Political Conflict and Electoral Cleavages in Central-Eastern Europe, 1992-2018

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1 Overview

1.1 Poland

Overview: the 2000s see the emergence of two right-wing parties, one of which (Law and Justice) gradually gains strong support among lower income voters, the other (Civic Platform) more popular among higher income voters. Support for Law and Justice is also correlated strongly with lower educational attainment and higher support for the government's role in reducing inequalities.

- The share of the left vote falls significantly in the 2005 elections, driven predominantly by a fall in the post-communist social democrat party (SLD) vote. In 2001 this party scored well across the income distribution (little relationship between vote share and income level); then its vote share fell across the income distribution in 2005. (Figures 1 and 8)

- In 2005, the Civic Platform and Law and Justice, both parties of the right, emerge with significant vote shares across the income distribution. At this stage vote shares have a positive gradient in income for both parties. Of these, in 2005 Civic Platform has a stronger positive gradient in education level, while Law and Justice is flat in education level. (Figures 2, 6, 7, 15, 16).

- In 2007 a stronger negative relationship between Law and Justice share and income group develops; it persists until 2015. In the 2015 elections, the Law and Justice vote share rises across the income distribution. (Figure 6) Between 2001 and 2015 the difference between the vote share of the top 10% and the bottom 90% for Law and Justice increases from +1% to -12%, controlling for covariates. (Figure 18).

- At the same time, in 2007 a strong positive relationship between Civic Platform and income group develops. (Figure 7) It persist until 2011 and then declines somewhat. Between 2005 and 2007 the difference in the vote share of the top 10% and the bottom 90% for Civic Platform increases from 4% to 17%, controlling for covariates. It peaks at 19% in 2011, then declines to 12% in 2015. (Figure 18)

- In 2007-2015, there is a negative relationship between Law and Justice vote share and education level, and it becomes strongest in 2015. (Figure 15) There is a strong positive relationship between Civic Platform vote share and education in 2005-2011; in 2015 the relationship becomes less positive. (Figure 16)

- Between 2005 and 2015, there is a strong relationship between agreeing that it is the role of government in reducing inequalities and the Law and Justice vote; the converse is true for the Civic Platform vote in most years, with the strongest relationship observed in 2005 and 2007. In 2015 the relationship for the Civic Platform is less strong. (Figures 28, 29).

1.2 Czech Republic

Overview: The main feature of the elections in the 2010s was a marked decline in vote shares of the mainstream Left and Right parties. Especially striking is a decimation of the Left in the 2017 elections. These votes largely went to the populist party Ano2011 (the Action of Dissatisfied Citizens), led by Andrej Babis, the current prime minister and the second richest Czech (in this respect, Babis is probably the most similar to Trump in the CE political arena). Note: we don't place Ano2011 on the right-left scale. It is commonly perceived as a centrist party. Babis himself describes it as "a Right-Wing party with social Empathy".

- From the mid-1990s until the 2010, we document a pronounced inverse-U relationship between vote shares for Left and income (the voting for the Left being more prevalent among P10-70) (Fig. 3). In the same period, we document a strong positive relationship between the vote share for Right and income (the voting for the Right being more prevalent among P50-100) (Fig. 4).

- Correspondingly, we find a strong negative difference in the vote share of the top 10% and the bottom 90% incomes for the Left between 1996 and 2013. However, in the 2017 elections, the Left scored equally among the top 10% and the bottom 90% income groups (Figure 19).

- Between 1996 and 2013, Right scored considerably better among the top 10% than among the bottom 90% income group. In 2017, Right score was equal among the top 10% and the bottom 90% (Figure 20).

- Ano2011 owes its darting success to the fact that it has managed to draw voters both from the right and left spectrum (higher-income voters from the Right and lower-to-middle income voters from the Left).

- Voters in the bottom income decile (P0-10) that previously voted for the Left switched to the new (anti-establishment) party Pirates (Pirati); while those that previously voted right seemed to have switched to radical right parties (as Usvit) (Fig.5).

- There is a strong positive relationship between the Right vote share and education (Figs 13 & 24). There is a moderately negative or no relationship between the Left vote share and education (Figs

12 and 23). As for Ano2011, there is a positive relationship between its vote share and education (Figs 14 and 25).

- Czechs are overall positively predisposed towards the redistribution (Fig. 32). Previously, voters in favour of redistribution largely voted Left and those against voted Right (Fig. 30). Consistent with previous findings, there is a switch to Ano2011 among voters of all views (Fig. 31).

