TERRITORIAL PATTERNS OF POLITICAL SELF-IDENTIFICATION IN POLAND

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Polish political cleavages create a unique pattern. It consists of intersection of two axes on which the voters self-identify: left-right and "Solidary Poland " versus "Liberal Poland ". The combination of these two identifications allows one to explain the axes of competition in the Polish party system. The cleavages described are strongly rooted in the country's political geography. Here you can also indicate two different divisions. One is related to urbanization, dividing the country into three comparable size parts - cities, towns and rural areas. The second one results from historical experience, in particular the division of Polish territory between three nineteenth-century empires - Russia, Germany and Austro-Hungary. These two divisions interact, creating different patterns of political behavior. Some of them are responsible for creating stereotypes that sharpen real diversity, while others are contrary to such stereotypes. The analysis of this phenomenon is helpful in seeking explanations for changes in the party systems of other European Union countries.

The presented research is based on the polls of the Polish General Electoral Survey 2007-2015 and the results of the parliamentary elections. An important point of reference is the Chapel Hill expert survey. The presented results show the durability of identification and the variability of their expression through support for political parties.