

Mass or Elite Polarization as the Driver of Authoritarian Backsliding? Evidence from 8 Polish surveys (2001-2011)

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October 2021

Abstract

Is elite or mass polarization the driver of the democratic backsliding? A number of recent papers in the political economy of backsliding have developed theoretical predictions about the effects of polarization in the electorate as well as elite polarization on the process of democratic backsliding. However, when tested, these predictions focus on the polarization of political elites, typically within the same country. Cross-national data is ill-suited for the purpose of testing these predictions as we have no common yardstick against which to measure what is a “dangerous” level of polarization or how to compare countries that use different electoral systems and, subsequently, have different party systems and democratic institutions. Yet scholars for the most part have avoided even describing the emergence of mass polarization outside of the US. We offer a longitudinal analysis of Polish public opinion data that anticipates the country’s downturn into authoritarianism by a few years to examine if polarization of the electorate preceded or followed the polarization of party elites. It focuses on a single, yet ultimately divisive issue—the costs and benefits of EU membership—five years prior to accession and five years following joining the international organization.

Specifically, it makes use of annual and monthly data from CBOS *Political Preferences of Poles* Survey to provide evidence that polarized attitudes regarding EU membership followed, rather than preceded the polarization of parties on this issue.

1 Introduction

The 2010's have seen a surge in research on the causes of democratic backsliding with scholars attempting to locate its antecedents, if not causes. One of the culprits researchers have identified is polarization, the topic of this special volume.

On the one hand, Milan Svolik (2018) makes the argument that when voters are sufficiently ideologically motivated, relative to how important they find democracy, they may choose a representative who is willing to bend democratic rules just to avoid the rise to power of an ideologically distant, but pro-democratic candidate. Polarization—represented here as the distance between ideal points of the democratic challenger and representative voter—increases the chances of democratic backsliding.

Ernesto Grillo and Prato (2020), on the other hand, identify circumstances in which ideological polarization, by reducing the support of the incumbent aspiring to be an autocrat, decreases his temptation to backslide. This happens when voters do not use past actions of the incumbent as a yardstick against which to measure his authoritarian tendencies and determine whether to support him. Polarization in this second model is interpreted as the length of the distribution from which representative voters are drawn. Hence, this polarization, should be interpreted as polarization in the electorate alone.

Finally, the relationship between polarization and backsliding is also explored in Chiopris et al. (2021). There, however, polarization is interpreted in yet a different way: as the ideological distance between a representative voter and a democratic challenger without any authoritarian ambitions. In this model, there is no elite polarization at all, as the distance between the (potentially authoritarian incumbent) and a pro-democratic challenger remains fixed. *Ceteris paribus*, polarization, measured as the distance between the representative voter and the democratic alternative, intuitively increases democratic backsliding.

In sum, the different conclusions scholars of backsliding have drawn about the relationship between polarization and backsliding stems from the fact that polarization can be interpreted as either polarization of elites or as polarization of voters. Despite this difference, most of political science research has focused on developing tools for measuring polarization of political elites. Such tools include candidate surveys (Saiegh, 2009), scaling techniques of roll call votes (McCarty et al., 2018; Carroll and Poole, 2014; Carroll and Kubo, 2019) and many others. If tools for measuring polarization in the mass electorate

have been developed at all, this effort has focused predominantly on the US and rarely been used jointly with measures of elite polarization, referenced above.¹

This paper fills the gap in testing theories of polarization by suggesting a way of operationalizing polarization in the electorate over time. It makes use of a series of monthly “Political Preferences of Poles” surveys conducted on nationally representative samples of the Polish electorate between 2001 and 2011, which is 5 years before and 5 years after the European Union expansion included Poland. This work offers also contribution to the literature on polarization in the Post-Communist context and the contribution of the EU to democratic backsliding in Europe, especially in Poland. The next section provides a brief background on the Polish party system and the exogenous emergence of the issue of EU joining. The following section introduces are method for assessing polarization in the electorate and applies it to Polish respondents’ attitudes to EU joining.

2 The Polish Party system and the Issue of EU joining

There are not many studies of polarization in the period preceding the victory of the Law and Justice party in Poland and Orban’s Fidesz in Hungary. Among the few, is Timothy Frye (2002)’s article about the threat polarization—interpreted as divided government—poses to the quality of economic reforms. According to Frye’s argument, such polarization in preferences of the legislative and executive made implementation of economic reforms slow and inconsistent. It ultimately delayed the consolidation of a market economy with credible enforcement of property rights. Yet not all scholars share Frye’s belief in the perils of polarization. Herbert Kitschelt (2000), for instance, includes party polarization in his measure of programmatic representation (*cosalpo*), which is the polar opposite of clientelism in voter-party linkages. Yet for Kitschelt, polarization is a factor *improving* party programmaticness. He reasons that in order for voters to have a real choice, parties cannot offer programs too close to one one another, lest voters cannot make meaningful choices at the ballot box.

These two interventions notwithstanding, few scholars prior to 2015 had linked polarization in Post-communist Europe to democratic backsliding.² The paucity of literature

¹There are notable exceptions to this norm. See, for instance, (Schibber, 2016).

²Though seeNalepa (2016, 2019)

on the subject is puzzling, given that backsliding is argued to be a gradual process, unravelling slowly over time (Luo and Przeworski, 2019). Hence antecedents of the crisis in 2015 in Poland and 2010 in Hungary should have been visible much earlier. Yet, Poland’s party system emerged in very odd circumstances, making it very hard to detect the signs of future democratic erosion.

The country’s political transition from a communist dictatorship to democracy took place concurrently with the economic transformation from a socialist planned economy to a free market one. While the economic reforms proceeded swiftly and successfully, the electoral and party system took considerably longer to crystallize and for a very long time was governed by the, so-called, regime divide (Grzymala-Busse, 2001). The regime divide is understood by scholars as a cleavage dividing the political issue space according to historical legacies rather than economic, ethnic, or socio-cultural differences. In the US context, the the Civil War created such a cleavage for many decades well into the 1940, culminating in the breakaway of Dixiecrats from the Democratic Party (Sundquist, 2011).

