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**The phenomenon of anti-system parties in Poland
on the grounds of the comparative analysis of Kukiz'15 and
KORWiN/Konfederacja (Confederation) parties' participation
in parliamentary campaigns of 2015 and 2019**

Abstract:

The aim of this article is to assess whether and to what extent parties operating in Poland which identify themselves as anti-system ones (Kukiz'15 and KORWiN (Konfederacja; Confederation)) are such parties in relation to doctrinally defined characteristics. In order to achieve the aim, the anti-system index was created and based on it, in the context of the above mentioned parties' performance in parliamentary campaigns of 2015 and 2019, the comparative analysis of their anti-system characteristics was performed.

Keywords: anti-system, Kukiz'15, KORWiN, political party, political awareness, political scene

Introduction

The systemic transformation in Poland that began in 1989 caused not only vital changes in the fields of economy and social life but also far-reaching shifts within Polish political scene. A single-party state has been replaced by a multi-party system based on the rules of democratic pluralism. Transformations taking place in the following years led to the stabilization of the system in which dominating roles have been played by two parties that have been taking turns being in government: Prawo i Sprawiedliwość and Platforma Obywatelska. The other two parties co-participating in and influencing the process: PSL and SLD were historically-shaped at least from the time of Round Table Talks.¹ However, stabilization did not mean complete fixation of the Polish political scene. Over the course of more than 30 years there have been appearing parties which opposed not only the non-effectiveness of governments' politics but also the way of policy-making in which the fractures of political scene were perpetuated. What constitutes a common denominator of those opposing parties is a specific 'supernova effect' – the parties were formed shortly before the election, gained social support and... disappeared over time of a parliamentary term. Among them, two parties falling into the category of anti-system parties are especially interesting ones – Kukiz'15 and Konfederacja (Confederation; the former KORWiN). Both of them became popular by embracing the atmosphere that dominated in the society, the atmosphere which may be called

¹ These parties entered into various coalitions, for example, at present, Lewica (left wing) and PSL-Polish Coalition. They remained, however, the leading political entity in the coalitions, both in terms of leadership as well as human resources and structures.

‘the process of change’, emanating by, among others, the resistance to ‘old’ political parties.² Undoubtedly, the electoral success of Kukiz’15 in 2015 and the following one of Konfederacja (Confederation) in 2019 contributed to the popularization of anti-systemism and to strengthening the belief that no system – both among parties and voters – can last forever. Within this context, it is worth asking the question of whether the parties that define themselves as anti-system ones comply with the doctrinal meaning of anti-systemism and its designates. This article is devoted to answer this question in a theoretical and empirical sense. The aim of this piece of work is to reconstruct the anti-system power of Kukiz’15 and Konfederacja (Confederation; the former KORWiN) which those parties showed during parliamentary campaigns in 2015 and 2019. In this regard, however, there is a huge lack of research tools. Therefore, it was necessary to develop a proprietary tool – the anti-system index that covers the analyzed phenomenon in five areas/dimensions of the analysis discussed in detail later in the article.

1. Anti-systemism in a classifying sense

Within the field of politics, the idea of anti-systemism is present from the 60s of the last century. It was introduced and popularized by an Italian political scientist Giovanni Sartori. The category of an ‘anti-system party’ was an important part of his theoretical concept called polarised pluralism.³

² E. Marciniak, T. Godlewski, *A qualitative portrait of the ‘electorate change’ in the parliamentary elections of 2015. Similarities and differences*, e-Politikon, 2015, no. XVII, p. 44.

³ G. Sartori, *Parties and Party System. A framework for Analysis*, Cambridge, 1976, p. 205.

The name ‘anti-system’ has been used most often to define specific kinds of parties, especially authoritarian ones (e.g. communist, fascist) called as those which ‘participate to destroy’.⁴ What is especially important for the purpose of this article, G. Sartori defined two ways in which anti-systemism can be understood: 1) a wide one (also called weak understanding) – appealing to a wide spectrum of behaviours aiming at lowering the level of political system’s legitimacy (in extreme cases – the delegitimacy of it), increasing the degree of polarization and radicalizing the activities of the participants of the political scene; and 2) a narrow one (also called ideological), referring to a set of rules different from the one dominating in the prevailing political system and ideology. In this sense, the main purpose of an anti-system party is not to share the power but to change the current political system.⁵ Opposing it takes the form of propaganda and/or specific political actions, including election programs and slogans.