2 Voting by income group

2.1 Left-right (Poland)

Figure 1: **LEFT** vote share in parliamentary elections in **Poland** by income group.
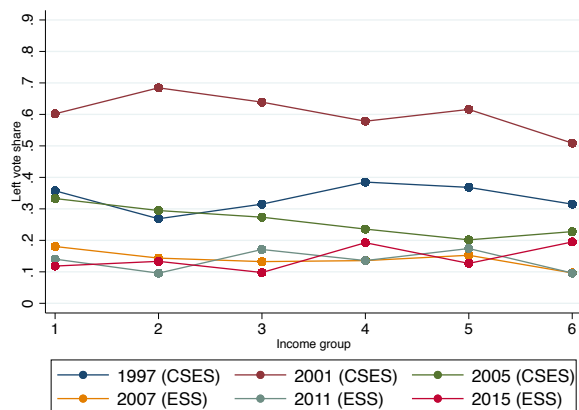
Figure 2: **RIGHT** vote share in parliamentary elections in **Poland** by income group.
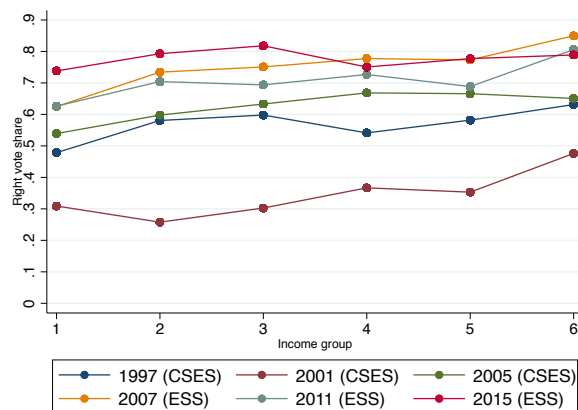
Description: Group 1 is the bottom 10% of household income, groups 2-5 are 10-30, 30-50, 50-70 and 70-90%, while group 6 is the top 10%. Left performed well in 2001 elections, thereafter vote share collapses across all income groups. Slight negative gradient in income in 2001 and 2005. Thereafter, low shares and flat in income. Right positively associated with income in 2001, thereafter becomes flatter - in 2015 not related to income level; right share among 10-30 and 30-50 percentile groups higher than for other income groups.

2.2 Left-right (Czech Republic)

Figure 3: **LEFT** vote share in parliamentary elections in **Czech Republic** by income group.
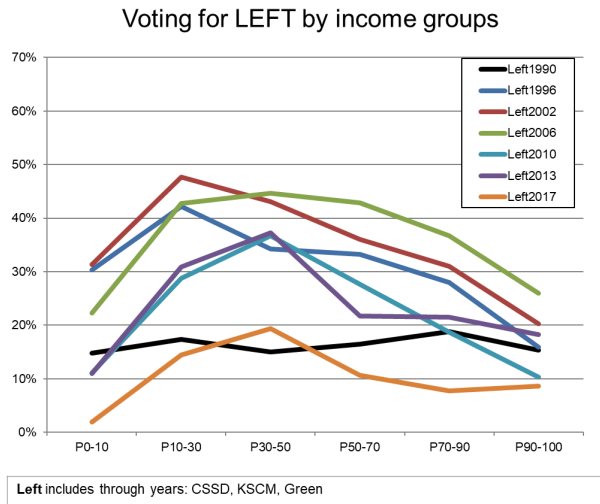
Figure 4: **RIGHT** vote share in parliamentary elections in **Czech Republic** by income group.
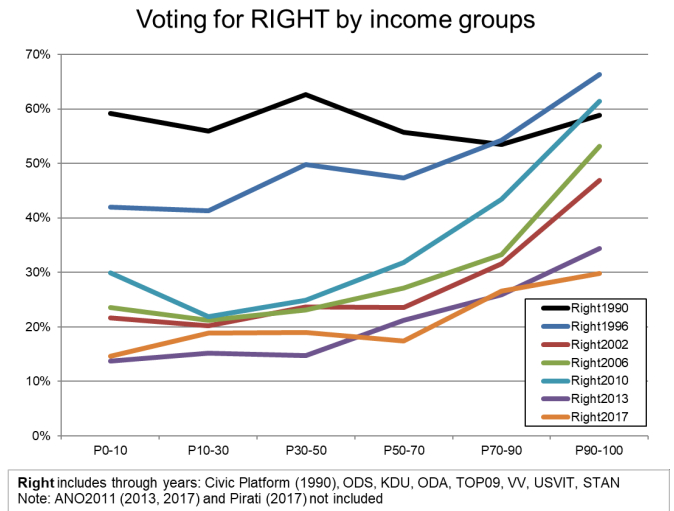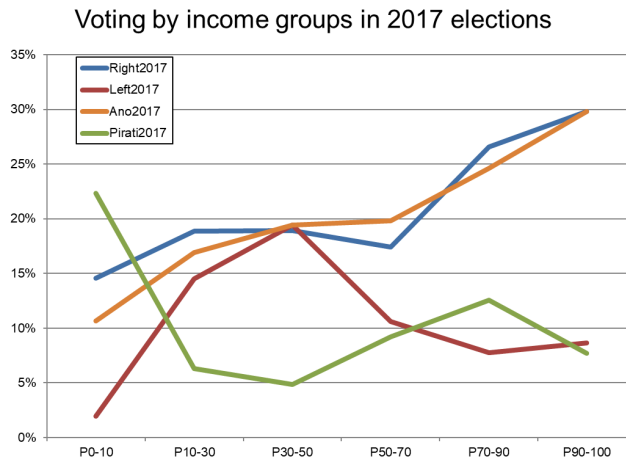

Voting for LEFT by income groups

Left includes through years: CSSD, KSCM, Green

Voting for RIGHT by income groups

Right includes through years: Civic Platform (1990), ODS, KDU, ODA, TOP09, VV, USVIT, STAN
Note: ANO2011 (2013, 2017) and Pirati (2017) not included

Figure 5: Left, Right, ANO and Pirati vote in **Czech Republic 2017 elections**.