In the Post-communist context, the main cleavage was the division between successor communists and their supporting parties (typically successors of communist satellite parties) on the one hand, and parties based on formerly dissident organizations, on the other. The reason this remained the main cleavage dividing elites in Post-communist Poland was that virtually all parties supported economic reforms and joining international organizations, such as NATO and the EU, so these other issues could not function as divisive.

Figure 4 in the appendix, illustrates the tail end of this first period in Polish politics. It summarizes answers to the main question posed in the CBOS surveys : “If elections to parliament (called “Sejm” in Poland) were to occur this Sunday, which party would you vote for?” (The question was only asked of respondents who already indicated their intention to vote).

Our data starts in 2001, when the post-communist Democratic Left Alliance, SLD, won the 2001 election and created a cabinet with the Polish Peasant Party (PSL).³ The cabinet led by Leszek Miller, however saw the emergence of a new cleavage: between the traditionalist ex-dissident parties—PiS and the League of Polish Families (LPR), along with

³PSL was a successor communist satellite party known earlier as the United Peasant Alliance (ZSL). The successor-satellite status led to its cooperation on one side of the regime divide with SLD.

PSL and Samoobrona—on the one hand, and liberal ex-dissident Citizens’ Platform (PO), on the other.

Between June 2001 and December 2004, CBOS allowed voters to choose between 29 parties, which alone underscores the instability of the party system. In the first part of this period, there is only one party with considerable electoral support: SLD (marked in the figure in light orange). In the second half of this period, as support for SLD dissipates, voters begin to consistently support the liberal Citizens’ Platform, PO (in blue) and the right-wing Law and Justice, PiS (in orange), both parties stemming from formerly anti-communist dissident groups.

During this period, PO and PiS initially remained allies. Gradually, however, they began to move into opposite directions, eventually delineating a new (and post-regime divide) cleavage. According to Jacek Janiszewski, a former MP, interviewed for this project, “members of the two parties tried to form another overarching coalition of the post-Solidarity right, based on the Conservative Peoples’ Party (SKL), but went their separate ways when this attempt failed.”⁴ Nevertheless, in the beginning of the fourth term, PO and PiS began talks to form an electoral coalition and even considered the possibility of a future cabinet coalition. When an attempt at an electoral coalition failed in the municipal elections of 2002, the two parties engaged in a game of chicken, developing competing programs for running against the post-communist SLD. After PiS won a plurality of votes in the 2005 elections, the first dimension of party conflict, separating the government from the opposition becomes a fusion of the economy, social issues, and EU accession politics.

As the regime divide began to dissipate, the negotiations concerning joining the EU started in earnest. As the details of accession were discussed, additional issues dividing the main parties appeared. One of them was the question of allowing EU citizens to acquire property in Poland. On the one hand, foreign direct investment could offer a boost to the economy, but on the other, it could attract descendants of 10.5 mln Germans expropriated as a result of the Yalta Treaty (causing Poland to shift to the West) to return and either reclaim or simply repurchase their former land and real estate. This stoked fear in the more pro-nationalist parts of the electorate. Because the Yalta Treaty had granted the Polish communist government control over German territories, this electorate expressed concerns

⁴interview with one of the authors, Warsaw, June 2011

that as part of a common federal entity the descendants of expropriated Germans would return to Poland. By 2001, two parties representing the interests of the Euro-sceptics had emerged: Samobrona (SRP), led by Andrzej Lepper, and the League of Polish Families, led by Roman Giertych.

The popularity of these two parties becomes fully visible in the Appendix's Figure 5, where SRP appears in blue and LPR in dark orange 6. After PiS and PO (now in grey and purple, respectively), these two parties had most voters. The support of these EU-skeptical parties— with no or very modest dissident background—hovered between 5 % and 10 %. In this period, CBOS offered respondents 22 parties to choose from, so only slightly fewer than in the 2001-2004 period.

In 2007, the PiS coalition between LP and SRP collapsed however, opening the possibility for PiS to distance itself from the two anti-EU, traditionalist parties. In 2007, a corruption scandal in SRP erupted, rocking the foundations of the EU-skeptical coalition. SRP collapsed as the corruption permeated the top echelons of leadership. Following the breakup, the SRP electorate, however, was up for grabs, so PiS shifted to the right in its programmatic appeals, jumping at the opportunity. Along the way, PiS acquired also some former LPR voters. In the 2007-2011 electoral cycle, there were “only 17 parties offered up as “choices” in the CBOS surveys, and, as indicated by Figure 6, the party system became dominated by PiS (blue) and PO (green), with SLD and PSL (the two post-communist parties, in orange and light blue, respectively) in the background. Today, PiS and PO are the parties that scholars blame for polarization in Poland.

Yet if Poland's backsliding is to be attributed to PO and PiS's polarization in the mid 2010's, the antecedents of this process should have first become visible when the two parties started first separating following the dissipation of the regime divide (in which SLD and PSL played a significant role).

3 Linking Polarization to Backsliding

In her work, on the origins of backsliding and polarization, Cinar (2021) posits that would be “closet autocrats” Chiopris et al. (2021) take advantage of new topics to use in their polarizing rhetoric. She argues that polarizing discourse helps backsliders prevent defections

from both their party membership as well as their voter base. Closet autocrats then employ polarizing rhetoric to solidify the platforms and views of the party.

The spectre of joining the EU has been used by scholars as a foil through which to analyze transformations of the Polish party system (Zuba, 2009). In a 2010 article, Radoslaw Markowski and Tucker (2010) write “ Prior to the 2005 election, PiS was a classical conservative party, in terms of both its programmatic appeal and its electoral support. Only around the time of the 2005 election and in particular before the 2007 election did their ... ‘Eurosceptic’ rhetoric become more pronounced, but even then it was more of an electoral device than a serious programmatic goal.” Markowski and Tucker (2010) go on to argue that voters of SRP and LPR (the parties whose electorates PiS subsequently captured) had Euro-sceptic preferences long before those parties came along and that these parties formed in response to these preferences. They test this (as they call it “Downsian”) theory against a competing (“responsible parties”) hypothesis, according to which party leaders led their supporters to oppose the EU.

