

Agnieszka Turska-Kawa

University of Silesia in Katowice (Poland)

ORCID: 0000-0002-2748-7037

e-mail: agnieszka.turska-kawa@us.edu.pl

Political Beliefs and Political Subjectivity of Grey Voters: The Case of Poland*

Abstract: The study's main aim is to look for relationships between political beliefs and political subjectivity of grey voters (over 65). Political beliefs contain a motivational element, mainly due to being embedded in the values and needs of the respective individuals. This can affect the consciously created place of the citizen within the political system in different directions. The orientation of the study on the grey voters may be cognitively engaging due to the several sources related to historical events that took place in Poland. Political beliefs were conceptualized through dimensions on a left-right scale, where xenophobia and religious fundamentalism were diagnosed in the area of cultural beliefs. In contrast, acceptance of capitalism and anti-welfare were diagnosed in the area of economic beliefs. Political subjectivity was diagnosed using an original tool, whose preliminary analysis made it possible to distinguish three factors of the construct: political initiative, political sense, and identification with the political system.

Keywords: *political subjectivity, older voters, political beliefs, economic beliefs, cultural beliefs, grey voters*

Introduction

In post-industrial countries, including Poland, the demographic structure of society has been changing (*Informacja o Sytuacji Osób Starszych Na Podstawie Badań Głównego Urzędu Statystycznego*, 2018). As a result, the percentage of older people in the population is increasing (*Struktura Ludności i Starzenie Się Społeczeństwa – Statistics Explained*, 2019). This process is accompanied by several changes in their behaviors and attitudes, meaning a certain new quality at this stage of life. The features of this “new old age” are particularly clearly present when the demographic processes associated with the increased

* The research was co-financed by the funds granted under the Research Excellence Initiative of the University of Silesia in Katowice, Poland

participation of elderly people in society overlap with the rapid transformations of the economy, social life, value systems, and intergenerational relations.

This is one of the areas where an increase in the percentage of the oldest citizens can bring about significant changes in political activity. Considering the demographic changes in recent years, there has been a substantial shift in the boundary of *helplessness* and *withdrawal* (Eysenck, 1954) related to old age. Consequently, people now experience the fullness of life and its meaning for longer. This opens up new possibilities of exploration for researchers in the field of political sciences, aimed at diagnosing the needs and expectations of the oldest segment of citizens, the consequences of which are visible, for instance, in the changes taking place in the structure of political engagement, political attitudes, and electoral activity. These may involve, for instance, a greater focus of the election campaign on the needs of the oldest demographic. A positive consequence of this process will undoubtedly consist in strengthening the debate in the public space about the needs and motivations of senior citizens, more extensive research in this area, and public and institutional interest in the segment of elderly people. A negative consequence may involve marginalization of the needs of other demographics, resulting directly from the electoral calculations of political actors. In the literature, voters in the period of late maturity, usually past the age of 65 (Strelau, 2003), are generally defined as grey voters.

The problem of political engagement of the oldest citizens has been probed by researchers only incidentally. Individual studies have been appearing concerning specific countries, addressing the aspect of grey voters' functioning in the political space. Achim Goerres (2007b, 2008) tested generational hypotheses in Germany and the UK. Joe Chrisp and Nick Pearce (2019) proved that in the United Kingdom, the dominant voting motivations of older people had economic grounds. Studies have also been appearing that analyze the electoral communication and offerings addressed to elderly people in the United Kingdom (Davidson, 2005) and the Netherlands (Otjes & Krouwel, 2018). Researchers also emphasize the importance of the needs of older people, which must be considered in the context of demographic change (Davidson, 2014). All studies clearly conclude that the significance of the grey voter segment will grow in the coming years.

This paper aims to explore the political subjectivity of grey voters in Poland. Political subjectivity refers to the collection of feelings, attitudes, emotions, and beliefs shaped by the individual's perceived place in the broadly understood political system. As a dynamic construct, political subjectivity interacts with other elements of the political system and individual attributes. The reflection presented here seeks the predictors of political subjectivity of the oldest citizens in their political beliefs, expressed by their declared place in the space delimited by the left-right poles. An extensive line of research in the literature proves the motivational nature of political beliefs, resulting significantly from the different needs and values of individuals situated at the opposite poles of the scale. Jost (2009) noted that citizens' political beliefs are a significant motivational force rooted in fundamental psychological antinomies, including preferences for stability vs. change, order vs. complexity,

familiarity vs. novelty, conformity vs. creativity, and loyalty vs. rebellion. It can be assumed that they will shape the individual's place in the political system differently. In the present study, political beliefs are conceptualized through dimensions on a left-right scale, where xenophobia and religious fundamentalism are diagnosed in the area of cultural beliefs. In contrast, acceptance of capitalism and anti-welfare are diagnosed in the area of economic beliefs. Political subjectivity is diagnosed using an original tool whose preliminary analysis made it possible to distinguish three factors of the construct: political initiative, political sense, and identification with the political system.

The political subjectivity of Poland's oldest citizens is an interesting research problem from both a cognitive and a practical point of view. These citizens represent a particular segment of voters, ones whose socialization process took place in a different political system, namely a communist one, in which the activity of citizens was limited. Many factors, such as historical events, first political experiences, and the activity of the Catholic Church may have influenced the development of their particular political beliefs. The perception of the current political system is naturally not free from the contexts indicated above, which may, in turn, influence the citizens' perception of their own place in the system and their judgment of it. The experience of functioning in different economic, social, and political realities allows them to realistically evaluate democratic change and its consequences for the economic, social, and political system from their point of view as citizens. At the same time, bearing in mind the prospects for change regarding the demographic processes taking place in Poland and the rest of the world, the topic seems to be extremely important from the point of view of application. Its essence is to satisfy the civic needs of the grey voter segment appropriately, put their activity to efficient use, and observe how these changes will influence the electoral market.

Political subjectivity as a foundation underlying political engagement

The development of democracy generated a lot of reflection and questions about political subjectivity. Although the question of political subjectivity has been addressed in studies in the field of political, philosophical, psychological, and sociological sciences, a common position can be noticed, namely the agreement that subjectivity is both a profoundly personal construct and a social one, emerging through relational dynamics, and reaching far beyond the structures of power as such (Abrams, 2015; Blackman et al., 2008; Moon, 2013). Subjectivity is, therefore, a collection of emotions and inner feelings that are shaped by the system's functioning quality. The sense of belonging is inherently incorporated in subjectivity in the respective concepts. Following Nira Yuval-Davis (2006), belonging can be considered on three levels. Firstly, it refers to one's place in the social structure, understood in a cross-sectional manner regarding differentiation by class, gender, race, ethnicity, etc. Secondly, there are forms of identification that do not necessarily conform to the ascribed social identity and which are instead created by way of self-identification and of the emo-

tional attachment generated on that basis: they can be, for instance, individual attributes, body image, vocational aspirations, or sexual prowess. Finally, belonging can be perceived in terms of the politics of belonging, i.e., of the institutions, laws, and regulations that interpret belonging in specific ways, embedded in ethically and formally formulated laws setting forth who belongs and who is excluded. The need for belonging is identified as one of the fundamental needs of every human being (Maslow, 1954), often playing a helpful role in further defining the individual Self. We perceive ourselves as members of a particular family, social group, region, or country. It is about the desire to participate in some structure with whose members the individual shares values, goals, and norms.

