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Opole University

MICHAŁ RADECKI

*Party leadership in Poland in comparative perspective*

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this paper is to analyse leadership in Polish political parties in comparative perspective. In the further parts of this paper, the methods of leader selections, their competitiveness, as well as reasons for their stepping down are discussed. Similarly to the western political parties, the Polish ones have been changing their methods of leadership selection. So far each time it has consisted in a formal increase in the inclusiveness of the selection. The reasons for transferring the rights relating to the leadership selection to party members were brought closer to the premises typical for Westminster democracies rather than the consensual ones. The analysis of the Polish case shows that the internal elections have been characterized by different levels of competitiveness.

**Key words:** party leadership, leaders, intra-party democracy, political parties, Poland

INTRODUCTION

A rise in the significance of political party leaders has become a clear and basically uncontested trend in contemporary democracies. Their status as heads of governments is growing, they are expanding their autonomy within their own parties, and also – although to a lesser extent – it is on them that election campaigns tend to concentrate [Poguntke, Webb 2005: 337 ff.]. Although the name of the phenomenon introduced in the literature (i.e. ‘presidentialisation’) met with criticism, the very fact itself of power concentration in the hands of political leaders appears not to raise any stronger controversy [Dowding 2013].

Despite the role which party leaders play, this issue has not been investigated thoroughly so far, especially when it comes to comparative studies [Pilet, Cross 2014c: 222]. The publications relating to leadership in political parties are dispersed, dominated by case studies which undertake to discuss questions of, *inter alia*, concrete cases of party leadership, changes of leader selection procedures, party leader election competitiveness, or social-demographic profiles of leaders. Comparative studies are becoming a more and more frequent field of research, though their number is still limited and the studies tend to focus only on some of the countries. The aim of this paper is to analyse leadership in Polish political parties in comparative perspective. In the further parts of this paper, the methods of leader selections, their competitiveness, as well as reasons for their stepping down are discussed. The size of individual sections of this article corresponds to the position of individual problems found in the publications.

#### DEGREE OF INCLUSIVENESS OF THE SELECTORATE

Contemporary political parties differ in the manner of party leader selection. Potential candidates may be required to meet various requirements. The entities varying in number of voters may elect candidates. The election procedures may also vary considerably. The scope of differences may be illustrated with the examples of the situations in Israel and Italy. In the ultra-orthodox Israeli party *Shas*, its spiritual leader appointed its political leaders in an arbitrary manner [Kenig 2009c: 65–66]. On the other hand, all the citizens, including legal immigrants and the persons over 16, were able to take part in the Secretary General elections of the Italian Democratic Party in 2007 and 2009, though the Italian law denies the voting right to those two groups in general elections [Corbetta, Vignati 2013: 83; Seddone, Venturino 2013: 304]. In practice, there are six methods of party leader selection. They can be chosen (1) by a single person, (2) by a party elite, (3) by parliamentary party group, (4) by a party representative body, (5) by party members, (6) by electorate [Kenig 2009a: 435]. These methods can be placed on an axis spanning from the most exclusive to the most inclusive (Fig. 1). Each of the methods provides a different level of legitimization, and – as some of the authors suggest – influences the choice of different leaders [LeDuc 2001: 325–326; McSweeney 1999].

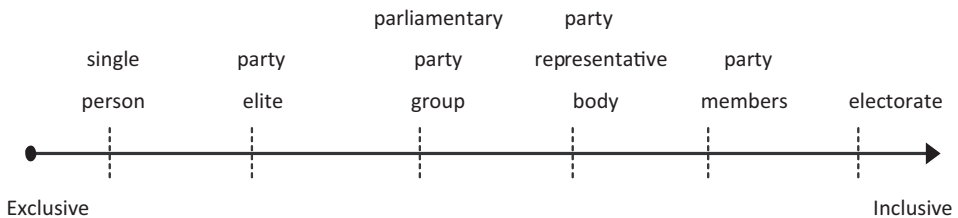


Figure 1. Methods of choosing political party leaders

Source: [Kenig 2009a: 435].