Voting by income groups in 2017 elections

2.3 Political party (Poland)

Figure 6: **Law and Justice (conservative right)** vote share in parliamentary elections in **Poland** by income group.
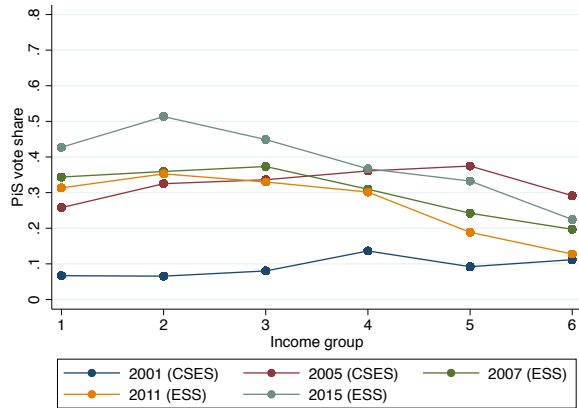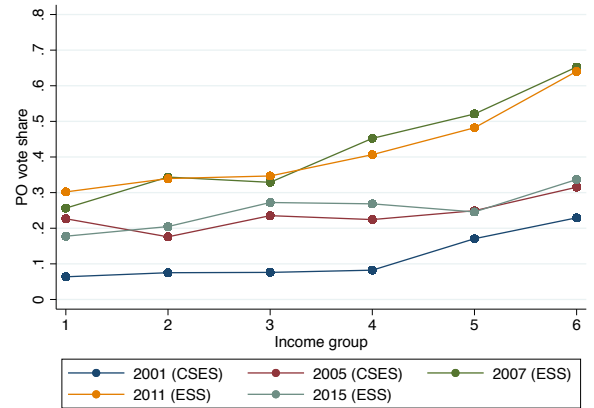
Figure 7: **Civic Platform (liberal right)** vote share in parliamentary elections in **Poland** by income group.

Description: Group 1 is the bottom 10% of household income, groups 2-5 are 10-30, 30-50, 50-70 and 70-90%, while group 6 is the top 10%. In 2001, Law and Justice very modest positive gradient in income, while Civic Platform has a slightly stronger performance in the 70-90 percentile and top 10% groups. In 2007 and 2011 the gradient becomes more positive for Civic Platform, while it becomes negative for Law and Justice from 2007 onwards. Civic Platform positive income gradient falls significantly in 2015.

Figure 8: **SLD (post-communist left party)** + coalition partners vote share in parliamentary elections in Poland by income group.
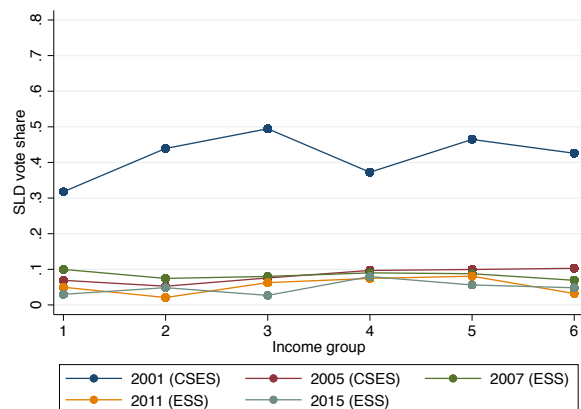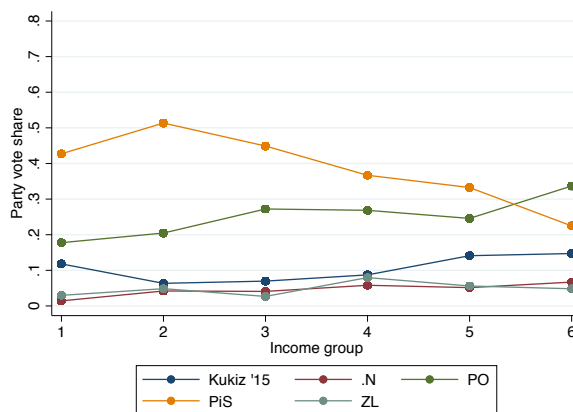
Figure 9: Party vote shares by income groups in 2015 by selected parties.

Description: Income groups defined as above3. Results show SLD and affiliated parties in electoral coalition if they were standing together in a particular election. Strong showing in 2001, thereafter share of vote is in the 5-10% level, with a slight positive gradient in income. In 2001, Law and Justice very modest positive gradient in income, while Civic Platform has a slightly stronger performance in the 70-90 percentile and top 10% groups. In 2007 and 2011 the gradient becomes more positive for Civic Platform, while it becomes negative for Law and Justice from 2007 onwards. Civic Platform positive income gradient falls significantly in 2015.
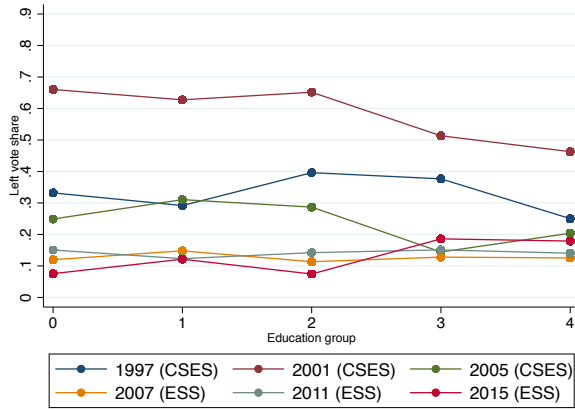
3 Voting by education group

3.1 Left-right (Poland)

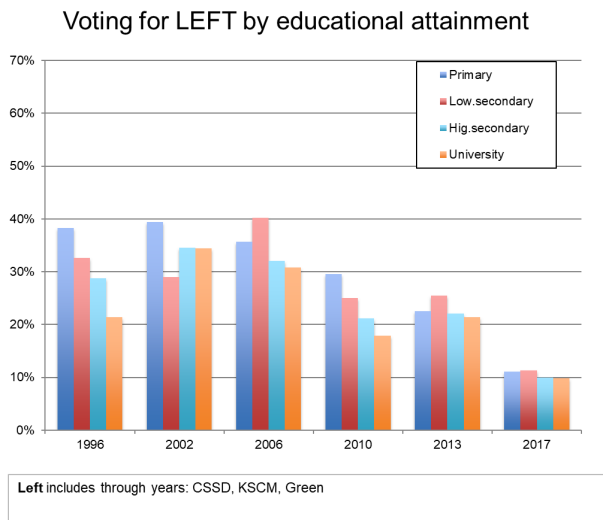## 3.2 Left-right (Czech Republic)

3.3 Political Party (Poland)

Figure 10: **LEFT** vote share in parliamentary elections in **Poland** by education group.

