

# Agnieszka Zaręba

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## Permanent campaign in Poland – causes, elements, importance

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**Agnieszka Zaręba**

The John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin, Poland

**PERMANENT CAMPAIGN IN POLAND –  
CAUSES, ELEMENTS, IMPORTANCE**

***Abstract:***

A permanent campaign is one of the elements of political communication. It can be observed as a process since at least 2004. The aim of this analysis is the description of the phenomenon of the permanent campaign in Poland in terms of its genesis, elements and importance. The permanent campaign in Poland depends on several factors. First of all, its existence is possible thanks to the development of new media, political advising, and media visibility of politician's activity. The permanent campaign has lasted in Poland since 2004. It is connected with the development of political consulting and the appearance for the first time in Poland of specific media performances, such as inquiry committees. They were a kind of media attraction for viewers. An important element of the permanent campaign is the functioning of a multi-dimensional conflict between the rulers and the opposition. Antagonism is usually based on a different system of values, is difficult to eliminate, is profitable for both sides of the conflict, because it arouses the interest of the media and the audience's attention.

***Key words:***

permanent campaign, political campaign, political communication

## *Introduction*

The implementation of basic mechanisms of political communication in Poland took place in the presidential election of 1990. The use of marketing techniques could be observed, however, already in the contract election in 1989<sup>1</sup>. Another breakthrough was the parliamentary election in 1993, when the Liberal Democratic Congress (KLD) decided to hire a foreign advertising agency<sup>2</sup>. A key moment for the development of Polish political marketing was the presidential elections in 1995. Aleksander Kwaśniewski's campaign belongs now to the classics of the application and effectiveness of marketing techniques in Poland<sup>3</sup>.

A permanent campaign is one of the elements of political communication. It can be observed as a process since at least 2004. It results not only from the high media saturation of society, but also instruments used during the campaign and the ways of managing it. The aim of this analysis is to describe the phenomenon of the permanent campaign in Poland in terms of its genesis, elements and importance.

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- 1 In the case of an analysis of adaptation of political marketing techniques in Poland, it is hard not to mention the election in 1989. Due to the fact that the election was undemocratic (i.e. the contract one), the use of the category assigned to democracy is a mistake, but it was then that we could observe the influence of Western political advisors for the first time. Zbigniew Brzeziński and a French expert Jacques Seguela – an advisor to President Francois Mitterand – offered their help to the solidarity side. J. Seguela was the originator of the integrated promotion of “Solidarity” candidates and their photos with Lech Wałęsa. In addition, during the campaign Poland was visited by Yves Montand, Jane Fonda and Stevie Wonder. The government side was very well prepared for that campaign. It had at its disposal funds, facilities and the media and a quite well operating structure – party and state offices, electoral preference polls were carried out (Ignaczewski 2005: 58-61).
  - 2 The adaptation of American techniques to Polish conditions turned out to be a total mistake. Street parades of KLD candidates accompanied by an orchestra and young girls did not receive support in Poland. The slogans: “No slogans, only facts”, “One million new jobs” were more appropriate for a social democratic rather than a liberal group. The campaign “Buy Polish products”, Polish Skills Programme were designed to change the image of the group. The programme emphasized the need to combat corruption, introduce transparency and honesty in economic life. The aim of these activities was to improve the image of the group, because it was associated with destructive privatisation and economic scandals. The fact is that the slogans were in line with election expectations, but the liberals were associated only with negative phenomena, e.g. rising unemployment (Dudek 2007: 162).
  - 3 Aleksander Kwaśniewski's foreign advisor, who regularly came to Poland, was Jacques Seguela (adviser to Francois Mitterand). A number of external advisors – Janusz Reykowski, Jerzy Wiatr – worked in the campaign. The French advisor is considered the creator of the image of the candidate, that is the clothing with a distinctive blue shirt and blue contact lenses which emphasized the candidate's natural eye colour. Teams of other candidates also used external experts. It is worth noting that experts from the British Conservative Party cooperated with Hanna Gronkiewicz-Waltz and Lech Wałęsa (Biskup 2011: 98-99).
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## *Literature overview*