The issue of inclusiveness should be differentiated from that of election decentralization. Those two elements are not identical [Hazan, Rahat 2006: 112]. Decentralization refers to the participation of local and regional bodies in decision making. The decentralization itself may mean that the powers have been shifted from the central elite level down to the local (regional) one. In this way, the selection may be decentralized, but due to a possible change in the number of the persons taking the decision, the inclusiveness of election may be diminished [Hazan, Rahat 2006: 112].

As regards Polish political parties, there have been so far three methods of party leader selection i.e. (1) by a parliamentary party group; (2) by a party representative body; (3) by party members.<sup>1</sup> A party leader has been selected twice by the parliamentary group. The only party which decided on this move was the Civic Platform (Platforma Obywatelska, PO). In October 2001, Maciej Płażyński was elected the leader of the PO [MS 2003], and following his resignation in April 2003, the party

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<sup>1</sup> The following documents have been used as the sources of information: Socjaldemokracja Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej [Social Democracy of the Republic of Poland] – The Statute passed by the Founding Congress on 28 January 1990, with amendments adopted by the National Convention of the SdRP on 18 May 1991, the Second Congress of the SdRP on 20–21 March 1993, and the National Convention of the SdRP on 23 April 1994, and the Third Congress of the SdRP on 6–7 December 1997; Sojusz Lewicy Demokratycznej [Democratic Left Alliance] – The Statute of the SLD. The consolidated text adopted by the Fifth Congress of the SLD on 28 April 2012; Unia Pracy [Labour Union] – Program Resolution and the statute adopted by the First Congress of the UP on 23–24 January 1993, Warsaw; Platforma Obywatelska [Civic Platform] – The Statute of the Civic Platform adopted on 29 June 2013; Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe [Polish Peasant Party] – The Statute of the PSL. The consolidated text covering changes passed by the Tenth Congress of the PSL on 8 November 2008, Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe – Porozumienie Ludowe [Polish Peasant Party – Peasants' Agreement] – The Statute of Polish Peasant Party – Peasants' Agreement, 1991; Unia Demokratyczna [Democratic Union] – The Statute of the Democratic Union, Warsaw 1991; KLD [Liberal Democratic Congress] – The Statute of the Liberal Democratic Congress, Warsaw 1991; Unia Wolności [Freedom Union] – The Statute of the Freedom Union passed by the Third National Congress of the Freedom Union on 26 January 1997, with amendments adopted by the Fourth National Congress of the Freedom Union; Akcja Wyborcza Solidarność [Solidarity Electoral Action] – The Statute of the Solidarity Electoral Action Social Movement; Bezpartyjny Blok Wspierania Reform [Nonpartisan Bloc for Support of Reforms] – The Statute of the Nonpartisan Bloc for Support of Reforms, 1993; Porozumienie Centrum [Centre Agreement] – The Statute of the Centre Agreement, Warsaw 1990; Prawo i Sprawiedliwość [Law and Justice] – The Statute of the Law and Justice adopted during the Fourth Congress of the PiS in Warsaw on 29 June 2013; Ruch Odbudowy Polski [Movement for Reconstruction of Poland] – The Statute of the Movement for Reconstruction of Poland passed by the First Congress of the Movement for Reconstruction of Poland in Warsaw on 14 December 1997; Zjednoczenie Chrześcijańsko-Narodowe [Christian National Union] – The consolidated text of the statute of the ZChN with amendments introduced during the Seventh Convention of the ZChN in Częstochowa (28 February–1 March 1998); Konfederacja Polski Niepodległej [Confederation for Independent Poland] – The Statute of the Confederation for Independent Poland passed by the Sixth Congress on 9 November 1996; Liga Polskich Rodzin [League of Polish Families] – The Statute of League of Polish Families; Ruch Palikota [the Palikot's Movement] – The Statute of the Palikot's Movement; Samoobrona [Self-Defense] – The Statute of the Self-Defense. In the case of doubts relating to the dates of issuance of the statutes or the lack of such, the dating of party documents made by the Archives of Political Parties of the Polish Academy of Sciences has been used. The word of comment concerns the inclusion of the BBWR in the analyses. That formation was established as an association, not as a political party, yet despite that, its statute records (§7 art. 5) clearly indicate that one of the goals it set for itself was participation in elections. Cf. [Gładkiewicz 2004: 14 ff.].

