

THE POLISH SEJM ELECTIONS OF 2015: SPACE VARIABILITY OF THE RESULTS BASED ON SINGLE-MEMBER CONSTITUENCIES SIMULATION

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Abstract: The main assumption of this paper is to analyse the Sejm elections of 2015 results. The authors conducted a simulation study regarding the single-member constituencies in the election to the Polish Parliament, basing the research on the election results facilitated by National Electoral Commission as well as the specific data provided by Central Statistical Office. The division of Poland into 460 single-member constituencies was mapped by the authors (those maps do not include the district divisions in the cities, as the agglomerations' division is problematic). Obtained results indicate to the marginalization of the Polish political scene – plural voting would preclude the election victories of the secondary political parties and civil rights movements.

Key words: parliament election, Sejm, parliamentary election of 2015, single-member constituencies, FPTP, electoral geography, political geography

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INTRODUCTION

The main assumption of this paper is to present the spatial variability of the civil activity in the parliament elections of 2015, as well as the differences which

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would have occurred if the elections had taken place using single-member constituencies electoral system. It certainly is a topical issue. In June 2015 the Paweł Kukiz's movement, Kukiz '15, was created, and its main postulate was to include single-member constituencies in the parliamentary elections. In May 2015 Bronisław Komorowski, the President of the Republic of Poland, announced a nationwide referendum concerning the FPTP (single member constituency plurality). It was not of a binding nature, however the Polish people espoused the FPTP.

The election is a celebration of democracy, as it allows the citizens to express their opinions concerning the governing party and to extend or withdraw their support. "An election is coming. Universal peace is declared, and the foxes have a sincere interest in prolonging the lives of the poultry" – this statement by George Eliot accurately describes the nature of election. According to the rules of the plurality voting, the parliamentary candidates are obliged to conduct a political campaign throughout the whole period of their tenure. After their tenure is over, parliament members have to account for all of their campaign promises. However, in the case of proportional representation system, which is currently operating in Poland, the situation is different – a political campaign is in progress only before the election starts, with the parliament members ignoring their promises soon afterwards as they do not have to account for them in any way. Therefore, in the proportional representation system one does not vote for the man, but for the political party. Single-member constituency electoral system has its advantages and disadvantages. It aims at forming a two-party system, which eventually would lead to one-party government, as it is "more consistent and, as a consequence, its actions can be more effective and determined than those of the coalition government, because it does not spend time or money for settlements between coalition partners, who simultaneously are each other's competitors for the voters' ballots during next elections" (J. Haman, *Single-member constituency electoral system: expectations, barriers, alternative solutions*, 2004). The main political parties are constantly under the voters' control, and the minimal change of social support during the elections with two leading political parties can cause a shift of a ruling party. This electoral system enables identifying with the voters. A completely different situation is noticeable in the case of proportional representation electoral system, in which even vast changes of support do not necessarily entail the shift of the ruling coalition, for example Polish People's Party or Christian Demographic grouping in the Netherlands. In the plurality voting system the main political parties strive for support even of the most extreme nationalists, as every vote matters and has an impact on the elections' results. In single-member constituency system people support and vote for a particular candidate, whereas in the electoral system currently operating in Poland we vote for a particular candidate as well as for a party. Political parties frequently field famous people during the elections, as they function as the so-called electoral engine, gaining the political support for the whole register. In the majority of such cases random candidates gain seats in the Parliament despite little social support.

The recognition of the candidates in constituencies has a big impact on the results of elections conducted in the plurality voting system, as well as "studying the changes of reach and impact of particular political parties' field structures, which has its reflection in the survey of electoral preferences and political attitudes" (J. Wendt, *The Geography of Power*, 2001). Polish people are amenable to Catholic Church, which has always had a strong influence over the election

results. “The territorial structure of Roman Catholic church has changed, the church which has always wielded nonofficial but significant political and economic power” (J. Wendt, *The Geography of Power*, 2001). Since 2005, one can observe strong influence and support of Radio Maryja for PiS (Law and Justice party) during elections. “Catholic Church, as a sign of opposition, won the battle with real socialism, reasserted its position in the society, autonomised itself from the country, simultaneously reasserting its influence over the nation and gained support of various communities. As a result of this conflict with the totalitarian country, Catholic Church extended the reach of its influence and convicted the majority of people to believe in its social doctrine and system of values by connecting them to national values” (J. Baniak, *The prestige of institutional church in Poland and social change: sociological study*, 2002).

Various factors have an impact on the voter turnout, for instance the level of education or material standing of the people – higher educated people more eagerly take part in voting than the residents of villages (P. Krzeminski, *Electoral behaviours in parliamentary and presidential elections in Poland over the period 2005-2007 – models of spatial divisions*, 2009). People living in the villages or small towns have a constricted access to polling stations, as sometimes there are several km to the nearest one, whereas in the cities the access is better (P. Krzeminski, *Electoral behaviours in parliamentary and presidential elections in Poland over the period 2005-2007 – models of spatial divisions*, 2009). Furthermore, the weather, Catholic Church, socioeconomic situation also have an impact on the turnout.