When reflecting on political subjectivity, some authors emphasize how it is formed in interaction with the external environment. One of the first works on political subjectivity, by Steven Brown (1980), draws attention to its changes under the influence of social and psychological processes. Michelle Jarman and colleagues (2002), in turn, clarify that perceiving oneself as a subject in the political system is a result of the interaction of broadly understood social institutions such as the family, school, military, but also culture, language, fields of knowledge, etc., with which the individual interacts, whether voluntarily or involuntarily. These authors believe that political subjectivity is shaped by the interactions between the individual's psyche and the system in which the individual functions.

An interesting point of view on subjectivity was presented by Sadeq Rahimi (2015). He notes that the experience of subjectivity is political. According to the researcher, politicality is not an additional aspect of the subject, but the subject's mode of being, i.e., precisely what the subject is (Rahimi, 2015, p. 8). Politicality is not confined to any specific area of functioning of the conscious individual. Rahimi argues that the moment when an individual begins to feel like a social subject is political. This politicality stems from the power that fills this meaning – the conscious individual begins to feel their own needs and interests, often shared with a social group. The motivation to satisfy them generates directions of individual and collective behaviors. This position is coherent with the view of Robert A. Dahl (1995), who emphasizes that politics is a natural field of citizens' activity that cannot be separated from everyday functioning.

For some researchers, political subjectivity includes agency. For Christine Krause and Katharina Schramm (2011, p. 126), political subjectivity involves "subjection to power, experiencing new agency and gaining recognition". In turn, Sophie Bond et al. (2020) explicitly recognizes that political subjectivity requires a self-conscious performative act of agency. It seems, however, that what determines the 'movement' of the subject is empowerment, which is a specific internal motivation of the individual. On the one hand, it contributes to well-being. On the other hand, it should be emphasized that the overall goal of empowerment is to improve the quality of life, leading to greater control in decision-making and self-regulation (Addelyan Rasi & Moula, 2015). The essence of political subjectivity is the awareness of one's place in the political system, but it is not a sufficient condition for activity. The trigger of this involvement is empowerment.

Motivational aspects of political beliefs

The sources of the motivational nature of political beliefs can be sought in at least two areas (Turska-Kawa & Pilch, 2022). On the one hand, their sources are linked to the psychological functioning of individuals. Needs that result from individuals' cognitive and personality characteristics can be a specific motivational trigger. Needs activate individuals towards undertaking a behavior that satisfies a given requirement. The motivational nature can also be indicated in the values. As Schwartz (2017) points out, fundamental values can be defined as trans-situational goals, varying in importance, which serve as guiding principles in a person's or group's life. Other researchers (Caprara & Cervone, 2010; Hitlin, 2003) emphasize the mediating nature of the values between the individual and society. On the other hand, political beliefs make it easier for individuals to orient themselves in the social space. They help citizens understand the complexity of political and social phenomena (Jæger, 2008). They make shaping opinions and attitudes towards political parties and their activities much more straightforward. Political beliefs also facilitate the crystallization of attitudes towards political parties and the evaluation of the legitimacy of their actions and decisions. The idea of self-identification predisposes to attributing a place in the political universe to particular parties or their social positioning. In this way, it is easier to find a relationship between the represented values and the perceived needs on the one hand and their transposition in the sphere of current politics on the other (Turska-Kawa & Wojtasik, 2010).

Research verifying the differences between individuals with different political beliefs demonstrates that such beliefs play an essential role in the individuals' political activity and social engagement. For example, conservatives are more sensitive to threats to the social order, which motivates them to defend social organizations and to abide by hierarchy (McCann, 2008). Consequently, they are more willing to accept social inequality and resist social change that could violate this order (Jost et al., 2003). People with conservative beliefs have a higher tendency to justify the political system and the actions taken by those in power (Jost, 2009; Jost et al., 2003), which may partly be due to their preference for maintaining the social status quo. In turn, individuals self-identifying as left-leaning will focus in their activity on protecting universalism and self-direction values, which is reflected, for instance, in the support given to activities aimed at promoting civil liberties (Barnea & Schwartz, 1998; Caprara et al., 2006, 2017). They are also more likely to show tolerance for ambiguity and acceptance of uncertainty, which may be related to their openness to change and new experiences (Caprara et al., 2008; Schwartz et al., 2010). Differences in activity and engagement are also observed in the media's activity patterns. The results of the study by Conover et al. (2012) show that right-leaning Twitter users exhibit more significant political activity, tighter social bonds, and a communication network topology that facilitates the rapid and broad dissemination of political information. Left-leaning users, on their part, produce less total political content, allocate proportionally less time to creating political content, are less likely to reveal their political ideology in their profile biography, and are less likely to share

resources in the form of hyperlinks. Vitriol et al. (2019) conducted an interesting study proving that uncertainty about one's political self-identification undermines political efficacy and interest in the political sphere on the part of individuals, causing them to withdraw from electoral engagement. This is because political beliefs are ceasing to be a helpful heuristic, making navigating the complex political space challenging. Similarly, other studies have shown that more significant political activity co-occurs with a more pronounced organization of one's attitude unidimensionally around the left and right poles (Lupton et al., 2015; Malka et al., 2019; Zaller, 1992). Low engagement is associated with the adoption of mixed attitudes. This is related to the nature of political discourse, which is often simplified into left- and right-wing terms in the media. In contrast, political events and decisions are often reported regarding these concepts, significantly facilitating communication. Although there are geographical and cultural differences (Pieurko et al., 2011; Schwartz et al., 2010) in the relationships obtained, most researchers agree on the motivational nature of political beliefs (Barnea & Schwartz, 1998; Caprara et al., 2006, 2017; Freire et al., 2009; Singer, 2016)..

Numerous studies have addressed how political beliefs change with age. For years, researchers have been testing the hypothesis that political beliefs become more conservative as one ages. Currently, based on holistic research into old age, the sources of conservatism are located in a broader area than merely ideology. Aging is observed in every area of the individual's functioning: biological, social, economic, and psychological. Shifting towards conservatism in one's views may result from natural changes in each area (Peterson et al., 2020). For example, psychological changes progressing with age include a preference for order and avoidance of uncertainty (Jost et al., 2007), which can be associated with traits such as conscientiousness and less openness to experience (Caprara et al., 2006; Gerber et al., 2011; Mondak, 2010), which are most often associated with conservatism. Several parallel theories concerning the relationships between political beliefs and age can be found in political science literature. The first line emphasizes that political attitudes tend to be relatively stable during one's life (A. Campbell et al., 1980; Goerres, 2007a; Peterson et al., 2020). In situations where they do change, however, liberals are more likely to become conservatives than vice versa (Peterson et al., 2020). Other studies show that between the ages of 18 and 26, citizens are particularly susceptible to changes in political attitudes, while after this period, the latter becomes increasingly rigid and resistant to new stimuli (Sears & Funk, 1999; Stoker & Jennings, 2008; Toffler, 1991). Some models emphasize the importance of other factors in changing one's political beliefs and attitudes while age is pushed into the background. The lifelong openness model suggests that attitudes may remain susceptible to change throughout life. (Franklin & Jackson, 1983). The running tally model is primarily a rational choice approach to political learning (Achen, 2002; Fiorina, 1981). This approach refers to the thesis that individuals routinely revise their attitudes based on retrospective and prospective assessments of the political environment.

