No	15	12	21	17
'Hard to say'	34	22	31	18
<b>Better status of Poland and Poles in Europe</b>	1999	2002	1999	2002
Yes	48	49	40	47
No	19	24	30	33
'Hard to say'	33	27	30	20
<b>Job opportunities outside farming</b>	1999	2002	1999	2002
Yes	35	42	25	39
No	27	29	41	38
'Hard to say'	38	29	34	23
<b>New markets to sell products</b>	1999	2002	1999	2002
Yes	46	45	33	38
No	23	29	40	40
'Hard to say'	31	26	27	22
<b>Subsidies for Polish farmers – as in the Union (Common Agricultural Policy)</b>	1999	2002	1999	2002
Yes	46	39	35	37
No	22	38	38	48
'Hard to say'	32	23	27	15
<b>Improved production safety (sales guarantees, contracts)</b>	1999	2002	1999	2002
Yes	36	42	29	36
No	30	32	46	45
'Hard to say'	34	26	25	19
<b>Cost-effective agricultural production</b>	1999	2002	1999	2002
Yes	35	36	27	34
No	32	40	47	48
'Hard to say'	33	24	26	18
<b>Improved standard of living in rural areas</b>				
Yes		34		31
No		39		46
'Hard to say'		27		23

Source: IPA and Agro-Info data

A comparison of the above results with the results of the survey from 1999 permits us to say that together with a slight drop in the level of anxiety about EU membership, hopes concerning the inclusion of our country in the Community structures have generally increased. Farmers are more aware of the benefits resulting from the integration than they were three years ago.

The only aspect of pre-accession hopes where the proportion of negative answers has increased, is the issue of subsidies for farmers. This is a consequence of the fact that the respondents are doubtful whether the benefits resulting from the integration are realistic. The proportion of respondents who question the chances of our farmers receiving equal payments as those granted to EU farmers has increased by 10 % among farmers, whereas among inhabitants of rural areas this proportion has gone up by as much as 16%.

The anxieties about Poland's integration with the Community structures are accompanied by a conviction that both the countryside and the farmers will not benefit from the integration. Workers and businessmen who have small and medium-size enterprises are also included in the group of professions, which are likely to lose out on integration. The groups that will benefit from integration are first and foremost people with higher education and, in the rural areas and owners of large farms. The scale of reluctance towards integration is also expressed in the popular opinion that people who get rich by means of dishonest transactions, i.e. swindlers and frauds, will also belong to the group of beneficiaries of the process.

## **2. Current relations with the EU and opinions on negotiations**

The rural population (59%), and to a greater extent farmers (70%), believe that the relations between Poland and the European Union are imbalanced. They perceive that these relations favour the EU Member States more than they do Poland. Only one fifth of rural residents (20%), and one seventh (14%) of farmers consider these relations to be balanced i.e. equally advantageous for EU Member States and for Poland.

Over a half of rural residents and even more farmers (62%) are very critical about our negotiations with the EU concerning agricultural issues and claim that the present Government is too lenient and makes too many concessions under pressure from the EU. Only about a quarter (23%) of rural residents and almost one fifth (19%) of

farmers share the opinion that the negotiations in agriculture achieve a fair compromise between the interests of Poland and the EU Member States.

In both groups surveyed, more than half of the respondents would not accept any compromise regarding direct and indirect payments to farmers and agriculture. Overall, 51% of rural residents and 59% of farmers share the opinion that Poland should refuse to join the EU if Polish farmers are not treated on the same basis as farmers from EU Member States at the point of accession. In a situation where the financial conditions for Polish farmers were not comparable to those of EU farmers, 34% of the rural population and 29% of farmers expressed their consent to the accession.

## V. Knowledge and assessment of knowledge on Poland's integration with the European Union

### 1. Interest and assessment of the 'sense of being informed' (i.e. satisfaction with information possessed)

Over the last three years, from June 1999 to May 2002, the interest of the rural population and farmers in issues concerning Poland's accession to the European Union has risen. More than half of the rural population (53%) and more than two thirds of farmers (68%) show interest in this respect.

**Table 1**  
Interest in integration issues  
(percentage)

Are you interested in the issues concerning Poland's integration with (accession to) the European Union?				
Level of interest	Rural population		Farmers	
	June 1999	May 2002	June 1999	May 2002
Very interested	5	<b>7</b>	10	<b>13</b>
Slightly interested	39	<b>46</b>	44	<b>55</b>
Not really interested	26	<b>29</b>	25	<b>23</b>
Not interested at all	27	<b>18</b>	17	<b>9</b>
'Hard to say'	3	<b>0</b>	4	<b>0</b>

Source: IPA and Agro-Info data

Interest in integration fosters discussion on these issues among friends, acquaintances and relatives. In the month directly preceding the survey, 72% of farmers discussed integration issues at least once, and 61% more than once, whereas for inhabitants of rural areas the figures were 53% and 42% respectively. Opponents of accession started these discussions more frequently than its supporters.