Markowski and Tucker (2010) test their hypotheses using three surveys conducted prior to elections (in 2001, 2005 and 2007) on voters for LPR and SRP contrasting them with voters from all other parties. They argue that if cues from Euroskeptic parties led voters to Euroskepticism (per the responsible party model), then at the time of the 2001 election we should see little, if any, distinction in the degree of Euroscepticism among voters for the LPR and SRP and voters for other parties (as well as non-voters). On the other hand if voters for the LPR and SRP were significantly more Eurosceptic than voters of other parties as early as the 2001 parliamentary election, then, Markowski and Tucker argue, one should conclude the opposite. Namely voters were already Eurosceptic when they made the decision to support the LPR and SRP in 2001, and thus could not have been ‘led’ to this position in the ensuing years by these new political parties. After presenting data from the three above mentioned electoral surveys, the authors conclude that they have “found evidence that these two new parties were attracting a previously unrepresented portion of the electorate, which is what the Downsian model suggests should occur” (Markowski and Tucker, 2010, p.529)

Setting aside potential problems with this research design and empirical test ⁵, we do

⁵For instance, the category of “other” parties might be regressing to the mean opposite extremes of

not find support for this “responsible parties” theory. Instead, we find evidence consistent with the Downsian hypothesis,” leading to similar expectations as posited by Cinar (2021): leaders use their rhetoric in polarizing ways, by exploiting new policy issues that they hope will divide the electorate. Critically, our technique, goes beyond looking only at voters of two parties and only at times preceding elections. In contrast to Markowski and Tucker (2010), we examine Euroscepticism over a ten year period and separately for electorates of the top 7 vote attracting parties in this period.

The details of our approach are explained in the following section.

4 Evidence of Polarization

To make the argument that voter polarization of the electorate is driven by the emergence of exogenous issues that parties can then manipulate to carve out support, we use a decade’s worth of data from the Center for Public Opinion Research, CBOS. CBOS is one of the most reputable pollsters in the Poland and has been conducting surveys for nearly four decades. It is a state funded institution but its independence from the government in office is legislatively sanctioned.⁶ The specific survey from which we extracted our questions, *Political Preferences of Poles*, is fielded monthly on a nationally representative samples of Poles between the ages of 18 and 75 (see appendix for details on sampling and interview structure). Each survey had approximately 1000 respondents, of whom roughly 60 % indicated they would be interested in voting in the upcoming elections.⁷ The surveys share similar, though not exactly the same, questionnaires. All include questions that ask respondents about their intention to vote and who they would vote for, outlooks for Poland’s future, trust towards party leaders, and democratic institutions (Sejm, Senate, President and Constitutional Court), and basic demographic information. In addition, every couple of months, the surveys include self-placement questions on various thermometer scales. The thermometer questions range from feelings concerning EU expansion and separation attitudes to the EU.

⁶When the Institute was established in 1983, still in communist Poland, the Academic Director would be appointed from the Sociology Institute of Warsaw University to ensure independence. This norm has persisted throughout the democratic period and is respected even currently, in democratically eroding Poland.

⁷In our results, we omit non-voters.

of church and state to self-placement on fiscal liberal-conservative scale.

For our exercise, we selected data between 2000 and 2011. Roughly once a year during that period (in May 2000, September 2003, February 2004, December 2004, May 2005, April 2006, April 2007, April 2009, and April 2011), the questionnaires included three thermometer questions pertaining the the EU. Each scale has 7 points.

The first question asks for self-placement on 7-point scale from 1 (“Poland’s EU membership will bring more benefits than costs”) to 7 (“Poland’s EU membership will bring more costs than benefits”).

What sets this general thermometer question apart from the others, is that it does not provide respondents with the reference point of personal benefit (as the third question does) be or benefits to other members (as the second question does). This question does not specify whether the costs are evaluated relative to Poland’s costs or relative to the costs that other countries in the EU are paying in return for membership. Nor does it ask them to assess the costs and benefits to them personally. Hence the next two questions.

The second question asks for self-placement on a scale from 1 (“Poland benefits more from EU membership than its existing members”) to 7 (“Poland benefits less from EU membership than its existing members”). Finally, the third asks for self-placement on a scale from 1 (“For me, personally, Poland’s EU membership will bring more benefits than costs”) to 7 (“For me, personally, Poland’s EU membership will bring more costs than benefits.”)

Next, to see how the electorates of different parties place themselves on these thermometer scales, we subset our respondents into electorates of seven main parties in 2000-2011: SLD, SRP, LPR, PiS, PO, PSL, and LPR. We then compare over time how the distribution of the self-placement of these seven electorates changed, for each EU-specific thermometer question changed.

More pronounced EU skepticism would be visible as the mass of the distribution skewing to the left. More pronounced Euroenthusiasm would be visible at the mass of the distribution skewing to the right.

These visualizations allow us to descriptively answer several questions. First, they allow us to see the distribution of respondents on a Euroskeptic to pro-EU issue, according to their own self placements. Second, they allow us to observe differences in self-placement

over several key electorates. Third, they allow us to observe changes in self-placements on these thermometer scales within party electorates across time.

Moreover, and critically for our theoretical question, these visualizations allow us to see if polarization in the electorate preceded polarization among elites or if polarization among elites preceded polarization among elites, interpreted here as party leaders.

In other words, they enable us to evaluate the “responsible parties” against the “Downsian’ hypotheses (developed also in Cinar’s work). If prior to EU joining, the voters—and electorates of LPR, SRP, and PiS in particular—self-placed as Euroskeptics, this would be an indication supporting the responsible parties hypothesis: voters were already Euroskeptic to begin with and parties, such as LPR, SRP and PiS, emerged to represent them. On the other hand, normal or uniform distributions of electorates of all parties, including LPR, SRP and PiS, on the EU thermometer scales period preceding EU accession negotiations would corroborate the Downsian hypothesis. Additional support for the Downsian hypothesis would be provided if over time, in response to party rhetoric, electorates of parties that promoted Euroscepticism, began separating from other parties and exhibiting Euroscepticism in their distributions.