The author of this paper took into consideration the data concerning counties (NUTS 4) provided by Central Statistical Office, as well as the website of National Electoral Committee. The data gathered in the constituencies abroad and on the ship voting was omitted, as it was impossible to adopt for the applied division into single-member constituencies in Poland.

Currently the parliament election in Poland is operated using the proportional representation system. Poland is divided into 41 districts¹, each of them choosing parliamentary deputies. In order to enter the Parliament, a political party must cross the election threshold - 5% of the total vote, with 8% for an electoral alliance². Ethnic and national minorities have been exempt from crossing the election threshold³. In the case of FTPT there is no obligation to cross any threshold – the person who gains the majority of votes in a given district, wins. This system undoubtedly has plenty of advantages as well as drawbacks, which are to be discussed in the following part of this paper. It is worth noting that the single-member constituency plurality system is used in Poland during the Senate (the upper house of the legislature) election. The study conducted after October 25 indicates that Pawel Kukiz, who demands introducing single-member constituencies in Poland, would not enter the Lower Chamber of the Parliament. The results of the study also reveal that the representatives of only three of all political parties would gain seats in the Parliament.

Figure 1 presents the division of Poland into districts in proportional representation electoral system, and figure 2 the division of Poland in the simulation of FTPT electoral system.

¹ The act issued on 5 January 2011, Electoral Code, appx. 1

² The act issued on 5 January 2011, Electoral Code

³ The act issued on 5 January 2011, Electoral Code



Figure 1. The division of Poland into 41 districts in the proportional representation electoral system

(Source: https://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Okr%C4%99gi_wyborcze_do_Sejmu_Rzeczypospolitej_Polskiej#/media/File:Sejm_RP_okr%C4%99gi.svg)

Legenda

□ Okręgi jednomandatowe

Województwa

- dolnośląskie
- kujawsko-pomorskie
- lubelskie
- lubuskie
- łódzkie
- małopolskie
- mazowieckie
- opolskie
- podkarpackie
- podlaskie
- pomorskie
- śląskie
- świętokrzyskie
- warmińsko-mazurskie
- wielkopolskie
- zachodniopomorskie

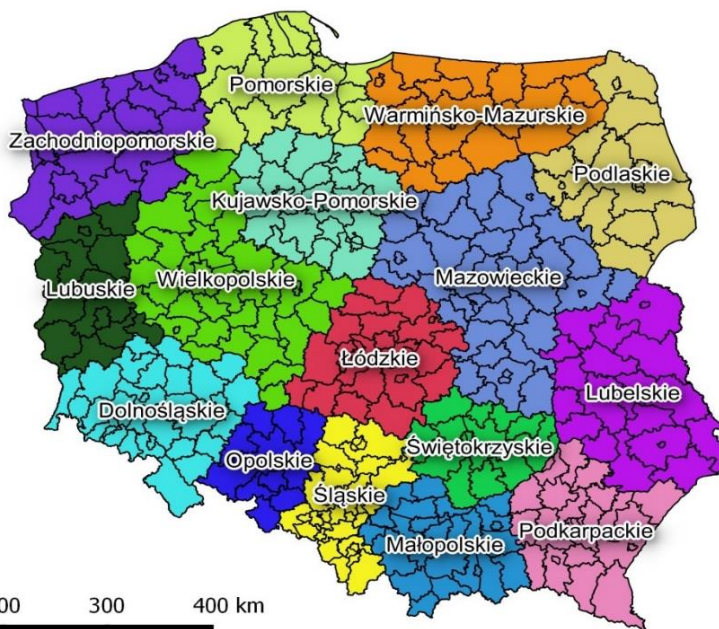


Figure 2. The division of Poland into 460 single-member constituencies in the FPTT electoral system; mapped for the paper

(Source: own elaboration based on the data provided by National Electoral Commission)

The majority of people authorized to vote in the election of the 2015 were the residents of District 19 (Warsaw) – 1,561,289, in was also the district in which the majority of parliamentary deputies were being chosen – 20. For comparison, in District 9 (Lodz) only 642 203 of all the residents were authorized to vote, with 10 parliamentary deputies. In the Northern Poland, District 25 (Gdansk, Sopot and neighbouring counties) noted 830,798 residents authorized to vote in the election taking place on 25 October 2015, and choosing 12 deputies. The smallest (taking into consideration its population) district was District 28 with the headquarters in a city with county rights, Czestochowa. Only 486,784 people were authorized to vote there.

