


Motivating Polish Voters: Political Campaign Before European Elections in Poland in 2019

Motywowanie polskich wyborców. Kampania polityczna przed wyborami do Parlamentu Europejskiego w Polsce w 2019 roku

MARIA MARCZEWSKA-RYTKO

Prof. Dr. Habil., Maria Curie-Skłodowska University

e-mail: m_marczewska@yahoo.com

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4006-0476>

Abstract: European Parliament elections are typically perceived as less significant (second-order) than parliamentary or presidential elections (first-order). The 2019 European Parliament elections in Poland saw the highest voter turnout of any election to date. In this context, it seems important to test the concept of Second-Order Election in relation to elections in Poland. This article aims to analyze the European Parliament elections in the context of the Second-Order Election concept's assumptions. The analysis included political party documents, party leaders' speeches, statistical data, press articles, and academic studies. The research found that some of the Second-Order Election concept's assumptions were confirmed, while others were disproved.

Keywords: European Parliament elections, European Union, political parties

Streszczenie: Wybory do Parlamentu Europejskiego są zwykle postrzegane jako wybory o mniejszym znaczeniu (*second-order*) w porównaniu z wyborami parlamentarnymi czy wyborami prezydenckimi (*first-order*). W wyborach do Parlamentu Europejskiego w Polsce w 2019 r. odnotowano najwyższą frekwencję spośród dotychczasowych wyborów tego typu. W tym kontekście istotne wydaje się sprawdzenie koncepcji *Second-Order Election* w odniesieniu do wyborów w Polsce. Celem artykułu jest analiza wyborów do Europarlamentu w kontekście założeń koncepcji *Second-Order Election*. Przedmiot analizy stanowiły dokumenty partii politycznych, przemówienia liderów partii, dane statystyczne, artykuły prasowe oraz opracowania naukowe. W wyniku przeprowadzonych badań ustalono, że część założeń koncepcji *Second-Order Election* znalazła potwierdzenie, część natomiast została zweryfikowana negatywnie.

Słowa kluczowe: wybory do Parlamentu Europejskiego, Unia Europejska, partie polityczne

The article contains some of the results of research financed by the National Science Centre, Poland, UMO-2023/49/B/HS5/02579.



The 2019 European Parliament elections were the fourth elections of their kind in Poland and they saw the highest voter turnout of any election to date. This article aims to analyze the election campaign before the 2019 European Parliament elections in Poland in the context of the Second-Order Election concept (Carrubba, Timpone 2005; Viola 2016). During the research process, several determinants characteristic of the Second-Order Election were verified: (1) a low turnout; (2) a focus on national rather than European issues; (3) the defeat of government parties; (4) losses by major parties; and (5) the impact of the timing of European Parliament contests within the domestic electoral cycle on the results for the ruling and big parties. The analysis primarily focused on primary sources, including political party documents, party leaders' speeches, and statistical data.

This article consists of several sections. The first part provides an introduction to the study. The second part analyzes the Polish political scene before the 2019 European Parliament Election. The third part presents the actors who participated in the European Parliament elections. The fourth section analyzes the main demands raised during the election campaign. The fifth section analyzes the results of the 2019 European Parliament elections. The final part contains conclusions based on the elements of the Second-Order Election.

1. Polish Political Scene Before the European Parliament Elections in 2019

The alignment on the Polish political scene before the elections to the European Parliament in 2019 was the outcome of the presidential and parliamentary elections in 2015, which, in the situation of opposition to the rule of the center-right Civic Platform (PO), were won by the conservative and populist Law and Justice party (PiS). In the parliamentary elections, PiS won 37.58% of the votes, thereby gaining 235 seats in the Sejm and 61 in the Senate (Państwowa Komisja Wyborcza n.d.-b). The victory of PiS in 2015 was the result of a combination of several factors: fatigue after eight years of rule by the PO-Polish People's Party (PSL) coalition; the image crisis of PO (especially as a result of the tape scandal); the effective social program of PiS; the successful exploitation of Andrzej Duda's victory in the presidential elections; the mobilization of the electorate and the fragmentation of the opposition. The following political parties won seats in the parliament: PiS, PO, Modern Party, PSL, and the political movement Kukiz'15 (Table 1).

Table 1. Results of the 2015 parliamentary election

Election date and turnout	Name of the electoral committee	Votes		Seats	
		number	%	number	%
25.10.2015 50.92%	United Right (Law and Justice+)	5,711,687	37.58	235	51.09
	Civic Platform	3,661,474	24.09	138	30.00
	Kukiz'15	1,339,094	8.81	42	9.13
	Modern Party	1,155,370	7.60	28	6.09
	Polish People's Party	779,875	5.13	16	3.48
	German Minority	27,530	0.18	1	0.22

Source: own compilation based on data from the National Electoral Commission (Państwowa Komisja Wyborcza n.d.-b).

