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EFFECT OF ELECTIONS ON POLISH POLITICAL SYSTEM

The 2019 parliamentary elections, although seemingly did not cause any greater change in the Polish political system, in fact may be treated as an important turning point. The

effect of the election results on the political system of Poland may be summarized in 6 points.

New Deputies of Jarosław Gowin’s Agreement



Source: twitter.com/porozumienie__

First, any parliamentary elections signify a change of parliamentary representation. In the forthcoming term, the ruling coalition will have opposition on both the conservative (or liberal

conservative) and socio-liberal side. Thus, the conditions for conducting a policy based on the division into “liberal Poland” and “social Poland”, forced through by Jarosław Kaczyński since at least 2011 and forming the main axis of dispute in the 2015-2019 parliamentary term, will no longer be so easy to maintain.

New Deputies of the United Poland



Source: own study

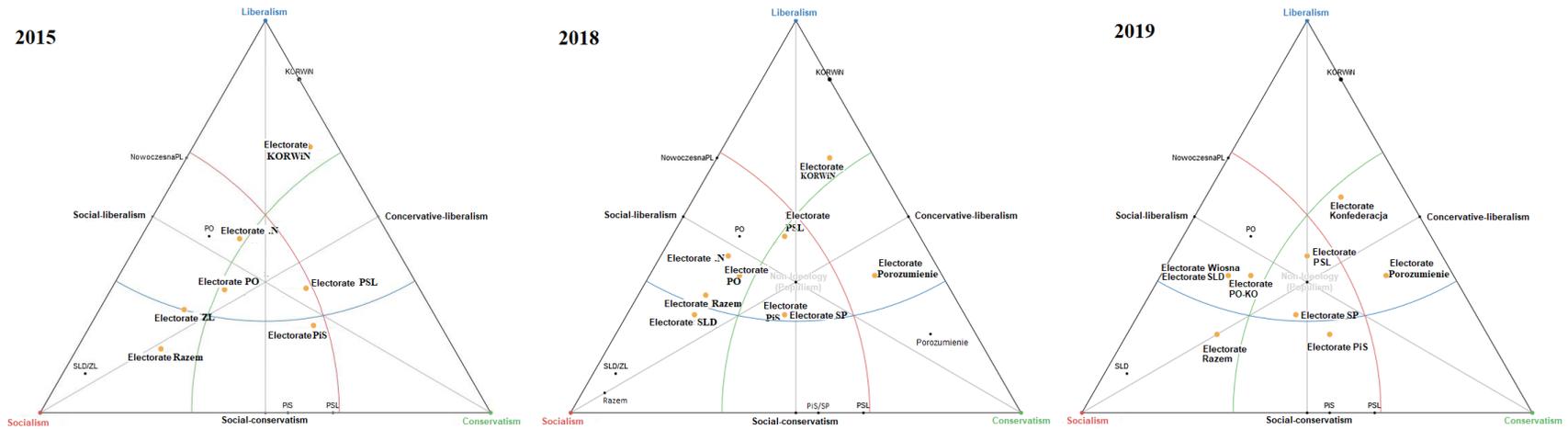
Second, as a result of the elections the internal system of forces in the United Rights has been clearly changed. Both Jarosław Gowin’s Agreement as well as the United Poland have been significantly reinforced. Gowin’s party will have 18 deputies and 2 senators, while Ziobro’s party – 17 deputies. This means that a rebellion of any of the coalitionists could lead to the collapse of the parliamentary majority and even a possible support from the Confederation, which has 11 deputies, would not help to maintain a majority government of Law and Justice. The tangible reinforcement of the coalitionists of Law and Justice must mean a change as regards the positions of ministers. In particular, the so far underappreciated United Poland should receive at least one additional ministerial portfolio. Moreover, Zbigniew Ziobro may request the position of Deputy

Prime Minister. So far, he was the only leader of the coalition partners of Law and Justice who was not Deputy Prime Minister.

