Determinants of voting behaviour in the 2007 elections.

The article subjects to scrutiny the determinants of voting behaviour in the 2007 parliamentary elections as seen in the perspective of two classic theories explaining such conduct. The first is the Columbia model, created by Paul Lazarsfeld and his collaborators, and the second is the Michigan model authored by Angus Campbell and collaborators. In accordance with the Columbia model, the voting behaviour of individuals is strongly related to their position in the social structure and the character of the social groups to which they belong. As seen in the perspective of the Michigan model, the key factor is the voter’s identification with a party, which determines their attitudes toward the competing political parties and has a strong influence on their electoral decision. Both these models, when subjected to a test, were then confirmed in the analyses produced in the article, however it was the Michigan model which was noted for its significantly better predictive value. The variables referred to in the Columbia model which have the strongest impact on voting include age and the frequency of religious observances. On the other hand, among the variables taken into account in the Michigan model, it is the party identification, sympathy toward political parties and the belief, on the part of the respondent, that a given party is competent, which has the strongest connections with voting. It is the affective variables, such as identification with a given party and a partiality toward it, which proved stronger in determining the voting behaviour of Polish voters in 2007 than the cognitive variables, such as feeling close to the programme of a given electoral committee and believing in its competence.