

Subjective vs. Objective Proximity in Poland: New Directions for the Empirical Study of Political Representation

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Abstract

While theoretical questions concerning the nature of political representation have long fascinated political scientists of all stripes, the empirical study of political representation has almost exclusively featured studies of stable, established democracies (Miller and Stokes 1963; Barnes 1977; Dalton 1985; Converse and Pierce 1986; Powell 1989). Moreover, left largely unexplored – despite its role as an underlying motivating feature of the whole enterprise – has been the manner in which representation affects the political attitudes and behavior of members of the electorate. We take up precisely this question as we concurrently shift the focus of our study to one of Europe’s most important new democracies: Poland, the largest of the so called new “EU 12”. We introduce a new dataset, the 2005 Polish National Election Study (Polish NES), which was specifically designed to study the topic of political representation. We use the Polish NES to test a wide range of important but relatively unexplored questions concerning the effects of sharing policy positions with political parties. More specifically, we examine whether being closer on issues to a given party increases the likelihood of voting for (or expressing a preference for in the case of non-voters) that party, and whether that effect is stronger for subjective or objective proximity. We also test whether being closer to one’s preferred party is related to feelings of partisanship, consistency in voting patterns, participation in elections, feeling efficacious in regard to the government, and satisfaction with democracy, and we can examine whether this relationship is more important for different versions of objective proximity. We present a variety of findings in the text, but two of the most important are that: (1) smaller perceived distance from a given party (“subjective proximity”) is always correlated with a preference/vote for that party, even when this is not the case using objective measures of the party’s position; and (2) closer proximity to one’s party in both subjective and objective terms is related to more overall satisfaction with the political system, but not necessarily stronger feelings of partisanship or a greater likelihood of participating in the political system through voting.

Introduction

Political representation stands at the crux of democratic theory. Although there are a variety of ways of conceptualizing representation, many of the most important focus on elections, and, consequently, on the relationship between the sovereign people and their elected representatives. Elections allow the sovereign to delegate its power to the representatives; in this way it is a classical Principal-Agent relationship with one collective entity transferring power to another collective entity (parliament) under strictly and broadly accepted rules.

While theoretical questions concerning the nature of political representation have long fascinated political scientists of all stripes, the empirical study of political representation has almost exclusively featured studies of stable, established democracies (Miller and Stokes 1963; Barnes 1977; Dalton 1985; Converse and Pierce 1986; Powell 1989). Moreover, scholars have devoted most of their energy to attempting to measure the general “representativeness” of different political systems. Left largely unexplored – despite its role as an underlying motivating feature of the whole enterprise – has been the manner in which representation affects the political attitudes and behavior of members of the electorate.

We take up precisely this question as we concurrently shift the focus of our study to one of Europe’s most important new democracies: Poland, the largest of the so called new “EU 12”. In doing so, we introduce a new dataset, the 2005 Polish National Election Study (Polish NES), which was specifically designed to study the topic of political representation.¹ Two features of the study are particularly important. First, the Polish NES allows us a wide variety of ways to measure “objectively” where a party stands on particular issues, relying on both a traditional mass-based survey supplemented by a survey of the newly elected members of parliament. Both

¹ Although space prohibits us from exploring earlier Polish National Election Studies in this paper, researchers should note that similar, and in many cases identical, questions were also asked in the 1997 and 2001 Polish National Election Studies as well; see for example Markowski and Tucker 2006.

the masses and the newly elected MPs are surveyed to find where they stand on 13 separate issues using, crucially, the exact same measurement scale. Second, the masses are also asked to place each of the major parties on these scales for a subset of these issues.² As a result, we can also examine citizen's own "subjective" perceptions of how far they stand from their parties across these issues, and compare these subjective assessments with our other more objective measures.

We are thus able to test a wide range of important but relatively unexplored questions concerning the effects of sharing policy positions with political parties. More specifically, we examine whether being closer on issues to a given party increases the likelihood of voting for (or expressing a preference for in the case of non-voters) that party, and whether that effect is stronger for subjective or objective proximity. We also test whether being closer to one's preferred party is related to feelings of partisanship, consistency in voting patterns, participation in elections, feeling efficacious in regard to the government, and satisfaction with democracy, and we can examine whether this relationship is more important for different versions of objective proximity. We present a variety of findings in the text, but two of the most important are that: (1) smaller perceived distance from a given party ("subjective proximity") is always correlated with a preference/vote for that party, even when this is not the case using objective measures of the party's position; and (2) closer proximity to one's party in both subjective and objective terms is related to more overall satisfaction with the political system, but not necessarily stronger feelings of partisanship or a greater likelihood of participating in the political system though voting.

² The elites are also asked to carry out this task, which will be discussed in the text below but which is not featured as prominently in this particular paper.

The remainder of this paper proceeds as follows. In the following section, we consider the theoretical heritage of political representation in an effort to firmly locate the study of the distance between a citizen and his or her political party on an issue scale – otherwise known as a proximity score – in that literature. After brief descriptions of the nature of the questions in the Polish NES that allow us to calculate our various proximity scores and some background information on the 2005 Polish national elections, we then present our hypotheses. The next section presents our empirical findings regarding, first, the relationship between proximity to a given party and support for that party, and then second, the relationship between proximity to one’s preferred party and the five variables of interest specified in the previous paragraph. In the final section, we present a few of the myriad of directions for future research in this regard, including some very preliminary empirical tests of two extensions of our research.

Theoretical Heritage

By now, the basic concept of political representation is relatively clear in the literature, although it has several traditions and discipline-specific approaches. The contemporary theoretical tradition starts with Pitkin’s (1967) classic book *The Concept of Representation*, in which, among other things, she clearly distinguishes the concepts of “standing-for” and “acting-for” representation. In a more nuanced vein, she distinguishes between *formalistic* (conceived of in terms of ‘authorization’ and ‘accountability’), *symbolic*, *descriptive*, and *substantive* “views” (her term) of representation.³ The empirically-oriented tradition of studying political representation most clearly traces its roots back to Miller and Stokes (1963) – featuring their famous “diamond of representation” – and has been fruitfully continued since by numerous

³ For empirically oriented scholars the last two views are of the utmost importance. We are not exception to this rule, and we subsequently explain what we take from Pitkin and why.

scholars in a variety of contexts (e.g., Converse and Pierce 1986; Dalton 1985; Powell 1989; Holmberg and Esaiasson (1989, 1996; Hill, Hinton-Anderson 1995; and Kitschelt et al. 1999).⁴

In both traditions strong assumptions are present as to the essence of the representation process. The simplest way of conceiving this process is to say that representation means for someone who is not present in a given circumstances (e.g., within a legislative body) to have his or her concerns/positions made part of this process – and in this sense somehow “be present” despite one’s absence – by means of some other entity (e.g., a political party) (Pitkin 1967). Consequently, representation entails the following: (a) there are always two entities, one that represents and the other that is represented; (b) the essence of the relationship between them should reveal some form of similarity or resemblance;⁵ (c) ideal types of representation can follow either the *will* of the people (delegate mode of representation) or their *interests* (trustee mode); (d) representatives can focus either on representing *local* (or sectoral) interest or *all-national* ones; and (e) representatives can focus on different “role-segments” (Wahlke and Eulau 1978) including the *party role*, *pressure group role*, or *representational role*.

In multiparty systems with proportional-representation electoral systems, the political behavior of an elected representative is often constrained to a high degree by the party to which he or she belongs; this is commonly referred to as the “Responsible Party Model” (Converse and Pierce 1986; Adams, Merrill, Grofman 2005). In two party systems with single-member districts such as the United States, by contrast, individual representative can often have a lot more freedom to cast votes according to their own preferences (Krehbiel 1998) Thus one of the fundamental challenges in empirically-oriented studies of political representation is that the two

⁴ Note that only the last of these citations includes empirical work from outside of established Western democracies.