There is a rising level of satisfaction in both groups of the Polish countryside about the information available which accompanies the growing interest in issues concerning Poland's accession to the European Union that has been observed in recent years. The improvement in the level and quality of information acquired in this

respect is only partly satisfactory. The number of people who declare a poor level, or no knowledge on integration has dropped very significantly. However the proportion of people who consider themselves well-informed or very well-informed has risen only slightly. Only 16% of the rural residents and farmers surveyed claim to be well informed on these issues.

**Table 2**  
The level of satisfaction regarding the possessed information on integration  
(percentage)

How do you perceive your level of knowledge on issues concerning the integration of Polish countryside and agriculture with the European Union?				
Level of knowledge	Rural population		Farmers	
	June 1999	May 2002	June 1999	May 2002
I consider myself very well-informed	0	<b>1</b>	0	<b>1</b>
I consider myself well-informed	9	<b>15</b>	10	<b>15</b>
I consider myself poorly-informed	38	<b>48</b>	39	<b>55</b>
I consider myself very poorly informed	28	<b>24</b>	32	<b>21</b>
I have no knowledge on that issue	23	<b>12</b>	18	<b>8</b>
'Hard to say'	2	<b>0</b>	1	<b>1</b>

Source: IPA and Agro-Info data

The more interested people are in the integration issues, the more they wish to know about them. It is disappointing that most people declaring great interest in the prospective accession of Poland to the European Union feel they do not have enough information on the issue. The informational needs determined by the level of interest in integration are particularly poorly satisfied among farmers.

The part of the rural population in favour of Poland's membership of the European Union feels better informed in this respect than the opponents of integration. Comparatively, 27% of integration supporters and 16% of its opponents see themselves as well and very well informed, whereas 15% and 28% respectively consider themselves to be poorly informed.

## **2. Knowledge concerning integration**

A low self-assessment of the state of knowledge on integration expressed by the rural population is fully justified. The level of knowledge of farmers and the rural population in general on integration issues just before the accession is indeed very low. Most people from both surveyed groups have heard the terms “direct payments for farmers” (88% of the rural population and 93% of farmers), “common agricultural policy” (83% and 88% respectively), “free movement of goods, services, persons and capital” (75% and 79% respectively), “production quotas and limits” (63% and 75% respectively) as well as “structural funds” (56% and 63% respectively), however relatively few respondents declare that they know the definitions of those terms, admitting that their knowledge in this issue is very limited. A majority of farmers and rural residents have never heard the terms IACS or SAPARD, and less than one in ten farmers and rural residents know what they mean.

In the case of farmers the level of knowledge about Poland’s prospective membership of the European Union does not appear to have a direct impact on attitudes to integration. In the case of the rural residents the impact appears very limited. Supporters and opponents of integration among farmers do not differ considerably as regards knowledge of the principles regulating the functioning of the European Union.

## **3. Main interest areas**

The effectiveness of the communications process depends, among other things, on whether the disseminated information is adequate for the needs identified and on the channels of communication that are used for its distribution. The rural residents are interested in many issues, both of an agricultural and a non-agricultural nature. Among the issues that are not directly related to agriculture, the survey highlighted questions relating to the general effects of integration, and the benefits and losses involved (12%), and more specifically, its impact on unemployment (8%), on the standard of living (6%), conditions and principles of integration (5%), and the cost of accession (4%).

As far as agricultural issues are concerned the interest of farmers is focused on fewer questions than the rural residents population as a whole. Their major interest is the value of potential payments to farmers and the rules for their distribution (29%). Additionally, farmers are anxious to acquire more information on the consequences of integration for agriculture and themselves (12%) and its effects on small farms (11%). Other issues listed most frequently relate to the sale of agricultural products upon accession (10%), Community standards and requirements in agriculture (9%), profitability of agricultural production (5%) and the level of production quotas after the accession (4%).

Among general issues, farmers are most interested in benefits and losses associated with integration (12%), the conditions and principles of membership (6%), the costs of integration (5%) and the standard of living after the accession to the European Union (4%).

When respondents were requested to choose the most interesting issues regarding EU integration from the presented list, it was apparent that interests vary considerably. This is also true in the case of the informational needs of the rural residents and farmers. The interests of the rural residents are focused on issues essential for the whole society, such as the cost of adaptation to Community requirements and the impact of integration on the unemployment level and living conditions. Farmers are also keen on those issues, yet the effects of integration on the countryside and agriculture, particularly the conditions governing the granting of direct payments and the potential support to rural areas, are of equal interest to them.