MPs elected Donald Tusk for the post [F.G. 2003]. Twice has the leader been directly elected by party members. In 2012, that took place in the Democratic Left Alliance (Sojusz Lewicy Demokratycznej, SLD) and in 2013 – in the PO. Generally, the majority of the Polish political parties, irrespective of their ideological profile, entrust their representative bodies with the task of leader selection.

An analysis of the Polish case in comparative European perspective shows that political parties in Poland tend to reach for the same method of party leader selection, namely, by electing the leaders by a party representative body (usually called a congress, a convention, a conference or an assembly), attended by delegates chosen at local and regional levels and often by party Members of Parliament. It needs to be clearly underlined that party bodies may often merely legitimize the decision taken earlier by party elites who have proposed one candidate of considerable popularity, who is later formally accepted by the congress. It appears that, as regards the Polish political parties, the fact whether the decision as to a leader selection is taken by a party congress or, for instance, by a party council, or directly by party members, is indeed of secondary importance, because formally democratic and inclusive procedures legitimize the prior arrangements concerning candidates who are to take over party leadership.

#### DIRECT ELECTIONS OF PARTY LEADERS

Democratization is often linked to expansion of the leadership selectorate. It must be stressed, however, that vital factors that need to be analysed are, *inter alia*, requirements concerning running in internal elections (such as contest fee or signature requirements) which can make it impossible or hamper entering the competition, and also informal norms relating to the candidate. The following analysis will focus solely on the selectorate.

During the last two decades, political parties in Europe began to democratise their leadership selection in the sense described above, that is, broadening the selectorate [Kenig 2009a; LeDuc 2001; Lisi 2010: 128]. The empirical studies suggest that such a move usually takes place (1) in the case of newly established parties, (2) after lost elections, (3) when a party is in opposition [Cross, Blais 2012: 134]. These stimuli were concluded on the basis of an analysis of the states representing majoritarian model of democracy. As other studies have shown, the influence of these factors has not been retained in Belgium, which is a consensual democracy [Wauters 2014].

As regards the sphere of institutional solutions, Poland presents a case of a state with the consensual democracy. Out of ten features characterizing this model, eight can be found in Poland. The analysis of the Polish political practice indicates, however, the existing similarities to the majoritarian model based on getting the majority over political opponents [Antoszewski 2012: 57–58].

Among the analysed political parties in Poland, two have changed their methods of leader selection. In both cases their leadership selectorate was expanded. In

2012, the SLD – as the first parliamentary political party – ran a direct election of its leader by party members. 21 961 party members cast valid votes.<sup>2</sup> Earlier it was the Congress of the party that had had the right to select the party member for this post. The SLD introduced changes into the method of selecting their leader, following the election defeat in 2011, when the party got the worst result ever. In the case of the PO, up to 2003 it was its parliamentary party group who used to select the party leader. After passing the new party statute in June 2003<sup>3</sup> the filling of the post became the responsibility of the National Convention – a party representative body. That change entailed democratization of election of the party leader. In 2003, the parliamentary party group of the PO consisted of 56 people while choosing the party leader.<sup>4</sup> On the other hand, in the election held during the First National Convention of the party in June 2003 there were 1,653 votes cast [Gawryś 2003]. The PO, at the convention of 2003, adopted a new statute which transferred this prerogative from the parliamentary party group onto the congress. That was a part of more substantial changes towards the broadening of internal democracy within the party. The former centralistic solutions had proved not functional both to leaders and members of the party [Sobolewska-Myślik, Kosowska-Gąstoł, Borowiec 2009: 43]. In 2006, the National Convention of the PO (i.e. the party congress) obligated the National Board to run a direct election of the party leader in the next term of office.<sup>5</sup> In 2013, the PO changed the party leader selection procedure again. The modified statute allowed all party members to take part in voting.