Current Study

The process of political socialization, first experiences as an actor in the political system, and historical memory are significant for the development of political engagement and attitudes at later stages of a citizen's life. Many studies confirm the importance of adolescence and early adulthood (Galston, 2001; Kirlin, 2002; McLellan & Youniss, 2003; Sears, 1983). According to the symbolic politics theory by David O. Sears (1983), political identification is a highly symbolic attitude, and it is precisely such attitudes that form in an intense way up to early adulthood. In this context, the essence of what is referred to as historical memory also needs to be emphasized. Collective memory does not refer to specific experiences and events but to the meaning-giving stories that come to be known as "the history" of a time, phenomenon, or event (Sapiro, 2004). This refers to the context of submerging the events that make it possible to give a particular emotional meaning to subjectivity. Collective memory is neither the aggregate of particular memories carried and passed on by those present at an event nor a mere "residue" of past events (Sears, 2002, p. 255).

The study's main aim is to look for relationships between political beliefs and the political subjectivity of grey voters. Political beliefs contain a motivational element, mainly due to being embedded in the values and needs of the respective individuals. This can affect the consciously created place of the citizen within the political system in different directions. The study presented here explores the relationship between political beliefs and political subjectivity among voters in late adulthood, past the age of 65. This orientation of the study may be cognitively engaging due to the several sources related to historical events that took place in Poland. Firstly, individuals over 65 were socialized in a significantly different social and political system, namely a communist one. They were young and had their first socio-political observations when Poland was not a sovereign country. It was governed by the Polish United Workers' Party as the hegemonic party, with the formal existence of "satellite" groupings, the so-called "allied parties." It significantly reduced the general public's activity, with all political resistance broken using undemocratic methods. The Catholic Church, headed by Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński, played an essential role in that period. The Church supported the Polish nation's openness (Grzymała-Busse, 2015), and church buildings provided freedom of action for the citizens (Guzek, 2019). Secondly, older people present a particular range of social needs (Bruggencate et al., 2018), care needs (Huang, 2015), and needs related to the sense of influence (Kar, 2015), which can moderate their political subjectivity. Thirdly, older people may experience fears related to the current socio-political situation. This may result from weaker adaptation mechanisms, the consequence of which may be, among other things, the cultivation of conservative attitudes or rejection of some achievements of civilization.

Political beliefs in the presented study are conceptualized as citizens' self-identification on the left-right scale, with the extremes treated two-dimensionally, in line with the latest reports. Currently, many researchers question the one-dimensionality of the scale (Choma

et al., 2010) and agree on the need to distinguish at least two dimensions of beliefs – social and economic. (Feldman & Johnston, 2014; Lachat, 2018). The need to distinguish the dimensions is reinforced by the fact that the relationships between them vary in different cultural and political contexts (Aspelund et al., 2013; Duriez et al., 2005; Hiel & Kossowska, 2007; Malka et al., 2019; Malka & Soto, 2015; Thorisdottir et al., 2007).

I posed two main research questions: (1) What are the relationships between dimensions of cultural beliefs (xenophobia and fundamentalism) and political subjectivity of grey voters? (2) What are the relationships between the dimensions of economic beliefs (acceptance of capitalism and anti-welfare) and the political subjectivity of grey voters? Two main hypotheses were formulated in response to the questions posed.

H1: Cultural beliefs will be positively related to the political subjectivity of grey voters.

Both xenophobia and religious fundamentalism are associated with a preference for traditional values and for the existing social order, to which the broadly defined “aliens” are not admitted, as they threaten the need for safety. This may tie the individual more closely to the political system as a consequence of supporting the existing socio-political status quo, which is acceptable because it is familiar and domesticated. It will also be necessary for older people with weaker adaptation mechanisms, for whom civilizational change generates fears of instability.

H2: Economic beliefs will be negatively related to the political subjectivity of grey voters.

Accepting capitalism and anti-welfare are attitudes that accept own entrepreneurship and the free market. However, older people are more often beneficiaries of the welfare state (Goerres, 2007b). Once retired, their income is reduced to the money they have already earned and the welfare projects offered by the government. Research results show that social security is vital to the financial well-being of senior citizens and is an essential motivator of their political attitudes and actions (Campbell, 2002). Thus, it seems their agency may be directly proportional to the belief that the state intervenes in the economic market by equalizing citizens’ opportunities and guaranteeing the satisfaction of fundamental needs.

Methods

Participants and procedure. The study was conducted between April 1 and 15, 2021, using CAWI (N=406) and CATI (N=201). Due to the pandemic situation in Poland, the decision was made not to conduct face-to-face interviews. Diversifying the method into telephone interviews and an online questionnaire was caused by the need to guarantee access to the survey and citizens who do not use the internet. Purposive sampling was used. The study covered the age group 65–95 (N=69,53; SD=4.07). The sample was Poland-wide. It included

302 men and 305 women. The largest group of respondents came from large cities with a population of over 100 thousand (41.8%), while medium-sized cities (with a population of 30-100 thousand) and towns with up to 30 thousand inhabitants had a similarly significant representation, respectively 16.3% and 15.2%. Nearly a quarter of the respondents came from rural areas (26.7%). The Ethics Committee of the University of Silesia in Katowice approved the study.

Measures. Political subjectivity. The Political Subjectivity Scale was designed in several stages. The initial pool of items was selected by students of political science, sociology, political consulting, and public consulting (N=132). They were asked to list, using the free association method, phrases expressing the individual's political subjectivity. Items that were repetitive, vulgar, or unrelated to the topic were excluded in turn. Subsequently, the item pool was handed over to competent judges (N=8: four political scientists, two sociologists, two psychologists), whose task was to estimate on a 5-point scale the extent to which the specific statement was related to political subjectivity. I included in the final scale items scoring higher than four on average. The tool used in the study eventually consisted of 14 statements to which respondents were asked to respond on a five-point scale (1 = "strongly disagree"; 5 = "strongly agree").

Political beliefs. I diagnosed the construct using the Political Beliefs Questionnaire (Czarnek et al., 2017). The tool consists of a battery diagnosing two dimensions of beliefs: cultural and economic ones. Within the first of these, the authors distinguish the sub-dimensions of xenophobia (in the study: $\alpha = 0.86$) and religious fundamentalism ($\alpha = 0.91$). In the second dimension, acceptance of capitalism ($\alpha = 0.44$) and antiwelfare ($\alpha = 0.75$) can be distinguished. Each dimension comprises several statements to which respondents are asked to respond on a five-point scale (1 = "strongly disagree"; 5 = "strongly agree"). Examples of statements: "Christian values should be particularly protected in Poland" (religious fundamentalism), "Poland should be first and foremost for Poles" (xenophobia), "The richest are currently paying excessively high taxes" (acceptance of capitalism), "The state should curb price growth, if prices are rising too rapidly" (acceptance of capitalism).