The ruling political party in Poland since 2015 has been PiS. The party was founded in 2001 on the initiative of the Kaczyński brothers, Lech and Jarosław. It referred to the traditions of the Solidarity Movement and the Solidarity Electoral Action, from which some of the PiS activists came. It held the reins of power between 2005 and 2007, and remained in opposition from 2007 to 2015. From 2015 to 2017, Beata Szydło held the position of Prime Minister. Mateusz Morawiecki was her successor as the Prime Minister. The office of Poland's President was held twice by PiS candidates: from 2005 to 2010 by Lech Kaczyński, who died in a plane crash at Smolensk, and the incumbent President A. Duda, who has held the office of the President since 2015. Law and Justice also won a victory in the local government elections in 2018, having gained the most votes in the *sejmiki* (provincial diets) – 34.13%, district (*powiat*) councils – 30.46%, and communes (*gminy*) (Państwowa Komisja Wyborcza n.d.-b). Law and Justice combined the elements of conservative, Christian-democratic and populist ideologies. It has adopted an Euroskeptic stance *vis-à-vis* the European Union (EU). It supported Poland's EU membership, at the same time emphasizing the necessity of reforming the EU's structure towards a community of nations. Law and Justice's Eurodeputies were part of the group of European Conservatives and Reformists in the European Parliament.

The main opposition party from the 2015 election was PO. In the parliamentary elections, it was supported by 24.09% of voters, which translated into 138 seats in the Sejm and 34 in the Senate (Państwowa Komisja Wyborcza n.d.-b). The party was established in 2001 on the initiative of Andrzej Olechowski, Maciej Płażyński and Donald Tusk. From 2007 to 2015, it formed a coalition with the PSL. A Civic Platform representative

Bronisław Komorowski was elected President, having held the office between 2010 and 2015. Civic Platform Chairman D. Tusk was elected President of the European Council. The election of D. Tusk for the next term met with a negative response from the ruling PiS party, which proposed Jacek Saryusz-Wolski as a rival candidate. Poland was the only state that voted against D. Tusk's candidacy, accusing him of representing the interests of foreign countries (mainly Germany) and the EU rather than Polish interests. Civic Platform referred to the traditions of the Solidarity Movement and partly to the Electoral Action Solidarity and the Freedom Union. Civic Platform has had the largest political representation of the political parties in the European Parliament. Its Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) were affiliated with the European People's Party. From the beginning, PO was a liberal-conservative, Christian-democratic, and social democratic party (depending on the party's wing). From the beginning, it advocated pro-union attitudes. On PO's behalf, Jerzy Buzek served as the President of the European Parliament from 2009 to 2012.

Another group elected to the Sejm was the Kukiz'15 movement. The movement was founded by Paweł Kukiz, who came in third in the 2015 presidential race. Kukiz'15 represented rightist-populist attitudes, supported one-seat constituencies, and referred to solutions of direct democracy in the process of political decision-making. In the Sejm there were also representatives of the Modern party, established on Ryszard Petru's initiative in 2015. Until November 2017, the party's official name was Ryszard Petru's Modern party. After the change of authorities and the assumption of chairmanship by Katarzyna Lubnauer, the party's new name was adopted. The Modern was a centrist, liberal, and pro-EU party. In 2018 R. Petru left its ranks with his closest associates. The Polish People's Party has been present in the Polish political scene since May 1990. The party entered coalitions with the Democratic Left Alliance, Union of Labour, and PO to form coalition governments. It represented agrarian and Christian-democratic views. The Polish People's Party representatives were also members of the European People's Party.

Outside the parliament were the Democratic Left Alliance (SLD) and the extreme right and left-wing parties. Eurosceptic parties included the right-wing National Movement, the Right Wing of the Republic, and the liberal-conservative Union of Real Politics. Among the leftist parties, the Together party is worth noting. Another opposition party was the Spring Party, founded in February 2019, with Robert Biedroń as its chief leader. The party represented

anticlerical, center-left, and feminist views. The Polish Green Party was established in 2003. It had a pro-ecological program and was a member of the European Green Party.

