

6 – Party patronage and elections

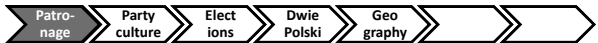
Polish Politics in a European Context

Robert Pernetta, MA

Slides are available on: www.v4ce.net

Patronage in Poland

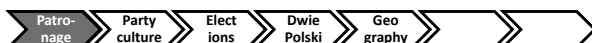
- Polish party politics is highly characterised by patronage (patron-client networks)
 - The executive has the power to nominate members
 - in ministries, foreign service
 - regional administration
 - state-owned companies and
 - quangos (quasi-autonomous governmental organisations)
- SLD and PSL** were formed from the political elite of the PRL (nomenklatura)
- party-membership was mainly a reason for political career
- during system change political networks were transformed into economic networks (privatisation, formation of NGOs, media, ...)



Why is there patronage in Poland?

Need for personnel in administration in early 1990s:

- Removal of old elite by post-Dissident parties
 - New tasks for administration and administrators
- Decision makers used their networks to fill posts (nepotism)**
- In each election the new leadership purged the old leadership and brought back its people
 - Instability of governments brought not only quick change of ministers but also their networks
- This is called in Polish TKM (English: "the winner takes it all")*



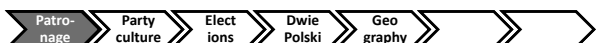
Plus and minus of Patronage

Advantages:

- Allows government parties to execute their political aims more easily
- Prevents build-up of closed bureaucratic circles without democratic legitimacy and accountability

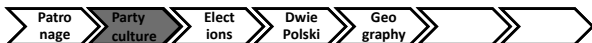
Disadvantage:

- Political careers are undertaken for rent-seeking (rent oriented political culture with low ethical culture – more prone to corruption and insider lobbying)
- Prevents the formation of a expert life-tenure civil service or foreign service
- Encourages the growth of public administration



Patronage and party system

- Polish parties are no mass parties, but organisations driven by the political elite
 - PO has 21,000 members, PiS has 18,000 members
 - SLD has 72,000 members, PSL has 60,000 members
 - Events leading to changes in the composition of the Sejm during a term:
 - Leadership conflicts in parties
 - minority government or
 - a party failing to re-enter the parliament :
- Outcome:**
- Sofa parties (splinter groups with many high ranking politicians)
 - "Plankton sejmowe" (individual parliamentarians or small groups)
 - "Crossing the floor" (changing affiliation of party)



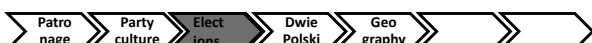
Relation between electorate and parties

- Political elite in Poland is highly closed and has low level of accountability – but responsiveness is high (leading to populist politics)
- The **"us" (people) against "them (politicians)** from the Socialist period is still very strong
- Political culture is not yet consolidated but has improved significantly**
- Despite the strong patronage the relation between electorate and party is based on identity
- Decisive for the results of elections are
- mobilisation of non-voters
 - Convincing swing voters (mainly through ideology)
- Civil society consolidation is still not fully developed**



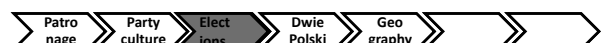
Elections 2007

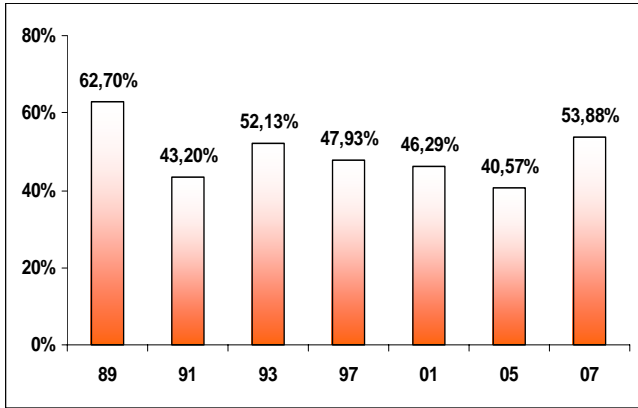
- Dominating topic was the policy style of President Lech Kaczyński and Prime Minister Jarosław Kaczyński:
- e.g. Instrumentalisation of justice and police against political enemies (esp. Anti-corruption police CBA)
 - lustration of the old nomenklatura
 - isolation of Poland in foreign policy
- PiS campaigned against the opposition based on:
- corruption,
 - pakt of Communists and their liberal allies (SLD-PO) from the Round Table talks
 - Stronger role of Poland in foreign policy (against Germany, Russia, EU but pro-US)