Results

Preliminary analysis. In the first stage of exploration, the structure of the items diagnosing political subjectivity was analyzed. An exploratory factor analysis was conducted to understand the factor structure behind the initial list of 14 items (Child, 2006; Field, 2013). The screen test showed that the three-factor solution fits the data best. Finally, principal axis analysis with Varimax rotation was performed with three factors to extract. The model explained a total of 60.39% of the variance. I rejected one item from the final scale because it loaded two factors (*I know what rights I have as a citizen, and I exercise them readily*). The items with factor loadings above 0.5 were used to create indices. The first factor consisted of 4 items and explained 28.82% of the variance ($\alpha = 0.84$). The second factor comprised

five items and explained 19.05% of the variance ($\alpha = 0.79$). The third factor consisted of 4 items and explained 12.52% of the variance, $\alpha = 0.78$. The items making up the first factor expressed citizens' initiative to deepen one's political subjectivity – searching for knowledge, observing current events, and combining them into a cause-and-effect system. It should be emphasized that the activity element in this factor is not related to a tangible impact on the political system (e.g., through participation in elections or referenda) but rather to caring for one's subjectivity. The second factor included expressions defining the perception of a sense of political space and comprehension of the rules that govern it. The third factor included citizens' feelings concerning their place within the political system, their sense of importance, and their awareness of the significance of their civil rights. Internal content analysis made it possible to name the individual factors of the Political Subjectivity Scale, constituting three autonomous elements of the construct: (1) political initiative, (2) political sense, and (3) identification with the political system.

Descriptive statistics are shown in Table 1A (Supplementary Materials). Correlations between three factors of political subjectivity and other variables are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Factor loadings of the items of Political Subjectivity Scale items

	1	2	3
I feel important as a citizen.	-.051	.038	.786
I feel that my opinion as a citizen matters.	.166	.088	.785
Regardless of the reshuffling of the political scene after the elections, I know that there is a place for me as a citizen.	.141	-.029	.752
I keep up to date with political events.	.871	.019	.072
I am keen to expand my knowledge about current political events.	.896	.016	.077
I am keen to expand my knowledge about the rules and principles that govern the socio-political space.	.820	.045	.212
I am never sure whether the moves of the highest-level authorities are right and appropriate.	.027	.690	.002
The only certain thing in politics is that there is no certainty.	-.157	.726	.117
I find the political scene unpredictable.	.111	.804	.002
It is difficult to find any logic in politicians' behaviors.	-.011	.806	.073
The rules governing politics are unclear to me.	.205	.682	.004
As a citizen, I know I can do a lot in politics if I want to.	.304	.151	.664
By following political events, I can anticipate solutions to difficult situations.	.593	.095	.221

Factor extraction method – Principal component analysis. Rotation method – Varimax with Kaiser normalization.

Intercorrelations between study variables are presented in Table 2. Place of residence shows no significant association with most of the variables. The exception is religious fundamentalism, with higher levels observed in respondents living in the smallest localities. Intercorrelations between political beliefs reflect the two classic patterns fairly consistently diagnosed in research (Czarnek et al., 2019; Kossowska & Van Hiel, 2003; Radkiewicz, 2017). In the first one, cultural leftism co-exists with economic rightism; in the second one, cultural rightism co-occurs with economic leftism. Interesting relationships were observed between cultural beliefs and political subjectivity factors. They correlate negatively with political efficacy and positively with political sense (here, exclusively religious fundamentalism) and identification with the system. Economic beliefs, on the other hand, positively co-occur with political efficacy, while only antiwelfare shows associations with the other factors of political subjectivity: positive with political sense and negative with identification with the political system.

Table 2. Intercorrelations between the variables used in the study

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Religious fundamentalism								
(2) Xenophobia	.645**							
(3) Acceptance of capitalism	-.105*	-.205**						
(4) Antiwelfare	-.231**	-.370**	.293**					
(5) Political initiative	-.121**	-.178**	n.s.	n.s.				
(6) Political sense	.164**	n.s.	n.s.	.233**	.112**			
(7) Identification with the system	.183**	.105*	n.s.	-.096*	.357**	.136**		
(8) Place of residence	-.084**	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$ (two-tailed)

Testing hypothesis. I conducted a series of quantile regression analyses to assess the relationship between political beliefs and political subjectivity. This method was chosen because the assumptions of regression analysis were not met. Quantile regression can estimate the conditional median of the outcome variable without making any assumptions concerning the distribution of the outcome. Each political subjectivity factor was treated as an outcome variable, while the PBQ dimensions served as predictor variables. The results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Regression analysis predicting factors of political subjectivity from political beliefs (N=607)

Predictors	coefficients	95% CI	significance
Political initiative			
Religious fundamentalism	-.010	-.062; .043	.740
Xenophobia	-.148	-.250; -.046	.004
Acceptance of capitalism	.038	-.083; .159	.437
Antiwelfare	-.042	-.100; .017	.905
MAE = 2.30 , pseudo R square = .007			
Political sense			
Religious fundamentalism	.155	.072; .239	.000
Xenophobia	.003	-.159; .165	.973
Acceptance of capitalism	-.089	-.282; .104	.367
Antiwelfare	.284	.191; .377	.000
MAE = 2.80, pseudo R square = .061			
Identification with the system			
Religious fundamentalism	.098	.027; .168	.007
Xenophobia	-.038	-.174; .098	.584
Acceptance of capitalism	.241	.078; .403	.004
Antiwelfare	-.081	-.160; -.003	.042
MAE = 2.52 , pseudo R square = .024			

Note: MAE – Mean Absolute Error

Discussion

The presented study aimed to investigate the associations of political beliefs with the political subjectivity of grey voters. Political beliefs were conceptualized through dimensions on a one-dimensional left-right scale, where xenophobia and religious fundamentalism were diagnosed in the area of cultural beliefs. In contrast, acceptance of capitalism and anti-welfare were diagnosed in the area of economic beliefs. Political subjectivity was diagnosed using an original tool, whose preliminary analysis made it possible to distinguish three factors of the construct: political initiative, political sense, and identification with the political system. Four median regressions were conducted to identify whether political beliefs regarding two aspects of the right-left distinction (cultural and economic) would significantly predict particular areas of political subjectivity.