Table 1. The amount of parliamentary mandates in Polish provinces.
(Source: own elaboration based on the data provided by National Electoral Commission)

Province	The number of mandates
Lower Silesia	36
Kuyavia-Pomerania	27
Lublin	26
Lubusz	14
Lodz	30
Malopolska	35
Mazovia	60
Opole	13
Sub-Carpathia	26
Podlasie	18
Pomerania	27
Silesia	45
Swietokrzyskie	15
Warmia-Masuria	21
Wielkopolska	43
West Pomerania	24

The map presenting the division of Poland into 460 single-member constituencies was necessary for conducting a simulation of the election of 25 October 2015 results. The data provided by Central Statistical Office was used to map the division⁴. The majority of the single-member constituencies is composed by single counties. As some of them were sparsely populated, the authors interconnected them. The main rule governing the division was to map the counties with at least one mandate. Plenty of factors were taken into account, the most prominent of them being the size of the county, its population and nature. Only 13 of all counties are to be considered as exceptions: brzezinski and skierniewicki (Lodz province), zwolenski and lipski (Mazovia province), parczewski and wlodawski (Lublin province), bieszczadzki and leski (sub-Carpathia province), sejnenski and suwalski (Podlasie province), kazimierski and pinczowski (Swietokrzyskie province), as well as goldapski and wegorzewski (Warmia-Masuria province). The counties bigger in proportion to others were divided into 2, 3, 4, 5 or more districts, with the biggest amount of mandates in Warsaw (18 districts coinciding with the capital city's quarters). The assumptive results are diametrically opposed to those of the proportional representation electoral system. As a consequence of introducing FTPT system in Poland, its political scene would be entirely dissimilar. All of the biggest cities have lost on the proportional representation system; for instance, Warsaw has only 18 deputies now, having

⁴ <http://stat.gov.pl/> (02.12.2015)

had over 20 in FTPT system. The division of such cities as Gdansk and Poznan is not included on the map, which naturally affects the results. Nevertheless, in FTPT electoral system further mandates are allocated to the cities, also to the largest political grouping in a given city. Chart 1 presents the amount of mandates in FTPT electoral system at the level of provinces.

The number of candidates being chosen is the greatest in Opole, Lubusz and Swietokrzyskie provinces, as they are characterized by the proportionally low number of people authorized to vote. The biggest amount of districts has been noted in Mazovia province, as it is the biggest province in terms of its city area and population; furthermore, Warsaw had been divided taking into consideration the following pattern: one district = one mandate. For the paper, the simplest rule was applied: the winner in the district gains a mandate.

The election of 25 October 2015 results

The election had been called by the outgoing President Bronislaw Komorowski⁵ on the date of 25 October 2015 under the Act of 17 July 2015. The election was a result of two-year political campaign, which commenced in May 2014 with the elections to the European Parliament, followed by municipal elections in November 2014 and presidential elections in May 2015. 30 534 948⁶ people were authorized to vote and 15 595 335⁷ took part in the voting. The voters had the option of casting their votes in 27 859 districts⁸, almost two times the number of districts in the elections of 2011. The success of Andrzej Duda in application of the position of the President of Poland undoubtedly had a tremendous effect on the results of the election. The exit polls after the presidential elections unanimously indicated on the victory of PiS (Law and Justice Party) - the support oscillated between 27 and 37%. PO (Civic Platform) got into the second position with 24,4% and was followed by Kukiz '15 with 23,7%. The exit polls results are presented on Chart 2.

Table 2. The results of exit polls from the presidential election

(Source: own elaboration based on the data provided by the following website:
<http://polska.newsweek.pl/wybory-parlamentarne-2015-analiza-sondazywyborczych,artykuly,364902,1.html>)

The company conducting a survey	Estimator	CBOS	Ibris	TNS	Milword Brown	Avg.
	10-11 VI	26 V - 3 VI	5-6 VI	8-9 VI	11 VI	
PiS	33	35	27	37	31	32,5
PO	19	33	23	28	20	24,4
Kukiz'15	29	15	27	23	25	23,7
Nowoczesna	3	3	9	3	7	5,2
SLD	4	4	4	2	5	3,9
PSL	4	1	4	3	3	3,1
KORWIN	2	2	4	2	4	2,8
Twoj Ruch	2	1	1	0	3	1,5

The chart clearly indicates on PO winning with Kukiz '15 only according to CBOS and TNS polls. The exit polls show that only four of the parties would gain

⁵ On 24 May Bronislaw Komorowski had lost the run for reelection to Andrzej Duda (55,5% of the votes)

⁶ Detailed information: http://parlament2015.pkw.gov.pl/349_Wyniki_Sejm/0/0

⁷ http://parlament2015.pkw.gov.pl/349_Wyniki_Sejm/0/0

⁸ http://parlament2015.pkw.gov.pl/349_Wyniki_Sejm/0/0

seats in the eighth term of the Parliament, with SLD and PSL (the parties which have always had their representatives in the Parliament) not crossing the 5% electoral threshold, similarly to KORWIN and Twoj Ruch. The polls from June for the first time included new formations of Ryszard Petru and Pawel Kukiz, which would enter the Parliament. Comparing those results with the results of the polls conducted before the presidential elections, the loss of PO is visible, as the party counted on 40% support. This collapse in support was caused by the defeat of Bronislaw Komorowski, the elections favourite. The pre-election poll conducted by the Ibris for Onet company indicates on the victory of PiS (37%), with PO (23%) placing second and Nowoczesna (12-13%) third. The remaining parties, namely Zjednoczona Lewica, Kukiz '15 and PSL would languish on the edge of crossing the threshold (5% for political parties, 8% for electoral alliances).

