

RETURNING TO EUROPE OR STAYING IN ONE'S HAMLET?

**Cultural Identity and Social Stratification as Factors in
the 2004 European Parliament Elections in Poland**

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Executive Summary

This paper explores both ideological and structural sources of pro- and anti-European attitudes in Poland. The data used in the analysis come from a post-election survey commissioned by the author at the CBOS polling institute after the June 2004 election to the European Parliament. The findings indicate that the position people of Poland have adopted toward the EU has been shaped by factors different than their attitudes toward the major political actors of the 1990s: politics of identity have seemingly lost ground to concerns related to one's position in social stratification. Yet the impact of this position is still relatively weak and filtered through the prism of one's personal experiences and perceptions: the best predictor of attitudes toward the EU is, by far, one's assessment of the political and economic changes in Poland since the 1989 breakthrough.

Introduction

In his monumental study of cultural, economic, and political change in 43 societies, Ronald Inglehart clusters all 43 nations in a two-dimensional space defined by the level of secularization on the one hand and the existential considerations on the other, and remarks: “Poland is an outlier (...) it does not fit into any coherent cluster” (Inglehart 1997: 93). Along with other ex-communist societies of Eastern Europe – and unlike the societies of Western Europe and North America – the people of Poland emphasize the need for a mere survival above the desire to achieve subjective well-being; what sets Poland apart from this cluster is the attachment of her people to the traditional system of authority. The author associates these traditional attitudes with the influence of Catholic traditions. Elsewhere, he and a coauthor point out that in Poland faith in God and habitual church attendance have been preserved better than in any other European society (Norris and Inglehart 2004: 131).

Research focused specifically on patterns of mass political behavior leads to similar conclusions. As documented by several authors (see Grabowska 1993, Grabowska and Szawiel 2001, Jasiewicz 2003, Kitschelt et al. 1999, Szawiel 1999, Szczerbiak 1999, Tworzecki 1996 and 2003, Wade, Lavelle, and Groth, 1995), throughout the 1990s the best predictor of voting behavior in Poland was not one’s economic situation or social position, but one’s religiosity (understood here as the intensity of one’s religious beliefs and practices). This phenomenon contradicts both conventional wisdom and theoretical predictions (Evans and Whitefield 1993, Kitschelt 1992 and 1995, Mateju, Rehakova, and Evans 1999), according to which mass political behavior in post-communist nations would be driven mostly by economic factors. Societies undergoing a rapid social and economic change, the argument goes, bifurcate into the winners

and the losers, the haves and the have-nots, causing massive feelings of relative deprivation, which in turn are expected to breed “pocketbook” voting.

Yet, while such processes have indeed taken place in Poland as much as in any other post-communist country, they did not generate – at least not until the beginning of the new millennium – well-defined political cleavages based on economic class or social status. Instead, the dominant cleavage has usually been articulated as a choice between secular and confessional conceptions of social order, between civic and ethnocentric visions of the Nation, and between appeasement or condemnation of the Communist past and its residues. Voters’ support for either of the two major political camps, Electoral Action Solidarity (AWS) and the post-communist Democratic Left Alliance (SLD) was, throughout the 1990s, unrelated to voters’ policy preferences regarding economic and social issues (unemployment, taxes, privatization, etc.). Instead, it was determined by voters’ values, or their general cultural identity, of which the best available indicator was one’s religiosity. Economic considerations seemed to play some role only in the case of support for less popular parties, such as the Polish Peasant Party (PSL) or the Freedom Union (UW).

Yet, as Poland entered a period of economic disturbances in the late 1990s (high unemployment, slowdown in the economic growth, crisis of public finances, etc.), considerations stemming from economic and social policy failures have begun to override those general political identities as the actual motivations of voting behavior. This tendency, almost completely absent in all elections of the 1990 and hardly visible during the 2000 presidential race (which could have been due to the very nature of presidential elections in a system where president is in fact not accountable for the state of the economy), has surfaced as a significant factor during the September 2001 general election (for details see Jasiewicz 2003). Its major

manifestation was evident in the support given to the Self-Defence by those who perceive themselves as the losers in the economic and political transition.

There are also other parties that may be associated with specific classes or quasi-classes: the Polish Peasant Party represents farmers (although it should be noted that it lost election in rural areas to both SLD/UP and Self-Defence), the Civic Platform speaks for the emergent middle class (or urban professionals, to be more precise), while the Freedom Union, despite its elimination from the Sejm, has not ceased to be the voice of Polish traditional intelligentsia. Still, support for the most powerful, at the time of the 2001 election, actor on Polish political scene, the post-communist Democratic Left Alliance, has been better defined in identity (religiosity) terms than in socio-economic ones. The same has been true about several post-Solidarity parties: the Electoral Action Solidarity of the Right, Law and Justice, League of Polish Families, and, to a lesser extent, the Civic Platform.

Another impulse to change has been brought by the June 7-8, 2003 national referendum on the accession of Poland to the European Union. Analyses of pre- and post-referendum survey data (Jasiewicz 2004) suggest that pro-European attitudes have been negatively correlated with age, and positively correlated with social status (education, income), place of residence (urban), and employment outside of the agriculture. Euro-enthusiasts have dominated almost completely among well-educated young urban professionals, but remained a minority among poorly educated, older peasants. Also, in the northern and western provinces of Poland, support for the EU accession was, on the average, higher than in the central, eastern, and southern provinces. While there has been a positive correlation between religiosity and Euro-skepticism, it has never been as strong as correlations with structural factors. It is fair to say that among Euro-skeptics one could find mostly people who already perceive themselves as losers in the transition away

from Communism and who feel vulnerable to the challenges, which Poland's entry to the Union might pose for them, their families, and their communities.