A different approach to anti-systemism emerges from the latest research conducted in relation to the Covid-19 pandemic. As authors claim, what society experienced in 2020 and 2021 not only impacted it in the economic or social context, but also contributed to the intensification of anti-system attitudes of the people – that is, the society shows a higher level of dissatisfaction with the fundamental social and political order. This assertion has been confirmed by international research conducted by a team led by Henrikas Bartusevičius from the Peace Research Institute in Oslo. The study used

⁴ B. Michalak, *Antisystemism of the protest party*, <https://repozytorium.umk.pl/bitstream/handle/item/1576/Antysystemowo%C5%9B%C4%87%20partii%20protestu.pdf>, p. 1, accessed November 2021.

⁵ B. Michalak, *Anti-systemism ...*, p. 5.

a significant (amounting more than 6,000 respondents) sample of adult residents coming from the USA, Denmark, Italy and Hungary. The researchers confirmed that there is a correlation between the psychological burden of individuals and the tendency they show to take anti-government and anti-system actions as well as to use political violence (especially when it comes to people whose political orientations are authoritarian and based on domination⁶). This shows how restrictions and social isolation destructively influence the processes of social exclusion and marginalization which stimulate broadly understood anti-system attitudes and actions.⁷ This is a completely new strand in the research discourse which certainly requires to be discussed and confirmed in subsequent studies as it may constitute a new, important perspective for understanding and interpreting anti-systemism through the prism of relations between parties and citizens.

Taking all this into account, for the purposes of this article its authors adopted, after G. Sartori, a narrow understanding of anti-systemism, assuming that it is characterized by more specific designates that can be empirically operationalized and measured both qualitatively (content analysis) and quantitatively (the occurrence of a given feature) using the index tool.

⁶ H. Bartusevičius, F. Leeuwen van, M.B. Petersen, *Dominance-Driven Autocratic Political Orientations Predict Political Violence in Western, Educated, Industrialized, Rich, and Democratic (WEIRD) and Non-WEIRD Samples*, *Psychological Science*, Volume 31, Issue 12, December 2020, Pages 1511–1530.

⁷ H. Bartusevičius, A. Bor, F. Jørgensen, M.B. Petersen, *The Psychological Burden of the COVID-19 Pandemic Is Associated With Antisystemic Attitudes and Political Violence*, *Psychological Science*, Volume: 32 issue: 9, September 2021 Page(s): 1391–1403.

2. Determining the features important in the analysis of anti-system parties

Anti-system parties oppose all political system, including the party system. They indicate many irregularities that are to occur within these organizations. Their postulates often result from the crisis taking place within classic political parties when they are perceived as insufficiently democratic, hierarchical, centralized and corrupt. Although some of the anti-system parties have chosen to lead their management in a more democratic and pluralistic way, as Ryszard Herbut claims, 'at the moment it does not seem to be a common tendency'.⁸ Similarly, a conservative approach in terms of form, areas of the subject matter they undertake and their communication can be perceived as a negative feature of classic political parties. When creating the index tool, the authors of the article included the features that are opposite to the dominant order and political system – that is the features which constitute a kind of anti-system syndrome.

The first dimension of the analysis is the ideological one. Political parties and movements oppose (to a various extent) the values, principles and mechanisms on which the political reality is based. They can do this using many political trends, both those considered to be left-wing and those right-wing. Regardless of their worldview, however, the common denominator which they express in political programs and communication styles is undermining the legitimacy of the political system combined with proposing solutions for its reconstruction. At this point, it should be underlined that

⁸ R. Herbut, *Theory and practice of the functioning of political parties*, Publishing House of the University of Wrocław, Wrocław 2002, p. 186.

ideological anti-systemism corresponds to a large extent with the ideology of populism, as many of anti-system postulates refer to the classical trend of populism. This is, in particular, visible in the use of 'the people' and 'the elite' concepts, presenting the first group as the one guided by the public good, possessing popular wisdom, and the second group as corrupt, caring only for particular interests. The intention for communicating such vision of reality is to restore power to citizens and to take it away from depraved elites.

Anti-system parties also put special emphasis on the condition of public finances and the economy, as well as relations between politicians, interest groups and their social background, that is they take advantage of the so-called *the anti-state trend* of populism typical for the parties operating in 1990s. At the same time, what they propose are solutions based on a free market and what they announce is that they will deal with the state's corruption. Therefore, the election lists of these parties may include economic experts or experts from areas which are key for the effective operation of the state. Anti-system movements also try not to use the image of a professional politician but to promote candidates who deal with business and entertainment, who are not affiliated with the ruling political elite and not involved in political scandals.