Previewing our results, what we observe in Poland between 2000 and 2011 offers considerable support for the Downsian hypothesis.

Five years prior to EU accession (which took place in 2004) electorates do not vary much on any of the EU questions. On the first question, we see that indeed, electorates of all parties, but PSL’s are practically uniform in their responses to all EU questions, except for the general question about costs and benefits. There, the electorate of the agrarian post-communist PSL seems to lean slightly more EU-enthusiastic. Yet, this is only visible in the very first, 2000 survey.

In 2004, the UW electorate and later also the PO and SLD, begin to take a more pro-EU stance. This is especially visible with the SLD electorate in 2006 and with PO electorate in 2009. These are generally pro-EU parties that were in office at the time the respondents drawn from their electorates indicated the highest pro-European values.

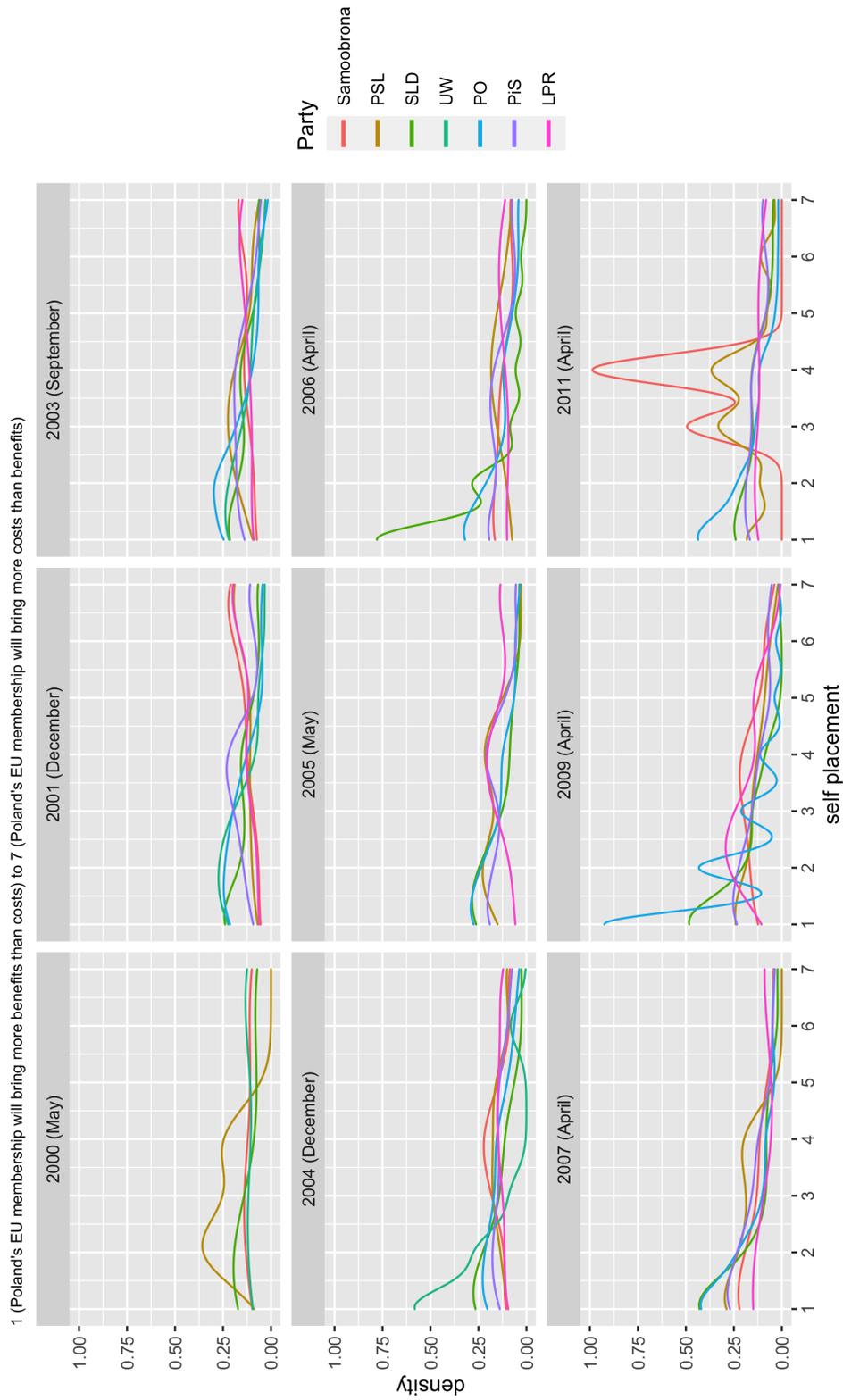


Figure 1: Center for Public Opinion Research, “Political Preferences of Poles” (2007-2011), Self-placement on 7 point scale from 1 (Poland's EU membership will bring more benefits than costs) to 7 (Poland's EU membership will bring more costs than benefits)..

In 2011, we also see the modal self-placement of SRP, the staunchly anti-EU party, shift to the right with a mode at 4, indicating that respondents believed there were more costs than benefits from joining the EU. In the same year, the modal self-placement of the PO electorate is strictly 1. These measurements are taken 7 years following EU expansion and heavily suggest that voters have internalized the message propagated by their party leaders.

Responses illustrated in Figure 2 are associated with the question that provided respondents with a reference point against which to measure the anticipated costs of EU joining. When asked about the value of EU joining relative to other EU members, we see a similar pattern emerge as reported above: In 2000, almost through 2004, the distributions are flat, with no electorate standing out as more Euro-enthusiastic or Euroskeptical than another.

By February 2004 and especially May 2005, LPR's electorate grows increasingly Euroskeptical relative to the others. Meanwhile, by April 2009, PSL's electorate becomes more enthusiastic, a reflection of the fact that Polish farmers were consuming a disproportionate amount of EU subsidies relative to the rest of Europe. By 2011 LPR's electorate is staunchly Euroskeptical, believing—contrary to facts—that Poland is benefiting less from EU membership than other members.