The June 2004 Elections to the European Parliament

The issue of Poland's place in the EU is certain to play a most significant role in Polish politics for the years to come. On June 13, 2004 Poles for the first time in history elected their representatives to the European Parliament. Yet the excitement associated with the 2003 EU accession referendum, still evident during the May 1, 2004 accession celebrations, evidently subsided before the election. The pre-election campaign was rather lukewarm; on the election day a mere 20.9% of eligible voters went to the polls. Of the twenty-five nations that elected their MEPs that week, only one (Slovakia) recorded a lower turnout. Still, the election turned out to be a major test before the parliamentary and presidential elections of 2005.

The election was contested by eight major political actors (parties or coalitions). They were:

- Civic Platform (PO), a center-right party established by the dissenters from the AWS and UW in 2001, led by Donald Tusk and Jan Maria Rokita, both representing the youngest generation of Solidarity veterans;
- League of Polish Families (LPR), an organization of Polish fundamentalist Catholics, whose emergence in 2001 was inspired by Father Tadeusz Rydzyk of *Radio Maryja*;
- Law and Justice (PiS), a right-wing post-Solidarity party, also created before the 2001 general election and led by the Kaczyński twin brothers, Lech and Jarosław;
- Self-Defense of the Republic of Poland (SRP), a radical populist organization evolving around its charismatic (and demagogic) leader, Andrzej Lepper;
- Democratic Left Alliance (SLD) and Labor Union (UP), the ruling post-communist coalition;
- Freedom Union (UW), the party of Polish intelligentsia, led by former Solidarity leaders and advisors;

- Polish Peasant Party (PSL), a successor to a former Communist satellite group;
- Polish Social Democracy (SdPI), a group of recent (2004) dissenters from the SLD, led by the former Sejm Marshal, Marek Borowski.

When the polls closed, the PO emerged as a clear winner, followed by the LPR, PiS, Self-Defence, the SLD/UP coalition, UW, PSL, and SdPI (for details see Table 1). The poor showing of the ruling coalition was hardly surprising, as it was foreshadowed in public opinion polls. Better than pre-election predictions was the actual support for the League of Polish

Table 1. Elections to the European Parliament

Date of election:	June 13, 2004
Number of seats:	54
Electorate:	29,986,109
Total votes cast:	6,258,550 (20.87%)
Valid votes cast:	6,091,531 (97.33%)

Party	Votes		Seats	
	N	%	N	%
<i>Platforma Obywatelska</i> – Civic Platform (PO)	1,467,775	24.10	15	27.78
<i>Liga Polskich Rodzin</i> – The League of Polish Families (LPR)	969,689	15.92	10	18.52
<i>Prawo i Sprawiedliwość</i> – Law and Justice (PiS)	771,858	12.67	7	12.96
<i>Samoobrona Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej</i> – Self-Defence of the Republic of Poland (SRP)	656,782	10.78	6	11.11
<i>Sojusz Lewicy Demokratycznej</i> – Democratic Left Alliance (SLD) and <i>Unia Pracy</i> – Labor Union (UP) coalition	569,311	9.35	5	9.26
<i>Unia Wolności</i> – Freedom Union (UW)	446,549	7.33	4	7.41
<i>Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe</i> – Polish Peasant Party (PSL)	486,340	6.34	4	7.41
<i>Socjaldemokracja Polska</i> – Polish Social Democracy (SdPI)	324,707	5.33	3	5.56
Others	498,520	8.18	0	0.00

Families and the Freedom Union. Both parties apparently profited from a low turnout, as their respective core constituencies (LPR: older dwellers of small and medium-size town; UW: well-educated urban intelligentsia) tend to be more disciplined and more likely to mobilize for an election than the average voter.

All in all, the EP election outcome was indicative of the following developments in the Polish political arena in 2004:

- the rapid decline in popularity of the ruling SLD/UP coalition;
- the growth of the moderate, strongly pro-EU center (Civic Platform and the Freedom Union);
- the consolidation of the Euro-skeptic extremes: the right (LPR) and the left (Self-Defense).

This paper explores both ideological and structural sources of pro- and anti-European attitudes in Poland. The data used in the analysis come from a post-election survey commissioned by the author at the CBOS polling institute and financed from a grant awarded by the National Council for Eurasian and East European Research. The survey was conducted from June 18 to June 21, 2004, on a sample of 960 individuals representative for all registered voters.

