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A New Populist Divide? Correspondences of Supply and Demand in the 2015 Polish Parliamentary Elections

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This paper uses a new set of questions to analyse the impact of populist attitudes on party preferences and voting behaviour in the 2015 Polish parliamentary elections. At these elections, voters faced a choice between two broad blocs: parties that accepted the "liberal-orthodox" model of post-communist politics, and those that rejected this model and the political elites associated with its implementation. I find that there is a coherent set of populist attitudes among the Polish electorate, and that it correlates with economic and cultural attitudes in ways consistent with the supply-side divide between liberal and anti-liberal parties. Analysis of the individual and combined impact of these attitudes on voting behaviour reveals that populism plays a significant role both in structuring the sentiments of voters towards particular kinds of political parties and in determining how they cast their vote.

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