Figure 11: **RIGHT** vote share in parliamentary elections in **Poland** by education group.

Description: Bottom education group includes those with primary education or below, the top group includes those with at least some post-graduate education. Group 1 includes Similar pattern to that for income.

Figure 12: **LEFT** vote share in parliamentary elections in **Czech R.** by education group.
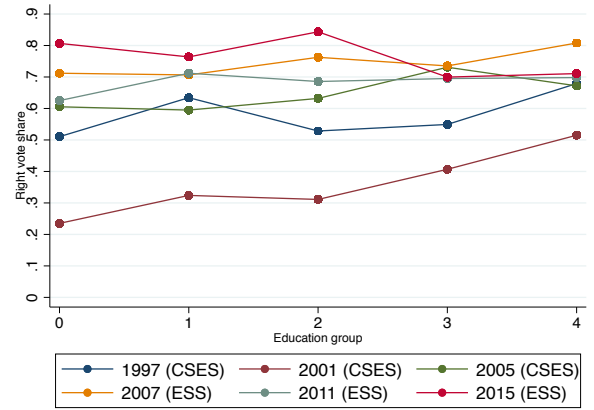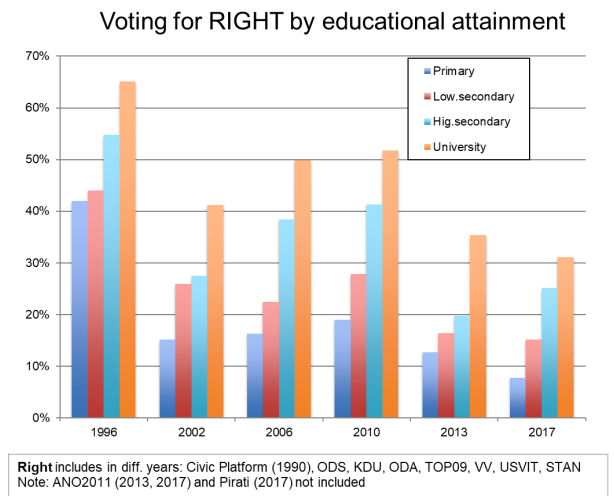
Figure 13: **RIGHT** vote share in parliamentary elections in **Czech R.** by education group.

4 Regression results

4.1 Income

Figure 14: **Party** vote share in parliamentary elections in **Czech R.** by education group.

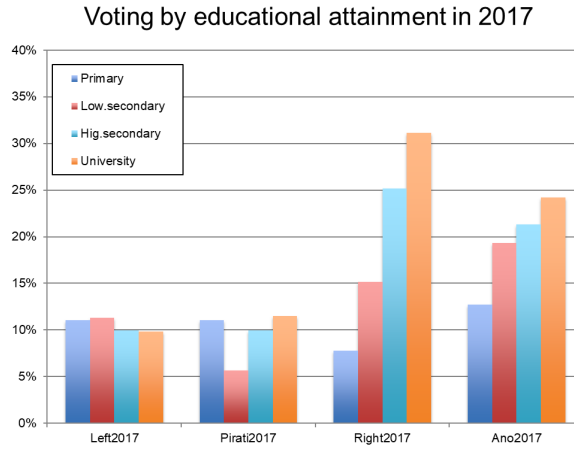Voting by educational attainment in 2017

Figure 15: **Law and Justice (conservative right)** vote share in parliamentary elections in **Poland** by education group.
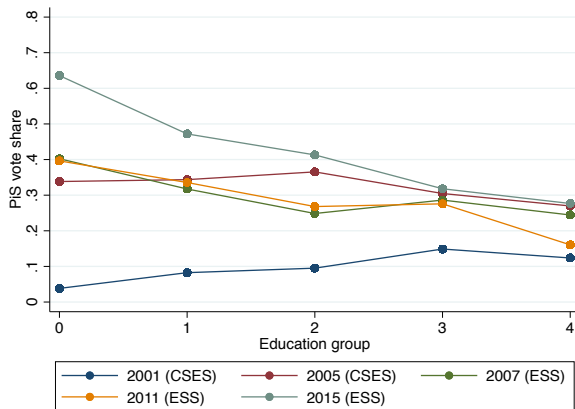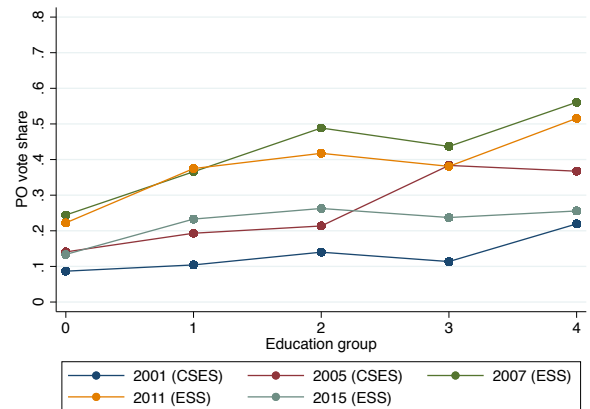
Figure 16: **Civic Platform (liberal right)** vote share in parliamentary elections in **Poland** by education group.