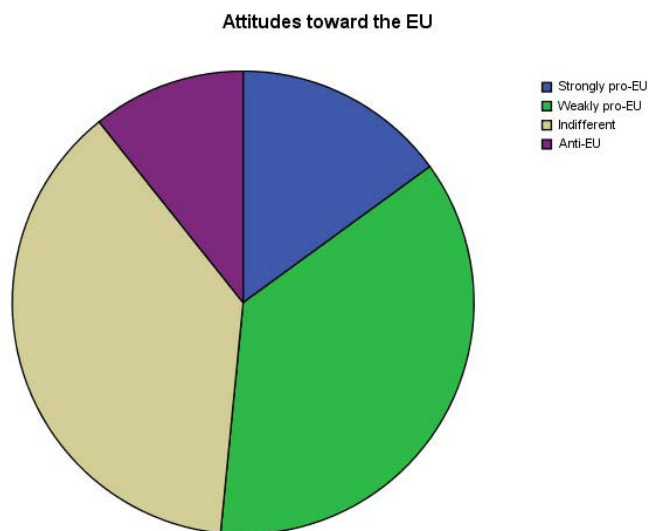
Voting behavior in the 2004 EP elections

The most obvious way to analyze outcome of any elections is to find out who and why voted for specific parties or candidates. Yet in this case such analysis is practically impossible. Due to the very low turnout in the election (20.9%), a relatively high number of parties contesting the election (eight parties divided among themselves the fifty-four contested seats), and a relatively small size of the representative sample (960 cases), each party's actual constituency is represented in our data set by a handful of individuals only (from nineteen for the

PSL to 68 for the PO), which eliminates the possibility of a statistically sound cross-sectional analysis. Instead, we will compare here four groups of voters, defined as follows:

- **Strongly pro-EU:** individuals who in 2003 voted in favor of Poland’s accession to the EU and in 2005 cast their vote for one of the pro-EU parties (PO, UW, PiS, SLD/UP, or SdPI): **15.0%** of the entire sample;
 - **Weakly pro-EU:** those who in 2003 voted yes in the referendum, but in 2004 did not vote for any of the pro-EU parties (stayed home or voted for a non-pro-EU party): **36.6%**;
 - **Anti-EU:** those who in 2003 voted “no” in the referendum, regardless of which party they voted for in 2004: **37.7%**;
 - **Indifferent:** the remainder of respondents, that is those who in 2003 abstained from the vote in the referendum, regardless of their behavior in the 2004 election: **10.7%**.
- The relative size of all four groups is illustrated in Graph 1:

Graph 1. Attitudes toward the EU.



We will begin with a presentation of how major demographic and social categories break down by these groups (tables 2 to 6).

Table 2. Sex * Attitudes toward the EU

% within Sex

		Attitudes toward the EU				Total
		Strongly pro-EU	Weakly pro-EU	Indifferent	Anti-EU	
Sex	male	18.2%	36.3%	36.3%	9.2%	100.0%
	female	12.2%	36.8%	39.0%	12.0%	100.0%
Total		15.0%	36.6%	37.7%	10.7%	100.0%

Table 3. Age in six groups * Attitudes toward the EU

% within Age in six groups

		Attitudes toward the EU				Total
		Strongly pro-EU	Weakly pro-EU	Indifferent	Anti-EU	
Age in six groups	29 or younger	12.0%	32.9%	41.7%	13.4%	100.0%
	30-39	11.8%	45.6%	34.6%	8.1%	100.0%
	40-49	16.3%	39.8%	35.5%	8.4%	100.0%
	50-59	21.0%	37.9%	31.3%	9.7%	100.0%
	60-69	21.1%	29.3%	33.3%	16.3%	100.0%
	70 or older	6.5%	33.9%	51.6%	8.1%	100.0%
Total		15.0%	36.6%	37.7%	10.7%	100.0%

Table 4. Place of residence * Attitudes toward the EU

% within Place of residence

		Attitudes toward the EU				Total
		Strongly pro-EU	Weakly pro-EU	Indifferent	Anti-EU	
Place of residence	village	5.8%	37.6%	42.9%	13.7%	100.0%
	town to 19 999	15.0%	39.2%	37.5%	8.3%	100.0%
	town 20 000 - 49 999	30.7%	34.7%	27.7%	6.9%	100.0%
	town 50 000 - 99 999	12.7%	35.2%	43.7%	8.5%	100.0%
	city 100 000 - 499 999	15.2%	41.1%	37.1%	6.6%	100.0%
	city 500 000 and more	38.2%	25.5%	23.5%	12.7%	100.0%
Total		15.0%	36.6%	37.7%	10.7%	100.0%

Table 5. Resident of northwestern provinces * Attitudes toward the EU

% within Resident of northwestern provinces

		Attitudes toward the EU				Total
		Strongly pro-EU	Weakly pro-EU	Indifferent	Anti-EU	
Resident of northwestern provinces	no	15.8%	33.0%	38.4%	12.8%	100.0%
	yes	13.8%	41.8%	36.7%	7.7%	100.0%
Total		15.0%	36.6%	37.7%	10.7%	100.0%

Table 6. Education * Attitudes toward the EU

% within Education

		Attitudes toward the EU				Total
		Strongly pro-EU	Weakly pro-EU	Indifferent	Anti-EU	
Education	elementary incomplete	2.3%	29.5%	59.1%	9.1%	100.0%
	elementary	5.3%	31.7%	53.4%	9.6%	100.0%
	vocational	8.6%	39.3%	42.4%	9.7%	100.0%
	secondary incomplete	13.6%	22.7%	59.1%	4.5%	100.0%
	secondary-general	21.4%	38.8%	29.6%	10.2%	100.0%
	secondary-professional	16.3%	39.5%	26.2%	18.0%	100.0%
	post-secondary professional	20.0%	56.0%	16.0%	8.0%	100.0%
	higher incomplete	27.6%	41.4%	17.2%	13.8%	100.0%
	higher	42.9%	32.4%	19.0%	5.7%	100.0%
Total		15.0%	36.6%	37.7%	10.7%	100.0%

In the case of most major demographic and social characteristics, certain stand-out categories can be found: people with college degrees and inhabitants of big cities are more strongly pro-EU than other groups; village dwellers are more strongly anti-EU; being poorly educated and/or old (over seventy) increases one's chance to fall into the "indifferent" category. With the exception of this oldest group, age is not related (contrary to commonsensical expectations) to the pro- or anti-EU stand; the same is true about sex. Similarly, there is no relationship between region of residence (the northern and western lands awarded to Poland from Germany after WWII versus the rest of the country) and the attitudes toward the EU. This

last observation may be surprising in the light of the referendum results and of the strong showing in the north-western provinces of pro-EU parties in the 2004 vote. The explanation can be found in the relatively low turnout in the North and West (turnout being one of the elements defining the four categories used in this analysis).