2. Election Campaign Entities Before the 2019 European Parliament Elections

Altogether, 26 electoral committees were formed, some of which registered their candidate lists (tickets) all over the country, some registered their lists in a portion of constituencies, and 16 did not register any list (Państwowa Komisja Wyborcza 5.07.2019b). Candidates' lists were registered all over the country by the following electoral committees: (1) European Coalition PO, PSL, SLD, N, the Greens comprising PO, PSL, Democratic Left Alliance, Modern, and the Greens (moreover, female members ran on this ticket – one for each: the Union of European Democrats, the Feminist Initiative, and Polish Social Democracy); (2) Electoral Committee of PiS, on whose ticket members of the Agreement and Solidarity Poland also ran; (3) Coalition Electoral Committee The Left Together – the Together Party, Union of Labor, RSS, on whose ticket ran members of the Together Party, Union of Labor, and the Movement for Social Justice; (4) Electoral Committee Robert Biedroń's Spring (moreover, two female members of the party Now! and a female member of the Edward Gierek Movement for Economic Revival also ran on this ticket); (5) Electoral Committee of Voters Confederation KORWiN, Braun, Liroy, Nationalists (the Drivers' Party also ran on their ticket); (6) Electoral Committee of Voters Kukiz'15 (on this Committee's ticket, members of the Right Wing of the Republic, Union of Real Politics, a member of Direct Democracy, and a female member of Silesians Together).

The following electoral committees registered their lists in some constituencies: (1) Coalition Electoral Committee PoEXIT – Coalition registered in constituencies nos. 9 and 10. The committee was formed by the Congress of the New Right and the party it founded, PoEXIT; (2) Electoral Committee Unity of Nation registered in Constituency no. 5; (3) Electoral Committee The Real Europe Movement – Europa Christi, registered in Constituency no. 8; ultimately they did not take part in the election; (4) Electoral Committee of Voters Poland Fair Play Independents Gwiazdowski registered in Constituencies nos. 1, 4, 5, 8, 10, 11.

It should be emphasized that sixteen electoral committees did not register their lists: Social Alternative; Normal Country; Responsibility; the Party of Drivers; Piast – the Unity of Thought of European Nations; Jarosław Gowin's Agreement; The Right Wing of the Republic; The Movement of November 11; The People's Party "Paternal Heritage" of the Republic of Poland; The Party of Labor; The Slavic Union; The Second Republic of Poland; Confederation of Independent Poland – the Indomitable; Polish Families Together; ROP (Movement for the Rebuilding of Poland); Together for Częstochowa.

3. Demands Made During the Election Campaign

The election campaigns conducted by individual committees differed both in terms of the way of campaigning and the content presented. The official name of Electoral Committee no. 1 Confederation KORWiN Braun Liroy Nationalists was announced in February 2019. Activities aimed at forming a coalition have been carried out since December 2018. The first parties to form a coalition were KORWiN and the National Movement (Nationalists). They were then joined by Grzegorz Braun's Reveille, and by the association and subsequently the party of Piotr Liroy-Marzec, The Effective. The coalition was initially named the ProPoland Coalition. It also included the Federation for the Republic founded by a former Kukiz'15 member Marek Jakubiak; Kaja Godek; members of the Eastern Borderland circles; Association Common Sense and Academy of Patriots; and the Drivers' Party (Państwowa Komisja Wyborcza 5.07.2019a). On the anniversary of Poland's entry into the EU structures, the Confederation, assisted by the association March of Independence and All-Polish Youth, organized a Eurosceptic March of Independence under the banner "Away with the European Union" (Partyla 1.05.2019). It also took part in the protest "Stop 447" in front of the Prime Minister's Chancellery and the United States Embassy in Warsaw (*Konfederacja ramie w ramie* 11.05.2019). The protest was aimed against the American JUST Act, under which the United State Department may support the actions of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) concerning the uncompensated property of Holocaust victims without heirs.

In general, the parties that made up the Confederation represented a wide range of rightist and Eurosceptic views. They pointed out that they

were EU-skeptic to emphasize that they were critical of the EU rather than Europe and opted for the dismantling of the EU structures. Their proposals included opposition to the Euro and retention of the Polish currency, the zloty; remaining in the Schengen zone and the European Economic Area; a critical attitude towards the American JUST Act; improvement of economic relations with the Russian Federation; universal access to firearms; restoration of the death penalty; opposition to immigrants (especially from countries outside Europe); decentralization of and less bureaucracy in Poland (*Konfederacja: Wyprowadzimy Polskę z UE* 9.04.2019; Pięta 18.04.2019; *Co z dostępem do broni?* 13.04.2018; Rogacin 27.02.2019). Members of the Confederation emphasized that they were against “other states imposing their laws upon us, be it Washington, Brussels, or any other entity” (Rogacin 27.02.2019). The Confederation’s logo showed a crowned eagle inscribed in the contour of Poland.