Apart from that, anti-system parties propose solutions which can be marked as impossible to be implemented within a given international order and those which main goal is to please the voters. At the same time, much more intense than in the case of other political groups, all their theses are announced through messages that use manipulative techniques. This include, inter alia, taking up controversial, often demagogic topics referring to low instincts

and collective negative emotions as well as using expressive language.

Anti-system movements can not gain the support of electorate basing on the traditional right-left division. Therefore, they motivate voters by using a distinctive form and structure. Firstly, they usually take other organizational form than this of a political party, e.g. they are called an association, a movement or a list of independent deputies. They also propose, for example, various other forms of participation in the creation of party programs, in order to make it much more democratic. They also try to be organized internally in a different way, for example by giving up party discipline during parliamentary voting, emphasizing that the party consists of self-thinking people who know themselves what their position on a given issue is, and they make decisions mainly based on the best solutions for voters and the state.

The final dimension of anti-system parties is therefore the electorate which may differ from the electorates of other parties, e.g. because of the so-called strategic voting. Anti-system parties often rely on civic opposition which is reflected in voting for names from the electoral list of a movement or opposition/protest party. This regularity is pointed out by, among others, Meindert Fennema whose observations allow to conclude that many people vote for one of the anti-system parties not because they support its program, but because they can thus manifest their opposition to the political clients of the two parties which are dominant on the political scene.⁹ Researching the electorate of anti-system parties should therefore include all criteria indicating a strong need

⁹ M. Fennema, *Populist Parties of the Right*, [in:] Rydgren J., *Movements of Exclusion: Radical Right-wing Populism in the Western World*, Hauppauge 2005, p. 16.

for changes in politics, dissatisfaction with the functioning of the current political system and features related to the inclination to social rebellion (e.g. a feeling of hurt, anomie, pessimistic thinking about politics, etc.).

3. The construction of the anti-system index

The index of anti-systemism was created based on the analysis of the subject literature and on the multifaceted analysis of the above-discussed areas of anti-system nature. It distinguishes five dimensions:

1. **Election program** – understood as a political offer that is publicly available on the official websites of the party/movement
2. **Political communication** – assuming that information on political communication is obtained primarily by analysing the provisions of the election convention which is a carefully prepared message addressed by a party to the voter during the election campaign
3. **Structure of the political movement;**
4. **Politicians of the political movement** – assuming that they are considered to be people who were given parliamentary mandates while being on that movement's list and/or are on the management board of the movement and/or performed at the election convention of this movement
5. **Electorate of the political movement.**

Within each of the dimensions, a set of distinctive features characteristic for the anti-system party was defined. The occurrence of a given feature meant assigning one point

(present/not present). Some dimensions consist of more than one feature – at that time, the presence of at least one of them in the analyzed party was assumed to be a sufficient criterion of anti-systemism. In total, it was possible for an analysed party to be awarded 10 points. Using the nominal scale was a deliberate procedure as it allows for a sharp marking of the limits of the presence of anti-system signs (features) in the analyzed dimensions.¹⁰

The first dimension discusses the program and the political offer formulated by the party. It includes two features:

1. **Proposition of making profound changes in the political system** – affecting the operation of state organs and changing basic legal acts;
2. **The presence of populist postulates** – unrealistic, referring to what is socially attractive.

The second dimension covers the sphere of communication. It contains a set of four features:

3. **Undermining the legitimacy of the system** – showing the legal status of the state and the condition of public finances.
4. **Criticising the elite** – exposing the connections between politicians and their relationship with other institutions in the state, pathologies of power, often personal attacks.
5. **Using ‘the people’ concept** – applying the concept in the context of restoring the power to ordinary people, citizens and all other designates of the word ‘people’ in the sense of the ideology of protest populism;

¹⁰ It is planned to extend the index by adding intermediate values. However, this procedure requires additional qualitative research activities of a verification nature.

6. **Controversiality of the message** – raising controversial topics or topics avoided by other parliamentary groups; the use of social engineering techniques referring to current social moods and negative collective emotions.

The third dimension relates to politicians who constitute the staff of the group/party. It includes the specificity of the candidates put forward by the parties and their connections with the current political system. This dimension contains one feature:

7. **Non-party politicians** – the party's leader was not a politician before; the presence of local politicians unknown so far as well as experts not related to the establishment.

