

Slomczynski, Kazimierz M. and Krystyna Janicka. 2004. „Social Structure and the Institutions of Democracy: Support, Representation, and Accountability.” *Polish Sociological Review* 148:413-428.

Abstract:

We examine the relationship between social structure and universal and free elections to the Polish parliament [Sejm], asking three basic research questions: Is support for the institution of elections similar in various segments of the social structure? Are distinct segments of the social structure adequately represented in parliament? Do voters from different locations in the social structure hold parliamentarians accountable for their political actions? Using survey data we demonstrate that support for elections among women, the younger generation, and members of the working class and peasantry is weaker than it is among men, the middle-aged, and members of privileged classes. Official data reveal that the composition of the Sejm is less representative of the entire adult population than is the composition of candidates to parliament. On the basis of both official and survey data we show that voters make parliamentarians accountable but the manner in which they do this depends on their location in the social structure. Unemployment and corruption are important factors in voters' decisions but the latter factor is important only for disadvantaged classes while the former one is important only for privileged classes.