Electoral Committee no. 2 was organized by Robert Biedroń’s Spring party. This party registered its electoral list in all constituencies. Running on its ticket were candidates associated with this party and two women activists of Now! party. Before the European Parliament elections, Spring adopted a special program for the EU. It contained the following proposals: create the European housing program that would subsidize the construction of 10 million apartments in the EU, including Poland; introduce free public land transport for all Europeans under 26 in the whole territory of the EU; the Union as a one-visa area with a uniform European passport instead of national passports from 2022; the Green Pact for Europe – an international agreement obligating all Member States to depart from coal by 2050; the European Sport and Culture Card to enable making use of sports and culture services; introduce the European Women’s Rights Charter; implement a convention on the rights of the disabled persons; create the European Free Media Fund to support the media that promote democracy and keep an eye on the authorities; secure more funds by the EU for grants for NGOs; compile a list of crucial medicines that should be equally available in all the EU countries; provide availability of medicines at prices consistent with the earnings of citizens in a given country; a complex system of Union subsidies for healthcare provision; the European Program of Fight against Cancer; complete digitalization of the patient’s case history on the European level; Poland without Smog – replace all coal stoves by the end of the current budget perspective, that is, by 2027 (Program dla Unii Europejskiej n.d.). Spring was a pro-European party.

Electoral Committee no. 3 was formed by the European Coalition and established on February 1, 2019. The motive behind it was "to create one broad candidate list in the election to the European Parliament, whose goal would be to restore the strong position of Poland in the EU" (*"Koalicja Europejska dla Polski"* 1.02.2019). The leading founders of the coalition were PO leaders, with Grzegorz Schetyna as the chief author. On February 21, 2019, the party board opted for the completion of the European Coalition project. Decisions to participate in the Coalition were made by the SLD, the Green Party, Modern Party, and PSL. The Coalition was also joined by the following parties: Now!, Democratic Party, Union of European Democrats, Social Democracy of Poland (SDPL), Freedom and Equality, Feminist Initiative (IF), and the League of Polish Families. The Coalition adopted a parity basis on their lists, which guaranteed 50% of places to women. In May, the "Poland in Europe" march was organized, attended by European Council President D. Tusk (*Ulicami Warszawy przeszedł marsz* 18.05.2019).

In their Policy Program – Declaration. The Future of Poland. Great Choice – adopted on April 4, 2019, the European Coalition put forward the following postulates: restore Poland's position in the EU; improve Poland's relations with other EU members; strengthen the single market and equal competition policy in the EU; the EU's energy and climate solidarity; establish the European Oncological Program; equal opportunities for Polish agriculture; defend Union funds for Polish regions; acquire funding for climate protection measures; observe the rules of democracy, and law and order; equal rights for women and men; enhance the EU's defense cooperation; strengthen the alliances with the United States within NATO; enhance development opportunities for young people; secure appropriate road/railroad transport and telecommunications (Koalicja Europejska 2019).

The Electoral Committee of PiS was allotted no. 4. The Law and Justice postulates were listed in the European Declaration. They contained the following principles: a Europe of values, that is, the return to the European Community values promoted by its founders; a Europe of the family, entailing the right of parents to bring up their children; European support for the Polish countryside, entailing the defense of the interest of Polish farmers; the EU's budget good for Poland, that is, negotiation of the new budget should be advantageous for Poland; the European common free market, in which Polish firms are accorded equal treatment; the safe frontiers of Europe; an energy independent Europe; the same quality of products all over Europe; a Europe of equal opportunities (abolition of double

standards in the treatment of EU members); fair climate policy in Europe, taking Polish interests into account; sustainable development as the foundation of a strong EU; opposition against illegal immigration (*PiS program wyborczy* n.d.). Moreover, PiS declared its support for small and medium enterprises; a thorough reform of public finances; introduction of tax concessions depending on the number of children in the family; retention of diversified VAT rates with a simultaneous reduction of the basic rate; maintenance of state control over strategic companies; free education; introduction of the state-guaranteed housing credit system; support for Polish families through many social programs; opposition to the speedy adoption of Euro in Poland; and regulation by law of the problem of the so-called “frankowicze” – Swiss franc borrowers. As the Opposition sought to impose the narrative about PiS striving to withdraw Poland from the EU structures, PiS stressed that Poland would remain in the structures of the EU, which should contain more common market and democratic procedures and less protectionism and inequality. The postulate of conducting a pro-American policy was also repeated (*PiS program wyborczy* n.d.).

The so-called Kaczyński Five, containing the manifesto proposals of PiS announced by Jarosław Kaczyński at the party’s convention in February 2019: PLN 500 plus for the first child: “the thirteen” – annual bonus for pensioners; income tax exemption for those employed until they have attained the age of 26 years; reduction of personal income tax for employees; restoration of suspended bus connections (Bochen 18.03.2019; Gołdyn 6.04.2019). Jarosław Kaczyński’s idea of PLN 500 plus for each cow and 100 PLN for each fattening pig produced a significant response. The Law and Justice Electoral Committee adopted the concept of reaching the inhabitants of small towns and villages, that is, direct contact with residents. Law and Justice conducted the action “Defend Your Right” (*Akcja PiS “obroń swoje prawo”* 14.05.2019). The audience was told that if they did not vote for PiS, “someone would take away from them what they consider important, e.g., the European Coalition would take away the zloty from the Poles and replace it with the Euro, and then there would be high prices in Poland; or that ‘others’ would decide to take away ‘our rights’” (Mierzyńska 2019). In early 2019, a scandal broke in connection with the Srebrna Company. One of its aspects was the doubts about the involvement of PiS Chairman J. Kaczyński and other PiS activists in the operation of the company in the context of the Act on political parties. This law prohibits political parties from engaging in business activities.