Description: In 2001, Law and Justice very modest positive gradient in income, while Civic Platform has a slightly stronger performance in the 70-90 percentile and top 10% groups. In 2007 and 2011 the gradient becomes more positive for Civic Platform, while it becomes negative for Law and Justice from 2007 onwards. Civic Platform positive income gradient falls significantly in 2015.

4.2   Education

Figure 17: SLD vote share in parliamentary elections in Poland by education group.
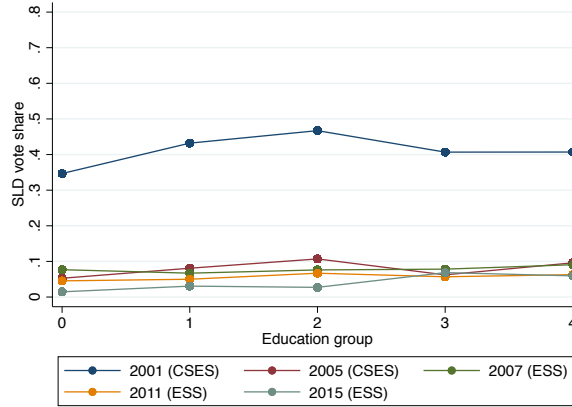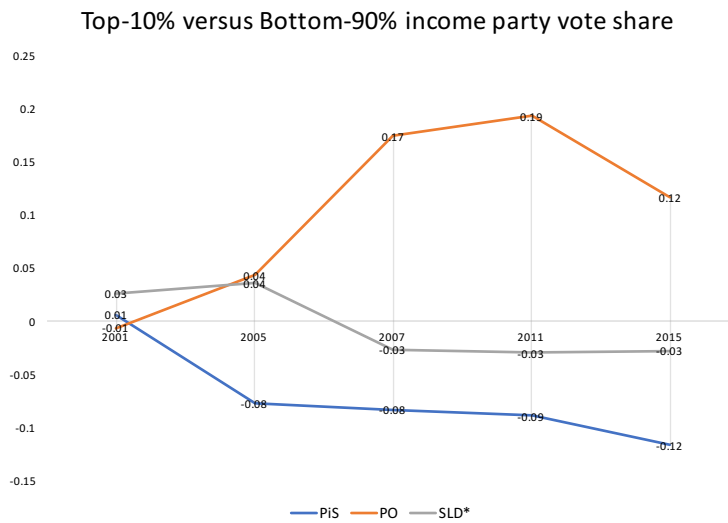

Figure 18: Party vote share in parliamentary elections in Poland (top-10 percent versus bottom-90 percent regression results).

Description: Civic platform becomes significantly over-represented in the top 10% of income in 2007. Strong performance among top 10% relative to the rest of the population continues in 2011, with a decline in 2015. Law and Justice tends to have 10% of the vote than in the rest of the population from 2005 onwards and this is even more pronounces in 2015. SLD fairs better in top 10% in 2001 and 2005 relative to the rest of population, thereafter fairs slightly poorer.

5 Views on inequality and redistributive policies

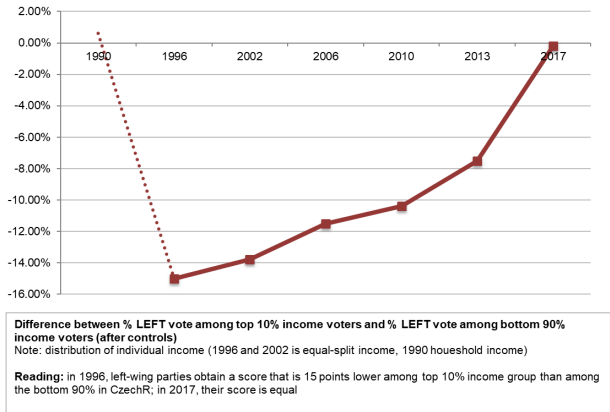Figure 19: Left vote predicted difference for top-10%/bottom 90% after controls for Czech R.

Difference between % LEFT vote among top 10% income voters and % LEFT vote among bottom 90% income voters (after controls)
Note: distribution of individual income (1996 and 2002 is equal-split income, 1990 household income)

Reading: in 1996, left-wing parties obtain a score that is 15 points lower among top 10% income group than among the bottom 90% in CzechR; in 2017, their score is equal

Figure 20: Right vote predicted difference for top-10%/bottom 90% after controls for Czech R.

Difference between % RIGHT vote among top 10% income voters and %RIGHT vote among bottom 90% income voters (after controls)
Note: distribution of individual income (1996 and 2002 is equal-split income, 1990 household income)

Reading: in 1996, right-wing parties obtain a score that is 14 points higher among top 10% income group than among the bottom 90% in CzechR; in 2017, their score is 2.8% higher
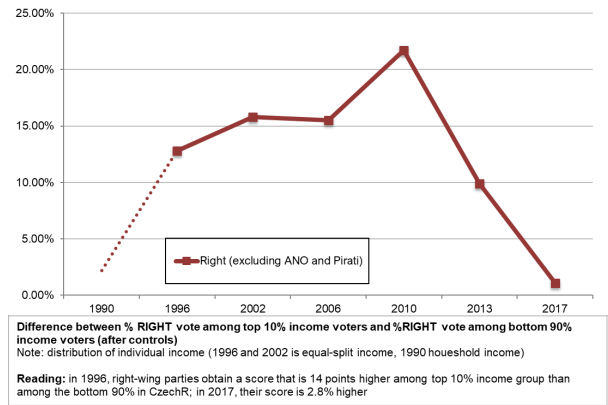
Figure 21: Right vote predicted difference for top-10%/bottom 90% after controls for Czech R. (with and w/o Prati party).