Sidney Blumenthal was the first to formulate the concept of the permanent campaign in the early 80s of the twentieth century. His professional career perfectly describes the essence of work of a political consultant. He was an advisor to President Bill Clinton, supported the secretary of state and now a candidate in the primaries for the position of the President of the United States, Hilary Clinton<sup>4</sup>. Sidney Blumenthal joins the rise of permanent campaign to the development of political advising and its significant influence on the shaping of the process of governing in the United States<sup>5</sup>. In his opinion, the new type of politics - post-politics (Szafranski 2009: 167-177) consists of the interaction of three factors: the theme of the campaign, opinion polls, the mass media (Blumenthal 1982: 10). The permanent campaign is a kind of a political ideology characteristic for modern times. The author connects it with the process of image creation and strategic calculation, while governing becomes a constant campaign and at the same time an instrument to gain popularity<sup>6</sup>. Maintaining popularity becomes the target of governing the state. This requires from politicians

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4 Currently, he most likely again advises, this time Hillary Clinton during the primaries in 2016 (Silverstein 2015).

5 Bruce I. Newman (1999: 11-13) in his assessment of the situation on the political market compared politics to business bringing quick profits, in which experts literally “produce” images of politicians. This belief stems from the fact that in the United States the candidate is mainly engaged in the development of a general outline of the campaign strategy, while specialists are responsible for the remaining parts, such as the formation of election platforms, conducting public opinion research, promotion planning. Politicians rarely take part in the preparations for the enumerated marketing stages. The increasing participation of consultants and all kinds of professionals in the election campaign and beyond causes a real threat to democratic society. So far, the party chairman and the candidate’s team have been responsible for the overall strategy and the shape of the campaign, but now we can see the process of shifting the political decision from a public institution to an advisor who is “hired”, and is not subject to any democratic control and verification in the form of elections. And the influence of consultants on elections and the permanent campaign is significant. It is demonstrated by the following survey of political consultants conducted by the “Chicago Tribune” in 1994. The most interesting point is that, according to the consultants the permanent campaign means that they do not stop advising at the end of the election campaign, but continue their work when their candidate is in office in anticipation of another campaign, and continue paid collaboration with the politician as official or nominated advisors.

6 On the other hand, D. Nimmo formulated the concept of a “total campaign”. Its essence is the disappearance of differences between the process of the campaign and the process of governing the state, an attempt to control the overall communication of the politician in the conduct of the office. The concept of the permanent campaign is present in Western Europe, especially in Britain. The British prime minister has the right to announce at a time convenient for his/her party the date of the parliamentary election, which forces the opposition to conduct a permanent election campaign.

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the constant acknowledgement of the state legitimacy by maintaining the credibility of politicians. And the credibility is verified by the satisfactory election result (Cf.: Piontek 2011: 172). For politicians, the permanent campaign is a kind of a “game plan” that sets a specific scheme of action. When politicians win elections by appealing to undecided voters, the programmes they offer, essential in governing the state, become weak. Having no proposals for the solution of substantive problems in the field of economy, taxes, etc., they return very quickly to the operating methods which enabled them to achieve the electoral success. In the concept of the permanent campaign citizens are perceived as a vague mass susceptible to simple emotions, self-presentation tricks and rhetoric. The campaign in this concept does not have a time frame. According to Sidney Blumenthal, the permanent campaign is comparable with Leon Trotsky’s concept of “permanent revolution”, a process of constant transformation. This means that it begins before the election and continues throughout the term. Characteristic features of the permanent campaign are: the weakness of political parties, strong mass media and political pragmatism which in itself becomes a political ideology for the party (Blumenthal 1982: 23-25; Verčić 1999: 56). Summing up Blumenthal’s considerations, Dorota Piontek indicates that the election campaign is the simultaneous communication and seduction and constant contact with the public opinion, survey and submission to the will of public opinion when making decisions about what topics to choose for the campaign and how to conduct it or the elements of the candidate’s image. This is the only occasion in which the electorate has the opportunity to influence political elites. Unfortunately, voters are limited in the cognitive framework in the assessment of the reality. On the other hand, governing means the probable loss of popularity and voters’ benevolence as a result of taking unpopular decisions or desisting from election promises. According to the author, the paradox of the permanent campaign lies in the fact that politicians “seduce to rule, and govern to lose” (Piontek 2011: 172).