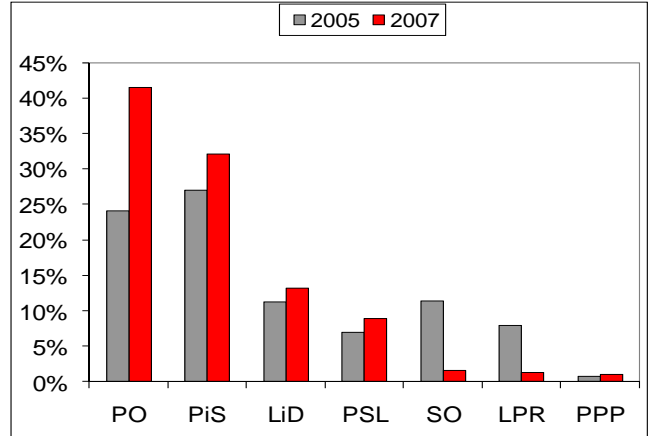
Elections 2007

- Opposition reacted with a campaign:
- Protection of democracy and rule of law
 - Liberal economic policy
 - New open foreign policy
- Opposition parties PO, PSL and SLD did not attack each other
- In the polls PO had a clear leadership, but ...
- does PSL enter the parliament?
 - Does PO get more than 50% of the seats?
 - Will PiS have more than 40% (majority to support presidential veto)



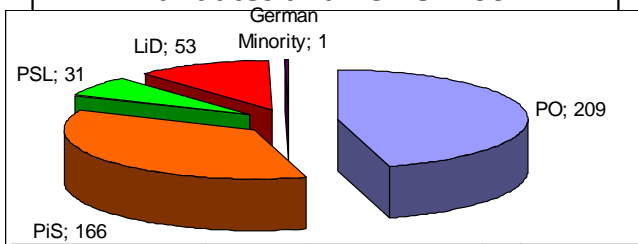


Polands voter participation from 1989-2007

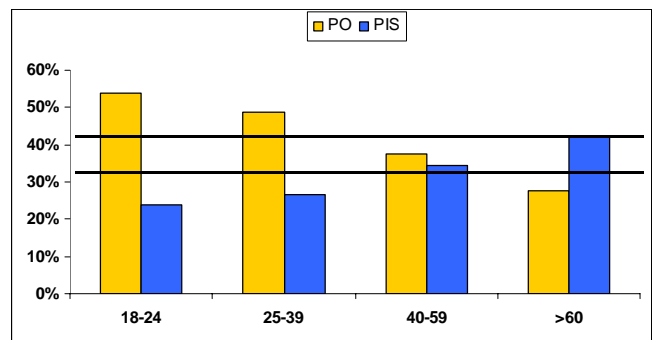


Results of Elections

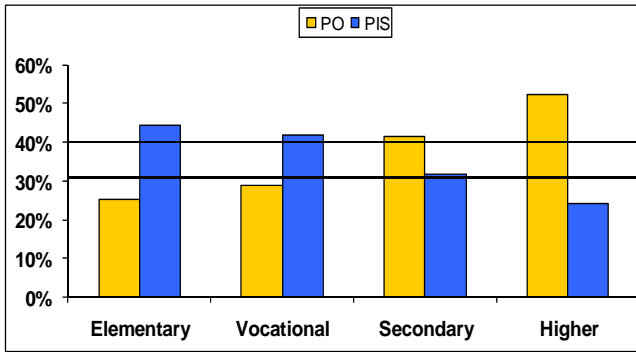
Mandates and Power 2007



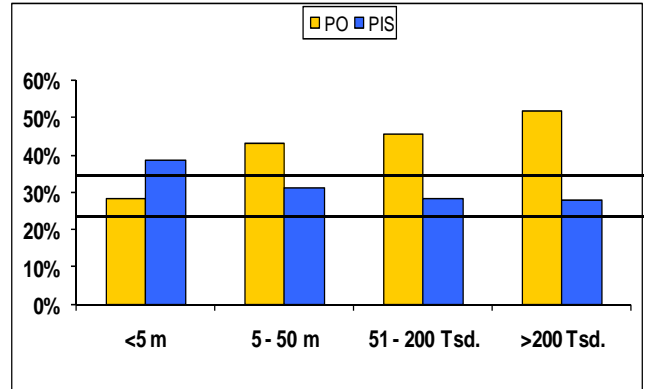
Party	Seats	Percentage of Seats
PO	209	45.4%
PiS	166	36.1%
PSL	31	6.7%
LiD	53	11.5%
German Minority	1	0.2%



Voters allocation depending on their age



Voters allocation depending on their education



Voters allocation depending on rural or urban areas

Two Polands?