It is clear though, that this polarizing effect appears after EU expansion and, at least sequentially seems to be a response to and not cause of party propaganda. This is consistent with the Downsian hypothesis and at odds with the responsible parties hypothesis.

Finally consider the question that asks voters to place themselves on a thermometer scale where they have to evaluate how EU joining will benefit them personally. Early on, voters clearly have a very poor idea about how to answer this question, with most of the party electorate distributions remaining flat until at least December 2004. Beginning with PiS's electorate at that time, the distributions start resembling more of a bell curve, which given the personal nature of gains and losses is what we would expect. Some Poles, benefited personally from EU membership. For instance, students were eligible for more scholarships as EU members; workers could seek employment across the Union for higher wages than they would receive in Poland. In contrast, employers, though, found it harder to hire and retain talent. By 2011, only LPR voters can be clearly seen as Euroskeptical.

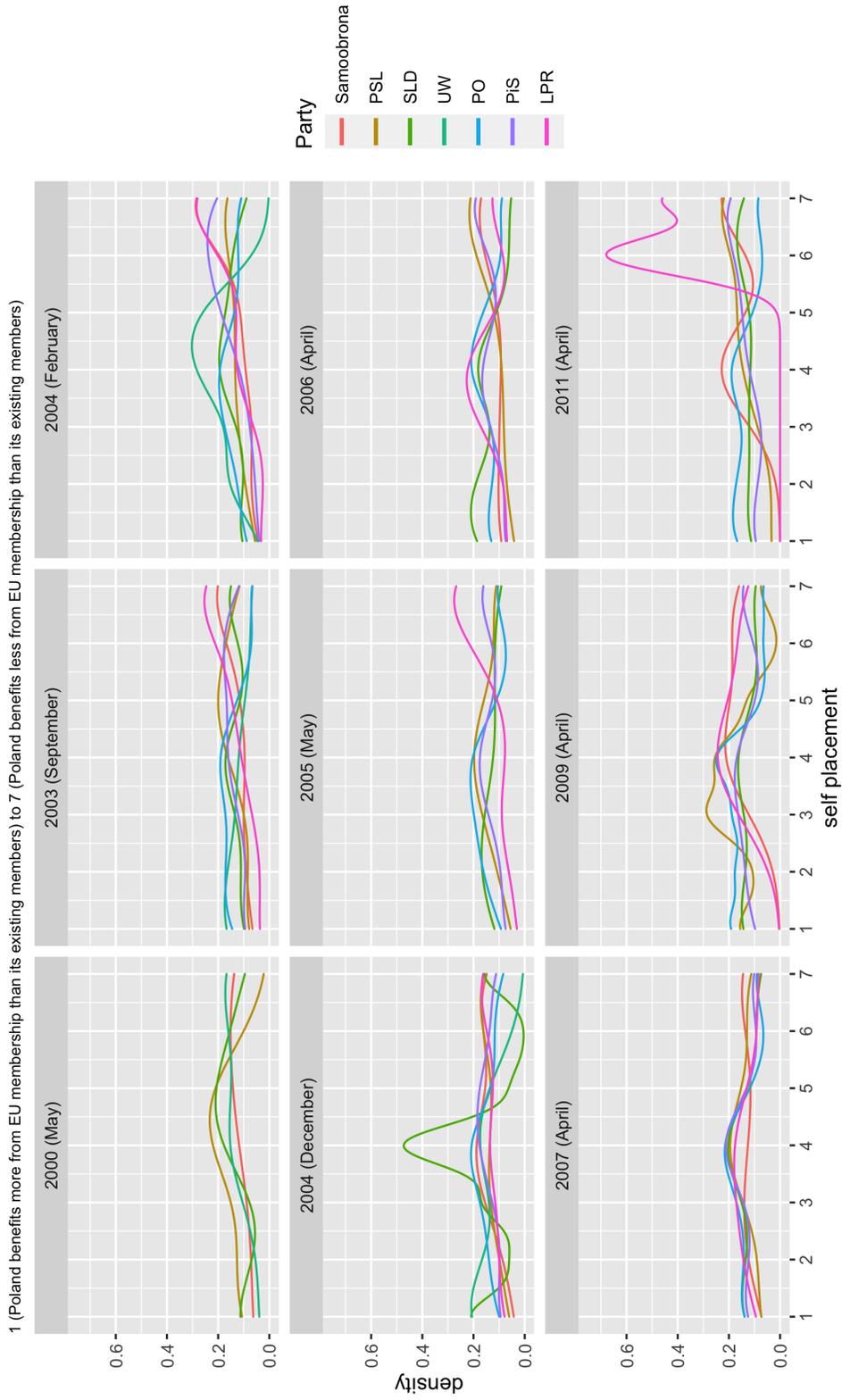


Figure 2: Center for Public Opinion Research, “Political Preferences of Poles” (2007-2011), Self-placement on 7 point scale from 1 (Poland benefits more from EU membership than its existing members) to 7 (Poland benefits less from EU membership than its existing members).

We pause here to reflect on why the results of the last self-placement exercise look somewhat different than the previous two. Why was party rhetoric effective in skewing voters toward Euroskepticism or Euroenthusiasm when it comes to costs and benefits of EU joining for Poland, but not so much for the voters personally?

While it is easier to shape voters' preferences by telling them about consequences of policies they have little expertise in, voters themselves are in the best position to answer questions regarding their personal lives. What self-placement answers to the first two questions suggest however, is that voters had very little knowledge of what joining the EU would entail. It is therefore very hard to imagine that they would develop an opinion about what EU membership entailed for Poland and then use a party's program on the EU as a salient dimension of voting. Yet that is exactly what a responsible parties theory would expect them to do. According to the responsible parties theory, cleavages in the mass electorate precede the emergence of cleavages in the party system.