The Electoral Committee 'The Left Together' – the Together Party, Union of Labor, RSS was allotted no. 5. This coalition was formed for the European Parliament elections. The parties that made up the coalition represented socialist, social democratic, and pro-European views. The first positions on the candidates' lists were occupied by seven women and six men (*Lewica Razem* 17.04.2019). The Committee's election catchphrase was "Europe. You are at home." The most important assumptions of the policy platform promoted by Left Together included: a social Europe, European working standards, European economy of the future, a solidary and just Europe, creation of the European Housing Fund, European health provision standards, a 35-hour working week, and extended vacation (*Lewica Razem* 17.04.2019).

Number 6 was held by the Electoral Committee Kukiz'15. The Committee leader P. Kukiz emphasized: "We must not disregard the elections to the European Parliament, because these decisions are a decision whether we are striving for the Republic of Poland's sovereignty within the EU, or we are condemning ourselves to a game of appearances played by PO-PiS, which has already lasted for three terms in the European Parliament" (*Kukiz* 18.05.2019). With regard to the electoral program, he said that Kukiz'15 opted for a "Europe of equal opportunities, in which the Polish and the German farmer will receive the same subsidies [...], in which a microentrepreneur will be appreciated and have an opportunity to develop" and "regardless of whether or not we believe in God, the Christian culture is our distinguishing characteristic, our heritage, and our path" (*Kukiz* 18.05.2019).

Number 7 was allotted to the Electoral Committee of Poland Fair Play Nonpartisan Gwiazdowski. This political movement was founded by a lawyer and economist, Robert Gwiazdowski, and some independent local government representatives in March 2019. Its candidate lists were registered in only six constituencies. The main postulates, termed Gwiazdowski's Six, were: reduce taxation on work; introduce citizens' pension; one-seat constituencies in the elections to the Sejm; introduction of decentralization and deglomeration; reforming the justice system; and a strong Poland in the structures of the EU (*Polska Fair Play* n.d.). In an interview, the movement leader Professor Gwiazdowski said that "the elections to the European Parliament are a springboard we have to take off from because we started in late January. We decided to take action. In the system, in which two main parties are trying to fill it with themselves so that there is this dichotomy" (*Ciastek* 17.05.2019).

Number 8 was given to the Electoral Committee the True Europe Movement – Europa Christi, which, after having registered their electoral lists, withdrew from participating in the elections. The movement was founded in November 2018 by Eurodeputy Mirosław Piotrowski, associated with Radio Virgin Mary. The leader of the movement announced that its aim was to strengthen and extend the Polish right wing: “Our party is Catholic, Christian, and we do not want the Catholics and Christians to be treated as second- or third-class citizens. We also want to act for Polish society, to strengthen our say, and refuse to let the EU outplay us, raise electricity prices, or impact our lives in disadvantageous ways” (*Komitet Ruch Prawdziwa Europa* 18.03.2019).

The Electoral Committee PoEXIT – Coalition was assigned no. 9. The party was established in January 2019 by the President of the Congress of the New Right, Stanisław Żółtek. Its election manifesto contained Eurosceptic themes: “We are going to maintain the principle of the free movement of people (the Schengen Agreement) and goods (EEA).” It said, “we don’t have to be a member of the EU to freely travel all over Europe with just an ID” (Program – kierunek zmian n.d.).

The last number, that is, 10, was allotted to the Electoral Committee Unity of Nation, a rightist, Eurosceptic party formed in 2015 by some activists of the League of Polish Families (*Deklaracja Programowa – Jedność Narodu* n.d.). Its election program stated that the just political system created in Poland would be offered to other European nations “for the mission of our nation is to revive Christian Europe proud of its heritage, radiating its culture and rich spiritual life to other nations and continents.” The main manifesto theses included: actions taken on behalf of the national interest; motherland treated as the family of families; restoration of the Polish school; increased spending on higher education and science; implementation of an appropriate program for exploitation of Poland’s natural resources; reform of State finances and maintenance of the zloty; dissemination of ownership; agriculture based on native family farms; reform of the Polish army; provision of energy security by building a network of regional power stations; the good of the nation as the foundation for the existence of the State; governments exercising power in the interest of Poland; cooperation with the countries that take Polish interests into account in their policies.