The direct elections of party leaders did not lead to achieving similar results in the political parties which decided for that move. As regards the SLD, in the election of 2012, in which all the party members were able to participate, Leszek Miller did not have any counter-candidate and the election itself seemed not to attract any major interest on the part of the mass media. The case of the PO was quite different, though. The leadership battle between Donald Tusk and Jarosław Gowin was covered extensively by the mass media, the more so as the dispute between the two politicians was aggravating. The competitiveness of intra-party election also increased considerably. Its more detailed presentation may be found in the next section of this article. The situational contexts connected with the introduction of leadership selection by party members were similar in the case of both parties – the SLD and the PO decided for that move while being at a crisis point. In the case of the former, it had resulted directly from the defeat suffered in the 2011 General Elections, when

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<sup>2</sup> The results of the SLD chairman election – a multimedia presentation, [http://www.sld.org.pl/aktualnosci/82-wyniki\\_wyborow\\_na\\_przewodniczacego\\_sld\\_prezentacja\\_multimedialna.html](http://www.sld.org.pl/aktualnosci/82-wyniki_wyborow_na_przewodniczacego_sld_prezentacja_multimedialna.html) (access 29.06.2015).

<sup>3</sup> The Statute of the Civic Platform adopted by the First National Convention of the PO on 1 June 2003.

<sup>4</sup> The state as for the end of the 4th term of office of the Sejm: [www.sejm.gov.pl](http://www.sejm.gov.pl).

<sup>5</sup> The resolution of the Third National Convention of the Civic Platform of 21 May 2006 concerning preparation of the new method of running elections within the structures of the PO.

the party suffered the worst defeat in its history. Prior to that, the right to select the leader belonged only to its Congress. In the case of the PO, the issues of the low public support for the party and the fact that it had formed the government in coalition with the PSL seemed to be important for the change. The PiS began to gain popularity and in part of the opinion polls it began to come closer to the PO, which had had no serious rivals to reckon with before. In this way, the reasons for transferring the rights relating to the leadership selection to party members were brought closer to the premises typical for Westminster democracies rather than the consensual ones.

Concluding the first part of the considerations, it is worth underlining the fact that similarly to the western political parties, the Polish ones have been changing their methods of leadership selection. So far, each time it has consisted in a formal increase in the inclusiveness of the selection. Like in the case of the parties functioning in the Westminster states, the democratization has been a result of the crisis which the parties in question had to overcome and an attempt at regaining legitimization, as well as the former position on the political stage. Regarding the SLD and the PO, the direct election of the leaders was imposed by the party authorities, without any considerable pressure from party activists or members to gain larger inclusiveness. Thus, it was rather a different situation from the one that occurred in the case of the British Conservative Party, in which the pressure of the activists advocating greater democratization of the party in this sphere led to the changes. The election held by the PO, and to a lesser extent the one held by the SLD, were organized on the conditions in which the current leader could not be guaranteed a victory, but he could still be very likely to win them.

#### COMPETITIVENESS IN PARTY LEADERSHIP SELECTIONS

Competitiveness can be brought down to the alternativeness of choice, and therefore the possibility of, at least, potential replacement of those who are in power [Antoszewski 2004: 13]. Kenig put forward several proposals of competitiveness measurement methods for party leader selections. The first of them relates to a success or a defeat of the current leader while running for re-election. The second method refers to the probability of entering a rivalry for the leader's position. When there is only one candidate, we come to deal with "coronation", whereas when there are at least two such candidates – with rivalry. Another method is based on indicating the number of candidates to fight for leadership in the party. In order to measure competitiveness Kenig developed a distribution of votes index (ENC/N) applicable to competing candidates [Kenig 2009b: 244–245].