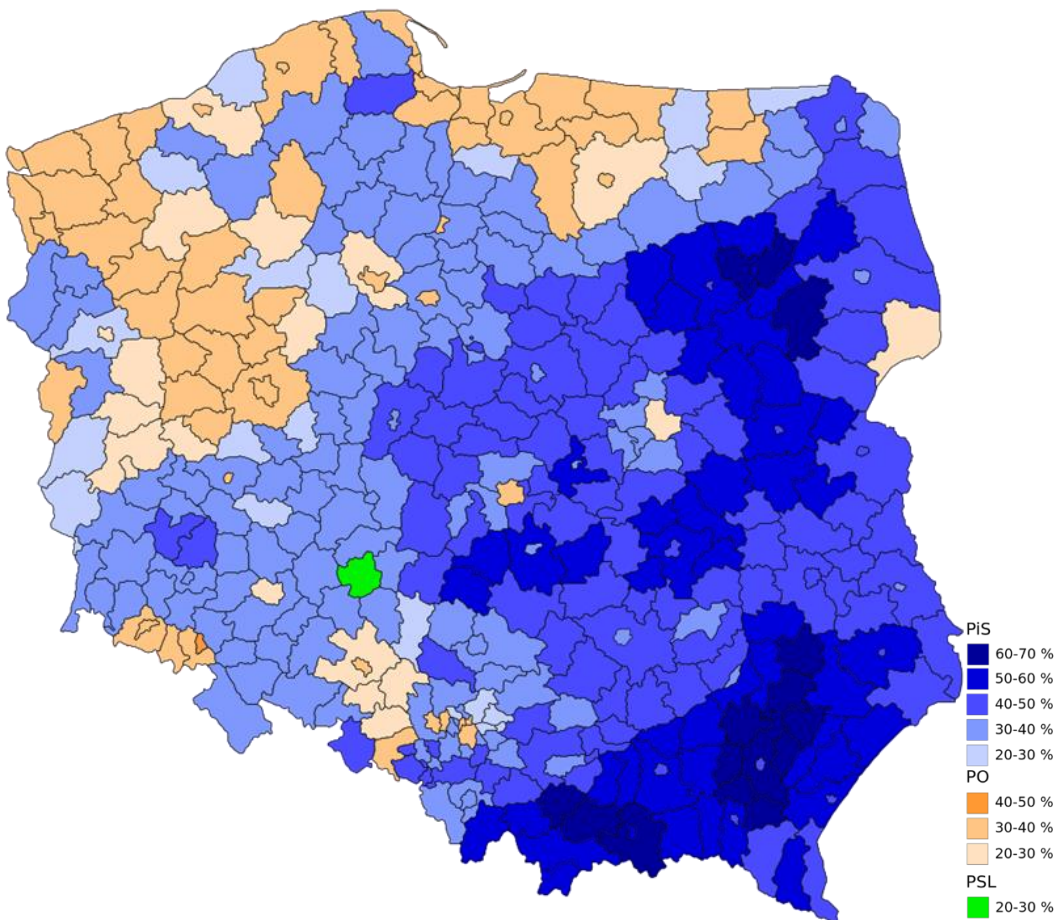


Figure 3. Spatial variability of the parliamentary elections results in Polish counties
(Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Polish_parliamentary_election,_2015)

The data provided by National Electoral Commission claim 50,92% to be the voter turnout which for the fourth time after 1989 exceeded 50%. The Republic of Poland is divided into 41 districts, noted in the Act of 5 January 2011. The highest turnout was noted in District 19 (it exceeded 71%) and the lowest one in the Elblag District (41,30%). The voter turnout in 19 of the districts exceeded 50%.