More linear – and more profound – relationships have been recorded in the case of socio-economic categories, the sector of employment, the status of being unemployed, and the self-declared class position (tables 7-9):

Table 7. Sector of employment * Attitudes toward the EU

% within Sector of employment

		Attitudes toward the EU				Total
		Strongly pro-EU	Weakly pro-EU	Indifferent	Anti-EU	
Sector of employment	agriculture	3.3%	29.3%	46.7%	20.7%	100.0%
	manufacturing industries/state owned	13.7%	37.7%	40.6%	8.0%	100.0%
	manufacturing industries/private sector	13.3%	46.1%	31.3%	9.4%	100.0%
	public services	20.1%	41.4%	32.0%	6.5%	100.0%
	services/private sector	24.5%	40.2%	26.5%	8.8%	100.0%
	other	29.8%	28.7%	33.0%	8.5%	100.0%
	have never worked	5.7%	28.6%	51.4%	14.3%	100.0%
Total		15.0%	36.6%	37.7%	10.7%	100.0%

Table 8. Unemployed * Attitudes toward the EU

% within Unemployed

		Attitudes toward the EU				Total
		Strongly pro-EU	Weakly pro-EU	Indifferent	Anti-EU	
Unemployed	no	16.3%	36.4%	35.7%	11.6%	100.0%
	yes	5.3%	37.7%	52.6%	4.4%	100.0%
Total		15.0%	36.6%	37.7%	10.7%	100.0%

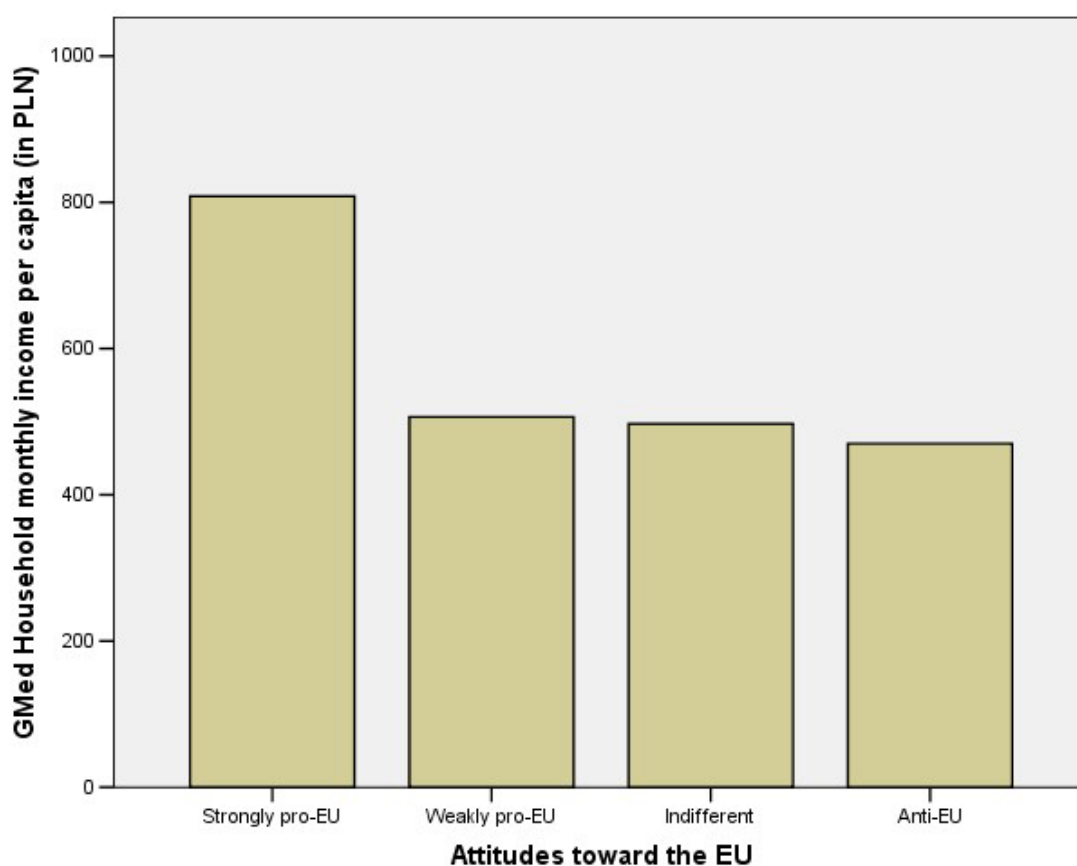
Table 9. Social class * Attitudes toward the EU