In the study, the selection competitiveness measurement has been made mainly by means of the index of effective number of parties, which had been worked out by Golosov [Golosov 2010]. Its adaptation to carrying out analyses of party leadership has been dictated by a few reasons, and – in particular – by the possibility of synthetic

presentation of the rivalry result and the prospect of making comparisons. Neither the Laakso-Taagepera index of effective number of parties, which is classical on the ground of analysis of party systems [Laakso, Taagepera 1979], nor the ENC/C index, which is founded on the former, [Kenig 2009b: 245] has been applied. The Laakso-Taagepera index has met with extensive criticism [Dunleavy, Boucek 2003; Golosov 2010]. Its drawbacks can come to light, among others, in producing misleading scores for party constellations, in which the largest parties obtain over 50% of election support [Golosov 2010]. Support of this and a greater scale in an intra-party election – as presented below – is not a rare occurrence. Therefore, applying this index or indexes that are based on it could lead to erroneous conclusions. The index elaborated by Golosov has been successfully applied in analyses of competitiveness of elections within parties [Quinn 2012: 168 ff.]. Its calculation leads to indicating the effective (“factual” or “actual”) number of candidates running for leadership. Intuitiveness of interpretation is its advantage. For instance, the value of 3.1 means that there were about three real contenders who took part in the race for the leader’s position. Its minimum value equals 1 and occurs in practice when there was only one person running for the post.

Table 1. Competitiveness in Polish political party leader elections

Election	Winner	Number of candidates	ENC	Percentage point advantage over the runner-up
PiS				
29.05.2001	Lech Kaczyński	1	1	–
01.12.2001	Lech Kaczyński	1	1	–
18.06.2003	Jarosław Kaczyński	1	1	–
03.06.2006	Jarosław Kaczyński	1	1	–
06.03.2010	Jarosław Kaczyński	1	1	–
29.06.2013	Jarosław Kaczyński	1	1	–
PO				
19.10.2003	Maciej Płażyński	1	1	–
09.04.2003	Donald Tusk	1	1	–
01.06.2003	Donald Tusk	1	1	–
21.05.2006	Donald Tusk	2	1.19	69.21
26.06.2010	Donald Tusk	1	1	–
23.08.2013*	Donald Tusk	2	1.26	59.15
PSL				
05.05.1990	Roman Bartoszcze	3	1.99	15.16
29.06.1991	Waldemar Pawlak	3	2.11	23.22
21.11.1992	Waldemar Pawlak	1	1	–
23.11.1996	Waldemar Pawlak	3	1.84	24.08
23.10.1997	Jarosław Kalinowski	2	1.59	25.71
24.03.2000	Jarosław Kalinowski	2	1.13	77.19
16.03.2004	Janusz Wojciechowski	2	2.25	11.20
29.01.2005 1st ballot	–	2	1.41	41.67
29.01.2005 2nd ballot	Waldemar Pawlak	1	1	–

08.11.2008	Waldemar Pawlak	2	1.20	66.75
SdRP				
29.01.1990	Aleksander Kwaśniewski	3	1.12	84.56
20–21.03.1993	Aleksander Kwaśniewski	1	1	–
27.01.1996	Józef Oleksy	1	1	–
06.12.1997	Leszek Miller	2	1.28	56.68
SLD				
01.07.1999	Leszek Miller	1	1	–
18.12.1999	Leszek Miller	1	1	–
29.06.2003	Leszek Miller	1	1	–
06.03.2004 1st ballot	–	5	2.99	12.89
06.03.2004 2nd ballot	Krzysztof Janik	2	1.59	25.64
18.12.2004 1st ballot	–	3	2.30	1.44
18.12.2004 2nd ballot	Józef Oleksy	2	1.81	10.48
29.05.2005	Wojciech Olejniczak	2	1.55	28.99
31.05.2008	Grzegorz Napieralski	2	1.91	4.76
10.12.2011	Leszek Miller	4	1.34	65.06
28.04.2012*	Leszek Miller	1	1	–

\* – election results date

Source: Prepared on the basis of press releases. The first SdRP election results [cf. Tomczak 2003: 19]; the first and the second PSL elections [cf. Hartliński 2011: 262].