**Table 3**

Main interest issues of farmers and rural population  
(percentage)

What issues concerning Poland's integration with the European Union are you interested in mostly?		
Opinions:	Rural population	Farmers
Impact of the integration on the level of unemployment in Poland	53	40
What are the costs that Poland has to make in order to adjust to Community requirements?	53	56
Impact of the integration on standard of living, salaries and price level	52	40
Possibilities of Community support for rural areas	32	40
Conditions for granting direct payments	23	44
Quality standards of agricultural production required by the EU	13	21
Impact of the integration on the functioning of small farms	13	10
Ways to create farmers' associations	11	16
'Hard to say'	10	5

Source: IPA and Agro-Info data

Farmers and the rural residents in general hold the opinion that, at present, just before Poland's accession to the European Union, farmers need to know how to sell their produce and to be supplied with information on new technologies in agriculture.

#### **4. Sources of information on integration**

The most popular source of information on integration is television. In total 89% of rural residents and 90% of farmers include television programmes as one of three main sources in this respect. It is of interest that while the rural residents draw their knowledge on issues related to Poland's accession to the EU more frequently from non-agricultural broadcasts (e.g. news), farmers point with equal frequency to agricultural broadcasts and programmes intended for a broader audience.

The second source of information on integration is the press, as 52% of both rural residents and farmers indicated. Information on integration is delivered mainly by the

national press, but to a large extent also by local newspapers. In the case of farmers, magazines addressed to that particular social and professional group play a considerable role.

The radio is only slightly less popular as a source of information on integration than the television. In total 46% of rural residents and 45% of farmers indicated this medium. Mainly national broadcasters supply information on integration although, less often it is also furnished by local ones.

The remaining sources of information on issues related to the accession of Poland to the European Union are rarely used. Within these options, various kinds of meetings, lectures and training on integration are the most appreciated, particularly among farmers. Overall, 7% of rural residents and twice as many (14%) farmers consider these as major sources of information. They assign the organisation of such events mainly to local authorities, agricultural advice centres (ODR's) and agricultural chambers.

The hierarchy of the preferred sources of information on integration is different from the order of actual sources of knowledge in this area. Additionally, the needs of farmers are slightly different in this respect from the needs of the inhabitants of rural areas.

Both farmers (total of 59%) and rural population (57%) place television as the most desired source of information on the accession to the European Union. More specifically, farmers chose mainly farming programmes, whereas the rural residents prefer programmes addressed to a broader audience such as the news.

The second preferred source of information on integration among farmers (51%), and third among rural residents (36%) are various kinds of meetings on that topic. Among such events the most popular are the meetings organised by county and municipal authorities, followed by agricultural chambers and agricultural advice centres; and meetings with representatives of farmers' trade unions.

The press – mainly the national press, but relatively often also specialist farming magazines and local newspapers – are also listed as desired sources of information on integration (37% in both groups).

The potentially significant sources of information on issues related to Poland's accession to the European Union are brochures and reference books. In total 24% of the rural residents and 26% of farmers would like to use these as a source of knowledge.

A large group of respondents – in total 24% of the rural residents and 23% of farmers, select the radio. The preference is mainly national broadcasting stations and distinctively less frequently the local ones, as one of the three most desired sources of information on integration.

A comparison of actual and desired methods for communication about the integration shows that television is likely to remain one of the main channels for disseminating information on integration to the rural residents and among farmers, although its informational and educational content is likely to be supplemented with information originating from other sources.

Direct channels for disseminating of information on integration, such as various kinds of meetings, lectures and training relating to the prospective membership of Poland in the European Union, should become more frequent sources of this supplementary information. Local governments, agricultural chambers, agricultural advice centres and agricultural trade unions are likely to be more involved in the organisation of such events.

Additionally, leaflets, brochures and reference books on the issues related to integration are likely to be used to a far greater extent than they are at the moment. Following the suggestions of farmers they should be available mainly in local shops and with village administrators. Easy access to brochures and leaflets should be ensured in town and municipal offices and in post offices.

More information points on integration should be established within the counties, municipalities and communes.

The research shows that television is one of the main sources of information on integration and it is likely to remain so. In order to ensure its effectiveness, it is critical to present information of the highest quality, ensuring that it is clear, reliable and credible to the audience. However, the clarity and reliability of existing information on integration is very often considered unsatisfactory. Its credibility and reliability are particularly criticised. Only one farmer in five and one rural resident in four claim that the information is trustworthy and reliable, whereas more than a half of farmers (59%) and rural residents (53%) would question this. More than one respondent in three (37% of rural residents and 36% of farmers) perceive the presentation of information about integration on television as being clear and understandable. Every second rural resident and more than a half of farmers (52%) share the opposite opinion.

## **VI. Methodological assumptions and fieldwork**

The survey was prepared by the Institute of Public Affairs and conducted on a fieldwork basis by the Public Opinion Research Centre (CBOS) in Spring 2002. It is based on a sample of 1,043 rural inhabitants.

