

Motives of voting in presidential elections

Competition in this year's presidential election was extremely exciting and fierce. Electoral mobilization of the supporters of both main contenders for the office of president, Andrzej Duda and Rafał Trzaskowski, made the election result difficult to predict, and the difference in votes in the second round was small. In the first round, a noteworthy result (13.87%) was achieved by Szymon Hołownia, who created the social movement Poland 2050 after the elections. Relatively many voters supported Krzysztof Bosak, the candidate of the right-wing Confederation (6.78%) in the first round. Władysław Kosiniak-Kamysz (who at some point before the change of the candidate by the Civic Coalition [KO] had a chance to make it into the second round) and Robert Biedroń fell below expectations and aspirations.

According to declarations regarding the motives of voting in the first round of elections, Andrzej Duda was elected due to positive assessment of his presidency and the achievements of the government, first of all the social policies: Family 500 plus program and other solutions for children and families, as well as support for pensioners (13th retirement pension, the announced 14th pension, and benefit increases). The president managed to build a bond with voters who felt that the fate of ordinary people was important for him and that he could be trusted because he took his electoral commitments from 5 years ago

seriously. As his most ardent supporters declared, he was their only and best choice, a candidate fully meeting their needs and expectations.

Rafał Trzaskowski's voters were driven primarily by the hope that the power of Law and Justice (PiS) would be limited and the quality of governance would be improved. Although their vote was primarily a vote for change, the Civic Coalition candidate appeared to meet well the social expectations of the president. He was perceived by his voters as a politician substantively prepared to perform this function. His determination in the electoral fight was also recognized. On the other hand, voters appreciated his openness to people and striving for consensus. Already in the first round, some voters took into account the election chances of the rivals of the incumbent president and voted for Rafał Trzaskowski as the most serious competitor of Andrzej Duda.

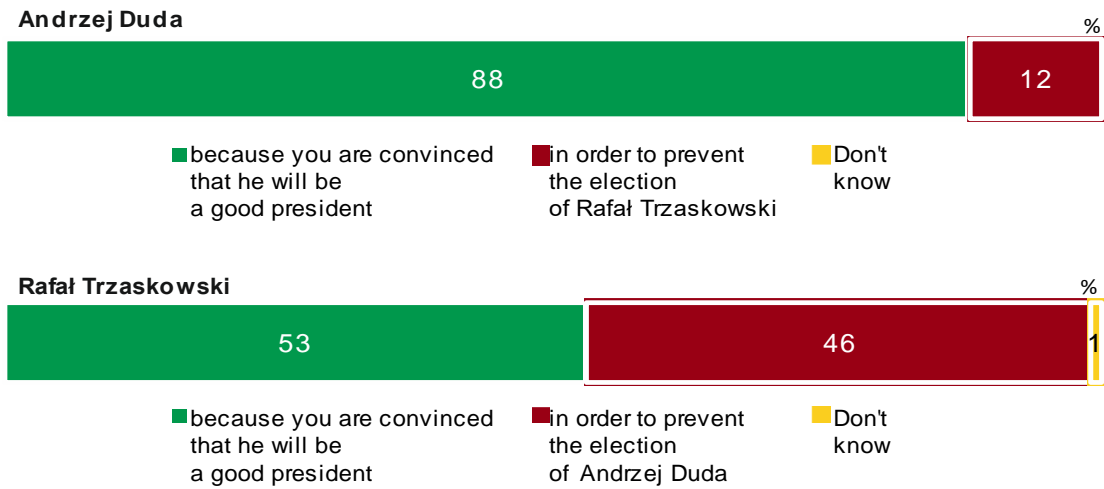
Voters of Szymon Hołownia expressed their distance from the political parties in Poland, including both major parties dominating the political scene.

Krzysztof Bosak's voters were united primarily by liberal views on the economy. They expected more economic freedoms and less fiscalism. Worldview considerations were also important. Krzysztof Bosak's voters also justified their decision with the desire to break the PiS-PO duopoly on the political scene and hand over power to a representative of a formation that had not yet ruled.

Władysław Kosiniak Kamysz was supported primarily by the most loyal supporters of the Polish Peasant Party (PSL), while Robert Biedroń had the backing of people identifying with the ideological left.

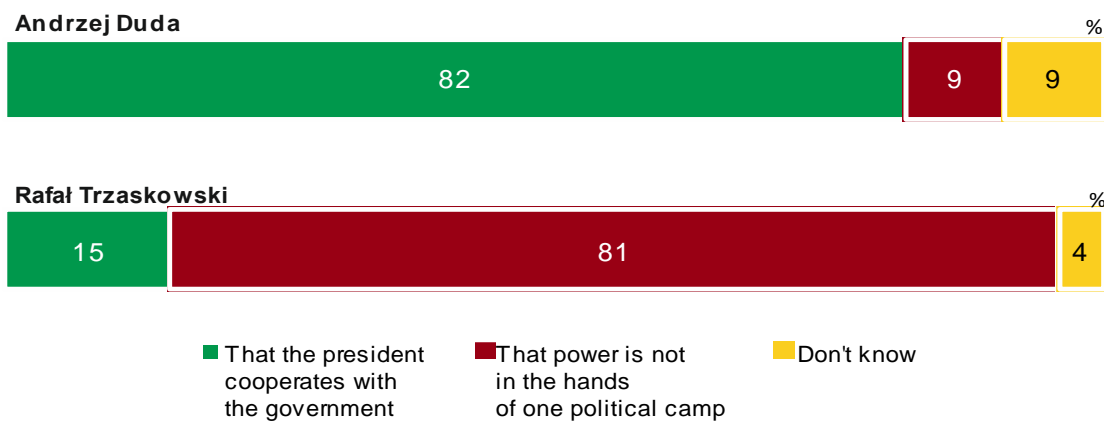
It is worth noting that in this year's elections, negative voting was more important than in all presidential elections starting from 1995. While the vast majority of those who declared their support for Andrzej Duda in the second round (88%) believed that he would be a good president, only 53% of Rafał Trzaskowski's voters had such conviction. A slightly smaller percentage of his voters (46%) acted primarily to prevent the re-election of Andrzej Duda.

Do you intend to vote for:



One of the important threads of the election campaign were opposing arguments to encourage voting in the second round of the presidential elections: cooperation of the government and the president which enabled efficient governance, versus limiting the power of PiS. The overwhelming majority of Andrzej Duda's electorate (82%) agreed with the opinion that it is now more important that the president should cooperate with the government. For those who voted for Rafał Trzaskowski (81%), it was important that power should not be in the hands of one political camp.

What is more important now? Answers of 2nd round voters of:



It can be argued that voting in the second round of the presidential election become a de facto plebiscite for or against the current government.

More information about this topic can be found in CBOS report in Polish: "Motives of Voting in Presidential Elections 2020", August 2020. Fieldwork for national sample: July 2020, N=1339. The random sample is representative for adult population of Poland.