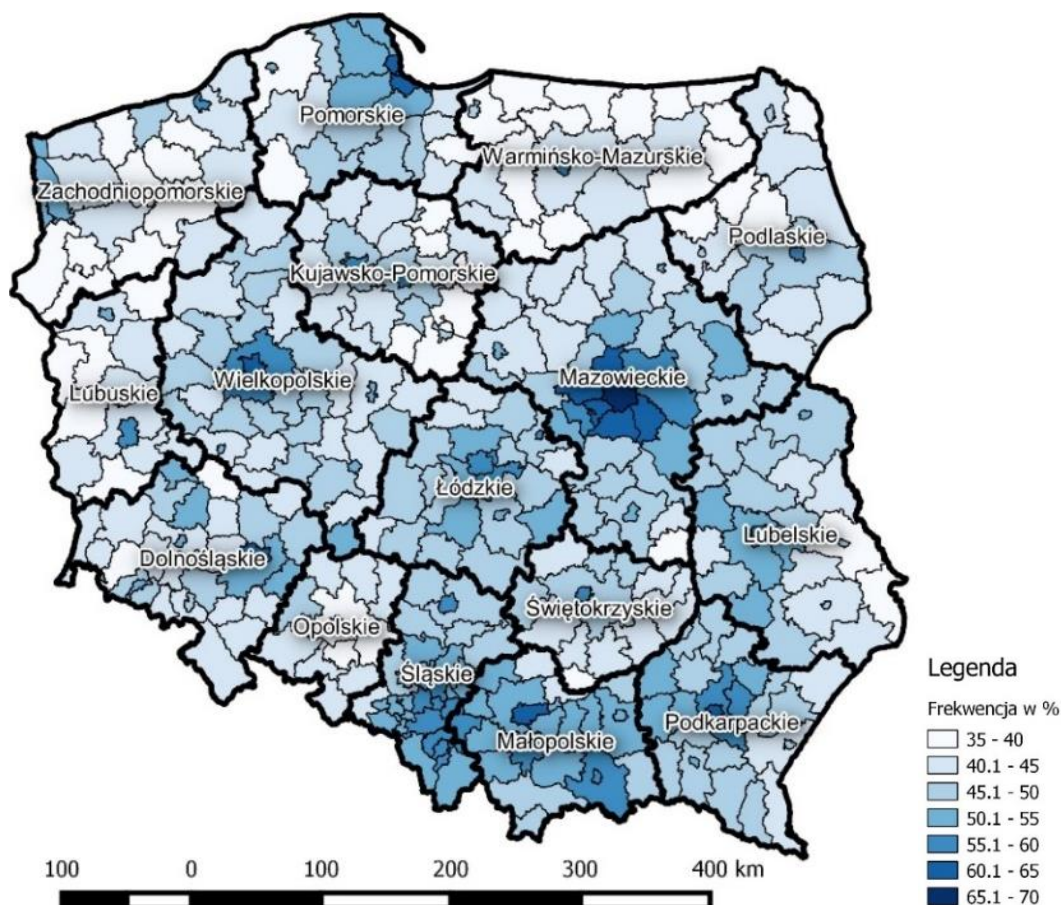


Figure 4. The voter turnout in counties during the parliamentary elections of 25 October 2015 (Source: own elaboration based on the data provided by National Electoral Commission)

The map above shows the voter turnout in all of the counties in Poland. It is highly diversified, especially in the largest Polish cities such as Warsaw, Cracow, Gdansk, Gdynia, Poznan and Wroclaw. The following part of the paper presents the turnout in specific provinces.

Lower Silesia province noted a 49.42% turnout, which was lower than the average turnout noted in the country. The highest turnout in Lower Silesia was observed in the provincial capital, Wroclaw (60.6%). In glogowskie, lubinskie, olawskie, wroclawskie counties as well as the cities with county rights: Jelenia Gora and Walbrzych, over 50% turnout was noted (higher than the average for the whole province). The turnout in Walbrzych (the city with county laws) was low – 42.26%. The lowest turnout was observed in gorowoskie county in the northern part of the province – 37.97% and in south-easterly lowieckie county – 39.72%.

Kuyavia-Pomerania province noted the turnout lower than the country's average – 46.36%. Only two of the magistrate districts noted the voter turnout higher than 50% - Torun (55.90% - the highest percentage in the whole province) and Bydgoszcz (55.55%). The other cities with county laws, Wloclawek and Grudziadz, noted 47.18% and 46.69% respectively. A turnout lower than 40% was

observed in the following counties: wloclawskie – 37.57%; grudziadzkie – 37.58%; rypinskie – 37.94%; radziejowskie – 38.27%; wabrzeskie – 38.38% and lipnowskie county – 38.53%.

In Lublin province, 49.02% of the people authorized to vote cast their ballots, with the highest turnout in Lublin (58.64%). A turnout lower than 50% was noted in the following counties: swidnickie – 51.07%; lubelskie – 51.25%; janowskie – 52.70%; pulawskie – 52.86% and in magistrate district Biala Podlaska – 53.08%. In Zamosc and Chelm almost 50% of the authorized turned up to vote – respectively 49.66% and 49.30%. The lowest turnout was noted in the southern-easterly part of the province, in chelmskie (37.91%) and hrubieszowskie (39.38%) county.

Lubusz province noted a comparatively small total number of voters who participated, as it was smaller than 45%. Two cities with the magistrate district rights, Gorzow Wielkopolski and Zielona Gora, noted the highest in the province turnout – 50.84% and 56.97% respectively. The voter turnout in the other counties did not exceed 44%. The lowest number of people cast their votes in the following counties: strzelecko-drezdeneckie – 38.83%; krosnienskie – 38.92%; sulcinskie – 39.47%; zaganskie – 39.64% and slubickie county – 39.82%.

Lodz province noted 51.63% turnout and it is one of few provinces, in which the turnout was higher than the country's average. None of the provinces noted a turnout lower than 40%. The cities with county rights: Lodz, Piotrkow Trybunalski and Skierniewice noted the turnout of 57.21%, 54% and 56.18% respectively. More than 50% of people authorized to vote cast the ballots in 8 counties of the province. The lowest number of people decided to vote in northwest part of the grounds of Lodz, leczycki county – 41%. The central part of the province noted a relatively high voter turnout.