⁵ The commonality of this phenomenon across the literature is blurred by the fact that particular authors use fairly different concepts to represent it. *Congruence* and *concurrence* are among the most frequent ones, but Converse and Pierce (1986) talk of “representative bonds”, Powell (1989) – of “citizens control”, Miller and Stokes – of “constituency control”, Dalton (1985) of “dyadic correspondence”, etc.

entities at the heart of the representation process can significantly differ in their ontological status across countries. While the “represented” are always a collective entity, the “representative(s)” might either be individuals (e.g. members of parliament from single member districts) or collective entities such as parties. Moreover, the composition of the group to be “represented” can also be based on different shared characteristics in different political systems (e.g., geographic locations, political allegiance, ethnicity, etc).

Another important matter has always been what – in ontological terms – do we take for the real content of representation? Is it enough to compare voters’ preferences and expectations with the attitudes, preferences and values of the representatives? Or should we be more demanding and compare voters’ preferences to policy outcomes? It is worth noting at this point the existence of an apparently transatlantic divide on this matter. While the American (Anglo-Saxon) tradition often is concerned with policy outputs (Brooks 1985; 1990; Bartels 1991; Petry 1999), the European tradition has been more focused on the preferences and attitudes of the representatives, often in terms of “party issue-positions”, rather than the policy outputs (cf. Miller et al. 1999).⁶ Of course, in the European multiparty systems, where parties are the ultimate representative entities, attempts to measure the “representativeness” of the system thus face the crucial challenge of how best to operationalize the “true (real) party position”.⁷ (As we have noted previously, one of the great strengths of the Polish National Election Study is that it offers a wide range of possibilities of finding this “true” party position; we return to this point in the following section.)

⁶ In Miller and Stokes (1963), the representative side of the diamond is defined by the roll-call behavior of legislators, a phenomenon located, so to say, in the middle of the opinion-policy nexus; the roll-call behavior of legislators is not a real policy output, but also is somewhat far removed from a pure measure of a representative’s attitudes.

⁷ Moreover, even when we can agree on a way of identifying the “true party position”, we must keep in mind that this position is always a mean calculated on the basis of very different positions of either MP’s attitudes or MP’s perceptions. In other words, the “true party position” has a standard deviation and it can be homogeneous or heterogeneous. In real political practice this phenomenon can matter a lot (see Kitschelt et al 1999).

At this point, let us return to Pitkin's distinctions. For the remainder of this paper, we set aside the formalistic and symbolic aspects of representation, but instead concentrate on the "descriptive" mode of representation – the extent to which the representative body resembles the voters, those being represented.⁸ The pure form of descriptive representation is about literal resemblance: does the representative look like, share similar values to, and reveal interests that are important to the ones they represent? This mode of representation is a classical example of 'standing-for' type of representation, and is static in its nature. Consequently, in this paper we are predominantly following the 'acting-for' type of representation, namely the "substantive" mode of representation, which concentrates on whether the representative body advances the policy preferences of interest to the represented. One can evaluate this mode of representation by the extent to which policies pursued by the representative (body) serves the best interests of their constituents. At the very extreme it is about pure, measurable policy outputs; its more moderate version focuses on attempts at policy implementation (cf. Klingemann, Hofferbert, Budge 1994).

In an effort to operationalize this concept, we turn to Achen (1978)'s concept of proximity, which – in Achen's conceptualization – is the empirical manifestation of the "equality" value of democracy and represents the extent to which there are parties located close to different respondents on important matters of policy. While we are not concerned with assessing the relative equality of different political systems in terms of proximity-representation, we use this concept as a starting ground for measuring the variation in "representation" provided by different parties to different citizens, or, concurrently, variation in how represented individual citizens are by their preferred party across different issues. We expand on Achen's basic concept of proximity by adding to it the nuance of *subjective* vs. *objective* proximity. Thus *subjective*

⁸ For more on the extent to which the accountability mechanism, a more formalistic character of representation, functions (or perhaps more aptly struggles to function) in Poland, see Markowski 2002; 2006.

proximity is a measure of the distance between an individual voter's position on an issue and his or her perception of where a given party stands on that issue. In contrast, *objective proximity* refers to how close a voter is to a given party based on some "objective" means of identifying where that party stands; we return in great detail to the various methods of locating this objective placement of the party later in the paper. For now, with these concepts of representation as expressed through proximity in mind, we turn to specific hypotheses about the effects of variation in proximity across individuals.

Hypotheses and Variables

Regardless of how we choose to measure the proximity of a voter to his or her party, we are ultimately interested in this aspect of representation because we believe it has political consequences.⁹ In this section we present six hypotheses for politically relevant factors that we would expect to be affected by representation as expressed through proximity on policy issues. This list is by no means exhaustive, but we feel it does touch on some of the most important of these possible topics.

First and foremost, we would expect proximity to a party on policy issues to increase one's likelihood of voting for that party. Indeed, such an assumption lies at the very essence of proximity based spatial models of voting (Downs 1957; Osborne 1995).¹⁰ More specifically, then we expect that *the shorter the policy distance between a citizen and any given party, the more likely the he or she is to vote for that party* (H1a).¹¹ Of course, restricting our sample to

⁹ This is not to say that it might not be interesting to consider to consider proximity unto itself, for example, by exploring whether the average size of proximity scores vary within a given country either across parties or over time, or, with the appropriate caveats regarding the cross-national comparison of survey data, across countries.

¹⁰ Due to the multiparty nature of Polish politics, we set aside for now directional models of spatial voting (e.g., Rabinowitz and MacDonald 1989), although this would be an interesting topic for future research.

¹¹ We use "policy distance" here as a short hand for proximity on any one issue or some way of summarizing proximity across a number of issues. As will be discussed in the subsequent sections, we will use a variety of

voters excludes many of our respondents. Therefore, a closely related hypothesis of a slightly more general nature would be that *the shorter the policy distance between a citizen and any given party on an issue, the more likely he or she is to prefer that party to other parties* (H1b).¹²

But in addition to vote choice, there are a number of other political attributes we might expect to be influenced by being more proximate to one's party on policy issues. First, we would expect that *the shorter the policy distance between a citizen and his or her preferred party, the more likely he or she will be to express an attachment to that party and the stronger that attachment should to be* (H2). The logic here is fairly straightforward: if there is a policy basis to partisanship (Fiorina 1981; Franklin and Jackson 1983; Achen 1992, 2002b), then we should expect to find more and stronger partisans among those who share policy opinions more closely with their preferred party.¹³ While self-reported partisanship is certainly a very common way to measure partisanship in the political science literature, others have advocated using more behavioral measures of partisanship (Green and Schickler 1993), especially in new democracies (Brader and Tucker 2001). One classic behavioral implication of partisanship is stability in the vote across elections, or repeatedly voting for the same party (Campbell et al. 1960). Thus for the same reasons we also predict that *the shorter the policy distance between a voter and his or*

different ways to measure this policy distance between a respondent's own position on an issues and the position of his or her party (e.g., average of MPs positions, average of a party's electorate's position, subjective evaluation by the respondent of the party's position). We will also use a variety of different combinations of issues to come up with the appropriate average policy distance for an individual.

¹² We code a respondent's preferred party as, in order of priority: the party the respondent voted for if he or she voted; the party a respondent feels "close" to or "closer to than other parties" if he or she did not vote; and finally the party the respondent ranks highest on a likes/dislikes scale if she neither voted nor identified a party to which he or she felt close.