4. Results of the 2019 European Parliament Elections

Voter turnout reached 45.68% of eligible voters, the highest compared to the three previous European Parliament elections (Obwieszczenie 2019/989; Państwowa Komisja Wyborcza czerwiec 2019; Państwowa Komisja Wyborcza n.d.-a). It is important to note that in the May 26, 2019 vote, only three electoral committees exceeded the required electoral threshold, thus obtaining seats in the European Parliament (Table 2).

Table 2. European Parliament elections 2019: Votes cast and number of seats

Electoral committee	Votes cast	Votes cast in %	Seats
United Right (Law and Justice+)	6,192,780	45.38	26
European Coalition	5,249,935	38.47	22
Robert Biedroń Spring	826,975	6.06	3

Source: own compilation based on data from the National Electoral Commission (Państwowa Komisja Wyborcza n.d.-b).

The Law and Justice electoral committee received 45.38% of the vote, securing its first victory in the European Parliament elections (Obwieszczenie 2019/989; Państwowa Komisja Wyborcza czerwiec 2019). The committee received a total of 26 seats (or 27 after Brexit is finalized). The European Coalition received 38.47% of the votes, placing second. It won 22 MEP seats. Robert Biedroń's Spring committee received 6.06% of the vote, placing it in third place. The party won three seats in the MEP. The Confederation Committee received 4.55% of the vote, placing it in fourth place and failing to reach the required electoral threshold. The Eurosceptic and anti-EU Confederation exceeded the 5% support requirement in only two constituencies. The remaining eurosceptic parties achieved even lower levels of public support. This may indicate that PiS captured the majority of voters who were skeptical of the EU.

The number of candidates participating in the election was 866, including 463 men and 403 women. Only in the committee The Left Together did the number of female candidates exceed the number of male candidates. Two electoral committees, the European Coalition and Robert Biedroń's Spring, adopted a parity basis for their lists, guaranteeing 50% of places for women. Among the leaders topping the candidates lists in individual constituencies, the proportion of women to men was as follows: The Confederation KORWiN Braun Liroy Nationalists: one woman and 12 men; Robert Biedroń's Spring party: eight women and five men; European Coalition: three women and ten

men; PiS: five women and eight men; The Left Together: seven women and six men; Kukiz'15: four women and eight men; Poland Fair Play: six men; PolEXIT: two men; and the Unity of Nation: one man.

In Poland, the attitude toward the proposals of the Greens was ambivalent, which was reflected in comparatively weak voter support. The high activity of the Greens in public spaces before the Euro-elections did not seem to translate into electoral success.

Conclusions

The research conducted allowed us to verify the assumptions characteristic of Second-Order Election in relation to the elections held in Poland in 2019. First, it turned out that the electoral committees assigned a special, high priority to the European Parliament elections, striving to achieve the best possible electoral result. Widespread pre-election mobilization translated into a high level of voter participation in the elections. In this situation, it can be concluded that the first characteristic indicator of Second-Order Election, assuming low turnout in second-order elections, such as the European Parliament elections, was not confirmed for the 2019 European elections.

Second, document analysis revealed that domestic issues played a primary role in the campaign. There were also demands regarding Poland's place in the EU and the concept of the EU. Therefore, it can be concluded that electoral committees focused primarily on domestic issues, with European issues second.

Third, a decline in support for ruling parties has not been confirmed. The Second-Order Election model assumes that voters will use this type of election to express dissatisfaction with the government. It was expected that PiS would receive a red card in the European Parliament elections. The Law and Justice, in power since 2015, achieved success, breaking the previous winning streak of pro-European and pro-integration groups.

Fourth, the assumption that large political parties in power or in opposition are losing ground to smaller parties has not been fully confirmed in Poland's case. In Poland, the relevance of several main parties, first and foremost, PiS and PO, has developed in Parliament. Other political formations have been consistently marginalized.

Fifth, the influence of the electoral cycle on the results of European Parliament elections was confirmed. The 2019 European Parliament election

campaign was part of the electoral cycle in Poland: parliamentary elections took place in the fall of 2019, and presidential elections were scheduled for 2020. The 2019 European Parliament were characterized by sharp competition between PiS and anti-PiS blocs. They were treated like plebiscites before the parliamentary and presidential elections.