In Malopolska province, comparatively high number of people turned up to cast their ballots – 54.90%, which constitutes almost four percentage point more than the country's average. Cracow, Nowy Sacz and Tarnow welcomed the highest number of voters (62.21%, 59.07% and 54.63% respectively). As much as 16 out of 22 counties in Malopolska province noted the turnout higher than 50%, including 13 counties with the turnout percentage higher than the country's average. Fewest people voted in proszowskie county (43.65%).

The highest voter turnout took place in Mazovia province (58.71%). As much as 70.80% of all people authorized to vote cast their ballots, even though it was not a record (NEC provides the data indicating on the parliamentary elections of 2007 to be record-breaking in this matter). The most people voted in the central part of the province, in the counties near and in Warsaw: grodziskie – 59.54%, legionowskie – 61.73%, otwockie – 60.69%, piaseczynskie – 62.19%, pruszkowskie – 63.93%, warszawskie – zachodni 61.21% and wolominski – 57.63%. The lowest turnout in Mazovia province was noted in its northern and north-western part, as well as in south-eastern part in lipskie county (38.56%). High turnout was observed in Plock (54.78%), Radom (54.87%), Ostroleka (52.15%) and Siedlce (57.23%). The Sokolowskie county in the eastern part of the province excelled in terms of the voter turnout (52.52%).

Opole province noted one of the lowest turnouts – 43.12%. Only one of the counties exceeded 50% in terms of the voter turnout, and it was higher than the country's average – Opole, the provincial capital. Analysing the voter turnouts in this province and its space variability, one can notice the especially low turnout

in the counties neighbouring with Opole: opolskiej – 39.26%, strzeleckie – 37.89% and krapkowickie – 37.02%.

The voter turnout in Sub-Carpathia province totalled 50.43%. The highest percentage of people voted in Rzeszów, which is a city with county rights – 60.52%. The other cities with county rights noted: 53.22% in Krosno, 48.92% in Przemyśl and 44.49% in Tarnobrzeg. The lowest turnout was noted in the southern part of Sub-Carpathia province, in the counties lubaczowski – 43.23%, przemyski – 43.90% and bieszczadzki county – only 40.62%.

Podlasie province noted a voter turnout of 47.10%. In the northeastern Poland, the most people decided to vote in the following counties: sejneński – 37.46%, moniecki – 38.83%, grajewski – 39.61% and kolneński – 39.85%. 56.61% of the people authorized to vote cast their polls in the provincial capital. In the county with Białystok, almost 50% of the authorized residents decided to vote. Łomża and Suwałki noted the similar turnout, 47.86% and 46.87%, respectively.

In Pomerania province, 916,859 (51.88%) people authorized to vote cast their ballots. The highest turnout was noted in Gdańsk, Gdynia and Sopot (61.21%, 62.27% and 64.40% respectively). All of the counties' cities noted the turnout higher than 50%. The lowest voter turnout was noted in sztumski county – only 35.54% of the authorized people voted.

Silesia province noted a voter turnout of 52.25%, with the highest percentage in Bielsko Biala (59.41%). 25 out of 36 counties noted a turnout higher than 50%. Every of the counties' turnouts exceeded 40%, and the lowest percentage of people voting was noted in raciborski county – 41.59%. Most of the counties noted a turnout around 50% with only Zabrze, where less than 45% of the authorized people cast their polls.

482,794 people voted in Świętokrzyskie province, which equals a 46.82% turnout. Only the provincial capital, Kielce, noted the voter turnout higher than 50% (58.44% specifically). The turnout there was 22.02 percentage points higher than the turnout noted in kazimierski county, where the percentage of the people voting was the lowest in the province. The other counties noted the turnout of 40-50% in average.

Warmia-Mazuria province noted the lowest turnout of the election, namely 42.32%. The highest turnout in the province was noted in Olsztyn (56.64%) and Elbląg (48.33%). The lowest percentage of people who voted was noted in elbląski county (36.19%) and the following counties: bartoszycki, braniewski, działdowski, elcki, goldapski, ketrzyński, lidzbarski, nidzicki, olecki, ostrodzki, piski and wegorzewski. Only one land district, nowomiejski county, noted a turnout higher than the province's average – 43.33%.

In Wielkopolska province 2,717,872 were authorized to vote, but only 2,717,872 voted, which equals a 50.16% turnout. The most people cast their ballots in Poznań – 257,689 (61.33%). All of the cities with county rights managed to exceed 50% in their turnouts: Konin – 53.64%, Kalisz – 53.98% and Leszno – 53.17%. None of the counties noted a voter turnout lower than 40%. The lowest turnout was noted in złotowski county (42.14%, only 0.18 percentage point lower than the turnout of Warmia-Mazuria province). The counties of Wielkopolska province noted a similar approximate turnout.