¹³ For the purpose of testing this hypothesis, we code partisanship on a 0-3 scale, where 0 equals no partisanship and 3 equals strong partisanship. We employ the same "close" and "closer to" questions described in the previous footnote to ascertain partisanship. Note the important difference between H1b and H2. In H1b, we are considering all respondents and seeing in each case if people who are closer to party A are more likely to anoint party A as their preferred party. In H2, we are comparing whether people who are closer to *their preferred party* are more likely to describe themselves as a partisan (and as a stronger partisan) than people who farther from *their preferred party*. This will be the style of analysis for H3-H6 as well.

*her preferred party, the more likely he or she will be to have voted for that party in the previous election as well (H3).*¹⁴

We might also expect that *the shorter the policy distance between a respondent and his or her preferred party, the more likely he or she will be to participate in elections (H4).*¹⁵ Here we draw upon arguments such as those advanced in Franklin (2004) suggesting that people are more likely to participate in an election if they care more about the outcome of the election. While there are many reasons why people might care about the outcome of an election, we simply suggest that, *ceteris paribus*, people may be more likely to want to participate in an election if they share more common policy preferences with the party for which they intend to vote than compared to people who are more distant from their preferred party. Of course this is not the only reason why people will choose to participate or not participate in an election, but our goal here – and indeed in all of our hypotheses – is not to provide the definitive explanation for any of these variables of interest, but rather to examine the effects of closer political representation as defined in terms of proximity.

Our final two hypotheses concern overall satisfaction with the political system, a question that is of particular importance in new democracies and in some ways represents the heart of our analyses. Accordingly, we predict that *the shorter the policy distance between a citizen and his*

¹⁴ Readers should note that the Polish NES does not have panel waves across electoral cycles. Thus although we describe this as a behavioral measure, we are in fact relying on a recall of the 2001 parliamentary election vote to create this variable, with all the attendant caveats that invokes. That being said, of the 602 respondents that reported voting in both the 2001 and 2005, over a quarter (27.3%) reported voting for a different party in 2001 than in 2005. Therefore, what we are measuring here is whether a party's newest adherents – those that voted for it for the first time in 2005 – are most distant from the party than its harder core supporters who voted for it in both 2001 and 2005. Ideally, we want to construct this measure in the opposite direction – seeing if those who abandoned the party in 2001 were farther from it on policy grounds – but this would have meant placing the more methodologically suspect recall vote at the center of the analysis.

¹⁵ Electoral participation is coded by taking the mean participation rate (0 = no participation, 1 = participation) across the 2005, 2001, and 1997 parliamentary elections for every election for which the respondent was (a) old enough to vote and (b) willing to respond the question. The result is a variable from 0 – 1 with most answers clustered on 0, .33, .5, .67, and 1.

*or her preferred party, the more he or she will find the political system to be efficacious (H5).*¹⁶

In a related vein, we can predict that *the shorter the policy distance between a citizen and his or her preferred party, the more satisfied he or she will be with democracy in general (H6).*¹⁷

The Polish National Election Study

The Polish National Election Study (PNES) is explicitly designed to facilitate the testing of hypotheses on the topic of political representation generally, and, more specifically, hypotheses relying on proximity scores such as those presented in the previous section. The study actually contains two separate surveys, a standard nationally representative random sample of citizens, as well as a second elite-level survey of members of the newly elected parliament.¹⁸ For both surveys, a substantial part of the questionnaire is devoted to asking respondents about their attitudes and preferences concerning important issues and policy domains. As these questions are identical across both the mass and MP surveys and employ the same numerical scales, we can smoothly compare positions generated from either of the two surveys.¹⁹ The 2005 Polish NES design includes questions concerning 13 such issues/policy domains.²⁰

¹⁶ We measure political efficacy by combining two variables, one which asks respondents whether they think who governs matters, and the other which questions the extent to which they believe that “people like me” don’t have any say in what the government does.

¹⁷ We measure satisfaction with democracy on a 1-4 scale, with 1 = most satisfied with democracy and 4 = least satisfied with democracy.

¹⁸ The fieldwork took place between September 27 and October 8, 2005, by CBOS polling institute. The sample is a random one based on PESEL system (All-National Electronic System of Citizens Census), representative for the adult population of Poland. The response rate was 55.9%. The final N = 2402.

¹⁹ Thus there is a strong contrast between our approach to measuring the positions of parties on issues and studies that rely on either codings of political party programs, role-call votes, or expert surveys not explicitly designed in conjunction with election studies to ascertain the position of parties. In all of these alternative cases, the measurement scale for positions of parties will differ from the measurement scale for the positions of their electorates. In contrast, our approach uses an identical measurement scale for measuring the position of MPs and their electorates.

²⁰ These were: 1/ policy towards crime, 2/ privatization of state owned enterprises, 3/ the role of the church and religion in the state and public domain, 4/ accountability for communist past, 5/ unemployment policy, 6/ tax policy, 7/ the EU membership issue, 8/ the scope of the social safety net, 9/ agricultural subsidies, 10/ foreign investment in Poland, 11/ decrease in birth rate and de-population of Poland, 12/ abortion policy, 13/ immigration policy.

A crucial additional feature of the design is that the masses were also queried on the positions of the five major parties in the 2005 election across four of the thirteen issues. Importantly, these issues were selected because they tapped into at least one of the three main axes of competition in the Polish party system, which are: (i) *economic*: populist left vs. liberal pro-market dimension; (ii) *socio-symbolic*: (anti-communist) religious fundamentalism vs. secular liberalism), and (iii) *socio-cultural*: nationalist-parochialism vs. cosmopolitan openness. In *ex-post* analyses of the data, the four selected issue/policy domains were indeed among the most important components of factor analyses that create these dimensions of competition. “Tax policy” and “privatization policy” load the economic dimension, “communist past issue” is strongly correlated with two religious-related questions - the role of the Church and abortion – and thus depicts the socio-symbolic dimension. Finally, the socio-cultural dimension is tapped by the issue of EU membership, which is in itself is an important mega-policy domain in a new member state such as Poland.

By taking these two surveys in combination with one another, we have a variety of means by which we can calculate an “objective” measure of where the party stands. By focusing on the elite survey, we can place the “objective” measure of the party’s stance at the mean score given by that party’s MPs when asked where they personally stand. Alternatively, we can treat the MPs as experts, and take the mean value that all MPs gave when they were asked where they thought that particular party stood on an issue (recall MPs were all asked to place parties on issues dimensions as well). We can even modify this further, by taking only the mean value of where representatives of a given party placed their own party (but note how this is different from the average of where they placed themselves). We can use the electorate in a similar manner. A party’s position could be the mean of its supporters in the electorate on a given issue. Or it could

be the mean position assigned to it by the entire electorate, or the mean position assigned to it by its own electorate. When we add in the subjective proximity measure from taking the distance between one's own position and the position one individually assigns to one's party, that yields seven different ways to measure proximity scores: three ways using objective scores from the MP survey; three ways using objective scores from the mass-survey; and the subjective scores. In an effort to keep the presentation of results thorough but concise, we report results using one "objective-MP" score (the distance between an individual and the mean placement of the MPs of his or her party); one "objective-electorate" score (the distance between an individual and the mean placement of supporters of his or her party); and the subjective proximity score. Choosing these particular variations of the MP and electorate objective scores also allows us to maximize the number of issues in the analysis, as both can be calculated across all 13 issues.²¹

