

Reelection of President Duda: Poland's Future Remains Bright, But The Glow Is Dimming

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The narrow re-election of Polish President Duda saved the country from returning under Brussels' Euro-Liberal yoke, yet the electorate's clear-cut age and locality divides bode ominously for the country's future since they suggest that the opposition might inevitably return to power if voting trends remain constant.

A Close Call

Poland [narrowly avoided](#) returning under Brussels' Euro-Liberal yoke with President Duda's re-election, which for all intents and purposes ensures that the country will de-facto remain a one-party state at least until the next parliamentary elections in three years' time. [Sputnik](#) explained why this is the case by pointing out how the ruling Euro-Realist conservatives control the lower house of parliament and the presidency, and that while the opposition holds the upper house, any veto that it makes can easily be overruled by a simple majority vote from its lower counterpart before being signed into law by the president.

Political Implications

This is extremely important to keep in mind since it means that the Law & Justice Party's (PiS) legal and socio-economic reforms will continue. These are mostly related to regaining national sovereignty over its judicial system, and continuing its generous welfare programs, respectively. Had the opposition won the presidency, then Poland would have remained in domestic political deadlock until the next parliamentary elections.

While PiS supporters and many well-wishers abroad are breathing a collective sigh of relief after Duda's approximately 2% win (less than half a million votes), they also shouldn't rest on their laurels since the same earlier mentioned Sputnik piece reports how the electorate is clearly split along age and locality. Younger voters and those in urban areas voted for the opposition, while older ones and those in rural areas voted for the ruling party. The implication is obvious, and it's that the opposition will inevitably return to power if voting trends remain constant. This means that the next three years are the most important ever for PiS.

The ruling party must not only do all that they can to solidify all of their forms into law, but they must also ensure that they can't be reversed should the opposition eventually win both the lower house and the presidency (possibly regaining at least the former in three years and then the latter two years after that). Not only that, but PiS must urgently work on winning the hearts and minds of the youth and other city folk. This will be extremely difficult to pull off, however, since the country is literally split in two — not only politically, but even geographically.

Poland's Electoral Geography

Three maps that were shared by the "[Notes From Poland](#)" Facebook page illustrate just how sharp Poland's partisan divide presently is. As the page admins wrote under their relevant post, "Despite losing the election overall, Rafał Trzaskowski got the most votes in the majority of Poland's 16 provinces (first map). However, looking at who won in smaller districts (second map), President Duda's overall advantage becomes clearer. The third map shows by how large a margin a candidate won in each district."



The Identity Crisis

Euro-Liberals tend to reside in the partition-era regions of Poland that were controlled by Germany, whereas Euro-Realists happen to live in the Austrian and Russian ones. While the first-mentioned tend to be politically aligned with modern-day Germany by virtue of Berlin being the continental leader of Euro-Liberalism, the second don't have any particular affinity for modern-day Austria and most Poles in general regardless of political disposition fear and/or hate modern-day Russia for "historical reasons" (whether rightly or wrongly, and whether they arrived at those views on their own or as a result of domestic political manipulation).

It might be interesting for the reader to peruse the author's prior work on this topic, which is too extensive to summarize in this particular analysis. The pertinent pieces are "[Polarized Poland: The Identity Crisis Goes International](#)" (2016), "[Polish-Russian Relations: Russian Guilt & Polish Exceptionalism](#)" (2017), and "[Germany Wants To Replace The Patriotic Polish Government With Europhile Puppets](#)" (2020). Politico's recent piece about how "[Poland's Duda Goes To War Against Foreign Media](#)" is also somewhat insightful in showing why he's so concerned about the influence of German-owned media, though it's predictably biased against PiS.

The Political Battleground

PiS' struggle is therefore to convince the German-influenced Euro-Liberal voters in the former part of Poland that Berlin controlled during the partition era to support the party's socio-conservative and pro-sovereignty agendas, a tough task if there ever was one since they're naturally inclined towards liberalism and the surrendering of their country's rights to supranational EU institutions that are de-facto controlled by Germany. As the last of the three maps that was shared earlier shows, that part of the country is where both parties generally showed the narrowest sign of victory in the respective localities that they won.

Some were solidly Euro-Liberal, but many of them were as neck-and-neck as parts of the Midwest were in the US' 2016 election. These "swing" localities were just as responsible for President Duda's re-election as America's were for Trump's original election, and they'll likely remain some of the most important political parts of their countries for the coming future. It's these battlegrounds where PiS will have to work its hardest if it wants to retain its control of the lower house during the next parliamentary elections three years from now. With this in mind, a few policy recommendations can be made.

The Path To Polish Greatness

Cracking down on German-controlled media as some expect might soon happen would be a very powerful step in the direction of weakening the pernicious anti-Polish influence that the country's neighbor exerts over the most politically important part of the population. Germany does indeed pursue anti-Polish policies in both the social and political realms. Its aggressive promotion of Euro-Liberalism is intended to destroy Poland's traditional conservative society just like its similarly aggressive pressure upon the country to surrender more of its sovereignty to Berlin's proxies in Brussels is meant to de-facto eliminate Poland's hard-earned statehood.

In parallel with this, Poland must make tangible progress on strengthening integration within the "[Three Seas Initiative](#)" (TSI) that it leads. While this American-backed geopolitical project is admittedly anti-Russian to the core, it is the only means for Poland to rise as a Great Power (however long that takes in practice) and at least superficially present itself as Germany's peer in the long term, after which they might be able to eventually renegotiate their relationship (with American mediation of course) in order to make it more equitable. This vision won't enter into force anytime soon and is dangerously conditional on the outcome of the US' elections.

Trump's victory would guarantee that the TSI becomes the [focal point](#) of European geopolitics in the coming future, while Biden's would probably relegate it to the periphery as the Democrats seek to reconcile American-EU relations at Poland's expense, just as Obama sought to do vis-a-vis Russia when it came to scaling back the Bush-era "missile defense system" there (though at that time Poland's "expense" was only perceived as such and that decision wasn't truly to its detriment). Germany, not Russia, is the greatest threat to Polish statehood, and Biden's victory would force Warsaw to either submit to Washington-Brussels-Berlin or risk isolation.

Concluding Thoughts

As the article's title clearly stated, "Poland's Future Remains Bright, But The Glow Is Dimming", and it might even disappear as soon as the end of the year in spite of PiS' recent victory in the event that Biden beats Trump in November. Even in that scenario, however, Poland would do well to continue with its pro-sovereignty agenda irrespective of whether its top ally dumps it for the sake of "reconciling" Trans-Atlantic relations with the EU's de-facto German leader. All that must matter to the ruling party from here on out is winning the hearts and minds of the voters from formerly German-controlled Poland in order to ensure that their victory wasn't in vain.

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