Difference between % RIGHT vote among top 10% income voters and %RIGHT vote among bottom 90% income voters (after controls)
Note: distribution of individual income (1996 and 2002 is equal-split income, 1990 household income)

Reading: in 1996, right-wing parties obtain a score that is 14 points higher among top 10% income group than among the bottom 90% in CzechR; in 2017, their score is 2.8% higher
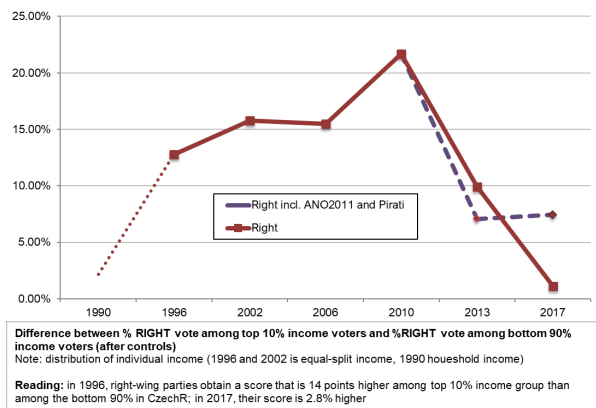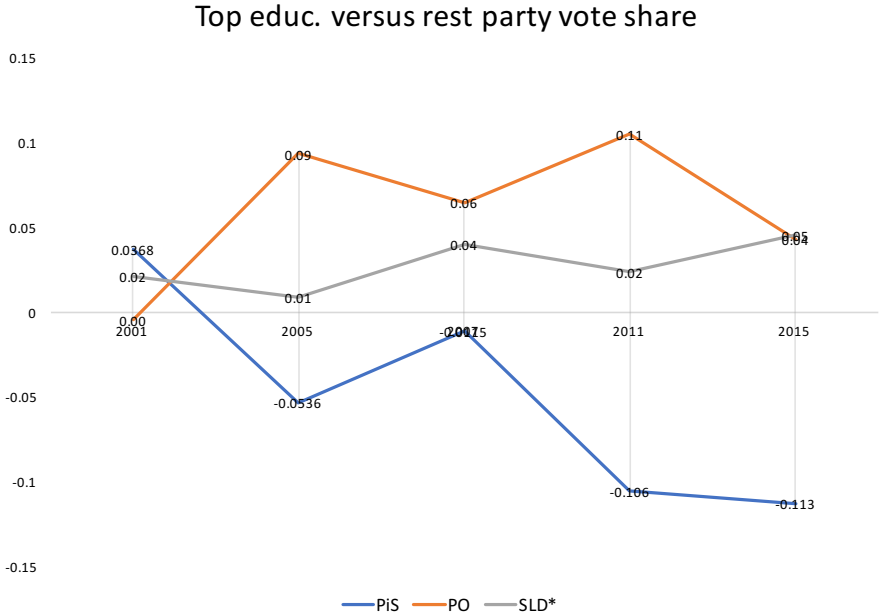
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Figure 22: Party vote share regression results in parliamentary elections in Poland (top education group versus bottom education group regression results).

Top educ. versus rest party vote share

Description: Similar to pattern for income, except that SLD share among top education group relative to rest of population tends to be positive and relative share is similar to Civic Platform in 2015. SLD result includes coalition partners if they ran election in a coalition.

Figure 23: Left vote share regression results in parliamentary elections in Czech R. (top education versus bottom education group).
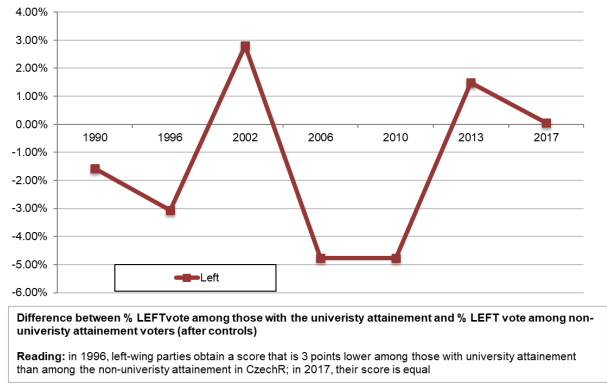

Difference between % LEFTvote among those with the univeristy attainement and % LEFT vote among non-univeristy attainement voters (after controls)

Reading: in 1996, left-wing parties obtain a score that is 3 points lower among those with university attainement than among the non-univeristy attainement in CzechR; in 2017, their score is equal

Figure 24: Right vote share regression results in parliamentary elections in Czech R. (top education versus bottom education group).