The 2005 Polish National Elections

Before moving on to the empirical tests of H1-H6 afforded by the Polish NES, we briefly present an overview of the political situation in Poland at the time of the 2005 national elections. To begin, the one word that can best describe the workings of the Polish party system since the collapse of communism is instability. Politicians and parties seem to change, merge, and disappear every four years. It is not unheard of to have major politicians that have been in the leadership of four to five different parties, and, in fact, the only party in place since 1991 in its current form is the Polish Peasant Party (PSL). As a consequence, many voters either exit altogether by deciding not to participate in elections (the 2005 parliamentary election had a

²¹ Although we have not looked at every possible iteration of every analysis, we have explored many of them by now and it is our best assessment that similar substantive results would have been returned had we reported versions of the analysis featuring the other objective proximity scores. The bigger differences appear to be across the three categories (subjective, objective from the MP survey, and objective from the electorate survey) than within the two individual categories, but we invite interested readers to explore this in more detail on their own.

turnout of only 40.5%) or switch their party preferences from election to election (in many cases because the party they voted for in the previous election no longer exists). Such patterns contribute to Poland's astronomic voter volatility index (Pedersen 1979), which is comparable only to the worst cases from Latin America, such as Bolivia, Brazil, and Ecuador during their first years after transition to democracy.²²

Now, in search of minor indications of stability, one may claim that in the 2005 election – for the first time in Polish democratic history – the same six parties made it into the parliament as in the previous, 2001, election. These were: Law and Justice (Prawo i Sprawiedliwość, PiS), Civic Platform (Platforma Obywatelska, PO), Self-Defense of the Republic of Poland (Samoobrona Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej, SRP), Social-Democracy (Socjaldemokracja, SLD), the League of Polish Families (Liga Polskich Rodzin, LPR) and the Polish Peasant Party (Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe, PSL). In terms of their electoral support they received 26.99%, 24.11%, 11.41%, 11.31%, 7.97%, and 6.96% of the vote, respectively. In terms of ideological or programmatic labels, PiS was a conservative party with visible populist and moderate nationalist leaning. PO ought to be classified as “liberal-right” party, SRP, as populist-left radical, SLD as a classical social-democratic “middle of the road” party by European standards, LPR as a radical nationalist-xenophobic one, and PSL as a classical peasant-people's party. After the election, the government – after a prolonged period of negotiations – was quite unexpectedly formed by PiS and two radical populist/xenophobic allies of theirs – SRP and LPR.

Two weeks after the parliamentary elections, the presidential elections took place. As no candidate crossed the 50% threshold in the first round, a second round was held with only the

²² Between the 2001-2005 elections its aggregate figure (gross volatility) was at 38% and its individual one (net volatility) at 63%! Even more surprising is the 26% (gross) and 28% (net) between-bloc volatility, meaning that more than one-fourth of the population changed its support across the two big ideological camps.

two front-runners. The ultimate winner was Lech Kaczyński (PiS), the twin brother of the leader of PiS, Jarosław Kaczyński.²³

Empirical Analyses

Before presenting the results of our empirical tests of the hypotheses, we need to note some important features of our data. First, across almost every issue area, when we calculate the average self-placement of MPs by party and the average self-placement of the masses by party, the party positions generated from the mass data are more tightly bunched with one another. Put another way, there appears to be more partisan division between MPs than between the masses. See, for example, Figure 1, which plots the average positions of MPs (by their party) and the masses (by their preferred party) on the issue of Poland's relationship to the EU.

-- INSERT FIGURE 1 ABOUT HERE --

We can note that although the masses and the MPs line up in almost the same direction, the distance between the positions of the parties generated from the self-placement of MPs is greater than the distance between the positions of the parties generated from the self-placement of the masses.²⁴ As a consequence, average objective-MP proximity scores are always larger than average objective-electorate proximity scores.²⁵

-- INSERT TABLE 1 ABOUT HERE --

Second, Poles do not assign the same level of importance to all 13 of the issue areas about which they were queried in the 2005 Polish NES. As noted previously, respondents were also asked to rank the importance (or salience) of each issue on a 0-10 scale. As shown in Table 1, the relative salience of an issue turned out to be largely independent of respondents' partisan

²³ For more on the presidential election, see Markowski 2006.

²⁴ This finding confirms that a continuing pattern in this regard in Poland – and in other Central European countries – that was previously noted in Kitschelt et al. (1999).

²⁵ See Table 2 later in this section.

preferences, especially among the most salient issues.²⁶ Across the electorates of all six major parties, the highest average salience for an issue is always found for unemployment, followed by crime, and then, for four of the six parties, by taxes.²⁷ It is interesting to note that with the exception of tax policy, these issues do not overlap with the four issues for which we have subjective measures of party placement by respondents (the other three are privatization, policies towards former members of the communist regime, and relations with the EU).²⁸

This brings us to the question of how to assign a single proximity score for each respondent to their party. We need such a summary measure for our analysis, but the data are in the form of measurements across 13 individual issues for the objective measures and 4 individual issues for the subjective measures. In order to best balance between a variety of tests and still presenting concise and interpretable results, we report three different ways of summarizing the “average” proximity a respondent has to his or her party for our two objective (MP-objective and electorate-objective) proximity scores.²⁹ Our first method is to take the average proximity score across all 13 issue areas. This has the advantage of using all of our available data, and thus should provide the most complete picture of the extent to which a party is close to one of our respondents. We will call this the All-13 (or A13) measure of proximity. However, by simply averaging across all issues, we are essentially assigning equal weight to issues that we think respondents value differently. Thus our second measure takes the average of the proximity

²⁶ There is more notable variation in the relative salience of issues at the bottom end of the salience spectrum.

²⁷ The exceptions are the Peasant’s Party, where the average salience of agriculture (8.51) barely exceeded tax (8.47), and Self-Defense, the other party that caters towards peasants, where agriculture (8.36) and social-welfare policy (8.48) were both slightly higher than taxes (8.20).

²⁸ In particular, problems of de-communization and of the communist past, is one of the least salient issues according to Polish voters. Nevertheless, it turns out to be one of the most influential factors when it comes to analyzing Poles’ voting behavior (see Markowski 2002).

²⁹ Given the number of moving pieces that are already present in our analysis, we limit ourselves here to analyzing variants of the raw proximity score, in other words the actual distance between a respondent’s self-placement on an issue and the placement of his or her party (by whatever of the various methods we choose to place the party). We could have also varied the way in which we measured that distance by taking the squared value of the distance, or attempted to create new summary proximity measures on the basis of factor analyses. Both represent interesting future avenues of research, but are beyond the scope of this current paper.

scores from only the three most important issues as determined by the Polish electorate as a whole: unemployment, crime, and tax; we will call this the Top-3 (or T3) measure of proximity.³⁰ This can serve to counter-balance our fear that by using all 13 issue areas in our first summary measures, we are somehow introducing too much noise to the analysis by including low salience issues in the analysis. For our third measure, we calculate the average proximity across the four issue areas for which we can also calculate subjective proximity scores; we call this measure the Subjective-4 (or S4) proximity measure. In doing so, we take advantage of the fact that these four issues were featured in the Polish NES precisely because they were intended to capture the major dimensions of Polish political competition, as we have discussed previously. Thus the S4 measure allows us both to have the most appropriate objective proximity scores to compare with our subjective proximity scores (for other measures, we might be concerned that differences are stemming from the inclusion of different issue areas as opposed to the different type of proximity scores), and to examine the effect of representation on a set of proxy issues for the most important dimensions of political competition without the noise that comes from including all 13 issues. Table 2 therefore summarizes the different proximity scores we employ in our empirical analyses by the sample of respondents (only voters vs. all supporters of a party), type of proximity scores (objective-MP, objective-electorate, and Subjective), and issue areas included in the summary measure (all 13 (A13), the top 3 by salience (T3) and the four issues included in the subjective analyses as well (S4)).