We see no evidence that polarization of Polish parties on the issue of EU expansion, especially PiS and PO, was preceded by polarization in the electorate. We do see however, evidence consistent with Cinar (2021) referred to by Markowski and Tucker (2010) as the Downsian hypothesis.

Today, 10 years following the survey, the EU is definitely a polarizing issue for Poles, but this was not always the case. This paper has argued that voters received most of their cues on how to position themselves on EU membership from the leaders of parties they voted for.

Our evidence is broadly consistent with the argument linking polarization and democratic backsliding resting through leaders using exogenous events to sow the seeds of polarization in the electorate. It is easier to stoke conflict surrounding issues that are new than issues that are old. In the latter case, rhetoric would need to persuade some voters to switch views. Precisely because of its novelty at the time of the survey, the issue of EU expansion in Poland presents an ideal such topic to resolve the polarization conundrum.

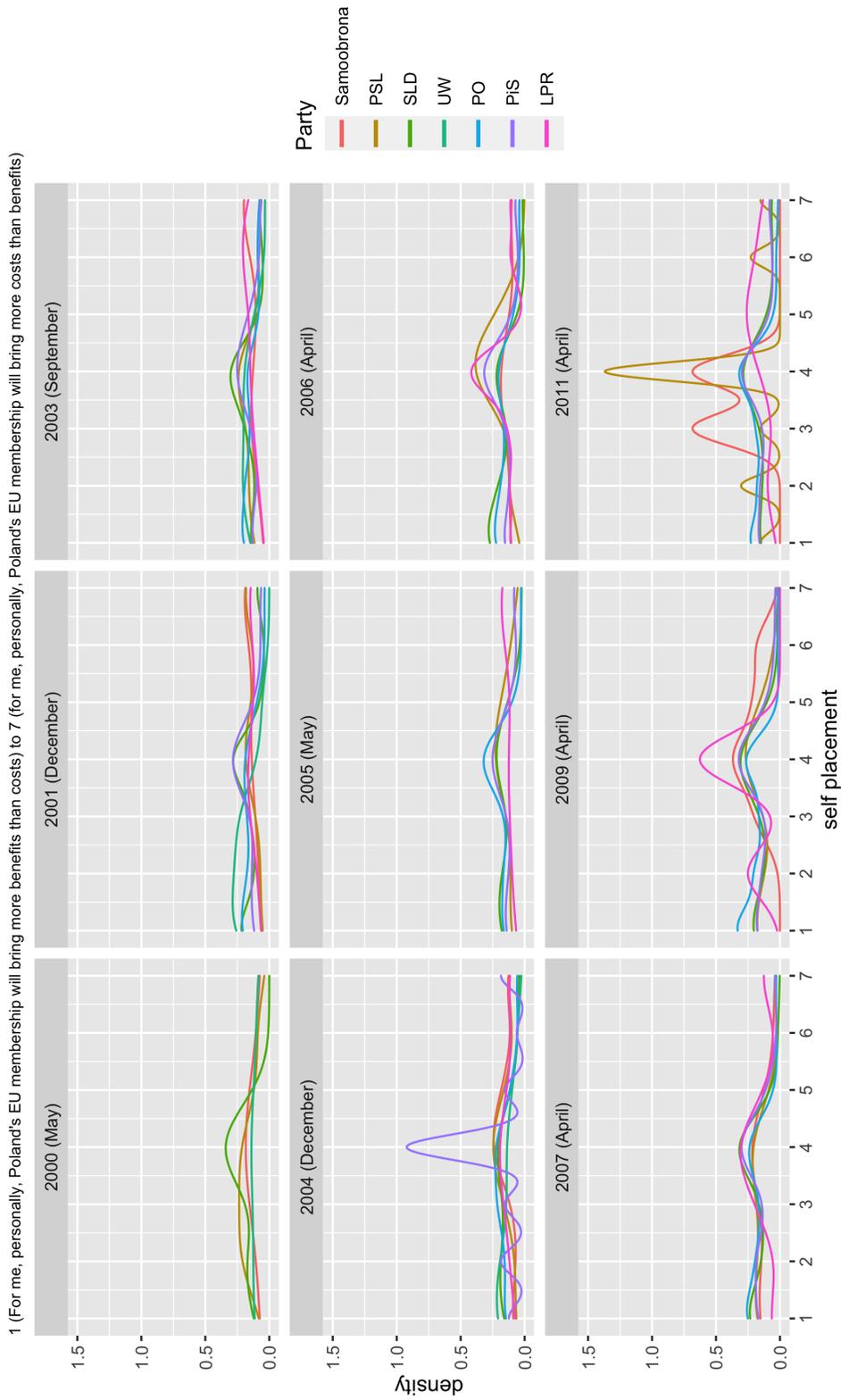


Figure 3: Center for Public Opinion Research, “Political Preferences of Poles” (2007-2011), Self-placement on 7 point scale from 1 (For me, personally, Poland’s EU membership will bring more benefits than costs) to 7 (for me, personally, Poland’s EU membership will bring more costs than benefits).

5 Conclusion

Recent theoretical work on democratic backsliding points to polarization as one of the causes of this process. Yet empirical scholarship has not devoted enough effort to distinguishing between two types of polarization—polarization in the mass electorate and polarization among political elites. Even though the two may go together, it is worth disentangling them and asking which came first. We argue that when mass polarization precedes elite polarization, party behavior can be interpreted along the lines of the responsible parties hypothesis: where there is a need for representation, parties will emerge. The more dangerous form of polarization, however, is when leaders create divisions in the electorate that previously did not exist. This creation of cleavages may take place via polarizing rhetoric that recalibrates everyday political decisions as matters of “us versus them.”

In this paper we propose a visualization technique based on simple descriptive statistics that for suitable data allows us to detect the sources of polarization—attributing them to party elites, per the Downsian hypothesis, or to genuine cleavages appearing in society. The technique requires survey data that includes self-placement over time while also allowing to group respondent according to their intention to vote. The visualization allows to observe the development of cleavages over time and in response to exogenous campaign events.