Comparing the number of candidates running for the post, the PiS leader elections are the least competitive of all the political parties under analysis. PiS leader Jarosław Kaczyński has had no counter-candidate at the party congresses so far and each time he has been able to renew his mandate. The internal elections within the PO have been characterized by a low, yet higher than in the case of the PiS level of competitiveness. Within the PO, the rivalry in the race for the post of the party leader, symbolic though it was, appeared for the first time during the election of 2006, when Andrzej Machowski, a party member and the Mayor of a Warsaw district-town of Ursynów, was the opponent of Donald Tusk, who was running for his re-election. Machowski's result then was 97 votes, while Tusk's one equalled to 533 [Majewski, Reszka 2011: 65]. A far more competitive election followed in 2013, when Gowin was Tusk's opponent. On the other hand, the average value of the ENC index for the PSL amounts to 1.59. The statute of this formation requires at least two candidates to run for the post, which raises the level of competitiveness in an artificial way, while the opposing candidates do not offer real competition to each other. Such a scenario took place in the election carried out during the Seventh Congress of the PSL in 2000, with Jarosław Kalinowski winning 576 votes, while his rival – Stanisław Żelichowski, who had decided to run for the post after being persuaded to do so – managed to get only 73 votes. If one were to accept that in the both cases there was only one person who was running for the post of the leader,



then the ENC index would amount to 1.56. Taking into consideration the reservation relating to the actual competitiveness of the elections in the PSL, the SLD ought to be acknowledged to be a party with generally the highest competitiveness level as regards the election of the party leader. In the case of the SdRP/SLD, the average value of the ENC index amounts to 1.49, taking into account merely the elections of the July and the December of 1999. Such a move seems justified if one takes account of the considerable nearness of the two events in time, which was connected with the process of party registration. Until 1999, that is until the moment of the SdRP transforming, together with the other units forming the SLD coalition, into one party, the competitiveness had remained at a relatively low level. Leszek Miller's leaving the post of the SLD leader was connected with a substantial rise in the competitiveness of the new party leader elections. The position of the very SLD itself on the political stage had been considerably weakened prior to that, in consequence of being in government. In the case of the SdRP, basically throughout the whole time of its functioning, there was a consensus relating to the candidate for the leader. That had been expressed in a considerable advantage over the other candidate/s (the winner enjoyed the support from over 70% of the delegates) if there were more leadership contenders. The situation changed along with the establishment of the SLD as one consolidated formation and the resignation of Miller – its first leader and Prime Minister in the years 2001–2004. Thus, the thesis which advances the idea of replacing the consensual strategy of selecting the party leader with competing for leadership seems justified. Nevertheless, this conclusion is weakened by the fact that the 2012 party leadership election was run with only one candidate.

Referring the Polish case to comparative studies, it needs underlining that election turnout on the nationwide level [Fauvelle-Aymar, François 2006] and on the internal one within the party [Lisi 2010; Wauters 2015] is linked to competition. However, the analysis of Polish cases has not confirmed this regularity. Juxtaposing the turnouts while choosing the leader of the SLD in 2012 (60.5%) and the leader of the PO in 2013 (51.12%) does not entitle one to conclude that the low turnout originates from a lack of intra-party rivalry for power. Including members in the intra-party decision-making process, analysed in this study through the prism of introduction of direct democracy in party leader selection, did not lead to a rise in the number of party members. Obviously, there was no such intention on the part of both parties, either. This situation is different from that observed in Canadian parties [Carty, Blake 1999].

#### CAUSES OF LEADERSHIP CHANGES IN POLITICAL PARTIES

In a similar way as Robert Michels did it while formulating the “iron law of oligarchy”, contemporary researchers of political parties generally accept that elites establish control over the party at the expense of activists and ordinary members

[Loxbo 2013: 538]. Researchers who proposed the cartel party thesis, claim that through formal strengthening of the rights of rank-and-file party members the decision making role played by middle level activists is limited. These decisions include, for example, acceptance of the election program, recruitment of elites (especially those representing parties in parliament), or election of the party leader [Katz 2001: 290; Katz, Mair 2009: 759; Mair 1997: 11]. Still, there are proposed opposing interpretations, too, according to which party leaders become more open to preferences of party members and the electorate [Kitschelt 2000].