³⁰ An alternative to this approach would be to use individual level salience scores to weight each individual's average score separately. However, this introduces two other serious methodological challenges for the analysis: how best to weight the proximity scores by salience and how to deal with missing data in the salience scores. Both of these questions could lead to a variety of different ways of calculating the proximity scores, which would lead to a host of new analyses to report. Thus the method we have chosen for this paper, while certainly more crude, has the advantage of being conceptually simple and not requiring multiple different versions of the analysis; by relying on the salience expressed by the electorate as a whole, we also can neatly side-step the problem of missing data. We did, however, carry out a number of analyses (not reported here) using one version of weighting by salience, and it led to the same results as we will present with our cruder variable: generally less empirical support for our hypotheses when we focus more on high salience issues. We return to this point in the final section of the paper.

-- INSERT TABLE 2 ABOUT HERE --

With all of these factors in mind, let us reiterate the anticipated direction of the relationship we expect to find for each of our hypotheses based on how our variables are coded. In all cases, an increase in distance between the position of an individual and his or her party results in a higher proximity score. Therefore, For H1a and H1b, where the vote choice/party preference is coded as a dummy variable (0 if the party is not one's preferred party and 1 if it is), we expect to find a negative relationship between the size of the proximity score and party preference (e.g., as the proximity score gets smaller, one is more likely to support the party). Similarly, for H2 (strength of identification with a party) H3 (participating in elections) and H5 (efficacy of the political system), we also expect negative relationships between proximity and our measures of these variables. However, support for democracy is coded in a manner where support decreases from 1 – 4, and thus we expect a positive relationship between proximity scores and support for democracy in H4. Additionally, volatility is coded as a dummy variable for people who have switched parties, and therefore we again in this instance expect a positive relationship (people who are closer to their party have lower proximity scores and are predicted to be more likely to be coded as “0”, or a non-switcher).

Finally, we want to explicitly note that in the following sections we will be reporting bivariate correlation coefficients as opposed to regression coefficients from more fully specified multivariate regression models. We do so in the spirit of Achen (2002a), who stresses the importance of careful empirical analysis of the relationship between variables, especially in the initial stages of research projects. Our goal in this in paper is not to produce fully specified models that can explain the phenomena of voter turnout or satisfaction with democracy; such tasks would require completely separate papers of their own. Rather, we seek to make

comparisons about the relationship of one variable – proximity on policy issues between citizens and the parties that are elected to represent them – to a series of important political outcomes and behaviors across a wide range of ways to conceptualize and measuring that variable. If we were to attempt to carry out these comparisons in the context of more fully specified multivariate models, we would by necessity have to include different control variables in different models: the same model can not be expected to explain turnout, partisanship, and satisfaction with democracy. Thus, paradoxically, the more sophisticated analysis would complicate our primary goal of making legitimate comparisons across our different hypotheses. Moreover, once we begin to introduce theoretically relevant control variables, the number of different versions of models we can run with such variables is large, thus further complicating what is already a complex analysis with many moving pieces. Research involves trade-offs between different facets of complexity and thoroughness; in this paper we have elected to keep the statistical analysis simple as we consider a wide range of ways to measure our core concept – proximity – and its relationship to multiple variables of interest.³¹

Proximity and Voting

We turn first to H1a and H1b, which predict that the shorter the distance between a respondent and his or her party, the more likely he or she should be to vote for/support that party. Table 3 presents the correlation between a respondent’s distance from the party at the top of the column and whether or not that respondent voted for that party (coded as a 0 for no and 1 for yes) in the first column under each party (“vote”), and whether or not the respondent supports

³¹ It is also important to remember that like regression analysis, the analysis of correlation in a representative data set absent an explicitly experimental design can never conclusively determine the direction of the causal arrows between two variables. We have theoretical reasons for expecting that the causal arrow is indeed in one direction – more so in the case of some of our hypotheses than others – but for now we are seeking only to illuminate the correlation between sets of politically relevant variables.

that party (coded as a 0 for no and 1 for yes) in the second column under each party (“pro”). Recall from the earlier discussion of the coding of the supporter variable (see note 13) that the supporter (now “pro” on the table) category includes all voters for that party *plus* non-voters for whom we can attribute a party preference. The sample includes all respondents in the data-set for whom we can calculate a proximity score.

-- INSERT TABLE 3 HERE --

The first conclusion to be drawn from this table is probably the single most important finding of this paper. The spatial model of voting holds across all parties, but only in so far as it is people’s own personal beliefs about their distance from their party that matters. This is not at odds with the spatial model of voting, but it does have consequences for how we think about political representation. Put another way, we always find a strong, statistically significant correlation between lower *subjective* proximity scores and the likelihood of voting for or supporting a given party, but this is not always the case for *objective* proximity scores.³² This conclusion holds no matter what form of objective proximity score we compare to the subjective proximity scores. As noted previously, the most appropriate comparison is between the subjective proximity scores and objective-S4 proximity scores, but we would draw the same conclusion using the objective-A13 or objective-T4 proximity scores. Voters and supporters of parties always believe that they are closer to their preferred party than people who do not support that party, but objectively speaking, this is not always the case.

A second important observation that we can make from Table 3 is that there are very real difference across the six parties. Perhaps most notably, Civic Platform (PO) supporters have by far the most consistent and strongest relationship between their preference to support their party

³² Due to the cost of collecting subjective ranking of parties across issue areas, the Polish NES only asks respondents to place five parties on the issues scales. Thus we do not have subjective proximity scores for PSL.

and their proximity to their party on policy issues. Strikingly, this conclusion holds no matter what measurement of proximity we use: in every row of Table 3, the correlation coefficients for PO are always the largest and are always statistically significant at even a $p < .001$ level.³³

Conversely, there is almost no support for H1a or H1b for any of the objective proximity measures for two parties (Self-Defense (SRP) and the Peasant's Party (PSL)), and at best only very tepid support in the case of a third (the Democratic Left Alliance (SLD)). Since the spatial model of voting rests on the basic assumption that people ought to support parties that share similar positions on issues, it seems worthwhile to pause for just a moment to consider possible explanations for these findings. While in general Poland's parties are not considered nearly as personalistic as, for example, Russia's were considered to be in the 1990s (Miller et al. 2000; Miller and Klobucar 2000), the one clear exception is SRP and its leader, Andrzej Lepper. So it is possible that people chose to vote for SRP largely because of its leader, sometimes at the expense of congruence on issues. Indeed, such a conclusion goes along nicely with the fact that Lepper himself drew approximately twice as many votes in the presidential election as SRP did in the parliamentary election (2.26 million for Lepper as a presidential candidate compared to only 1.35 million for SRP in the parliamentary election). SLD, by contrast, should have been among the best known parties, given its relative permanence in Polish politics and its status as a communist successor party. However, elsewhere one of us has argued that the identity of communist successor parties can tend to be "sticky", with voters supporting the party because of its communist roots without relation to the policies that it has followed in the post-communist era, especially in regard to economic issues (Tucker 2006). If this is still the case with SLD –

³³ Moreover, this pattern can be found on an issue by issue basis as well. For example, when we examine the correlation between the Objective-MP proximity scores and each of the 13 issues individually, we find 8 issues for PO supporters where the correlation is at least $-.10$ and $p < .001$; for no other party can we find more than 3 issues that meet these criteria individually, and for two of the parties there are none. Results are available from the authors upon request.

and it is one of Central Europe's most reformed post-communist parties – then it might explain a lack of congruence between the party and its supporters, particularly on economic issues.³⁴

PSL is a bit harder to understand. As a peasant's party, one might expect that congruence on agricultural issues would trump all other issues, and thus lead to the findings in Table 3 (note that neither the T3 or S4 summaries include the agricultural issue). However, somewhat inexplicably there is no correlation between support for the PSL and being close to the PSL on the agricultural issue using either the objective-MP or objective-electorate measures; nor is there any correlation between supporting the PSL and being close to the PSL on any other single issue for that matter.