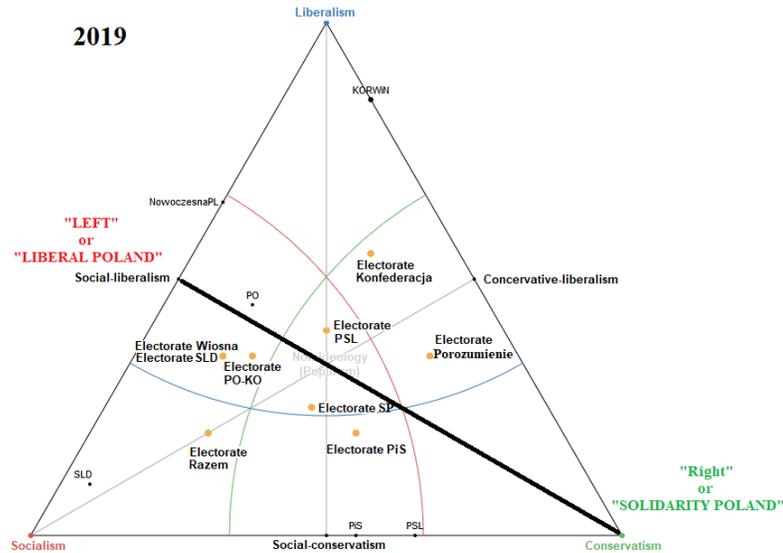
Third, Law and Justice lost a majority in the Senate, in which the candidates of opposition parties and independent candidates leaning towards the opposition filled 51 out of 100 seats. This change does not mean that any draft submitted by the United Rights could be stopped in the Senate. In the Polish political system the Senate may only adopt modifications to bills. When a draft is passed on from the Sejm to the Senate, the latter has no more than 30 days to speak on possible changes. After that deadline, it is considered that the Senate has approved the proposals presented by the Sejm. This means, that in the forthcoming term the pace of legislative work will be significantly slower. The Senate, in the hands of the opposition, will be able to delay and significant bill of the United Right by 30 days. This period of 30 days can also be used for media campaigns, in particular to inform foreign media of the position held by the opposition. This, the tactic of controlled media pressures from the outside of the Polish political system which is now used on a wide scale will have a broader application.

Fourth, the loss of a majority on the Senate means the possibility of media and political use of the upcoming hearings of officials appointed by the United Right. The Senate shall deliberate on: reports and information presented to the Senate by the Constitutional Tribunal, National Council of the Judiciary, First President of the Supreme Court, Ombudsman for Civil Rights, Ombudsman for Children's Rights, National Broadcasting Council, National Media Council and President of the National Remembrance Institute – Commission for the Prosecution of Offences against the Polish Nation as well as information of the Council of Ministers, including information on the affairs of Polonia (people of Polish origin living abroad). Thus, it may be expected that the Senate will reject the reports of the Presidents of the Constitutional Tribunal or the National Broadcasting Council, while the debate will provide an opportunity to wage attacks at the United Right. On the occasion of hearings of the President of the Constitutional Tribunal also a stepped up campaign with controlled pressures on the part of foreign med

Electorate Movement on Political Spectrum 2015-2019



Main Axis of Conflict on Polish Political Spectrum



Source: www.trojkatpolityczny.pl

Fifth, the opposition majority in the Senate is hung on the vote of a single Senator. At the same time, the Civic Coalition entered from the Warsaw district to the Senate Kazimierz Michał Ujazdowski, who was supposed to win many votes from abroad (Polonia). That politician was in the past a candidate of Law and Justice, and was also strongly associated with the Ordo Juris Foundation. This may mean that in the course of the term he may find himself closer to the United Right than the united opposition. Moreover, the slight majority of the opposition is also endangered by the possibility of a transfer of those senators who may get profitable offers from the government which controls the largest companies, such as KGHM or Orlen. Therefore, the situation in the Senate is a test of stability of the quite broad anti-government coalition.

Six, the victory of the ruling camp in the parliamentary elections, given the fact that the Confederation managed to place its deputies in the Sejm, which owing to the use of the d'Hondt method for the distribution of seats, was to prevent the United Right from getting the independent majority, will exert an impact on the 2020 presidential elections. It may be predicted, that Donald Tusk will not run in the presidential elections. The results of the parliamentary elections indicate an increased support for the United Right, for which high turnout was so far rather dangerous. Therefore, Tusk has more to lose than gain as regards image in the present political situation, which does not guarantee a victory for an opposition candidate. This means, that a candidate for presidency will be one of the current leaders of the opposition or MP Kidawa-Błońska. Thus, the chances of winning the forthcoming elections by Andrzej Duda are growing.