% within Social class

		Attitudes toward the EU				Total
		Strongly pro-EU	Weakly pro-EU	Indifferent	Anti-EU	
Social class	working class	7.2%	36.3%	45.3%	11.2%	100.0%
	lower middle class	14.4%	40.2%	32.6%	12.9%	100.0%
	middle class	23.5%	40.4%	26.5%	9.6%	100.0%
	upper middle class	53.5%	20.9%	18.6%	7.0%	100.0%
Total		15.6%	37.4%	36.3%	10.7%	100.0%

Here conventional wisdom is sometimes confirmed, but sometimes denied. On the one hand, as anticipated, people employed in agriculture oppose the EU more strongly than other groups. On the other, those who declared the status of unemployed seldom express strong pro-EU sentiments, as could be expected on the basis of analyses presented by Bell (1997) or Gibson and Cielecka (1995), but equally seldom voice an anti-EU position; over half of them falls into the indifferent category. The strong relationship between the self-declared class position (the table omits the *upper class* and *other* categories, as they were indicated by too few respondents) is confirmed by the data on income per capita in respondent's household: the median income for the strongly pro-EU group is 808.33 PLN, for the weakly pro-EU 506.46, for the indifferent 497.04, and for the anti-EU group 470.00; the mean for the entire sample is 533.00 PLN (see Graph 2).

Graph 2. Median household income per capita by attitudes toward the EU.



Nonetheless, the strong relationship between religiosity and attitudes toward European integration has not diminished in 2004, as illustrated by table 10:

Table 10. Attending religious services * Attitudes toward the EU Crosstabulation

% within Attending religious services

		Attitudes toward the EU				Total
		Strongly pro-EU	Weakly pro-EU	Indifferent	Anti-EU	
Attending religious services	several times a week	9.3%	26.7%	46.7%	17.3%	100.0%
	once a week	14.0%	39.4%	34.1%	12.5%	100.0%
	a few times a month	13.9%	39.9%	36.1%	10.1%	100.0%
	a few times a year	15.0%	35.0%	45.0%	5.0%	100.0%
	never	25.3%	25.3%	40.7%	8.8%	100.0%
Total		14.9%	36.4%	37.9%	10.9%	100.0%

Yet even more profound relationships can be found between the position towards the EU and the assessment of various facets of Poland's economic, social, and political reality, shown in tables 11 to 17, (which present the distribution of a given opinion within each of the above defined four groups):

Table 11. The economic situation compared to 12 months ago * Attitudes toward the EU

% within Attitudes toward the EU

		Attitudes toward the EU				Total
		Strongly pro-EU	Weakly pro-EU	Indifferent	Anti-EU	
The economic situation compared to 12 months ago	is a lot better	2.1%	1.7%	.3%		1.0%
	is a little better	36.8%	17.7%	13.8%	5.8%	17.8%
	is the same	31.3%	39.6%	32.6%	26.2%	34.3%
	is a little worse	20.1%	25.6%	32.0%	41.7%	29.0%
	is a lot worse	6.9%	13.1%	17.4%	25.2%	15.1%
	don't know	2.8%	2.3%	3.9%	1.0%	2.8%
Total		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 12. The economic situation over the next 12 months will * Attitudes toward the EU

% within Attitudes toward the EU

		Attitudes toward the EU				Total
		Strongly pro-EU	Weakly pro-EU	Indifferent	Anti-EU	
The economic situation over the next 12 months will	get a lot better	1.4%	1.1%	1.1%		1.0%
	get a little better	38.9%	32.8%	19.6%	11.7%	26.5%
	stay the same	33.3%	36.2%	35.1%	35.0%	35.2%
	get a little worse	13.2%	17.7%	24.3%	34.0%	21.3%
	get a lot worse	3.5%	2.8%	4.7%	9.7%	4.4%
	don't know	9.7%	9.4%	15.2%	9.7%	11.7%
Total		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 13. Satisfaction with Polish democracy * Attitudes toward the EU

% within Attitudes toward the EU

		Attitudes toward the EU				Total
		Strongly pro-EU	Weakly pro-EU	Indifferent	Anti-EU	
Satisfaction with Polish democracy	very satisfied	6.3%	3.4%	1.4%		2.7%
	fairly satisfied	45.8%	27.6%	18.0%	11.7%	25.0%
	not very satisfied	36.1%	39.9%	35.9%	42.7%	38.1%
	not at all satisfied	9.0%	21.1%	31.2%	35.0%	24.6%
	don't know	2.8%	8.0%	13.5%	10.7%	9.6%
Total		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 14. Satisfaction with the EU democracy * Attitudes toward the EU

% within Attitudes toward the EU

		Attitudes toward the EU				Total
		Strongly pro-EU	Weakly pro-EU	Indifferent	Anti-EU	
Satisfaction with the EU democracy	very satisfied	11.8%	5.7%	3.0%	1.9%	5.2%
	fairly satisfied	52.8%	39.3%	21.3%	16.5%	32.1%
	not very satisfied	9.0%	11.7%	11.3%	26.2%	12.7%
	not at all satisfied	3.5%	3.4%	9.4%	8.7%	6.3%
	don't know	22.9%	39.9%	55.0%	46.6%	43.8%
Total		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 15. Comparison: former regime - the current one * Attitudes toward the EU