West-Pomerania province noted the high turnout in the counties: policki – 53.4%, Szczecin – 54.85%, Swinoujście – 50.59% and in Koszalin – 55.11%. Those counties noted a turnout higher than the province's average, which amounts only

to 45.88%. The lowest turnout was noted in the counties lobeskie – 35.04% and choszczenskie – 35.22%. As much as 8 of the province’s counties noted a turnout lower than 40%.

Table 3. The voter turnout in Poland’s 41 districts during the parliamentary election of 2011 and 2015 (Source: own elaboration based on the data provided by NEC)

District's number	District's name	Voter turnout (2011) [%]	Voter turnout (2015) [%]	The difference between 2015 and 2011 [%]
1	Legnica	45,25	46,71	1,46
2	Walbrzych	42,76	44,83	2,07
3	Wroclaw	52,49	54,08	1,59
4	Bydgoszcz	42,77	47,87	5,10
5	Torun	43,87	44,90	1,03
6	Lublin	49,31	52,01	2,70
7	Chelm	42,89	45,30	2,41
8	Zielona Gora	43,67	44,63	0,96
9	Lodz	55,54	56,74	1,20
10	Piotrkow Trybunalski	46,78	50,26	3,48
11	Sieradz	45,31	48,47	3,16
12	Cracow A	49,33	54,46	5,13
13	Cracow B	55,75	58,81	3,06
14	Nowy Sacz	48,75	52,18	3,43
15	Tarnow	47,96	51,85	3,89
16	Plock	43,32	46,22	2,90
17	Radom	46,71	49,38	2,67
18	Siedlce	47,33	50,56	3,23
19	Warsaw A	69,44	70,80	1,36
20	Warsaw B	57,88	60,00	2,12
21	Opole	40,95	43,12	2,17
22	Krosno	44,18	47,47	3,29
23	Rzeszow	48,75	52,56	3,81
24	Bialystok	46,57	47,10	0,53
25	Gdansk	52,25	52,55	0,30
26	Gdynia	51,22	51,28	0,06
27	Bielsko – Biala	53,32	56,35	3,03
28	Czestochowa	47,52	49,83	2,31
29	Gliwice	46,19	49,12	2,93
30	Rybnik	47,49	51,82	4,33
31	Katowice	51,75	53,92	2,17
32	Sosnowiec	49,73	51,41	1,68
33	Kielce	43,74	46,82	3,08
34	Elblag	41,24	41,30	0,06
35	Olsztyn	43,27	43,13	-0,14
36	Kalisz	45,27	47,27	2,00
37	Konin	45,44	46,64	1,20
38	Pila	45,74	46,07	0,33
39	Poznan	60,20	60,23	0,03
40	Koszalin	43,94	43,63	-0,31
41	Szczecin	47,69	47,27	-0,42
	POLAND	48,92	50,92	2,00

Chart 3 shows the results of the 2011 and 2015 parliamentary elections observed in 41 districts. The analysis of the data allows one to conclude that most of the districts are characterized by the increasing voter turnout, with the exceptions of districts: 35 – Olsztyn, 40 – Koszalin and 41 – Szczecin. Ewa Kopacz's political party, PO, was a winning candidate in the districts which noted the decreasing (when comparing it to the election of 2011) voter turnout. The remaining 38 districts noted an increasing turnout, which was the most visible in Cracow – 5.13%, Bydgoszcz – 5.10% and Rybnik – 4.13%. Jaroslaw Kaczynski's PiS was a winning candidate in those three districts. The lowest growth in the number of voting people was noted in Poznan (0.03%), Elblag (0.06%), Gdansk (0.30%), Pila (0.3%), Bialystok (0.53%) and in Zielona Gora (0.96%). In the election of 2015 as much as 19 of the districts noted the voter turnout higher than 50% (for comparison, only 10 districts noted such a turnout in the election of 2011). PO won in 8 of the districts, and PiS in 33 remaining ones.

After Poland had been divided into single-member constituencies, each of them was ascribed a winning party. The results on the level of provinces clearly show the division of Poland into its conservative and liberal part. Eastern regions are dominated by conservatism, with the residents being very religious, ecclesiastical. Comparing the eastern and northern people, one is able to conclude that the first ones are relatively impecunious. They count on the government's help and lead a life conforming with the laws of nature. For the comparison, western parts of Poland are inhabited mostly by the people open to modern technologies, co-operation with their neighbours and the so-called rat race. This differentiation is less visible in the case of single-member constituencies electoral system than in the proportional representation one, what can be observed clearly in West-Pomerania, Pomerania, Wielkopolskie, Lubusz and Lower Silesia provinces. The results of the study show that Polish people vote most eagerly for centre and left-wing political parties. In comparison to the elections of 2011⁹, this difference is still noticeable, however less visible than it was then, which was most likely caused by eight years of Donald Tusk and Ewa Kopacz's governing. The majority of the Polish people was in a need of a change, and consequently the boundary between the liberal and conservative Poland is now blurred. The chart below presents the Sejm elections of 2015 in single-member constituencies simulation, as they would have looked like with and without the election threshold.

