

Political divisions in Poland

Due to the upcoming parliamentary elections, we have once again checked the views of the electorates of the parties that have the greatest chance of having their representatives elected to the Sejm on important socio-political issues. We used the voters' opinions to distinguish, using statistical analyses, the axes of political divisions in Poland. The main axis of political division and identification is determined by the attitude to a wide range of interrelated issues: worldview issues and those related to the development of European integration. The second axis is defined by statism - economic liberalism.

The first and most important axis dividing electorates can be described as the left-right division. The left-wing option includes: acceptance of the possibility of entering into formal partnerships by people of the same sex; support for deepening European integration; calling for the fastest possible abandonment of the use of coal in the energy sector; the belief that the state should not distinguish any denomination or church; a liberal position on the legal regulation of abortion; positive attitude towards accepting refugees from Africa and the Middle East, as well as acceptance of the broad competences of local government. The right-wing spectrum of views consists of: disapproval of the institutionalization of formal relationships between people of the same sex; belief in the need to maintain the

greatest possible independence in the EU; support for using coal for as long as possible; acceptance of cooperation between the state and the Catholic Church; support for a legal ban on abortion; opposition to accepting refugees from Africa and the Middle East, as well as support for broad powers of the central government.

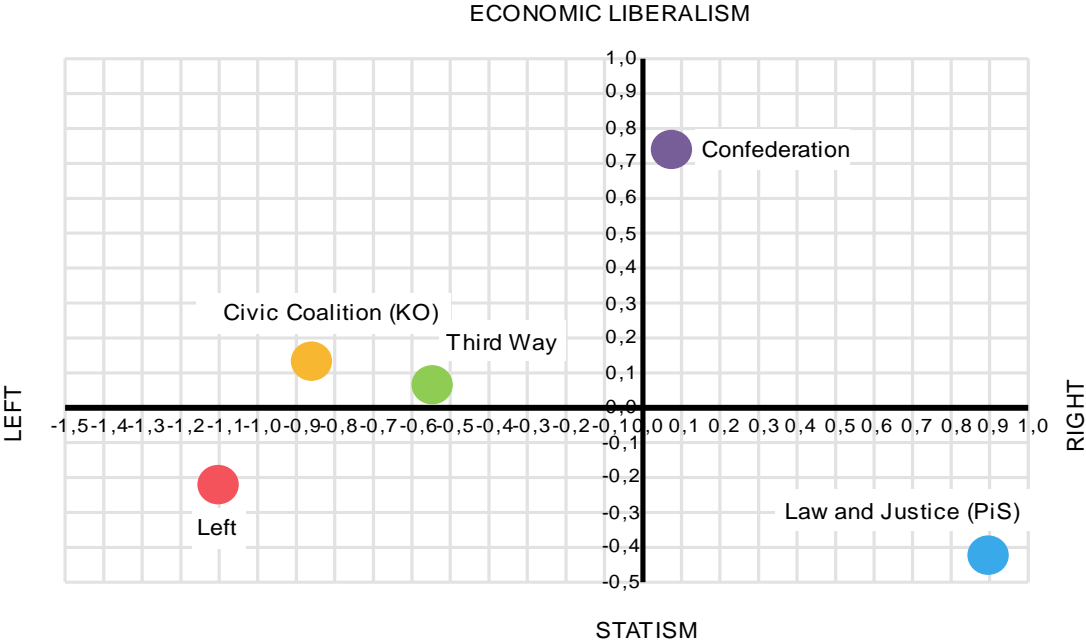
The second axis dividing the electorates illustrates voters' expectations regarding the proper socio-economic order and the role of the state. It contrasts the liberal state with the welfare state. The extremes of this axis can be described as statism and economic liberalism. The broadly understood statist orientation includes: attachment to the welfare state model, emphasis on protecting existing jobs and acceptance of a progressive tax scale. Economic liberalism is defined by scepticism towards the welfare state model, the belief that labour market flexibility is more important than job security, and support for a flat tax.

The electorates were located in the field defined by the axes of political divisions identified in the course of the analyses. The picture of political divisions obtained in this way presents the position of electorates in relation to the identified dimensions and - above all - in relation to each other. The distribution of electorates on the left-right axis vividly shows its constitutive importance for determining political identification and divisions in Poland. The position furthest from the centre, determined by the views of all voters, is occupied by the electorate of the Left on the one hand, and by the voters of Law and Justice (PiS) on the other. On the left, close to the Left's supporters, there is also the electorate of the Civic Coalition (KO), and - closer to the middle of the scale - are the supporters of the Third Way. The electorate of the Confederation occupies an interesting position within the presented reference system, as it is located only slightly to the right, almost in the centre.

The range of electorates' locations on the statism-economic liberalism axis is smaller. On the statist side are voters of Law and Justice and, closer to the middle of the scale, supporters of the Left. By far the most liberal views on the principles of socio-economic order and the role of the state are held by people declaring their willingness to vote for the Confederation in the elections. The views of supporters of the Civic Coalition and the Third Way on the proper shape of the socio-economic order are similar and place them on the side indicating a liberal orientation, although close to the centre. Still, considering their values

on the axis statism–economic liberalism, it can be said that the potential voters of both parties are quite close to supporters of the Left.

Electorates on the axes of political divisions



More information about this topic can be found in CBOS report in Polish: “Opinions of the Political Parties’ Electorates”, August 2023. Fieldwork for national sample: May 2023 (N=1056) and June 2023 (N=1024), mixed-mode interviews. The random samples are representative for adult population of Poland.