In the first model, xenophobia was the only significant predictor. Higher xenophobia scores make it possible to predict lower political initiatives. Highly xenophobic individuals present negative attitudes towards broadly defined aliens to the Polish nation, towards both foreigners and Western models. According to them, Poland should be first and foremost for Poles. Perceiving others as enemies and as a source of threat to cherished values can reduce initiative focused on working together for the common good. There may be several

sources of xenophobic attitudes in Poland. Regarding historical events, the study participants were socialized in a period when sharp political divisions existed, clearly defining “aliens.” For pro-government citizens, the latter were represented by the actively fighting democratic opposition; for citizens opposing the regime, they corresponded to the government ruling Poland in an authoritarian manner. In more contemporary times, discussions can be indicated in the context of protecting national values against the European Union and non-Polish culture in general. The overthrow of communism in Poland in 1989, the creation of democratic structures, the implementation of the Constitution, and the start of the European integration process awakened in the citizens a sense of civil and political subjectivity, accompanied by national pride. Poles felt they had influence, a sense of agency, and participation in the social and political processes around them. Over time, however, Poland started to fit within the trend of political apathy and alienation diagnosed for most European societies described as depoliticized (Terrén, 2002). Crises resulting from transnational processes (the economic crisis or the migration crisis), the threat to the national interest and the Catholic values fueled by political parties (Self-Defense of the Republic of Poland, League of Polish Families, and Law and Justice), as well as the perceived social inequalities accompanying corruption crises shook the psychological and social stability of Poles, generating in part a fear of what was non-Polish. It can be assumed that in this context, xenophobia derived from fears and built on a foundation of a low sense of safety might significantly weaken political initiative.

Within the second model, high religious fundamentalism and high anti-welfare were found to be significant predictors of political sense. The first factor is more likely to characterize individuals who sided with the democratic opposition and the Catholic Church in the communist system. They are; therefore, individuals disillusioned with the communist system, for whom the contemporary system, independently of its current imperfections, is perceived as the opposite – as a predictable one governed by a specific set of rules enshrined in binding legislative acts. Economic beliefs remain consistent with this. In fact, the free market exists only in democracies. Profound interference in the market under the communist system was widespread, which reduced citizens’ initiative and the understanding of market rules due to the loss of social control. It is worth emphasizing that political sense as a factor of political subjectivity reflects the sense of understanding of political rules and their causal relations rather than the respondents’ expectations towards the government.

Within the diagnosis of the relationships in the third model, high levels of religious fundamentalism and acceptance of capitalism and, with borderline significance, a low level of anti-welfare were found to be significant predictors of identification with the political system. The first predictor may be related to the state currently governed by the Law and Justice party (Prawo i Sprawiedliwość, PiS). As noted earlier, many processes taking place in recent years have undermined the citizens’ sense of safety, which may be felt particularly by older people. PiS has become a guarantee for the protection of believers’ interests and the Catholic Church as an institution. By emphasizing, in the public discourse, its support

for Catholic values, by dissociating itself from a Europe that is becoming secularized, and by admitting Church hierarchy, including in particular the milieu associated with the Redemptorist Tadeusz Rydzyk, to the discourse on important political and social issues, the party appears as a guarantor of the principles that provide a sense of safety.

Acceptance of capitalism was found to be a positive predictor of identification with the political system, which is inconsistent with my hypotheses. This result may have two sources. Firstly, it may be related to perceiving the current system to oppose the former one, which restricted citizens' freedom, including freedom of action and thought. Thus, independently of its drawbacks, it is seen as a better one, providing opportunities for development and activity. Secondly, it may show a holistic mental shift of the oldest segment of active voters who are looking for a field to express this activity. However, the study found that those favoring state intervention in the economic market were more likely to identify with the political system. The result had borderline significance, which can be treated as a trend and requires further exploration. However, it can be assumed that this result is shaped by individuals who have benefited from the changes PiS introduced in recent years. The party launched financial transfers for senior citizens. In 2019, the government proposed the Emerytura+ [Retirement Pension+] program, which pays an additional (thirteenth) retirement pension of PLN 1,100. Payment of a fourteenth pension has been announced for 2021. Another program introduced back in 2016 involved free medicines for people over 75. This has allowed older people the right to free medicines and medical supplies included in the Minister of Health's list. The result obtained in the case of the economic predictors seems somewhat contradictory, but only seemingly so, if interpreted in the context of Poland. In fact, it can be supposed that in ideological and axiological terms, identification with the system is built on the level of free-market beliefs. In practice, however, the PiS government, under the guise of democracy and of the "historical justice" dialogue, interferes in the market by giving out social benefits. This nurtures the conviction on the part of the general public that Poland is developing and that the fruits of this development belong to the citizens.

The survey was conducted on a group of people over 65 whose childhood and early years of socialization coincided with a period in which Poland was not a sovereign state. It was a time characterized by a lack of stable values, norms, or social rules. Socialization took place under conditions of social and political conflict. A particular conflict arose between the communist government, led by the Polish United Workers' Party (Polska Zjednoczona Partia Robotnicza, PZPR), and the Polish Episcopate, and more broadly between the political authorities and the Catholic Church, which stood up in defense of democratic values. The Church offered citizens an alternative to the communist ideology, providing physical shelter within the walls of church buildings and protecting democratic values and ideas. As has already been noted, many concepts in the political science literature show citizens' political beliefs and attitudes on the stability-lability dimension. Regardless, these early events constitute a resource of accumulated experience of the oldest citizens, and it is hard to deny their role. Referring to their most universal impact, two aspects of these events can

be highlighted. Firstly, they shaped the first patterns of political engagement and attitudes towards the political system. At this point, it is worth emphasizing that different dimensions of agency can be identified both in those who supported the communist authorities and those supporting the opposition or the Catholic Church, which defied them. On the one hand, in fact, supporting the authorities and engaging in their support may have shaped a sense of efficacy and the belief that the system in place is right. On the other hand, the fight against the system deepened the belief in democratic values, engaged people, and bonded them around specific ideas. Secondly, these events remain in people's memory and constitute a resource of accumulated experience on which subsequent activities are built as a superstructure. Social comparisons may significantly impact the dimensions of political subjectivity diagnosed. According to the life event theory and the counterpart theory, attitudes towards old age and the ways of experiencing it are rooted in personal experiences from the earlier years of one's life. The first theory attributes importance to earlier experiences in the individual's development, focusing on the significant events that accumulated in the individual to subsequently result in a particular attitude towards old age. The other theory emphasizes the importance of early development as the source of traits revealed late in the individual's life.

The research revealed the specificity of political subjectivity of the grey voters segment in Poland and its relation to the cultural and economic beliefs of the respondents. Exploring the social and political engagement of the oldest citizens is particularly important given the forecasts showing a systematic increase in the proportion of citizens aged 65 and over. Polish projections show that the percentage of Poles aged 65 and over will grow systematically (Hrynkiewicz et al., 2018). In 2035, it is expected to reach 23.2, with a slightly higher level (24.3) in cities and 21.7 in rural areas, and up to 32.7% in 2050 (34.1 in cities and 31.9 in rural areas, respectively). The changes in the percentage of the population aged 80 and over will be even more spectacular: in the years 2010–2035, it will more than double, increasing from 3.5 to 7.2. Research in the health diagnosis of elderly people clearly shows that as the length of the old age period grows, senior citizens also remain fit and active for a longer time (Waligórska et al., 2014), which is consistent with the results obtained in the study. It is interesting, however, to what extent the political agency of the diagnosed group is specific in today's Poland, taking into account the historical contexts related to upbringing, socialization, and the first political experiences of the studied group. According to the projections, it is difficult to predict the direction of engagement of citizens who will be joining the ranks of grey voters in the future years. These will be people whose political subjectivity was shaped based on other foundations, a fact that may determine that subjectivity in a significant way. This opens up a new field for research, becoming a lasting motivation for further studies.