Difference between % RIGHT vote among those with the univeristy attainement and % RIGHT vote among non-univeristy attainement voters (after controls)

Reading: in 1996, right-wing parties obtain a score that is 10 points higher among those with university attainement than among the non-univeristy attainement in CzechR; in 2017, their score is 20% higher
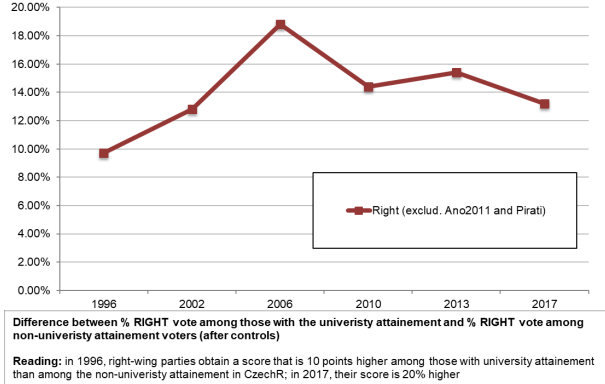
Figure 25: Right vote share regression results in parliamentary elections in Czech R. (top education versus bottom education group, including ANO and Pirati).
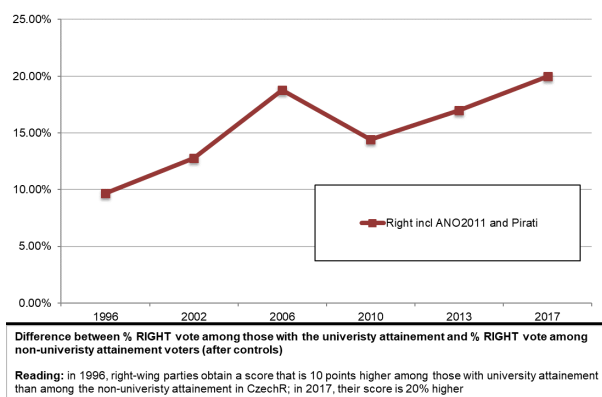

Figure 26: Poland left vote share by preferences for redistribution (Q: Government should reduce differences in income levels. 1 is Agree Strongly, 5 is Disagree Strongly). Fraction of left vote within each response reported.
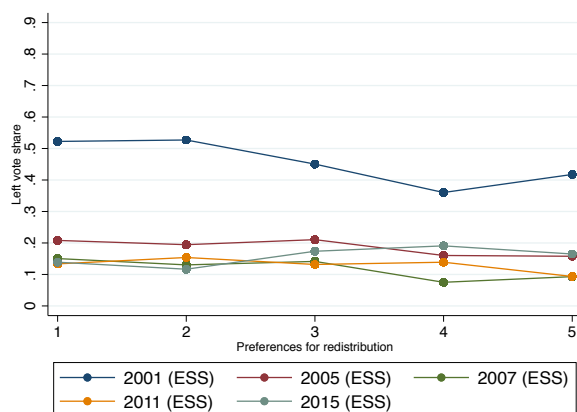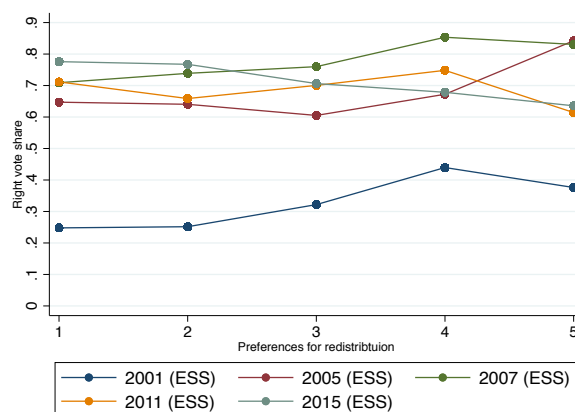

Figure 27: Poland right vote share by preferences for redistribution (Q: Government should reduce differences in income levels. 1 is Agree Strongly, 5 is Disagree Strongly). Fraction of left vote within each response reported.

Figure 28: Poland, Law and Justice vote share by preferences for redistribution (Q: Government should reduce differences in income levels. 1 is Agree Strongly, 5 is Disagree Strongly). Fraction of Law and Justice vote within each response reported.
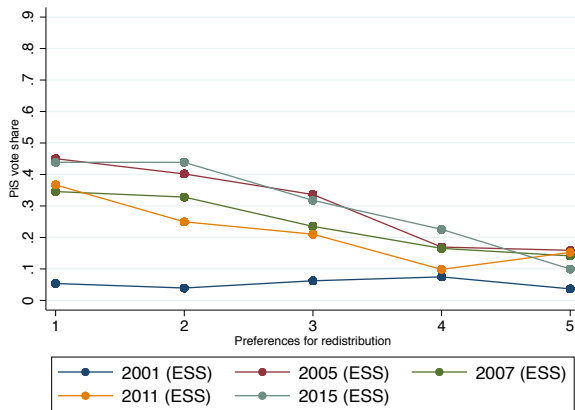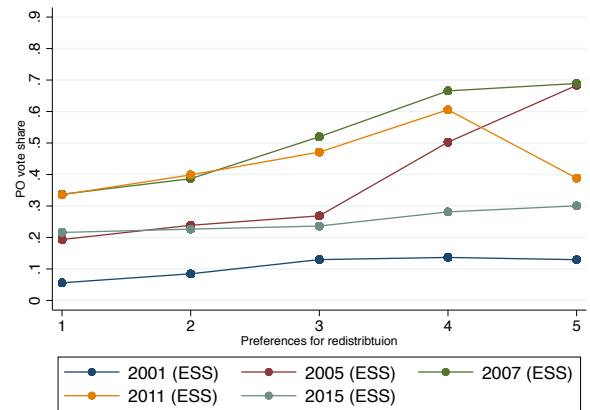
Figure 29: Poland, Civic Platform vote share by preferences for redistribution (Q: Government should reduce differences in income levels. 1 is Agree Strongly, 5 is Disagree Strongly). Fraction of Civic Platform vote within each response reported.