References

- Akcja PiS "obroni swoje prawo" przed wyborami do Parlamentu Europejskiego* [PiS Campaign "Defend Your Rights" Ahead of the European Parliament Elections] (14.05.2019), <https://www.tvp.info/42604798/akcja-pis-obron-swoje-prawo-przed-wyborami-do-parlamentu-europejskiego> (6.06.2019).
- Bochen, D. (18.03.2019), *"Piątka Kaczyńskiego": Jakie propozycje znalazły się w obietnicach PiS i kiedy zostaną wprowadzone?* ["Kaczyński's Five": What Proposals Are Included in the Law and Justice Party's Promises, and When Will They Be Implemented?], <https://www.money.pl/gospodarka/piatka-kaczynskiego-jakie-propozycje-znalazly-sie-w-obietnicach-pis-i-kiedy-zostana-wprowadzone-6360749894059649a.html> (7.06.2019).
- Carrubba, C., R.J. Timpone (2005), *Explaining Vote Switching Across First- and Second-Order Elections: Evidence from Europe*, "Comparative Political Studies" 38(3): 260–281. DOI:10.1177/0010414004272693.
- Ciastek, P. (17.05.2019), *Gościem Dnia DZ w Radiu Piekary był Robert Gwiazdowski lider ugrupowania Polska Fair Play* [Robert Gwiazdowski, Leader of the Poland Fair Play Group, Was the Guest of the Day on Radio Piekary], <https://dziennikzachodni.pl/gosciem-dnia-dz-w-radiu-piekary-by-l-robert-gwiazdowski-lider-ugrupowania-polska-fair-play/ar/c1-14138271> (8.06.2019).
- Co z dostępem do broni? Grzegorz Braun o obowiązującej doktrynie powszechnego rozbrojenia* [What About Access to Weapons? Grzegorz Braun on the Current Doctrine of Universal Disarmament] (13.04.2018), <https://www.pch24.pl/co-z-dostepem-do-broni--grzegorz-braun-o-obowiazujacej-doktrynie-powszechnego-rozbrojenia,59569,i.html> (7.06.2019).
- Deklaracja Programowa - Jedność Narodu [Programme Declaration - Unity of the Nation] (n.d.), <https://jednoscnarodu.org.pl/o-nas/> (6.06.2019).
- Gołdyn, D. (6.04.2019), *Kaczyński przebija wszystkich: 500 plus na każdą krowę i 100 zł na tucznika* [Kaczyński Beats Everyone: 500 Plus for Every Cow and PLN 100 for Every Pig], <https://wiadomosci.radiozet.pl/Polska/Jaroslaw-Kaczynski-500-plus-na-kazda-krowe-i-100-zl-na-tucznika> (6.06.2019).

- Koalicja Europejska (2019), *Deklaracja. Przyszłość Polski. Wielki wybór* [Declaration: The Future of Poland – The Great Choice], <https://koalicjaeuropejska.pl/deklaracja> (8.06.2019).
- “Koalicja Europejska dla Polski”: *Apel byłych premierów i szefów dyplomacji* [“European Coalition for Poland”: Appeal by Former Prime Ministers and Foreign Minister] (1.02.2019), <https://www.tvn24.pl/apel-bylych-premierow-koalicja-europejska-dla-polski,905696,s.html> (6.06.2019).
- Komitet Ruch Prawdziwa Europa – Europa Christi ogłosił start w wyborach do PE [Real Europe Movement – Europa Christi Committee Has Announced Its Participation in the EP Elections] (18.03.2019), <http://www.radiomaryja.pl/informacje/komitet-ruch-prawdziwa-europa-europa-christi-oglosil-start-w-wyborach-do-pe/> (7.06.2019).
- Konfederacja: *Wyprowadzimy Polskę z UE, pozostając w strefie Schengen i EOG* [Confederation: We Will Take Poland Out of the EU While Remaining in the Schengen Area and the EEA] (9.04.2019), <https://medianarodowe.com/polexit-pozostajac-strefie-schengen/> (4.06.2019).
- Konfederacja ramię w ramię z AGROUnią: *Protest przed KPRM przeciwko ustawie 447* [Confederation Stands Shoulder to Shoulder with AGROUnia: Protest in Front of the Chancellery of the Prime Minister Against Bill 447] (11.05.2019), <https://wpolityce.pl/polityka/446158-marsz-przeciwko-ustawie-447-konfederacje-wspiera-agrounia> (6.06.2019).
- Kukiz: *te wybory to decyzja czy dążymy do suwerenności* [Kukiz: These Elections Are a Decision on Whether We Strive for Sovereignty] (18.05.2019), <https://www.tvn24.pl/wybory-do-europarlamentu-2019/wybory-do-parlamentu-europejskiego-pawel-kukiz-w-kozielowach,936792.html> (8.06.2019).
- Lewica Razem ogłosiła hasło i program z jakim startuje w wyborach [The Left Together Party Has Announced Its Slogan and Programme for the Elections] (17.04.2019), <https://www.wnp.pl/parlamentarny/spoleczenstwo/lewica-razem-oglosila-haslo-i-program-z-jakim-startuje-w-wyborach-do-pe,38636.html> (7.06.2019).
- Mierzyńska, A. (2019), *Obalamy mity: W sieci to Koalicja miała program, PiS tylko straszył, a Konfederację uwielbiali fejkowi użytkownicy* (Debunking Myths: Online, It Was the Coalition That Had a Programme, PiS Only Made Threats, and the Confederation Was Adored by Fake Users), <https://oko.press/tag/wybory-do-parlamentu-europejskiego-2019/> (7.06.2019).
- Obwieszczenie (2019/989) Państwowej Komisji Wyborczej z dnia 27 maja 2019 r. o wynikach wyborów posłów do Parlamentu Europejskiego przeprowadzonych w dniu 26 maja 2019 r., Dz. U. z 2019 r. poz. 989 [Announcement (2019/989) of the National Electoral Commission of May 27, 2019 on the Results of the Elections to the European Parliament Held on May 26, 2019, Journal of Laws of 2019 item 989].
- Państwowa Komisja Wyborcza [National Electoral Commission] (n.d.-a), *Frekwencja ostateczna* [Final Turnout], <https://pkw.gov.pl> (10.10.2019).