There are a number of other useful observations we can make on the basis of Table 3 regarding the multiple variants of measures and samples that we have used to generate these results. First, there is no substantively meaningful difference between the findings generated relying solely on voters (the first column for each party), or on all supporters (the second “pro” column for each party). While in some ways this is not too surprising because voters make up a substantial portion of the supporters category, it is interesting that there is no dilution effect from including people who lean towards a party but could not be bothered to go and vote for that party in the analysis. Apparently, the act of voting itself does not force a reconsideration of the issues to ensure that one is choosing the party closest to oneself on the issues; whatever process makes this be (or not be) the case appears to be independent of casting a vote.³⁵ This finding of similarity between results limited to voters and those including all supporters remains in the following section, so for the sake of conciseness we will present only the results from the more

³⁴ And indeed, the two specific issues on which there seems to be stronger congruence between the objective position of the SLD and its supporters are on attitudes towards the role of ex-communist officials (nomenklatura), and abortion, both of which are unrelated to economic policies.

³⁵ We say apparently because in order to test this claim more fully, we would need to split the data into voters and non-voters, which we have not done in Table 3. It remains an interesting topic for future consideration.

general supporter category for the remainder of the paper.³⁶ Similarly, there is not much difference in our results across the two objective proximity categories, and certainly nothing that would change our substantive conclusions. While we do find higher correlations between objective-MP proximity across all 13 issues areas than for objective-electorate proximity (at least for the three parties for which we have conclusive positive findings: PiS, PO, and LPR), the difference in magnitudes does not change our conclusions regarding whether the effect is or is not present. Moreover, we do not find similarly consistent differences between the two forms of objective proximity when considering either the T3 or S4 measures to summarize proximity across issues.

On the contrary, though, there is a fairly consistent pattern – although it is not exclusively present – that the weakest relationship between proximity and vote/preference among the different ways of summarizing proximity scores is found when we restrict ourselves to the top 3 issues by salience (T3). This can be most clearly seen by looking at the results from PiS and LPR, which generate fairly clear support using the objective measures for H1a and H1b when using either all 13 issues (A13) or the four issues that were taken to be representative of the major cleavages in Polish politics (S4). This support largely disappears, however, when we use the T3 measure. We will return to this distinction again in the following section.

Proximity and Other Political Attributes

Having considered the relationship between proximity and preference for a given party, we now explore whether being more proximate to one's preferred party affects partisanship,

³⁶ In the following section, our analysis dictates that we only include people for whom we can identify a party with which they can be linked, so the analyses focusing only on voters have a lower N (e.g., by definition there are fewer voters than supporters, since the later category includes the former plus additional respondents). Thus the desire to avoid needlessly deleting data (see King et al. 2001 for concerns in this regard) led to our choice to report the supporter results as opposed to the voter results. That being said, the results continue to be nearly identical to the tests using only voters.

turnout, and general satisfaction with the political system in the manner specified previously in H2-H6. (Note that as we are now looking at proximity to one's preferred party, the sample is now limited to those for whom we can identify a preferred party.) The results of these analyses are presented in Table 4; note that we have included the predicted direction of each correlation coefficient at the top of each column.

-- INSERT TABLE 4 ABOUT HERE --

The first observation to be made regarding these results concerns the near uniformity of effects in the correctly predicted direction. For every single coefficient on this table that is statistically significant at a level of $p < .05$, the coefficient is in the correctly predicted direction. Indeed, there are only two coefficients on the entire table that are in the wrong direction, neither of which is statistically meaningful. So to the extent that proximity to one's party has an effect upon the political attributes we identified in H2-H6, it is in the manner that we would expect.

Second, the primacy of subjective proximity we observed when examining party preference is no longer in place. Indeed, when we directly compare the objective-MP proximity scores from the 4 issues (S4) that we use to calculate the subjective proximity scores, we find that the correlations are either as strong or stronger than the correlations using the subjective proximity scores. This is not to say that there is not a correlation between subjective proximity and our five variables of interest, but only that it is not uniformly more apparent than the objective measures of proximity, as was the case in choosing a party.

Third, unlike in the previous section, here we find a clear difference between the objective-MP proximity scores and the objective-electorate proximity scores. While we still do not have any patterns that suggest one set of objective proximity scores work better in certain cases and the other in other cases, we can certainly note that we get much stronger results while

using objective-MP proximity scores than the objective-electorate proximity scores. Almost across the board, whenever there is a difference between the two, the stronger correlation can be found using the objective-MP proximity scores. One reason this might be the case is that we might expect voters to have a better sense of where their party leaders stand on issues than their fellow supporters of a given party. Put another way, it is easier to imagine a voter leaving the polling place frustrated with democracy because she just cast a vote for a party that she knows differs from her across many issues than because she thinks that supporters of that party differ from her on many issues.³⁷

With these results in mind, we can now turn to assessing the support for H2-H6. Again, a relatively clear pattern emerges. Strong, consistent support can be found for the two hypotheses focusing on satisfaction with the new political system (H5 and H6). Across almost all of our measures, we find that closer proximity to one's party on policy issues correlates with a greater belief in the efficacy of government and more satisfaction with democracy at a $p < .01$ level.³⁸ Thus much as theories of political representation would predict, people who are "represented" by a political party are happier with the functioning of the political system. This is notable for three reasons. First, we have demonstrated this to be the case outside of the purview of the established democracies on which theories of political representation have previously been developed and tested. Second, we have shown that this conclusion holds across a wide variety of different theoretically informed ways to measure proximity. Third, it operates in highly chaotic,

³⁷ Note that this in some ways goes against the grain of Green et al. 2002 in the case of partisanship. The authors of this book argue that partisanship is in large part based on a *social identity*, whereby one feels similar to the people who support a given party. Now we have clearly not tested whether a respondent is in any way "like" the supporters of her party in a socio-demographic sense, but we are looking at the extent to which he or she shares similar political positions with them.

³⁸ The two main exceptions, from the objective-electorate proximity T3 and S4 scores, still correlate in the correct direction and are both significant at a level of $p < .10$ using a two-tailed test; subjective proximity also correlates with satisfaction with democracy at "only" a level of $p < .05$ using a two-tailed test.

unconsolidated “party system”; although in many ways it is hard in the Polish case to justify even calling it a “party system”, as the very trait of its ‘systemness’ is missing (Mair 1997).