Within the fourth dimension, the structure of the political party/movement was analyzed. This dimension includes two features:

8. **Form of the political movement** – which is often atypical, deviating from the form of classic political parties (association, no formal party, common list, other form characterized by weak institutionalization);
9. **High degree of democratization** – lack of hierarchy or party discipline within the group.

After all, the fifth dimension relates to the voters who make up the electorate of the anti-system party. The dimension contains one feature:

10. **Anti-system electorate** – that is, among voters there are people with characteristics appropriate to the previously-defined anti-system electorate.

4. A comparative analysis of Kukiz'15 i KORWiN parties' performance in 2015

Two new parties on the political scene took part in the 2015 parliamentary elections in Poland. One of them was the Kukiz'15 movement, which was created with the use of political capital after its leader Paweł Kukiz took third place in the presidential election, and the second one was a formation founded by Janusz Korwin-Mikke, i.e. Koalicja Odnowy Rzeczypospolitej Wolność i Nadzieja (the Coalition for the Renewal of the Republic; Freedom and Hope) - KORWiN for short. Both groups showed themselves as anti-system ones, which could already be seen when they were presenting politicians, structures, programs and election conventions, and also partially in the groups' electorates.

4.1. Kukiz'15 performance during the parliamentary campaign in 2015

In its election program, Kukiz'15 postulated at least a few changes to the system. One of them was passing a new Constitution, a new electoral law, and even a new political regime. At the same time, the party demanded introducing lower, fairer and simpler-measured taxes as well as a progressive system. These changes were to apply only to Polish citizens, because non-taxable foreign corporations had to be taxed – which meets the requirements of the criterion of populist promises.

During the pre-election convention, Kukiz '15 distinguished itself many times with its anti-system style of communication. What was questioned in it was the legitimacy of the system, i.a. through suggesting that the Polish state functions only theoretically. What is more, the party questioned the operation

of the system's organs, e.g. the judiciary or the security apparatus. The movement's narrative was also based on criticism of the political elite, blaming them for the poor state of the state. In its messages, the formation also decided to raise one of the more controversial topics at the time, which was the issue of the migration crisis in Europe. In their speeches, Kukiz'15 leaders referred to the fear of the so-called refugees through anecdotal stories about their behaviour that was to be observed in Western countries.

The majority of the candidates who appeared on the Kukiz'15 lists were people for whom politics was not their main occupation. Some of them, like Marek Jakubiak, dealt with politics at the same time being entrepreneurs. Paweł Kukiz had had only little political experience, and on a daily basis, like the popular rapper Piotr-Liroy Marzec, he was involved in music.

In 2015, the leader of the Kukiz'15 movement declared that he would not establish a party because he did not want his movement to operate at the expense of the state (structural criterion). Moreover, it was emphasized that party discipline would not be applied - a member of the movement, Kornel Morawiecki, assessed that such discipline would not appear within Kukiz'15 group because it was inconsistent with the Constitution.¹¹ The group's lists also included members of such parties as Ruch Narodowy (the National Movement), Kongres Nowej Prawicy (Congress of the New Right; after the departure of Janusz Korwin-Mikke), Demokracja Bezpośrednia (Direct Democracy), Partia Libertariańska (the Libertarian Party), Prawica Rzeczypospolitej (the Right

¹¹ Kukiz'15 without party discipline. 'It is unconstitutional' – TV Republic (accessed: November 15, 2021)

of the Republic) and a few members of Polska Razem (Poland Together), Solidarna Polska (Solidary Poland), Wspólnota (Community), Stronnictwo Pracy i Samoobrony (Labor and Self-Defense Party). Most of them were environments focused on deep system changes. In addition, the committee's lists also included Paweł Tanajno (DB; Direct Democracy) and Jacek Wilk (KNP; Congress of the New Right), who, together with Paweł Kukiz, ran for the office of president, and whom Kukiz described in one of the interviews as anti-system candidates.¹²

According to data gathered by CBOS (a research center exploring public opinion), less than one-fifth (i.e. 19%) of the electorate – the supporters of Paweł Kukiz's party in 2015 believed that it had the best program (there were answers: *there is no better program; they have interesting proposals; a historical and overview program, I like their approach to the market, they have a country development plan*). Relatively many supporters of the Kukiz'15 movement (12%) hoped that if the party came to power, it could change the most on the political scene (voters' motivations were included in the statements such as: to change something in the country; because they can change a lot; need to change the political situation). Some voters chose Kukiz'15 because they were *disappointed* with other parties active on the Polish political scene (9% - neither PiS nor PO did not meet my expectations; Kukiz'15 is the most reliable of all). Voters of the Kukiz'15 movement also believed that it was a progressive, democratically ruled party, open to new ideas including the support for Poland's membership of the EU

¹² Prepared on the basis of: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dQDxFhehUyg> (accessed: November 15, 2021).