The survey started on 26 April and finished on 6 May. The approach was to conduct around 1,000 interviews, 70% of which were to be based on a national sample of rural residents selected randomly by address, with the remaining 30% based on a quota sample of farmers. All selected households within the address sample were provided with preliminary cards prior to the interviews.

Survey documents included the questionnaire, respondent cards, fieldwork cards, interviewer guidelines, a list of 984 addresses to be used for the rural resident survey, and 92 quota breakdowns for the exclusive survey of farmers.

### **1. Farmers (a quota sample): A definition of the examined group and a method of farm selection**

The quota survey covered only those respondents who lived in individual agricultural holdings and who were over 18 years old as of the day of interview.

For the purposes of this research, an individual agricultural holding should be understood to mean a farm with 1 hectare or more of land for agricultural use, i.e. arable land, orchards, meadows and grazing land.

A managing person running a farm (participating in running of a farm) is understood to mean, according to the guidelines, a farmer who actually conducts agricultural production, i.e. takes decisions concerning the production of the farm, although this individual is not necessarily the owner of the cultivated agricultural holding. However, we were aware of the fact that in many cases the owner of the farm was not the managing person. Such cases included situations where the farm was owned by older parents but actually cultivated by their son or daughter, or conversely, where the agricultural holding formally belonged to children or grandchildren but the actual managing persons were parents or grandparents; as well as cases where a formal owner works outside agriculture and his spouse or other relatives are engaged in farming. Therefore, we also accepted family members

of farm owners as appropriate respondents, provided that they complied with the above criteria.

In cases where the farms were leased to a family member or any other person, we recognised the leaseholder as a managing person. Provided that such persons carried out agricultural activities on the leased land. If the leaseholder also owned an agricultural holding, then the total amount of land cultivated comprised the arable land that was leased and owned.

Before the research began, the interviewers had to check the actual area of the land of agricultural use cultivated by a potential respondent. The survey excluded people who operated only on the leased land. They were occasionally accepted for the interview on condition that they were permanent residents of a particular village, conducted agricultural production on the leased land, personally participated in fieldwork and farming, and where the leased land was their main source of income.

A total of 92 villages from the whole territory of Poland were selected randomly for the quota sample. In each of these villages interviewers conducted 2-4 interviews with farmers owning/leasing land of agricultural use of the size indicated in the quota description (in 33 villages – 4 interviews, in 50 villages – 3 interviews and in 9 villages – 2 interviews). A respondent was also required to reside in a particular village on a permanent basis. However, the land of agricultural use that the respondent cultivated could also be located outside of their village of residence, for example in other villages or even communes or municipalities of the same “old” voivodeship (province) [i.e. as under the former administrative system].

Each of the 92 quota breakdowns or sets included data regarding the number of respondents to be interviewed in a particular village, with due account of the area of land of agricultural use divided into five categories:

- 1–1.99 hectares,
- 2–4.99 hectares,
- 5–9.99 hectares,
- 10–19.99 hectares,
- 20 hectares and more.

Only one person, i.e. the actual managing person, could be interviewed in any particular farm. If it turned out that not even one farmer complying with the sample criteria lived in the selected village, then the interviewers continued the search for the appropriate respondent in the closest, neighbouring village located within the same

municipality. In exceptional cases, justified by a lack of farms of the appropriate size within the whole municipality, the interviewer was authorised to conduct the survey in a different municipality of the same “old” voivodeship.

Interviewers were additionally advised to contact the appropriate municipal office prior to the interview itself, in order to determine whether the farms of the required size existed in the selected village, and if so – identify their owners. Contact was also made with the village administrator of the selected village, either by telephone or a visit in person.

## **2. Rural residents: the address sample**

The address sample covered persons of age, actually residing in the countryside. Unlike in the quota sample, this research did not require that the respondent should cultivate the land. A total of 159 municipalities were selected at random from the entire area of Poland. Then, 984 farms were selected in the same way from those municipalities. In each agricultural holding only one person – selected by means of the Kirsch method – could be interviewed.

The number of farms in the preliminary sample (N=984) was justified by the fact that our intention was to acquire around 700 interviews, whereas the recent experience of the CBOS showed that in case of address samples in rural areas, the realisation rate amounts to about 70% of the total. It was therefore we decided to expand the preliminary sample to such number.

## **3. Assumptions versus results**

The structure of the completed sample, both in its address sample and quota sample, followed the preliminary assumptions to a large extent: the address quota was conducted in 75.5% of cases (i.e. 743 interviews were carried out), whereas the quota sample in 100% (i.e. 300 interviews completed). The surplus interviews amounting to several percent was most probably due to the respondents having a greater interest in the surveyed issues than is usually observed.