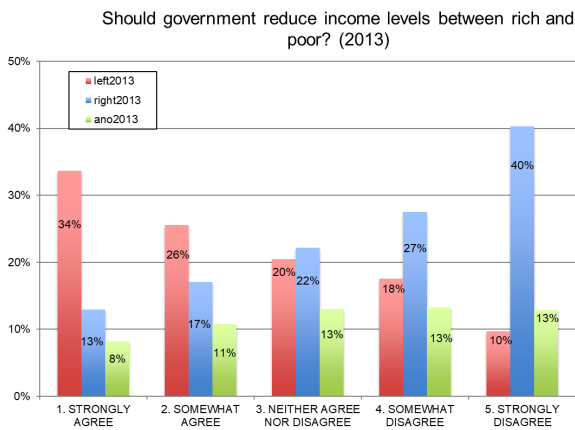Figure 30: Czech R. vote shares for 2013 by preferences for redistribution.

Figure 31: Czech R. left vote shares for 2017 by preferences for redistribution.
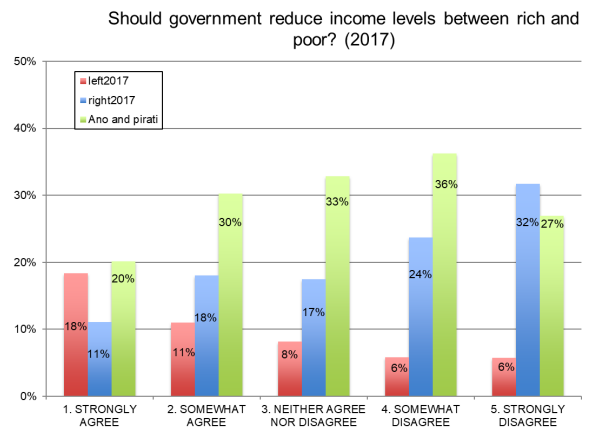

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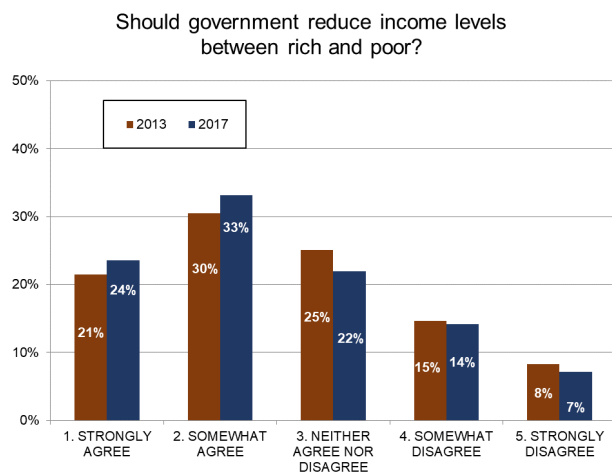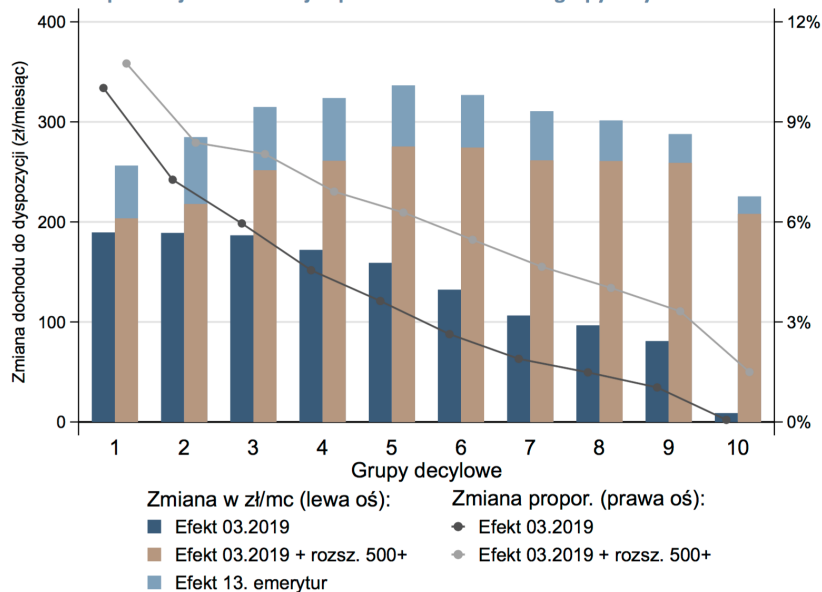Figure 32: Czech R. views on redistribution in 2013 and 2017.

Should government reduce income levels
between rich and poor?

Figure 33: Distributive effect of tax-beneft policies in Poland since the 2015 parliamentary elections.

Description: Vertical axis represents the level in Polish złoty (left axis) or the percentage change (right axis) of existing and proposed policies by income decile. The dark blue bars and dark line represent the effect by decile of policies implemented since the 2015 parliamentary elections until March 2019. The light blue and light brown bars, as well as the light blue line, represent the distributive impact of proposed policies. **Source (Polish):** Myck M., Najsztub M., Oczkowska M., Trzciński K., 2019. Pakiet podatkowo-świadczeniowych rozwiązań rządu Zjednoczonej Prawicy. Raport Przedwyborczy CenEA. **Source (English):** Myck M., Najsztub M., Oczkowska M., Trzciński K., 2019. The tax-benefit policies of the United Right government. CenEA Pre-electoral Report.