(to the most extent among other right-wing parties; 5% - a free party, everyone votes in accordance with their conscience; because they have more pro-European views). Voters also pointed out that Kukiz'15 is characterized by social sensitivity and care for ordinary people (4% - they deal with social problems). Moreover, the declared voters of this grouping believed that it was credible, truthful and did not cheat its supporters, and, as the research center emphasizes, it can be assumed what the respondents often meant by this was the person of the group's leader (11% - because he is truthful; they are rather quite credible; their solutions are short, firm and they don't beat around the bush).

There were more arguments relating to the figure of the leader that prompted voters to vote for the movement, including because he is very popular (also thanks to his musical career) and, compared to the leaders of other groups, he attracted followers to the greatest extent (3% - because I like him; sentiment towards music). What's more, as much as 20% of supporters indicated that they voted for Kukiz'15 because its leader is *from the outside of the system*.¹³

¹³ *Motives for voting for political parties*, CBOS research, May 2018 https://www.cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2018/K_063_18.PDF. (accessed: November 15, 2021).

Table 1. The anti-systemism of Kukiz'15 during parliamentary election in 2015

Ordinal no.	Dimension	Anti-system feature	Points
1.	Program	Propositions of making profound changes in the political system	1
2.		Populist postulates	1
3.	Communication	Undermining the legitimacy of the system	1
4.		Criticising elites	1
5.		Using 'the people' concept	0
6.		Controversiality of the message	1
7.	Politicians	They have no political experience or no ties to the establishment	1
8.	Structure	Unusual forms	1
9.		Democratization	1
10.	Electorate	Having the features of an anti-system electorate	1

4.2. KORWiN performance during the parliamentary campaign in 2015

During the 2015 campaign, the KORWiN party proposed a program in which all areas of the state's activity were taken into account. It contained postulates that could significantly change the scope of functioning of the most important organs as well as change or even remove many basic

legal acts. The proposal took into account most of the constraints imposed by the Constitution and the European Union, and the fact that some changes would require more time. In the program, one could find some promises that could be considered as populist, but on the other hand, many propositions were downright socially unpopular, which ultimately led to not giving the whole program a point for being populist.

The KORWiN party proposed a style of communication similar to this of Kukiz'15 movement. Public speeches focused on proving that the state is broken and corrupt, and blaming for it the political elite, not the partially-ineffective system. The crisis of the state was therefore linked to only one factor, without indicating what should be rectified. More controversial topics or forms of communication have not been dealt with. Also the people have not been shown as simple people who need to be restored to power in opposition to the corrupt elite.

The first election convention of the KORWiN party also provided interesting conclusions regarding the anti-system nature of its politicians and structures. Although the party was formally structured in the same way as all the others, the movement from the very beginning declared openness to cooperation with smaller groups. Members of the movement representing all 16 provinces in Poland and the abroad district were presented at the event. They presented themselves in a specific pattern - first they talked about their profession or education, and then they explained why they decided to join the party. In terms of the type of employment, a large group constituted entrepreneurs which was founded by some activists of Kongres Nowej Prawicy (the Congress of the New Right).

The CBOS's research from 2019 showed that the KORWiN party was only partially anti-system. The party's potential voters were more than average inclined to succumb to conspiratorial thinking about politics. They were also more than average pessimistic. However, the level of political alienation of KORWiN supporters does not differ significantly from the average. Together with the voters' right-wing orientation and not very strong psychological characteristics, no point could be awarded in this area.