We find markedly less support for H2, H3, and H4, although, as was previously mentioned, it is still the case that almost all of the coefficients are in the correctly predicted direction, only now with lower correlation coefficient and higher p-values. Essentially, the results show strong support for these three hypotheses only if we limit ourselves to the four variables for which we measured our subjective proximity scores (the subjective scores and objective S4 scores). Once we include either all 13 of our measures or the top 3 by salience, our confidence in these correlations begins to decline. Consider first our two tests of partisanship. For self-reported partisanship (H3), we are confident that those who are closer to their party are also likely to have a stronger self-reported level of partisanship when we use the subjective proximity scores, the MP-objective S4 proximity scores, and, to a slightly less degree, the MP-objective proximity scores across all thirteen issues (A13). We find results which are a bit stronger for the behavioral manifestation of partisanship through voting for one’s party two elections in a row (H4). Here we are confident that this behavior correlates with closer distance to one’s party for all of the objective-MP proximity measures, and, to a bit lesser extent, for the subjective proximity measure. We have the lowest degree of confidence in the relationship between turnout and objective proximity scores, although, interestingly, the relationship between turnout and subjective proximity is about as strong as any we find for any of the hypotheses with the subjective proximity scores. Apparently, while actually have a party that is objectively close to you has little impact on encouraging turnout, believing a party is close to you seems to be linked to turnout.³⁹

³⁹ Of all of our measures, though, this is the one we have most concern regarding the direction of the causal arrows, as in most cases two-thirds of the composition of the turnout variable is due to events that took place in the past;

To summarize, then, within the context of finding every statistically significant coefficient in the correctly predicted direction, we find that: (1) proximity is more related to satisfaction with the functioning of the political system than either partisanship or turnout; (2): objective-MP proximity is more closely correlated with all of our variables of interest than objective-electoral proximity; (3) objective proximity scores based on the three most salient issues to the electorate are less correlated with our variables of interest than other objective proximity scores; and (4) finally, both subjective and objective proximity scores seem to correlate with our variables of interest at roughly similar levels.

Directions for Future Research

If one wanted to do nothing more than continue to explore the same substantive questions addressed in the preceding sections, there are a wide directions in which future research could proceed. One option would be to consider different ways of measuring the proximity scores themselves, such as by squaring the distance between a respondent and his or her party; similarly, we could summarize the proximity scores using factor analysis instead of averaging. Another option would be to take the question of weighting by salience more seriously, although our initial forays in this direction have yielded less promising results than one might have expected. Still, our current conclusion that there seems to be no added significance from considering more salient issues than all issues regardless of salience is puzzling, and it is possible that a more sophisticated approach to incorporating salience would yield different results.

indeed, one third of the turnout variable is constructed on the basis of an election in which most of the parties that contested the 2005 election did not even participate because they had not yet been created. That being said, it can be argued that since the new parties in 2001 essentially took the place of specific old parties (e.g., PiS for AWS; PO for UW), we can still use proximity to one's party in 2005 as a relatively general proxy for proximity to one's party in 1997 and 2001. While there is undoubtedly some loss of precision here, it should still provide a useful test of the hypothesis. However, given our generally negative findings regarding turnout, we can not rule out the fact that a better measure of representation across the different election cycles (taken from a fantasy panel study that does not exist in the real world) might have returned different results.

Finally, we could – despite the concerns raised earlier – seek to embed our measures of proximity in more complex multivariate regression models, especially if we were interested in more fully characterizing the relationship between proximity and one of our variables of interest in particular.

However, we can also think of new but related substantive questions to ask. For example, years of sociological research might suggest that we are barking up the wrong tree in our assessment of hypotheses H2-H6. Perhaps one's satisfaction with the political system and willingness to engage with it is a function not of feeling represented by a political party, but rather in having a shared sense of the same policy positions as other members of the socio-demographic groups of which one is a member. After all, one is much more likely to talk about policy issues with members of one's social groups than to MPs or perhaps even than to communities of like minded partisans. To check whether this might be the case, we can replicate our analysis using proximity scores generated by measuring the distance between a respondent and the average position of members of four of his or her socio-demographic groups: education, age, income, and residence. Correlations between these proximity scores and our variables of interest for H2-H6 are found in Table 5, with the proximity scores again summarized across all 13 variables (A13), the 3 most salient issues (T3), and our 4 issues taken to be representative of the main axis of competition in Polish politics (S4).

-- INSERT TABLE 5 ABOUT HERE --

Table 5 reveals that, similar to proximity with one's party, proximity on political issues to other members of one's social strata increases overall feelings of satisfaction with the political system, as both efficacy and satisfaction with democracy are in the correctly predicted direction. Taken together with our previous findings, this suggests that finding others who share similar views on

policy issues with you makes you feel that the political system works better, be this people with whom you are likely to interact, your MPs, or other partisans of your party. However, unlike with proximity to one's political party, we find absolutely no support for the hypotheses that sharing similar policy positions with one's social compatriots is correlated with the likelihood of voting, the likelihood of sticking with a party across successive elections, or, perhaps most interestingly, with being a partisan. The last finding is of particular interest because it seems to run contrary to the idea that partisanship is likely to be a function of social networks (Campbell et al. 1960). This finding alone makes this an interesting topic for future research.

Another interesting direction for future research is to consider whether the correlation between proximity scores and our political variables of interest might be stronger among certain sub-groups of the population than others.⁴⁰ To take just one example, we might expect that the effects we have described in this paper are stronger among more politically engaged members of society than among those who pay less attention to politics. Accordingly, in Table 6 we replicate the analysis found in Table 4 for one particular measure of objective proximity – averaging across our 4 proxy issues for the dominant axes of competition in Polish politics (S4) for objective-MP proximity scores – and subjective proximity, but broken down into three categories: high levels of political engagement, medium levels of political engagement, and low levels of political engagement.⁴¹ These results are displayed in Table 6:

-- INSERT TABLE 6 ABOUT HERE --

⁴⁰ Note that this is not the same as saying “would these effects still be present in the presence of control variables?” because now we are entering into the realm of interactive variables, e.g. does the effect of proximity on satisfaction with democracy vary across different levels of political engagement?

⁴¹ We assigned respondents to these three groups on the basis of questions about how often respondents discussed politics with others, how interested they are in politics, and how much they followed the election campaign. Not surprisingly, a disproportionate number of people who refused to answer questions regarding their position on issues came from the bottom two categories, and thus our sample size is larger for the high and medium engagement categories.

While there is admittedly a lot to digest in Table 6, let us first call attention to our two political system variables for the objective-MP proximity measure (the upper-right hand corner of the table). Recalling that efficacy and satisfaction with democracy delivered the results most consistent with our hypotheses in the previous section, we again find this to be the case: correlations between sharing issue positions with one's party and being satisfied with democracy or having an efficacious view of government are indeed much stronger for highly engaged (and even medium-engaged) respondents than for those that are removed from politics. The same pattern can be found using subjective proximity scores for our efficacy variable. However, there is also a lot in this table that suggests other interesting patterns. For example, there are a number of cases that suggest there may be curvilinear patterns occurring, with the strongest results being found in the medium engagement category. Again, we seek to make no definitive conclusions at this point, but only to flag engagement specifically – and the opportunity to interact proximity with other variables generally – as an important area for future analysis.

Thus if one was to do no more than expound upon the points made in the previous paragraphs, there are probably at least five separate papers waiting to be written using these data alone. And of course, there are many other interesting directions in which one could head that we have not even touched upon at this point. Our hope, therefore, is that by introducing and demonstrating the possibilities of working with these new types of data – the Polish National Election Study in particular but also any study that would choose to replicate these sorts of questions in both mass-based and MP-based surveys – we can provide a model (but certainly not the only model) for how to move the study of political representation forward in exciting new directions. Even more importantly, in doing so, we have taken the first crucial steps in the important but arduous task of demonstrating empirically the claim that theorists of political

representation have long held to be true: that have a party that “represents” its electorate on policy issues does indeed have consequences for how individuals view and interact with the political system.