% within Attitudes toward the EU

		Attitudes toward the EU				Total
		Strongly pro-EU	Weakly pro-EU	Indifferent	Anti-EU	
Comparison: former regime - the current one	current regime is much better	47.2%	22.2%	7.5%	3.9%	18.4%
	slightly better	30.6%	23.4%	18.2%	19.4%	22.1%
	neither better, nor worse	8.3%	18.2%	17.1%	20.4%	16.6%
	slightly worse	6.9%	10.8%	17.4%	18.4%	13.5%
	current regime is much worse	2.8%	17.4%	28.2%	27.2%	20.3%
	don't know	4.2%	8.0%	11.6%	10.7%	9.1%
Total		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 16. Is the Polish economy better or worse than before 1989 * Attitudes toward the EU

% within Attitudes toward the EU

		Attitudes toward the EU				Total
		Strongly pro-EU	Weakly pro-EU	Indifferent	Anti-EU	
Is the Polish economy better or worse than before 1989	much better than before 1989	40.3%	11.7%	6.4%	3.9%	13.1%
	slightly better	31.3%	25.6%	18.8%	11.7%	22.4%
	neither better, nor worse	6.3%	14.2%	12.2%	15.5%	12.4%
	slightly worse	10.4%	18.2%	18.2%	19.4%	17.2%
	much worse than before 1989	5.6%	21.9%	29.3%	35.9%	23.8%
	don't know	6.3%	8.3%	15.2%	13.6%	11.1%
Total		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 17. Comparison: family standard of life currently and before 1989 * Attitudes toward the EU

% within Attitudes toward the EU

		Attitudes toward the EU				Total
		Strongly pro-EU	Weakly pro-EU	Indifferent	Anti-EU	
Comparison: family standard of life currently and before 1989	currently much better than before 1989	26.4%	8.8%	5.0%	1.0%	9.2%
	slightly better	27.1%	15.7%	12.2%	3.9%	14.8%
	neither better, nor worse	19.4%	21.4%	19.1%	23.3%	20.4%
	slightly worse	18.1%	19.1%	17.4%	28.2%	19.3%
	currently much worse than before 1989	6.9%	30.8%	37.6%	37.9%	30.5%
	don't know	2.1%	4.3%	8.8%	5.8%	5.8%
Total		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

All the above tables illustrate, very clearly, the strong linear relationship between the assessment of the current situation in Poland, including the effects of transition away from communism, and the attitudes toward the EU: the better this assessment, the stronger the pro-EU stand.

Finally, it should be added that the pro-EU attitudes do not equal, in their holders' minds, with the betrayal of their loyalty to Poland or abandonment of their national identity. As table 18

illustrates, the pro-EU individuals tend to accept a dual, Polish and European identity, while those opposed to the EU – and even more so the indifferent – more often reject the latter in favor of the exclusive adherence to the former.

Table 18. Which statement best describes your feelings * Attitudes toward the EU
% within Attitudes toward the EU

		Attitudes toward the EU				Total
		Strongly pro-EU	Weakly pro-EU	Indifferent	Anti-EU	
Which statement best describes your feelings	only a Pole, not a European	14.6%	22.0%	39.8%	27.2%	28.2%
	much more a Pole than a European	25.7%	27.4%	26.2%	29.1%	26.9%
	more a Pole than a European	28.5%	28.6%	19.9%	27.2%	25.1%
	as much a Pole as a European	30.6%	20.6%	13.3%	16.5%	18.9%
	more an European than a Pole		.6%			.2%
	other answers (depends, don't know, etc.)	.7%	.9%	.8%		.7%
Total		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

The above tables present bi-variate relationships between one’s position in society or opinions and attitudes toward the EU. Yet, to evaluate correctly the relative strength of demographic, socio-economic, and attitudinal (reflecting identity) variables, one must perform multivariate analyses. Here we will use multivariate regression analysis. It allows, in short, to assess the net impact of a given independent variable on a given dependent variable, controlling for the influence of all other variables. Coefficients Beta cited in the table below measure the strength (and direction) of this impact: the higher the value of Beta, the stronger the impact (positive or negative) of a given independent variable on the dependent variable in question.

Two regression models will be presented here. The first includes variables reflecting one's demographic position (sex, age, place of residence, residence in the northwestern provinces) and socio-economic status (education, income, status of being unemployed, employment in agriculture), as well as religiosity as a proxy of one's cultural identity. The second model, in addition to all these variables, includes also assessment of the transition away from communism (a composite scale incorporating assessment of the regime change, the national economy, and of the changes in respondent household's situation). Sex, unemployment, employment in agriculture, and residence in the Northwest were utilized as dummy variables. In both models, attitudes toward the EU was the dependent variable (we took here some liberty with the rules of statistics, as this variable is of ordinal rather than interval or ratio type); the high end of the scale is defined by the strong pro-EU stand. The outcome is presented in table 19.

Table 19. Attitudes toward the EU: Multiple regression analysis

	Model 1	Model 2
Variable:	Values of beta coefficients	
sex	*	*
age	.084	.131
place of residence	*	*
northwest	*	*
education	.202	.158
income	.194	.098
unemployed	*	*
agriculture	-.116	-.111
religiosity	*	*
assessment of transition	<i>(omitted from analysis)</i>	.291
Adjusted R ² =	.125	.193

* Variable's impact not significant at the .05 significance level.