Conclusions

The hypotheses put forward were not consistently confirmed for all political subjectivity factors. While designing the research model, I expected a positive relationship between cultural beliefs and the political subjectivity of grey voters. In the course of the research procedure, xenophobia proved to be a negative predictor of political initiative, while religious fundamentalism proved to be positively related to political sense and identification with the political system. I also expected negative associations between dimensions of economic beliefs and the political subjectivity of grey voters. Antiwelfare was found to be positively related to political sense and negatively related to identification with the political system. In contrast, acceptance of capitalism was found to be a positive predictor of identification with the political system. This means that left-wing cultural beliefs in the area of xenophobia made it possible to predict to a greater extent the sense of political initiative, while right-wing cultural beliefs in the area of religious fundamentalism and economic beliefs in the area of antiwelfare proved to be significant predictors for political sense. On the other hand, right-wing cultural beliefs in religious fundamentalism and economic beliefs in the area of acceptance of capitalism and left-wing political beliefs in anti-welfare make it possible to predict stronger political identification significantly. However, the last of these relationships should be treated as a trend due to the borderline value of significance.

Funding:

The research was co-financed by the funds granted under the Research Excellence Initiative of the University of Silesia in Katowice, Poland.

References:

- Abrams, T. (2015). Heidegger, subjectivity, disability. *Subjectivity*, 8(3), 224–242. DOI: 10.1057/sub.2015.3
- Achen, C. H. (2002). Parental Socialization and Rational Party Identification. *Political Behavior*, 24(2), 151–170. DOI: 10.1023/A:1021278208671
- Addelyan Rasi, H., & Moula, A. (2015). Towards a Conceptual Framework for Socio-cognitive Empowerment: Lessons from Intervention Research with Women in Iran. *Clinical Social Work Journal*, 43(4), 375–387. DOI: 10.1007/s10615-015-0518-5
- Aspelund, A., Lindeman, M., & Verkasalo, M. (2013). Political Conservatism and Left–Right Orientation in 28 Eastern and Western European Countries. *Political Psychology*, 34(3), 409–417. DOI: 10.1111/pops.12000
- Barnea, M. F., & Schwartz, S. H. (1998). Values and Voting. *Political Psychology*, 19(1), 17–40. DOI: 10.1111/0162-895X.00090

- Blackman, L., Cromby, J., Hook, D., Papadopoulos, D., & Walkerdine, V. (2008). Creating Subjectivities. *Subjectivity*, 22(1), 1–27. DOI: 10.1057/sub.2008.8
- Bond, S., Thomas, A., & Diprose, G. (2020). Making and unmaking political subjectivities: Climate justice, activism, and care. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 45(4), 750–762. Scopus. DOI: 10.1111/tran.12382
- Bovenberg, A. L. (2008). Grey New World: Europe on the Road to Gerontocracy? *CESifo Economic Studies*, 54(1), 55–72. DOI: 10.1093/cesifo/ifn005
- Brown, S. (1980). *Political Subjectivity: Applications of Q Methodology in Political Science*. Yale University Press. Online: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/247202200_Political_Subjectivity_Applications_of_Q_Methodology_in_Political_Science.
- Bruggencate, T. T., Luijckx, K. G., & Sturm, J. (2018). Social needs of older people: A systematic literature review. *Ageing & Society*, 38(9), 1745–1770. DOI: 10.1017/S0144686X17000150
- Campbell, A., Converse, P. E., Miller, W. E., & Stokes, D. E. (1980). *The American Voter*. University of Chicago Press.
- Campbell, A. L. (2002). Self-Interest, Social Security, and the Distinctive Participation Patterns of Senior Citizens. *The American Political Science Review*, 96(3), 565–574.
- Caprara, G. V., & Cervone, D. (2010). *Personality: Determinants, dynamics and potentials*. Cambridge University Press.
- Caprara, G. V., Schwartz, S., Capanna, C., Vecchione, M., & Barbaranelli, C. (2006). Personality and Politics: Values, Traits, and Political Choice. *Political Psychology*, 27(1), 1–28. DOI: 10.1111/j.1467-9221.2006.00447.x
- Caprara, G. V., Schwartz, S. H., Vecchione, M., & Barbaranelli, C. (2008). The personalization of politics: Lessons from the Italian case. *European Psychologist*, 13(3), 157–172. DOI: 10.1027/1016-9040.13.3.157
- Caprara, G. V., Vecchione, M., Schwartz, S. H., Schoen, H., Bain, P. G., Silvester, J., Ciecuch, J., Pavlopoulos, V., Bianchi, G., Kirmanoglu, H., Baslevant, C., Mamali, C., Manzi, J., Katayama, M., Posnova, T., Taberner, C., Torres, C., Verkasalo, M., Lönnqvist, J.-E., ... Caprara, M. G. (2017). Basic Values, Ideological Self-Placement, and Voting: A Cross-Cultural Study. *Cross-Cultural Research*, 51(4), 388–411. DOI: 10.1177/1069397117712194
- Child, D. (2006). *The Essentials of Factor Analysis*. Continuum.
- Choma, B. L., Ashton, M. C., & Hafer, C. L. (2010). Conceptualizing political orientation in Canadian political candidates: A tale of two (correlated) dimensions. *Canadian Journal of Behavioural Science / Revue Canadienne Des Sciences Du Comportement*, 42(1), 24–33. DOI: 10.1037/a0015650
- Chrisp, J., & Pearce, N. (2019). Grey Power: Towards a Political Economy of Older Voters in the UK. *The Political Quarterly*, 90(4), 743–756. DOI: 10.1111/1467-923X.12737
- Conover, M. D., Gonçalves, B., Flammini, A., & Menczer, F. (2012). Partisan asymmetries in online political activity. *EPJ Data Science*, 1(1), Article 1. DOI: 10.1140/epjds6
- Czarnek, G., Dragon, P., Szwed, P., & Wojciszke, B. (2017). Kwestionariusz przekonań politycznych: Własności psychometryczne. *Psychologia Społeczna*, 12(2), 205–222.
- Czarnek, G., Szwed, P., & Kossowska, M. (2019). Right – and left-wing prejudice toward dissimilar groups in cultural and economic domains. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 49(4), 807–823. DOI: 10.1002/ejsp.2548
- Dahl, R. (1995). *Demokracja i jej krytycy*. Społeczny Instytut Wydawniczy ZNAK.
- Davidson, S. (2005). Grey Power, School Gate Mums and the Youth Vote: Age as a Key Factor in Voter Segmentation and Engagement in the 2005 UK General Election. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 21(9–10), 1179–1192. DOI: 10.1362/026725705775194139