It is worth noting in this place a case study analysing the intra-party democracy in the Social Democratic Workers' Party of Sweden (SAP). In the light of conducted studies, the leaders of the party had less power at their disposal, whereas activists enjoyed more influence in the 1990s than in the period of flourishing of mass parties in the 1950s [Loxbo 2013: 549]. Independently of the role which is attributed to research of the case-study type in falsifying theories [Flyvbjerg 2006; Lijphart 1971: 692], an analysis of the democracy within the SAP proves that autonomy of leaders in contemporary parties should not be overestimated.

With reference to Great Britain, McAnulla pointed to four trends which contribute to forced exits of party leaders. They refer to the following: (1) the increased importance of perception of leadership; (2) progressing "celebrity" politics; (3) the erosion of the boundaries between public and private life; (4) the increased professionalization of politics [McAnulla 2010: 593].

In the light of systematic studies on the impact of election results on the ability of party leaders to keep their posts, there emerges a distinctive pattern of removing ineffective leaders [Andrews, Jackman 2008: 674]. For large parties, a loss of seats in Parliament entails depriving the leader of the post, the probability of his/her resignation growing higher when the given party does not manage to enter the government. In other words, careers of leaders are not endangered as long as their parties are increasing the number of seats in Parliament and they become heads of governments. The careers of small party leaders are closely connected with election results, which – in turn – translate into the number of seats won. Leaders of small parties can have a considerable influence on this, in contrast to the issue of entering a government as a junior partner. A poor election result and in the consequence of it – a weak position in parliament can put an end to the career of leaders of small political parties [Andrews, Jackman 2008: 674–675].

An analysis of the causes behind the dismissal of leaders of the Social Democratic Party of Denmark has revealed, in turn, that the election result played only a partial role in removal of one in three leaders of that party. Four election defeats did not entail changing the leader. The dominating reason for the changes was the fact of not entering the government [Bille 1997: 389].

Some researchers, who have advanced the concept which assumes that the length of time of the term of office is influenced by the perception of the leaders by bodies that have the right to remove them from the post, have reached beyond an analysis

of institutional and situational factors. This proposal is founded on the assumption that the bodies having the right to decide about the length of the term of office evaluate the current leader with reference to his/her direct predecessor. In this way, the terms of office of leaders who succeed ones who proved effective for many years are shorter than those of leaders who perform the function having succeeded less effective leaders [Horiuchi, Laing, 't Hart 2015: 357–358].

Table 2 includes reasons relating to Polish party leader exits, which have been grouped in compliance with the division covering six categories [Cross, Blais 2011: 135]. The analysis allows extending this typology by two more categories. Therefore, a change (cessation) of party leadership may be connected with the following: (1) voluntary resignation; (2) resignation under pressure; (3) resignation due to a difference of opinion regarding one specific issue; (4) political party ceased to exist; (5) death of the leader; (6) formal dismissal; (7) not running for re-election; (8) not being elected for the next term of office. Since it is a subjective assessment whether or not the stepping down was enforced, thus, including the cases into the first and the second, and also partially the seventh category, may pose some difficulty. The voluntary resignation is when the leader is not compelled to step down [Cross, Blais 2011: 135].

Table 2. Reasons for leader exits of political parties in Poland

Leader	Date of election	Date of exit	Reason for the exit
PiS			
Lech Kaczyński	29.05.2001	18.01.2003	voluntary resignation
PO			
Maciej Płażyński	18.10.2001	09.04.2003	resignation because of a single, specific disagreement with the party
Donald Tusk	09.04.2003	08.11.2014	voluntary resignation
PSL			
Roman Bartoszcze	05.05.1990	29.06.1991	not running for re-election
Waldemar Pawlak	29.06.1991	11.10.1997	formal removal
Jarosław Kalinowski	11.10.1997	16.03.2004	resignation under pressure
Janusz Wojciechowski	16.03.2004	29.01.2005	resignation because of a single, specific disagreement with the party
Waldemar Pawlak	29.01.2005	17.11.2012	not being elected for the next term of office
SLD			
Leszek Miller	15.04.1999	06.04.2004	resignation under pressure
Krzysztof Janik	06.04.2004	18.12.2004	not being elected for the next term of office
Józef Oleksy	18.12.2004	29.05.2005	resignation under pressure
Wojciech Olejniczak	29.05.2005	31.05.2008	not being elected for the next term of office
Grzegorz Napieralski	31.05.2008	10.12.2011	resignation under pressure