We apply the technique to the well-researched case of the issue of EU expansion in Poland. While attitude to the EU has become one of the most polarizing topics in the country, it has not been clear if this sharp division is the result of party elites driving the point home or an organic sentiment of Polish voters. We find evidence supporting the former theory, contradicting some existing research on this topic.

Acknowledgements

The authors acknowledge the generous support from the funding agency of the Center for International Social Science Research and the Pearson Institute, both at the University of Chicago.

6 Appendix

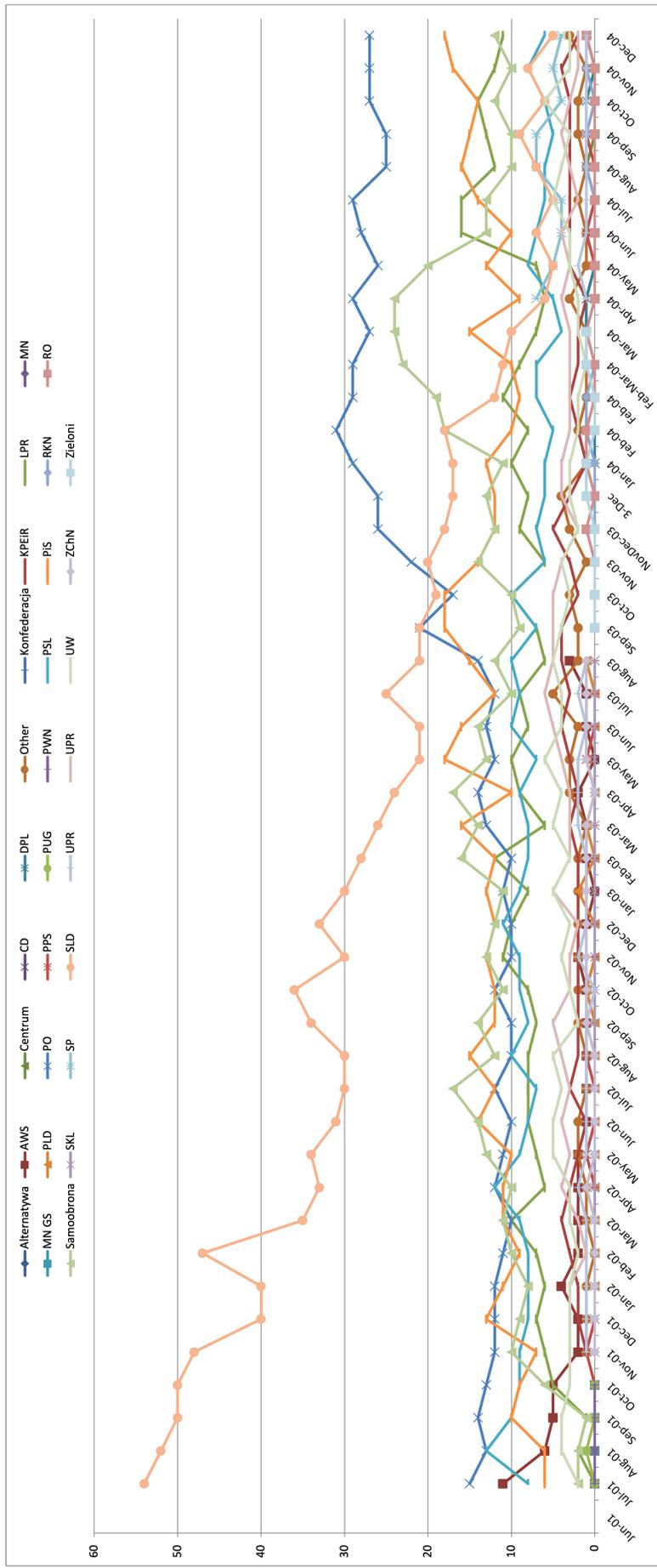


Figure 4: Center for Public Opinion Research, “Political Preferences of Poles” (2001-2004)

Answers to “If they election were to be held this Sunday, which party would you vote for?”, asked to nationally representative samples limited to respondents who indicated they “would vote this upcoming Sunday.”

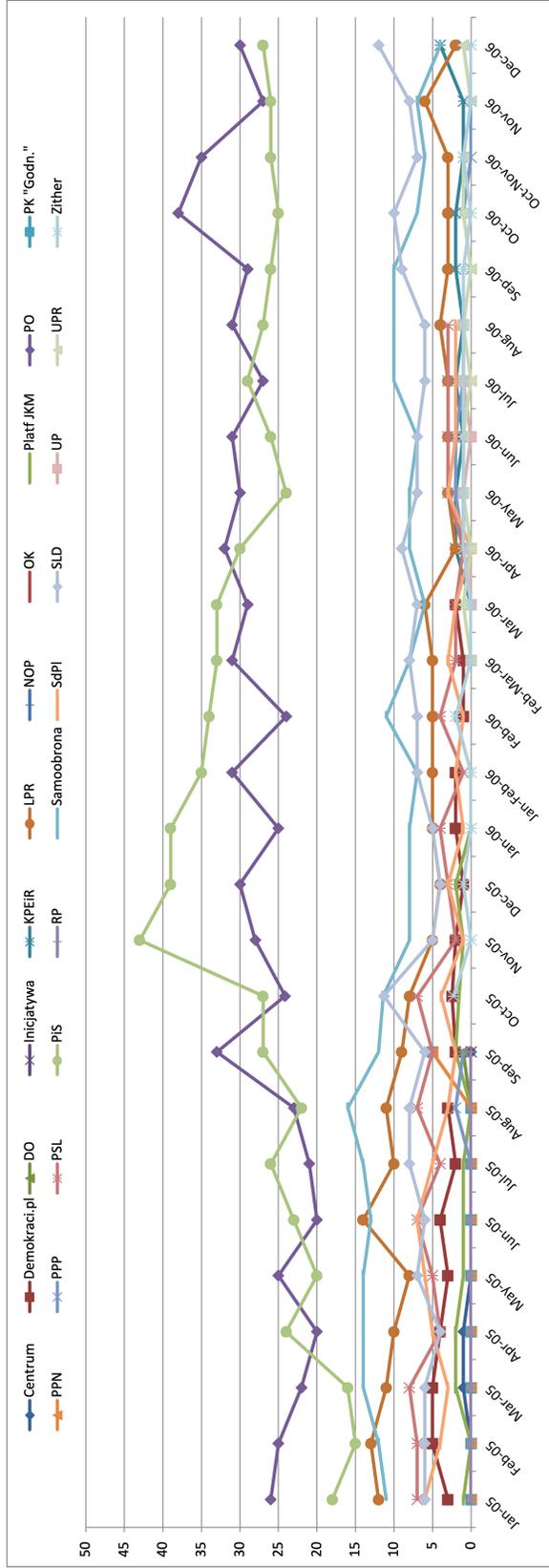


Figure 5: Center for Public Opinion Research, “Political Preferences of Poles” (2005-2007)