Table 2. The anti-systemism of KORWiN party during parliamentary election in 2015

Ordinal no.	Dimension	Anti-system feature	Points
1.	Program	Propositions of making profound changes in the political system	0
2.		Populist postulates	1
3.	Communication	Undermining the legitimacy of the system	1
4.		Criticising elites	1
5.		Using 'the people' concept	0
6.		Controversiality of the message	0
7.	Politicians	They have no political experience or no ties to the establishment	0
8.	Structure	Unusual forms	0
9.		Democratization	1
10.	Electorate	Having the features of an anti-system electorate	0

5. The comparative analysis of Kukiz '15 and Konfederacja (Confederation) parties' performance in 2019

5.1. Kukiz'15 performance during the parliamentary campaign of 2019

Before the parliamentary elections, the Kukiz'15's election program in 2019 was limited to postulates aiming at strengthening direct democracy in Poland and counteracting corruption, without officially presenting a new program. On the group's website, however, one could read about the strong and stable currency of the zloty, a reduction in excise tax on gasoline or the possibility of dismissing an MP during his term of office, which can be considered as populist offers.

In the field of communication, during the election campaign, Paweł Kukiz called for an end to the political civil war, but he did not refrain from criticizing the system, pointing out that it is its shortcomings, and not directly of politicians, that lead to pathologies within political parties. The controversy of the message was also abandoned, and the people were referred to only once, suggesting that a peasant was at that time abused by the system.

In 2019 the movement lost many anti-system politicians. Out of 42 deputies, only five were elected to the Sejm for the next term of office. One of the most important politicians became Stanisław Tyszką, who was previously connected to Jarosław Gowin's party Polska Razem (Poland Together). Moreover, the Kukiz'15 movement lost the advantage of not being tied to the establishment by making a deal with PSL.

In the case of the structural dimension, Kukiz'15 experienced significant changes which, however, were rather not connected to anti-system postulates. In 2020, Paweł Kukiz decided to register a political party. Nevertheless, the issue

of the internal organization of the party remained unchanged – voting discipline never occurred, and the considerable independence of the deputies in this respect was also confirmed by the greatest inconsistency during the parliamentary votes.

As far as the anti-system character of Kukiz'15 in 2019 in terms of the electorate is concerned, it has significantly decreased to such an extent that it would be unjustified to award a point in this dimension. In the CBOS research conducted just before the parliamentary elections in 2019, it was indicated that over the previous four years the psychological profile of Kukiz'15 voters has changed significantly. The group's supporters showed, *inter alia*, an average level of pessimism, a consistent level of thinking about politics in terms of a behind-the-scenes conspiracy, and an undistinguishable level of political anomie and alienation. Due to the merger of Kukiz'15 and PSL, the electorate of this party should be considered as voters of the Koalicja Polska-PSL (Polish Coalition). Research carried out by CBOS also indicated features that are characteristic of voters with centrist and agrarian views, which had been typical of the PSL electorate for years.¹⁴ Partly it was a potential electorate who was not satisfied with the current state of the state. However, the pessimism of voters in this respect was not clearly higher than in the case of other opposition formations. While in the survey carried out in March 2020, before the collapse of the PSL (Polish Coalition), only 57% of the respondents had an opposing attitude towards the government, 69% argued that the government was creating an opportunity for economic improvement, and 50% of the respondents was

¹⁴ 2019 *electorates – views*, CBOS research report, October 12, 2019 https://www.cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2019/K_124_19.PDF. (accessed: November 15, 2021)

not satisfied with the state of democracy in Poland¹⁵. Groups such as Lewica (left wing), Konfederacja (Confederation) or Koalicja Obywatelska (Civil Coalition) provided fewer positive responses in this regard.

Table 3. The anti-systemism of Kukiz'15 during parliamentary election in 2019

Ordinal no.	Dimension	Anti-system feature	Punktacja
1.	Program	Propositions of making profound changes in the political system	0
2.		Populist postulates	1
3.	Communication	Undermining the legitimacy of the system	1
4.		Criticising elites	0
5.		Using 'the people' concept	1
6.		Controversiality of the message	0
7.	Politicians	They have no political experience or no ties to the establishment	0
8.	Structure	Unusual forms	1
9.		Democratization	0
10.	Electorate	Having the features of an anti-system electorate	0

¹⁵ *Attitude towards the government in the first half of March*, CBOS research report, March 2020 https://www.cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2020/K_036_20.PDF. (accessed: November 15, 2021)

5.2. Konfederacja (Confederation) during 2019 parliamentary election

As for the Confederation's program, before the parliamentary elections in 2019 it was limited to postulates aimed at strengthening direct democracy in Poland and counter-acting corruption, without presenting a new program. On the website of the movement, however, one could read proposals concerning: the zloty as a strong and stable currency, lowering the excise tax on gasoline or the possibility of dismissing an MP during his term of office, which can be considered a populist offer.