Both models are rather weak (as indicated by the values of R²), yet they help to sort out the relative role of social stratification and identity in determining attitudes toward the EU. Certain variables reflecting social status – education, income, and also age – are good predictors

of attitudes toward the EU (positive relation), as is employment in agriculture (negative relation). The positive relation between age and attitudes toward the EU is surprising, as it was neither revealed in bi-variate analyses, nor is it congruent with conventional wisdom. The explanation of this relationship lies in the nature of the dependent variable (attitudes toward the EU), which is a composite reflecting both the valence of this attitude (for or against) and its intensity (the level of commitment reflected in participation in elections and referendum). Young people tend to support the EU accession slightly more than the older generations, but also more often abstain from voting. Similar phenomenon suppresses the influence of the residence in the northwestern provinces on views on the EU: the strong support for the EU recorded there was coupled with a relatively low turnout. Other variables reflecting one's position in social stratification, unemployment and place of residence, bear no relationship to the attitudes toward the EU. The latter – one's placement on the rural-urban continuum – relates to the EU attitudes in a non-linear fashion (strong support in big cities and small towns; more skepticism in rural areas and medium-sized towns), which obscures its impact in a linear regression model.

Religiosity, which is relatively strongly associated with the attitudes toward the EU in bi-variate analysis (see table 10) has no impact on these attitudes when controlled for the influence of other variables in multi-variate regression analysis. To put it differently, it is rather one's advanced age or lack of education than the intensity of one's religious feelings that contributes to the way people perceive the EU and behave in a referendum or EP elections. This finding indicates that the position people of Poland have adopted toward the EU has been shaped by factors different than their attitudes toward the major political actors of the 1990s; politics of identity have seemingly lost grounds to concerns related to one's position in social stratification. Yet the impact of this position is still relatively weak and filtered through the prism of one's

personal experience and perceptions: the best predictor of attitudes toward the EU is, by far, one's assessment of the political and economic changes in Poland since the 1989 breakthrough.

Conclusions

The analyses presented in this paper indicate a possibility of a significant shift in patterns of voting behavior in Poland: away from a vote based on one's cultural identity (values), toward a vote based on economic interests.

A full explanation of why for over a decade after the establishment of pluralist democracy in Poland people tended to be guided in their voting preferences by their worldview (for which religiosity was used as an indicator) rather than by their economic interests (or class) seems impossible with the use of survey data alone. The lack of correlation between Poles' positions in social stratification and their political preferences dates, in fact, decades, if not centuries, back. Norman Davies, the British historian, to describe this phenomenon used the term "two nations" (Davies, p. 45). The concept may be strong, but seems justified. In the times of partitions (from the late 18th to the early 20th century), some noblemen rebelled and were sent to prison, exile, or gallows, while others launched bureaucratic, military, or political careers in Russian, Austrian, or German structures. (Sometimes, an individual would do both in his lifetime: Romuald Traugut, a colonel in Russian army, led an unsuccessful anti-Russian uprising in 1863-64.) Some Polish peasants would denounce noble insurgents to the occupiers; others would volunteer to serve in rebel forces. Similarly, in the times of the Communist Poland, some intellectuals, workers, and peasants would join the party and remain faithful to it till the bitter end, while other intellectuals, workers, and peasants would risk their professional careers and the well-being of their families by joining underground organizations, producing and distributing

samizdat, or simply refusing to sign an oath of loyalty to the regime. These choices were not only moral, but also political in their nature. Many of the 19th or 20th century “collaborators” claimed, often not without merit, that their actions bring the nation more benefits (for instance economic development) than the lofty, but doomed from the beginning deeds of the “rebels” (for an empirical analysis of this phenomenon in the 1980s see Jasiewicz 1988).

Polish politics (and, specifically, patterns of voting behavior) of the 1990s seem to have carried this “two nations” pattern into a democratic Poland. The choices of whom to vote for were defined much more by the past (pre-1989) credentials of political actors and past experiences of the voters than by the present policy issues. The former were well defined and easily understood; the latter were foggy and poorly articulated. Grabowska and Szawiel (2001) compare Poland of the 1990s to Ireland of the 1920s: as the attitudes toward the Anglo-Irish Treaty split the Irish society and polity in half across class lines, the Solidarity versus Communists conflict defined Polish politics without much relevance to the current social and economic policy issues. Hence, the relative importance of cultural issues: one’s position on the question of abortion was in the 1990 a very good predictor of voting behavior, while positions on the questions of unemployment, tax policy, privatization, or crime prevention were not.

It is perhaps a paradox that the structural variables (individual’s positions in the multidimensional social stratification) have emerged as a significant factor in determining voting behavior first in the EU accession referendum and then the EP elections. Since Euro-skepticism among the political elite was often articulated in cultural or ideological terms (European secularism versus Polish Catholicism), one could hardly expect that the economic or social issues would emerge at the time of the referendum with a strength rivaling that of religiosity. If they did emerge anyway, it may be simply due to the flow of time (let us

remember that they first appeared with some significance at the time of the 2001 general election, two years before the referendum). This may confirm the expectations of authors such as Evans and Whitefield (1993), or Fodor, Hanley, and Szelenyi (1997): the economic inequalities are growing, the new classes are emerging and fledging, their class (or group) consciousness is solidifying. The old identities still count, but people seem more than previously inclined to vote by their pocketbooks.