Answers to “If they election were to be held this Sunday, which party would you vote for?”, asked to nationally representative samples limited to respondents who indicated they “would vote this upcoming Sunday.”

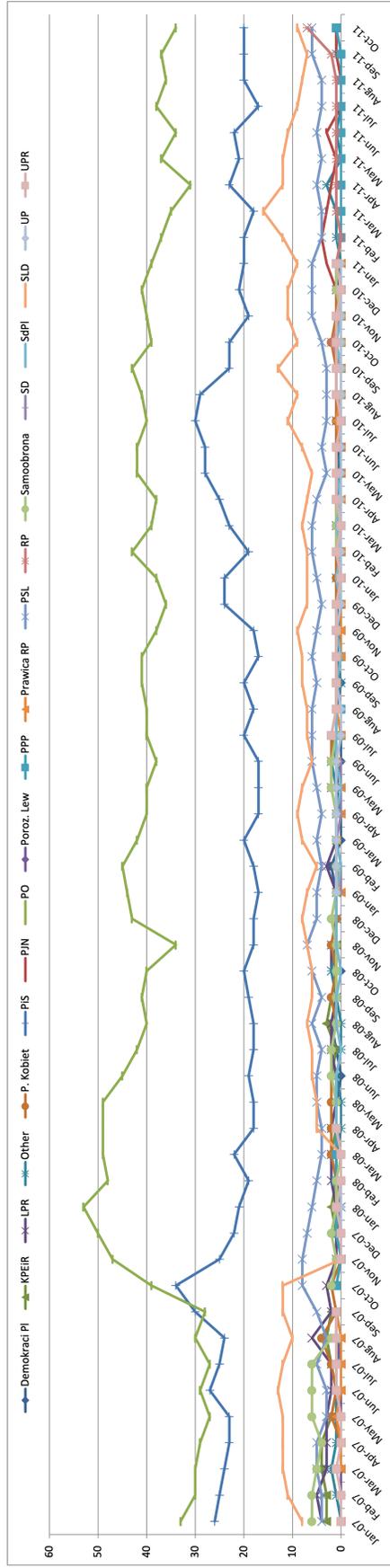


Figure 6: Center for Public Opinion Research, “Political Preferences of Poles” (2007-2011)

Answers to “If they election were to be held this Sunday, which party would you vote for?” , asked to nationally representative samples limited to respondents who indicated they “would vote this upcoming Sunday.”

Table 1: Descriptive statistics for answers to “Poland’s EU membership will bring more benefits than costs”

Survey	Obs	Mean	St. Dev.	Min	Pctl(25)	Pctl(75)	Max
2000 (May)	30	3.633	2.157	1.000	2.000	6.000	7.000
2001 (December)	439	3.604	2.128	1.000	2.000	5.000	7.000
2003 (September)	389	3.301	1.952	1.000	2.000	5.000	7.000
2004 (December)	300	3.377	1.932	1.000	2.000	5.000	7.000
2005 (May)	259	3.027	1.866	1.000	1.000	4.000	7.000
2006 (April)	375	2.797	1.927	1.000	1.000	4.000	7.000
2007 (April)	401	2.392	1.742	1.000	1.000	3.000	7.000
2009 (April)	429	2.193	1.519	1.000	1.000	3.000	7.000
2011 (April)	483	2.778	1.824	1.000	1.000	4.000	7.000

Table 2: Descriptive statistics for answers to “For me, personally, Poland’s EU membership will bring more benefits than costs”

Survey	Obs	Mean	St. Dev.	Min	Pctl(25)	Pctl(75)	Max
2000 (May)	30	3.567	1.813	1.000	2.000	4.000	7.000
2001 (December)	394	3.647	1.978	1.000	2.000	5.000	7.000
2003 (September)	360	3.706	1.905	1.000	2.000	5.000	7.000
2004 (December)	267	3.775	1.782	1.000	2.000	5.000	7.000
2005 (May)	224	3.527	1.804	1.000	2.000	4.000	7.000
2006 (April)	335	3.215	1.775	1.000	2.000	4.000	7.000
2007 (April)	369	2.967	1.603	1.000	1.000	4.000	7.000
2009 (April)	414	2.829	1.535	1.000	1.000	4.000	7.000
2011 (April)	458	3.269	1.651	1.000	2.000	4.000	7.000

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics for answers to “Poland benefits more from EU membership than its existing members”

Survey	Obs	Mean	St. Dev.	Min	Pctl(25)	Pctl(75)	Max
2000 (May)	29	4.448	2.063	1.000	4.000	6.000	7.000
2003 (September)	371	4.178	2.076	1.000	2.000	6.000	7.000
2004 (February)	339	4.631	1.966	1.000	3.000	7.000	7.000
2004 (December)	289	4.138	1.940	1.000	3.000	6.000	7.000
2005 (May)	232	4.272	1.998	1.000	3.000	6.000	7.000
2006 (April)	343	4.122	2.067	1.000	2.000	6.000	7.000
2007 (April)	361	3.770	1.948	1.000	2.000	5.000	7.000
2009 (April)	407	3.570	1.914	1.000	2.000	5.000	7.000
2011 (April)	438	4.123	2.126	1.000	2.000	6.000	7.000

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