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Figure 1: Average position of Masses and MPs by Party/Electorate on EU

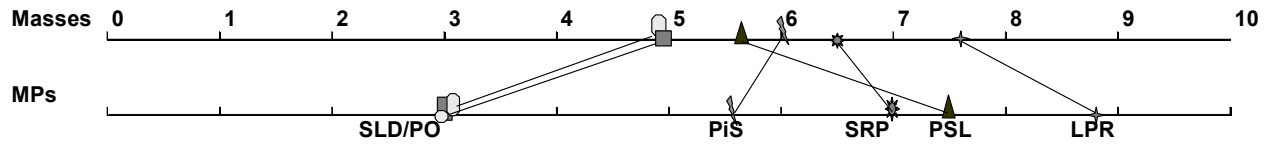


Table 1: Salience of Policy Issues by Electorate

	Non-vt	PiS	PO	SLD	SRP	LPR	PSL	All
Unemployment	9.65	9.72	9.54	9.59	9.79	9.80	9.68	9.65
Crime	8.80	8.89	8.50	9.00	8.89	8.92	9.33	8.80
Taxes	8.29	8.31	8.42	8.27	8.20	8.29	8.47	8.30
Social Safety	8.14	8.25	7.80	8.08	8.48	8.33	8.42	8.14
EU	7.11	7.34	7.50	7.42	6.89	7.15	7.90	7.25
Agriculture	7.22	7.25	6.33	6.48	8.36	7.83	8.51	7.16
Demographics	6.78	7.15	6.91	6.97	7.12	8.10	7.59	6.94
FDI	6.45	6.59	6.52	6.40	6.37	6.58	6.84	6.50
Privatization	5.87	5.73	6.02	5.31	5.72	6.26	6.38	5.87
Abortion	5.78	5.79	5.11	5.87	5.63	6.85	5.89	5.69
Religion	5.32	5.61	4.79	4.97	5.71	6.62	6.08	5.34
Nomenklatura	4.90	6.10	4.88	2.93	5.16	6.34	5.05	5.05
Immigrants	4.66	4.76	3.99	4.33	4.47	5.52	4.68	4.56

Table 2: Average Proximity Scores by Proximity Measure and Combination of Issues

	Objective-MP Proximity	Objective-Electorate Proximity	Subjective Proximity*
Voters:			
All 13 Issue (A13)	3.02	2.57	-
Top 3 Issues (T3)	3.38	2.98	-
Subjective Issues (S4)	3.10	2.62	2.60
Those Preferring a Party:			
All 13 Issue (A13)	3.10	2.62	-
Top 3 Issues (T3)	3.44	3.01	-
Subjective Issues (S4)	3.20	2.70	2.73

**Only available for S4 Issues*

Table 3: Correlation of Party Proximity and Likelihood of Voting/Supporting Party

	PiS		PO		SLD		SRP		LPR		PSL	
<i>Proximity Measure:</i>	Vote	Pro	Vote	Pro	Vote	Pro	Vote	Pro	Vote	Pro	Vote	Pro
Obj-MP:A13	-.13*	-.11*	-.21*	-.21*	-.03	-.05^	0	.03	-.13*	-.12*	.03	.03
Obj-MP:T3	-.03	-.02	-.14*	-.15*	.04^	.06*	.01	.05^	-.02	-.01	.06	.02^
Obj-MP:S4	-.09*	-.09*	-.21*	-.21*	-.05^	-.05^	.01	.01	-.06*	-.05^	.02	.03*
Obj-Elec:A13	-.07*	-.05*	-.13*	-.16*	-.04	-.05*	-.03	0	-.09*	-.08*	.02	.01
Obj-Elec:T3	-.03	-.01	-.10*	-.12*	.05^	.04^	-.02	0	-.04^	-.04	.06*	.05^
Obj-Elec:S4	-.09*	-.08*	-.12*	-.13*	-.05^	-.06*	-.04^	-.03*	-.06*	-.06*	-.02	-.01
Subjective	-.13*	-.13*	-.16*	-.17*	-.11*	-.14*	-.11*	-.10*	-.12*	-.13*		

Note: Expected Direction of Effect is Negative

* = $p < .01$; ^ $p < .05$ using two-tailed tests

Table 4: Correlation Between Proximity to One's Preferred Party and Political Attribute

	Partisan (-)	Volatile (+)	Turnout (-)	Efficacy (-)	SatDem (+)
<i>Proximity Measure:</i>					
Obj-MP:A13	-.07 [^]	.10 [^]	-.05	-.11*	.10*
Obj-MP:T3	-.02	.14*	-.03	-.07*	.12*
Obj-MP:S4	-.10*	.16*	-.08*	-.10*	.10*
Obj-Elec:A13	0	-.01	-.03	-.06*	.10*
Obj-Elec:T3	-.02	.02	-.02	-.04	.12*
Obj-Elec:S4	0	.03	-.08*	-.04	.10*
Subjective	-.08*	.08	-.09*	-.10*	.05 [^]

Expected Direction of Effect is Listed by Column After Variable Name

* = $p < .01$; [^] $p < .05$ using two-tailed tests

Table 5: Correlation Between Proximity to Members of One’s Socio-Demographic Strata and Political Attributes with (p-values) in parentheses and *N* in italics

	Partisan (-)	Volatile (+)	Turnout (-)	Efficacy (-)	SatDem (+)
A13 Issues	0.007 (0.727) <i>2281</i>	-0.052 (0.204) <i>601</i>	-0.016 (0.446) <i>2343</i>	-0.062 (0.003) <i>2255</i>	0.097 (0.000) <i>2142</i>
T3 Issues	0.007 (0.746) <i>2310</i>	-0.035 (0.391) <i>602</i>	-0.003 (0.874) <i>2373</i>	-0.080 (0.000) <i>2277</i>	0.098 (0.000) <i>2151</i>
S4 Issues	0.024 (0.250) <i>2311</i>	-0.034 (0.402) <i>602</i>	-0.022 (0.282) <i>2374</i>	-0.097 (0.000) <i>2279</i>	0.114 (0.000) <i>2151</i>

Table 6: Correlation Between Proximity to One's Own Party and Political Attributes by Political Engagement with (p-values) in parentheses and *N* in italics

	Partisan (-)	Volatile (+)	Turnout (-)	Efficacy (-)	SatDem (+)
Obj-MP:S4					
High Eng.	-0.04 (0.27) <i>684</i>	0.11 (0.06) <i>317</i>	-0.05 (0.18) <i>706</i>	-0.12 (0.00) <i>695</i>	0.12 (0.00) <i>687</i>
Med. Eng.	-0.09 (0.04) <i>610</i>	0.19 (0.02) <i>156</i>	-0.03 (0.49) <i>629</i>	-0.10 (0.01) <i>620</i>	0.07 (0.10) <i>582</i>
Low Eng.	-0.07 (0.16) <i>452</i>	0.24 (0.04) <i>69</i>	-0.03 (0.53) <i>464</i>	0.02 (0.64) <i>438</i>	0.02 (0.68) <i>408</i>
Subjective					
High Eng.	-0.08 (0.04) <i>606</i>	0.05 (0.45) <i>284</i>	-0.02 (0.63) <i>625</i>	-0.14 (0.00) <i>618</i>	0.07 (0.10) <i>609</i>
Med. Eng.	-0.09 (0.05) <i>474</i>	0.18 (0.04) <i>130</i>	-0.07 (0.15) <i>493</i>	-0.06 (0.19) <i>485</i>	-0.01 (0.90) <i>461</i>
Low Eng.	-0.04 (0.49) <i>276</i>	0.11 (0.48) <i>44</i>	-0.17 (0.00) <i>284</i>	-0.01 (0.93) <i>273</i>	0.06 (0.31) <i>254</i>