Source: Prepared on the basis of press information

In the case of the two parties descending from the Solidarity Movement, that is the PO and the PiS, each of them has changed its leader. In both cases it was a voluntary resignation connected with taking a post in local government (Lech Kaczyński)

or within the structures of the European Union (Donald Tusk). As regards the PSL, each of the five party leader changes has been classified within a different category. The PSL leader was dismissed once. Besides, in 1991 Roman Bartoszcze, who was the party leader then, was attempted to be removed from his post twice. The exerted pressure, which was meant to make the leader resign, was the major reason why the leader of the SLD stepped down. As regards the SLD, there have been five changes of the party leader. Three of the leaders were compelled to resign under the pressure of the party. The other two lost re-elections.

The analysis of the Polish case shows that party leaders, in a similar manner as leaders of political parties in consolidated West European democracies, rarely resign voluntarily. It is possible to indicate the above mentioned cases with no interpretational problems only in two situations. Generally speaking, the leaderships in the PiS and the PO are characterized by stability and a lack of competitiveness (the PiS) or limited competitiveness (the PO) in fight for power in the party. The situation looks different in the cases of the SLD and the PSL, within which there have occurred alternations of the leader (cf. Tab. 1). In the case of the former, in the years 2004–2005 the party went through a crisis of leadership as a result of frequent leader changes.

## CONCLUSIONS

Despite the limited number of studies, it is possible to present a few generalizations concerning party leadership on their basis. The growing role of party leaders is accompanied by a change in their selection methods [Pilet, Cross 2014b: 2]. Whereas in mass parties, it is a party congress that decides about the selection [Sobolewska-Myślik, Kosowska-Gąstoł, Borowiec 2010: 153], in the case of cartel type parties, the leader is selected directly by party members. As Katz and Mair underline, the formal growth in the role of party members is accompanied by the weakening of better organised and easier to mobilize activists of the middle level. According to the authors, this leads to strengthening of party leader position [Katz 2001; Katz, Mair 1995; Mair 1994].

In 1965, the most common method of selecting leaders was that by the congress attended by delegates selected by regional branches of the party, often with the participation of MPs, representatives of trade unions, youth and women's organizations and sometimes ideological factions [Pilet, Cross 2014a: 226]. Nowadays, the situation has not changed considerably and the selection is still made by the congress. Still, the second most popular method is the direct election of the leader by party members [Pilet, Cross 2014a: 226]. Consequently, in political parties, representative democracy dominates over direct democracy.

On the basis of the analysis of about 70 political parties in 13 parliamentary democracies over nearly 50 years (or since the moment of their transition to democracy in the case of the states of Southern Europe and Central-Eastern Europe), one

can speak of a visible, though not universal, trend towards increasing inclusiveness while choosing party leaders. Many examined parties decided to adopt more inclusive procedures to select their party leaders following (1) election defeats, and (2) during the time when they were in opposition [Pilet, Cross 2014a: 226].

There is no explicit answer in the literature to the question whether democratization of elections is connected with the selection of party leaders of different demographic features (sex, age) or personal experience (length of parliamentary service, experience of working in the government or the lack of it) in comparison with leaders selected on the basis of more exclusive methods, such as an election by party bodies.

Leadership in Polish political parties has not been analysed adequately yet in the way that would deal with the issues raised in this paper. The Polish parties have not also been included in the growing number of international comparative studies. It seems that the Polish case could introduce certain corrections to and complement the explanations present in the literature, relating to the methods of party leader selection, and also verify the causes behind the rise in the election participation, which – according to the literature – is connected with the rise in the competitiveness of elections.

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#### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**Michał Radecki** is a PhD candidate at the Institute of Political Science, Opole University. Research interests: political parties, political leadership, Polish politics.