Table 4. The results of the Sejm elections of 2015, counted in various ways
(Source: own elaboration based on the data provided by NEC*,
5% for political parties and 8% for electoral alliances)

The simulation assumptions	PIS	PO	Kukiz' 15	Nowoczesna	ZL	PSL	KOR-WIN	Partia Razem	MMN	Total
5% or 8% election threshold*	235	138	42	28	00	16	0	0	11	460
No election threshold	173	111	41	36	35	24	22	17	11	460
Single-member constituencies	333	126	0	0	0	1	0	0	00	460

⁹ More data available on: <http://wybory2011.pkw.gov.pl/wsw/pl/000000.html>

The biggest political parties would lose the most on the elimination of election threshold, as then they would be obliged to share their mandates with smaller parties. There is an ongoing for several years discussion on whether to cut or eliminate the threshold. The complete elimination would hamper the establishment of government, as it was in 1992, when 29 campaign committees sat in the Parliament, but almost 1/3 of them had only one representative. Nevertheless, cutting or eliminating the election threshold has its advantages as well – it reinforces the parties' cooperation and work for the common good.

PO was a winning candidate in most of the big cities of western Poland, it won the most votes in West-Pomerania, Pomerania, Lubusz and Warmia-Masuria provinces. The most votes at national level were won by PiS, which was the party's biggest success since 2001. The election of 2015 showed the diminished support for PO in every of the Polish provinces, it lost support of the counties, where PO has always been a winning party. Also the results in magistrate districts were striking, as 39 out of 66 of them supported PiS. The greatest support for PiS in history came from Warsaw¹⁰, despite the fact that it went down with PO by 0.04%. Comparing 2015 and 2011 elections, Kaczynski's party gained two more mandates, with PO losing four. PiS is a winning candidate in 10 of the single-member constituencies, with the remaining 8 voting for Ewa Kopacz's party. The detailed data noted in the capital city are presented in the chart below.

The districts with PiS as a winning party are marked by purple colours, and those with PO are coloured orange. The darker the colour, the greater support for the party. After counting the votes into single-member constituencies, there appeared cities with PiS representatives only, mainly in southeast parts of Poland (Lublin, Rzeszow, Bialystok, Kielce). PO gained only one mandate in Malopolska province's Cracow. The similar situation was observed in cities, where only Ewa Kopacz's party gained a seat: Opole, Gorzow Wielkopolski, Zielona Gora, Poznan, Szczecin, Gdansk, Bydgoszcz, Torun and Olsztyn. In the remaining province's cities two of the parties gained seats in the Parliament.

Table 5. The division of Warsaw into districts and winning parties
(Source: own elaboration based on the data provided by NEC)

Warsaw's districts	The winning party
Bemowo	PO
Bialoelka	PO
Bielany	PIS
Mokotow	PO
Ochota	PO
Praga - Poludnie	PIS
Praga - Polnoc	PIS
Rembertow	PIS
Srodmiescie	PO
Targowek	PIS
Ursus	PIS
Ursynow	PO
Wawer	PIS
Wesola	PIS
Wilanow	PO
Wlochy	PIS
Wola	PIS
Zoliborz	PO

¹⁰ Detailed data available on: http://parlament2015.pkw.gov.pl/349_Wyniki_Sejm/0/0/19/1465

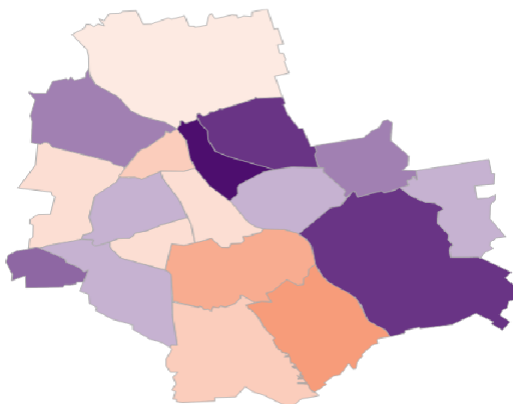


Figure 5. The division of Warsaw into single-member constituencies
(Source: http://parlament2015.pkw.gov.pl/349_Wyniki_Sejm/0/0/19/1465)

CONCLUSIONS

To sum up, single-member plurality electoral system is beneficial only to two main political parties in Poland. The remaining parties would not have their representatives in the Parliament in such a system, with the exception of PSL (a party which managed to gain one seat in Wielkopolska province). For the present, a change of electoral system is impossible, as none of the parties has yet managed to win the constitutional majority. Also the problem of regional parties, which are unable to cross 5% electoral threshold in the current electoral system, is worth noting. The simulation prepared for this paper proved the unavoidable changes of the Polish Parliament, whose policy will soon be free of small political groupings. The policymakers should consider the change of electoral system, taking into consideration the politicians and citizens' viewpoints. All of the maps used in the paper clearly show that the voters most frequently cast their ballots for two biggest political parties. In the elections of 2015 only in kepinskie county PSL was a winning candidate, whereas in the elections of 2011 there were counties with SLD as a winning candidate.

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