- Państwowa Komisja Wyborcza [National Electoral Commission] (n.d.-b), *Serwisy informacyjne wyborów i referendum ogólnokrajowych* [Information Services on National Elections and Referendum], <https://wybory.gov.pl> (10.10.2019).
- Państwowa Komisja Wyborcza [National Electoral Commission] (czerwiec 2019), *Sprawozdanie z wyborów do Parlamentu Europejskiego przeprowadzonych w dniu 26 maja 2019 r.* [Report on the Elections to the European Parliament Held on May 26, 2019], https://pkw.gov.pl/pliki/1560257676_Sprawozdanie_z_Wyborow_do_Parlamentu_Europejskiego_przeprowadzonych_w_dniu_26_maja_2019_r.pdf (10.10.2019).
- Państwowa Komisja Wyborcza [National Electoral Commission] (5.07.2019a), *Wybory do Parlamentu Europejskiego 2019: Informacje o Komitecie Wyborczym* [2019 European Parliament Elections: Information on the Electoral Committee], <https://pe2019.pkw.gov.pl/pe2019/pl/komitety/19905> (6.10.2019).
- Państwowa Komisja Wyborcza [National Electoral Commission] (5.07.2019b), *Wybory do Parlamentu Europejskiego 2019: Komitety* [2019 European Parliament Elections: Committees], <https://pe2019.pkw.gov.pl/pe2019/pl/komitety> (10.10.2019).
- Partyla, M. (oprac.). (1.05.2019), *„Precz z Unią Europejską”: Marsz Suwerenności w Warszawie* [“Down with the European Union”: Sovereignty March in Warsaw], <https://www.rmfm24.pl/fakty/polska/news-precz-z-unia-europejska-marsz-suwerennosci-w-warszawie,nId,2967364> (8.06.2019).
- Pięta, M. (18.04.2019), *Konfederacja odpowiada PiS: „Nie dla euro w Polsce”* [The Confederation Responds to PiS: “No to the Euro in Poland”], <https://medianarodowe.com/sejmowa-konferencja-prasowa-liderow-konfederacji/> (6.06.2019).
- PiS program wyborczy [PiS Election Programme] (n.d.), <https://wiadomosci.radiozet.pl/Eurowybory-2019/Wiadomosci/Program-wyborczy-PiS-2019-wybory-do-Parlamentu-Europejskiego-PROGRAM-POLITYCZNY-PiS> (7.06.2019).
- Polska Fair Play [Poland Fair Play] (n.d.), https://polskafairplay.org/wcontent/uploads/2019/03/Broszura_SzostkaGwiazdowskiego.pdf (6.06.2019).
- Program dla Unii Europejskiej [Programme for the European Union] (n.d.), <https://wiosnabiedronia.pl/program> (6.06.2019).
- Program – kierunek zmian [Programme – Direction of Change] (n.d.), <https://www.partiapolexit.pl/program/> (4.06.2019).
- Rogacin, K. (27.02.2019), *Konfederacja KORWiN, Liroy, Braun, Narodowcy: Zaprezentowano nazwę i logo* [Confederation KORWiN, Braun, Liroy, Nationalists: Name and Logo Presented], <https://polskatimes.pl/konfederacja-korwin-liroy-braun-narodowcy-zaprezentowano-nazwe-i-logo-znamy-szczegoly/ar/13923215> (9.06.2019).
- Ulicami Warszawy przeszedł marsz pod hasłem “Polska w Europie” [A March Under the Slogan “Poland in Europe” Took Place on the Streets of Warsaw] (18.05.2019), <https://tvn.warszawa.tvn24.pl/informacje,news,ulicami-warszawy-przeszedl-marsz-brpod-haslem-polska-w-europie,291105.html> (6.06.2019).
- Viola, D.M. (2016), *European Parliament Elections Theories*, [in:] D.M. Viola (ed.), *Routledge Handbook of European Elections*, series: Routledge Handbooks, (London-New York: Routledge): 39–48.