PiS:

Old

Low education level

rural

Demographic factors reflect the experience of system transformation

- Losers vote for a catholic, social conservative party. Promise of a return to „good old times“ - „Polska Solidarna“
- Winners of transformation vote in favour of new changes, like EU, economic reforms - „Polska Liberalna“

This can explain why there can be a stable two party system with two „right wing“ parties

PO:

young

highly educated

Urban

Patro
nage

Party
culture

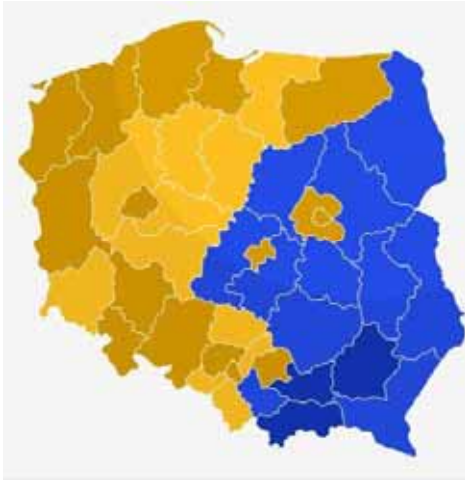
Elect
ions

Dwie
Polski

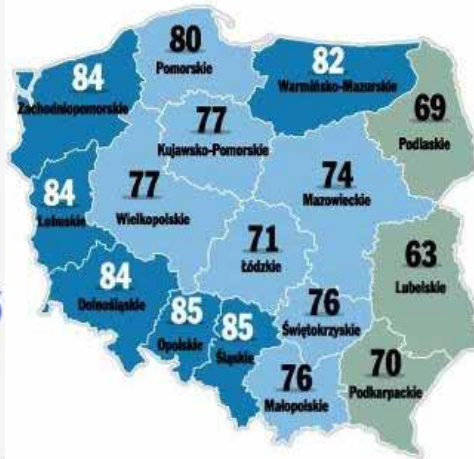
Text 1

Electoral geography

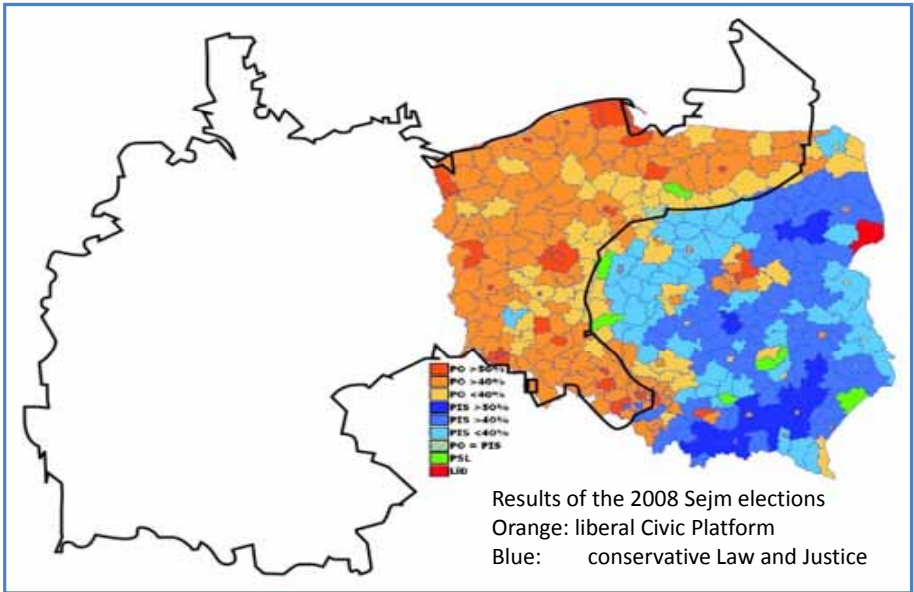
Elections to Sejm 2007



EU Referendum 2003



History matters



Electoral Geography

Rural- urban

Cities are liberal, pro-European „islands“ in a conservative, eurosceptic sea

With 50% rural population Poland is the most rural country in Europe

PSL is a good coalition partner for PO, not because of common ideology, but because they have different voters

East-West

Population in the Western (former German territories) was settled down after 1945. Population identifies mainly with the Polish state and not with the region (the same for Warmia-Mazury)

In Eastern Poland the identity is mainly with the local community, local Catholic church – their identity is more exclusive and conservative than in the West

Patronage

Party culture

Elections

Dwie Polski

Text 1

Electoral Geography

Micro-regions with special voting patterns

Hajnówka

Economic backward area in Eastern Poland with leftist voting patterns. Area with Belarusian-Orthodox majority

Bieszczady

Rural area in the very south east of the country. Region from which the Ukrainian population was deported after 1948. Polish population was settled down after 1948

Rybnic Coal Basin (ROW)

Highly industrialised region. Voting clear pro-EU but clearly pro PiS.

Region retaining its rural character, stronghold of Silesian regional identity, conservative Catholic, but strong links to Silesian minority in Czech Republic and Silesian emigration in Germany

Patronage

Party culture

Elections

Dwie Polski

Text 1