- Davidson, S. (2014). Older Voters: A Phantom Tyranny of Numbers? A Response to Berry: Young People and the Ageing Electorate: Breaking the Unwritten Rule of Representative Democracy. *Parliamentary Affairs*, 67(3), 726–738. DOI: 10.1093/pa/gss063
- Duriez, B., Hiel, A. V., & Kossowska, M. (2005). Authoritarianism and Social Dominance in Western and Eastern Europe: The Importance of the Sociopolitical Context and of Political Interest and Involvement. *Political Psychology*, 26(2), 299–320. DOI: 10.1111/j.1467-9221.2005.00419.x
- Eysenck, H. (1954). *The Psychology of Politics*. Routledge&Kegan Paul LTD.
- Feldman, S., & Johnston, C. (2014). Understanding the Determinants of Political Ideology: Implications of Structural Complexity. *Political Psychology*, 35(3), 337–358. DOI: 10.1111/pops.12055
- Field, A. (2013). *Discovering Statistics using SPSS*. SAGE.
- Fiorina, M. P. (1981). *Retrospective Voting in American National Elections*. Yale University Press.
- Franklin, C. H., & Jackson, J. E. (1983). The Dynamics of Party Identification. *The American Political Science Review*, 77(4), 957–973. DOI: 10.2307/1957569
- Freire, A., Lobo, M. C., & Magalhães, P. (2009). The Clarity of Policy Alternatives, Left–Right and the European Parliament Vote in 2004. *Journal of European Integration*, 31(5), 665–683. DOI: 10.1080/07036330903145914
- Galston, W. A. (2001). Political Knowledge, Political Engagement, and Civic Education. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 4(1), 217–234. DOI: 10.1146/annurev.polisci.4.1.217
- Gerber, A. S., Huber, G. A., Doherty, D., & Dowling, C. M. (2011). The Big Five Personality Traits in the Political Arena. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 14(1), 265–287. DOI: 10.1146/annurev-polisci-051010-111659
- Gorres, A. (2007a). Why are Older People More Likely to Vote? The Impact of Ageing on Electoral Turnout in Europe. *The British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, 9(1), 90–121. DOI: 10.1111/j.1467-856x.2006.00243.x
- Gorres, A. (2007b). *Reforming the Welfare State in Times of Grey Majorities: The Myth of an Opposition between Younger and Older Voters in Germany* (SSRN Scholarly Paper ID 1077604). Social Science Research Network. <https://papers.ssrn.com/abstract=1077604>
- Gorres, A. (2008). The grey vote: Determinants of older voters' party choice in Britain and West Germany. *Electoral Studies*, 27(2), 285–304. DOI: 10.1016/j.electstud.2007.12.007
- Grzymała-Busse, A. (2015). *Nations under God: How Churches Use Moral Authority to Influence Policy*. Princeton University Press.
- Guzek, D. (2019). *Mediatizing Secular State Media, Religion and Politics in Contemporary Poland*. Peter Lang.
- Hiel, A. V., & Kossowska, M. (2007). Contemporary attitudes and their ideological representation in Flanders (Belgium), Poland, and the Ukraine. *International Journal of Psychology: Journal International De Psychologie*, 42(1), 16–26. DOI: 10.1080/002075905000411443
- Hitlin, S. (2003). Values as the Core of Personal Identity: Drawing Links between Two Theories of Self. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 66(2), 118–137. JSTOR. DOI: 10.2307/1519843
- Hryniewicz, J., Witkowski, J., & Potrykowska, A. (2018). *Sytuacja demograficzna Polski jako wyzwanie dla polityki społecznej i gospodarczej* (p. 241). Rządowa Rada Ludnościowa.
- Huang, F.-H. (2015). Explore home care needs and satisfaction for elderly people with chronic disease and their family members. *Procedia Manufacturing*, 3, 173–179.
- Informacja o sytuacji osób starszych na podstawie badań Głównego Urzędu Statystycznego*. (2018). Główny Urząd Statystyczny. file:///Users/admin2/Downloads/informacja_o_sytuacji_osob_starszych_w_2017.pdf

- Jæger, M. M. (2008). Does Left–Right Orientation have a Causal Effect on Support for Redistribution? Causal Analysis with Cross-sectional Data Using Instrumental Variables. *International Journal of Public Opinion Research*, 20(3), 363–374. DOI: 10.1093/ijpor/edn030
- Jarman, M., Lamp, S., Mitchell, D., Nepveux, D., Nowell, N., & Snyder, S. (2002). Theorising Disability as Political Subjectivity: Work by the UIC Disability Collective on political subjectivities. *Disability & Society*, 17(5), 555–569. DOI: 10.1080/09687590220148522
- Jost, J. T. (2009). “Elective Affinities”: On the Psychological Bases of Left–Right Differences. *Psychological Inquiry*, 20(2–3), 129–141. DOI: 10.1080/10478400903028599
- Jost, J. T., Glaser, J., Kruglanski, A. W., & Sulloway, F. J. (2003). Political conservatism as motivated social cognition. *Psychological Bulletin*, 129(3), 339–375. DOI: 10.1037/0033-2909.129.3.339
- Jost, J. T., Napier, J. L., Thorisdottir, H., Gosling, S. D., Palfai, T. P., & Ostafin, B. (2007). Are Needs to Manage Uncertainty and Threat Associated With Political Conservatism or Ideological Extremity? *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 33(7), 989–1007. DOI: 10.1177/0146167207301028
- Kar, N. (2015). Care needs of older persons. *Journal of Geriatric Care and Research*, 2(1). https://www.researchgate.net/publication/280100651_Care_needs_of_older_persons
- Kirlin, M. (2002). Civic Skill Building: The Missing Component in Service Programs? *PS: Political Science & Politics*, 35(3), 571–575. DOI: 10.1017/S1049096502000872
- Kossowska, M., & Van Hiel, A. (2003). The Relationship between Need for Closure and Conservative Beliefs in Western and Eastern Europe. *Political Psychology*, 24(3), 501–518. JSTOR.
- Krause, K., & Schramm, K. (2011). Thinking through Political Subjectivity. *African Diaspora*, 4(2), 115–134. DOI: 10.1163/187254611X607741
- Lachat, R. (2018). Which way from left to right? On the relation between voters’ issue preferences and left–right orientation in West European democracies. *International Political Science Review*, 39(4), 419–435. DOI: 10.1177/0192512117692644
- Lupton, R. N., Myers, W. M., & Thornton, J. R. (2015). Political Sophistication and the Dimensionality of Elite and Mass Attitudes, 1980–2004. *The Journal of Politics*, 77(2), 368–380. JSTOR. DOI: 10.1086/679493
- Malka, A., Lelkes, Y., & Soto, C. J. (2019). Are Cultural and Economic Conservatism Positively Correlated? A Large-Scale Cross-National Test. *British Journal of Political Science*, 49(3), 1045–1069. DOI: 10.1017/S0007123417000072
- Malka, A., & Soto, C. J. (2015). Rigidity of the Economic Right? Menu-Independent and Menu-Dependent Influences of Psychological Dispositions on Political Attitudes: *Current Directions in Psychological Science*. DOI: 10.1177/0963721414556340
- Maslow, A. (1954). *Motivation And Personality*. Harper.
- McCann, S. J. H. (2008). Societal threat, authoritarianism, conservatism, and U.S. state death penalty sentencing (1977-2004). *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 94(5), 913–923. DOI: 10.1037/0022-3514.94.5.913
- McLellan, J. A., & Youniss, J. (2003). Two Systems of Youth Service: Determinants of Voluntary and Required Youth Community Service. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 32(1), 47–58. DOI: 10.1023/A:1021032407300
- Mondak, J. J. (2010). *Personality and the Foundations of Political Behavior*. Cambridge University Press.
- Moon, D. S. (2013). Autonomy and alienated subjectivity: A re-reading of Castoriadis, through Žižek. *Subjectivity*, 6(4), 424–444. DOI: 10.1057/sub.2013.11