In turn, during the last election convention of the Konfederacja (Confederation) in 2019, the movement was distinguished by political communication that was characterized by all anti-system features. During the speeches, the concept of the people appeared more than once in the context of restoring power to them and adapting the political system to it. It was emphasized that the current system does not work due to the law, which is, firstly, incomprehensible, secondly overregulated, and thirdly, of a flawed structure. The 'founders' of the system, i.e. PO, PiS, PSL, SLD, were blamed for this state of affairs. The message of the convention was also very controversial. Among the issues that were raised were, among others, problems of LGBT+ people or raising children in relation to cultural gender.

In terms of politicians, in the 2019 parliamentary campaign KORWiN was undoubtedly an anti-system party. Janusz Korwin-Mike is certainly a politician with extensive experience, but he has no connection to the establishment, and this has remained unchanged over the years 2015–2019. During this period, many entrepreneurs, experts and politicians

who could be described as non-partisans were also involved in the movements he led.

In terms of structure, it is worth emphasizing that since 2019 the party has become a coalition consisting of several parties and movements that pursued a common policy in each area. At the same time, after its conclusion, it was announced that party discipline would not function. However, no similar announcements were made in 2015, which did not allow the authors of this article to award a point in this area.

In 2019, the main feature of the party's electorate was its approach to economic and libertarian changes. Konfederacja (Confederation) identified itself as an anti-system group in terms of its approach to the system, but also as an ideological and new right wing one. In the studies of its potential electorate, the influence of an ideological rather than an anti-system approach is more visible. According to the latest CBOS survey conducted in December 2020, 69% of the potential voters of the Konfederacja (Confederation) assessed the current political situation as bad.¹⁶ In turn, when asked whether this situation was going in the right or wrong direction, 75% of the potential electorate of this formation chose the second answer. The voters of this party, however, were not particularly pessimistic in this regard. The situation in Poland was assessed worse, among others, by potential supporters of Poland 2050 led by Szymon Hołownia. The Konfederacja (Confederation)'s voters, however, assessed the economic situation in the country the worst of all the parties, with 64% of such votes.

¹⁶ *Social mood in December*, CBOS research report, December 2020 https://www.cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2020/K_161_20.PDF. (accessed: November 15, 2021).

Table 4. The anti-systemism of Konfederacja (Confederation) during parliamentary election in 2019

Ordinal no.	Dimension	Anti-system feature	Punkcja
1.	Program	Propositions of making profound changes in the political system	0
2.		Populist postulates	1
3.	Communication	Undermining the legitimacy of the system	1
4.		Criticising elites	1
5.		Using 'the people' concept	1
6.		Controversiality of the message	1
7.	Politicians	They have no political experience or no ties to the establishment	1
8.	Structure	Unusual forms	1
9.		Democratization	1
10.	Electorate	Having the features of an anti-system electorate	0

5. Summary

The conducted analysis made it possible not only to identify the level of compliance of the analyzed groups with the doctrinal features of anti-system parties, but also to capture the change in the strength of anti-systemism that took place between the two parliamentary elections of 2015 and 2019.

On the Polish political scene there is no ‘completely’ anti-system party – meaning a party characterized by all the features included in the anti-system index. It is also worth to notice a fundamental change of opposite directions that took place between Kukiz’15 and KORWiN / Konfederacja (Confederation) parties in just four years. In the parliamentary campaign of 2015, the Kukiz’15 movement was much more anti-system. The group had 9 out of 10 traits and was anti-system in all dimensions. In the same year, KORWiN had only 4 features in just three analyzed dimensions.

In turn, four years later, before the 2019 parliamentary elections, the Konfederacja (Confederation) was definitely more anti-system. At that time, Kukiz’15 lost its anti-system character in as many as 5 features and two dimensions. Quite a significant change as regards Paweł Kukiz’s party occurred in the area of the structure of the movement and its politicians, which was caused by the movement’s joining the PSL (Polish Coalition). Konfederacja (Confederation), on the other hand, increased its anti-system character by 4 features and one dimension. It was mainly the result of changes that appeared in the style of its political communication – which became even more aggressive, controversial and critical towards the system. Therefore, we can talk about a significant change in anti-system parties in Poland. In 2019 a new leader appeared, systematically gaining importance and appropriating this segment of the Polish political scene to an ever greater extent.

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