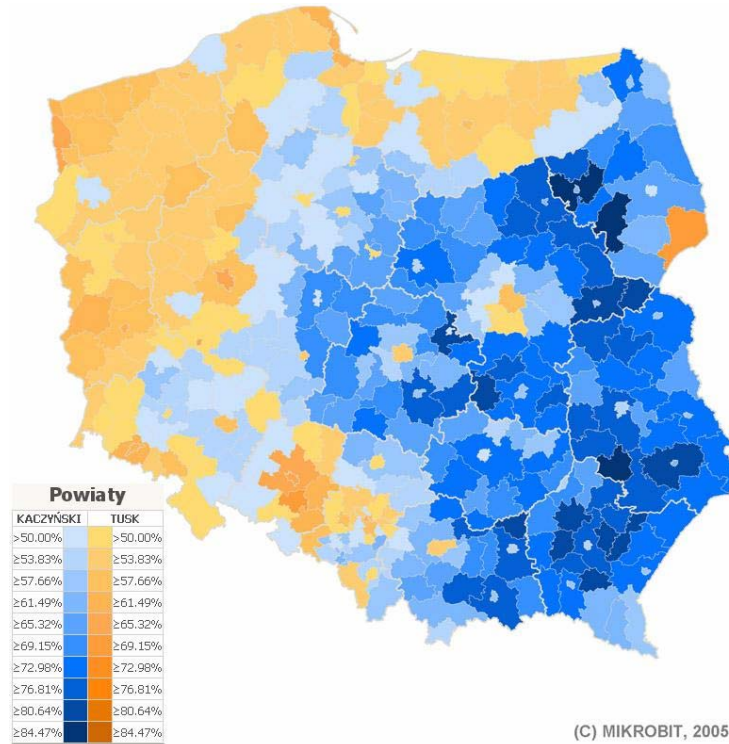
A new body of evidence on this issue has been created by the most recent set of elections. On September 25, 2005, the people of Poland elected their new parliament; in October they went to polls again, twice, to choose the new President (October 9: the first round; October 23: the runoff). The parliamentary election marked the demise of the post-communist SLD. Marred by a series of high-profile corruption scandals and ineptness of its leadership, the SLD, running in a coalition with the left-wing Labor Union (UP), collected a mere 11.3% of popular vote (far short of the 41% this same coalition won in 2001), which translated to 55 of the 460 seats in the Sejm. The election ended in a victory of two post-solidarity parties, the Law and Justice (PiS; 27.0% of votes, 155 seats) and the Civic Platform (PO; 24.1% and 133 seats). These two parties dominate also the Senate, with, respectively, 49 and 34 of the 100 seats. Three other parties surpassed the 5% threshold in the Sejm elections: the Self-Defense of the Republic of Poland (11.4%, 56 seats), the League of Polish Families (8.0%, 34 seats), and the Polish Peasant Party (7.0%, 25 seats); the remaining two seats were awarded to the representatives of ethnic German minority. No wonder that in the presidential race Lech Kaczyński of PiS and Donald Tusk of PO took a commanding lead over other candidates. After the first round Tusk emerged as the frontrunner, with 36.3% of votes against Kaczyński's 33.1%. Nevertheless, the final outcome was favorable to Kaczyński, who in the runoff collected 54.0% votes against Tusk's 46.0%.

Once this long electoral sequence was completed, the Sejm gave its vote of confidence to a PiS single-party minority government led by Prime Minister Kazimierz Marcinkiewicz.

Data from post-election surveys are not yet available for analysis at the time of this writing (December 2005), but exit polls provided an interesting, if sketchy, picture of patterns of voting behavior. Tendencies observed at the time of the European Parliament elections, in particular the increase in the relative importance of structural factors, have been clearly reflected in the patterns of support of the two leading parties and their respective candidates for President. The better educated, the younger, the affluent, the urban dwellers – in short, the likely Euro-enthusiasts – tended to vote for PO and Tusk; the less-educated, the older, the poorer, the rural dwellers – those prone to Euro-skepticism – tended to vote for PiS and Kaczyński. The latter prevailed this time, but only by the narrowest margin.

Yet the relationship between cultural identity and voting patterns has not disappear in this election. On the contrary, it revealed itself, stronger than ever, in the form of regional differences. The lands in the North and West of the country that were in the past under the German rule (either until 1945 or until 1918), where strong support for the EU was recorded in 2003 and 2004, in 2005 went, by and large, for PO and Tusk. In the former Austrian-controlled South-East (known as Galicia or Minor Poland), as well as the central and eastern provinces, formerly part of the Russian Empire, the majority of voters – with the exception of those in urban centers – leaned toward PiS and Kaczyński (see Map 1).

Map 1. Vote in the runoff of presidential elections (October 23, 2005) by *powiat* (county)



It should be noted that these local voting patterns coincide with the forms of religiosity dominant in a given region: rural areas in central, eastern, and southern Poland are the stronghold of traditional Polish Catholicism. In the East, the only rural communities leaning strongly toward PO and Tusk were the ones populated by religious minorities, Greek Catholics (Uniates) and/or Eastern Orthodox. This issue should become one of the focal points in the analysis of post-election survey data (exit polls data do not contain direct information on religiosity or denomination). The relationship between voting behavior in regions and economic development is less clear: while the East and South-East are more backward than the rest of the country (in fact, they constitute one of the poorest regions in the entire enlarged EU), there are also deeply depressed areas in the North (the Mazury region) and North-West (Pomerania),

where, due to the collapse of the communist-time state farming, unemployment and poverty are rampant. This issue also deserves attention in future analyses.

In the mid-2000s, some Poles reunite, eagerly, with Europe, after years of separation imposed on them against their will. Others seem unable to leave their own hamlet, or to let anybody inside. Yet the latter and the former live next door to each other, and will for the years to come.

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