- Otjes, S., & Krouwel, A. (2018). Old Voters on New Dimensions: Why Do Voters Vote for Pensioners' Parties? The Case of the Netherlands. *Journal of Aging & Social Policy*, 30(1), 24–47. DOI: 10.1080/08959420.2017.1363589
- Peterson, J. C., Smith, K. B., & Hibbing, J. R. (2020). Do People Really Become More Conservative as They Age? *The Journal of Politics*, 82(2), 600–611. DOI: 10.1086/706889
- Piurko, Y., Schwartz, S. H., & Davidov, E. (2011). Basic Personal Values and the Meaning of Left-Right Political Orientations in 20 Countries. *Political Psychology*, 32(4), 537–561. DOI: 10.1111/j.1467-9221.2011.00828.x
- Radkiewicz, P. (2017). Ideological Inconsistencies on the Left and Right as a Product of Coherence of Preferences for Values. The Case of Poland. *Polish Psychological Bulletin*, 48(1), 93–104. DOI: 0.1515/ppb-2017-0012
- Rahimi, S. (2015). *Meaning, Madness and Political Subjectivity: A study of schizophrenia and culture in Turkey*. Routledge.
- Sapiro, V. (2004). Not Your Parents' Political Socialization: Introduction for a New Generation. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 7(1), 1–23. DOI: 10.1146/annurev.polisci.7.012003.104840
- Schwartz, S. H. (2017). The Refined Theory of Basic Values. In S. Roccas & L. Sagiv (Eds.), *Values and Behavior: Taking a Cross-Cultural Perspective* (pp. 51–72). Springer International Publishing. DOI: 10.1007/978-3-319-56352-7_3
- Schwartz, S. H., Caprara, G. V., & Vecchione, M. (2010). Basic Personal Values, Core Political Values, and Voting: A Longitudinal Analysis. *Political Psychology*, 31(3), 421–452. DOI: 10.1111/j.1467-9221.2010.00764.x
- Sears, D. O. (1983). The Persistence of Early Political Predispositions: The Roles of Attitude Objects and Life Stage. In L. Wheeler (Ed.), *Review of Personality and Social Psychology*. Sage.
- Sears, D. O. (2002). Long-term psychological consequences of political events. In K. Monroe (Ed.), *Political Psychology* (pp. 249–269). Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Sears, D. O., & Funk, C. L. (1999). Evidence of the Long-Term Persistence of Adults' Political Predispositions. *The Journal of Politics*. DOI: 10.2307/2647773
- Singer, M. (2016). ELITE POLARIZATION AND THE ELECTORAL IMPACT OF LEFT-RIGHT PLACEMENTS: Evidence from Latin America, 1995-2009. *Latin American Research Review*, 51(2), 174–194.
- Stoker, L., & Jennings, M. K. (2008). Of Time and the Development of Partisan Polarization. *American Journal of Political Science*, 52(3), 619–635. DOI: 10.1111/j.1540-5907.2008.00333.x
- Strelau, J. (2003). *Psychologia: Podręcznik akademicki. Jednostka w społeczeństwie i elementy psychologii stosowanej*. Gdanskie Wydawnictwo Psych.
- Struktura ludności i starzenie się społeczeństwa – Statistics Explained*. (2019). Eurostat Statistics Explained. Online: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Population_structure_and_ageing/pl
- Terrén, E. (2002). Post-Modern Attitudes: A Challenge to Democratic Education. *European Journal of Education*, 37(2), 161–177.
- Thorisdottir, H., Jost, J. T., Liviatan, I., & Shrout, P. E. (2007). Psychological Needs and Values Underlying Left-Right Political Orientation: Cross-National Evidence from Eastern and Western Europe. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 71(2), 175–203. DOI: 10.1093/poq/nfm008
- Toffler, A. (1991). *Powershift: Knowledge, Wealth, and Violence at the Edge of the 21st Century*. Bantam Books.

- Turska-Kawa, A., & Pilch, I. (2022). Political beliefs and the acceptance of the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic restrictions. The case of Poland. *PLOS ONE*, *17*(3), e0264502. DOI: 10.1371/journal.pone.0264502
- Turska-Kawa, A., & Wojtasik, W. (2010). Struktura społeczna oraz preferencje partyjne w układzie autoidentyfikacji lewicowo-prawicowych. *Political Preferences*, *1*, 123–138.
- Vitriol, J. A., Tagar, M. R., Federico, C. M., & Sawicki, V. (2019). Ideological uncertainty and investment of the self in politics. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, *82*, 85–97. DOI: 10.1016/j.jesp.2019.01.005
- Waligórska, M., Kostrzewa, Z., Potyra, M., & Rutkowska, L. (2014). *Prognoza ludności na lata 2014-2050*. Główny Urząd Statystyczny.
- Yuval-Davis, N. (2006). Belonging and the politics of belonging. *Patterns of Prejudice*, *40*(3), 197–214.
- Zaller, J. R. (1992). *The Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion*. Cambridge University Press.

Supplementary Materials

Table 1A. Descriptive statistics for the Political Subjectivity Scale items

	M	SD
I feel important as a citizen.	3.20	1.007
I feel that my opinion as a citizen matters.	3.08	1.129
Regardless of the reshuffling of the political scene after the elections, I know that there is a place for me as a citizen.	3.42	.926
I keep up to date with political events.	4.09	.904
I am keen to expand my knowledge about current political events.	3.85	.962
I am keen to expand my knowledge about the rules and principles that govern the socio-political space.	3.57	.996
I am never sure whether the moves of highest-level authorities are right and appropriate.	2.31	1.094
The only certain thing in politics is that there is no certainty.	1.78	.838
I find the political scene unpredictable.	2.16	.975
It is difficult to find any logic in politicians' behaviors.	1.93	.966
The rules governing politics are unclear to me.	2.53	1.127
As a citizen, I know I can do a lot in the political space if I want to.	2.81	1.038
By following political events, I can anticipate solutions to difficult situations.	3.08	.912

Table 2A. Descriptive statistics of the analyzed variables

	N	Min.	Max	M	SD
religious_fundamentalism	607	6.00	30.00	13.0840	6.14547
xenophobia	607	3.00	15.00	7.8023	3.35085
acceptance_of_capitalism	607	3.00	15.00	7.5535	2.14415
antiwelfare	607	7.00	35.00	18.0972	4.69275
political_initiative	607	4.00	20.00	14.5832	3.10476
political_sense	607	5.00	25.00	10.7100	3.72020
identification_with_the_political_system	607	4.00	20.00	12.5074	3.17834
N Important (exclusion by observation)	607				