According to Dorota Piontek, a novelty of the permanent campaign is the continuous stimulation of the attention of the audience by searching for newer and newer stimuli. It is a basic element of the promotion. This leads to the wider and wider opening of the backstage of politics, allowing voters to watch the “process of political production” through the media. On the one hand, the directed political drama increases the interest of the recipient, on the other hand, it may cause information chaos (e.g. through unplanned scenes), which will turn out not to be very clear. According to the author, elections have their own legal conditions, different from the governing process itself, they have their own dynamics and glamour. They are connected with the process of positioning of the political product, creating polarisation of positions (conflict), which are supposed to help voters to define the situation.

The political advertising message can lead, according to Piontek, to the awakening of expectations which are impossible for the government to meet. The governing process “enforces taking into account real conditions, the need for compromise, giving up a part of own ideas, making decisions voters do not like” (Piontek 2011: 173). The permanent campaign, according to the author, produces its own rituals which have to maintain all participants, both actors and audience, in the state of constant readiness. This kind of situation requires more and more intense stimuli that allow the media, in particular news channels, to operate. Piontek asks an important question, whether the permanent maintenance of readiness will not exhaust voters, who with time will become less involved observers and not enthusiasts watching the development of events with so-called “flushed faces”. The permanent campaign understood as a state of mobilisation loses the uniqueness of the election campaign, impairs the mobilising function of the campaign, generally understood as a moment of defining one’s own desires and rational evaluation of election offers. The author criticises S. Blumenthal’s concept. A strategy centred on the image, sounding calculations and evoking emotions leads to the allocation of disproportionately great importance to issues that do not deserve it, and real problems are either abandoned or resolved without the actual control of the opposition and the media. The necessity of continuous mobilisation of the electorate causes the increase of populism in politics and lack of leaders who would have a vision of the development of society. The constant confrontation increases the negative factor in the campaign, limits the rationality of choices. This is caused by the continuous information noise and leads to a reduction in voter turnout, which politicians complain so much about. The penetration of the marketing approach to all spheres of life in which what counts is effectiveness favours the permanent campaign (Piontek 2011: 174, 176). Summarizing the authors’ consideration, both concepts of the permanent campaign show the opposite sides of the examined phenomenon. It seems that Blumenthal’s concept is closer to the political practice in most democracies, including in Poland.

### ***The genesis of the permanent campaign in Poland***

Following S. Blumenthal, we can connect the appearance of the permanent campaign in Poland with the examination of the development of political advising. In addition, the development of the news media is indicated, in particular TVN 24 which was established in 2001. Just like in the United States the development of the news media was initiated by the creation of CNN (Piontek 2011: 172). According to Jan Garlicki, factors affecting the development of the permanent campaign in Poland include: the aforementioned growing role of the media,

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and especially television in communication and creation of politics; the development of new media, especially the Internet and the opportunities offered by this means of communication; the increase of the role and impact of public opinion on politics; the emergence of the plebiscite politics model (sounding politics), that is the operation of the decision-making centre under the influence of results of public opinion and sentiment polls; and the stimulation of social moods by the decision-making centre through political PR; the functioning of the constant dispute (conflict) between the ruling and opposition groups, particularly their leaders; the increasing frequency of elections contributes to the creation of an atmosphere of the constant election campaign and the use of campaigning techniques; the aforementioned professionalization of campaigns and the increased role of political advisors at various stages of political communication, which reduces the role of the party apparatus; actions of candidates' teams aimed at the segmentation of voters and identification of target groups, to whom the communication campaign will be primarily addressed (Garlicki 2010).

It is worthwhile to connect the development of the permanent campaign in Poland with the development of political advising. Then it is possible to differentiate three stages:

1. "The period of initial marketing experiences" 1990-1994, in which basic marketing techniques were used, there were attempts to adapt experiences of other countries. The basis for the functioning of the campaign was the involvement of many people, the role of political advisors was generally small.
2. The period of "catching-up" covering the years 1995-2003, in which we could observe activities aiming at adapting political marketing techniques to the conditions and needs of Polish campaigns. The use of the mass media increased and the role of political advisors grew (Biskup 2011: 98-99).
3. The period of the permanent campaign since 2004<sup>7</sup>, in this period both the mass media and new media have been actively used, political advisors have played almost the main role (Biskup 2011: 96).

In the literature there are several concepts of the beginning of the permanent campaign. Generally the year 2005 is pointed to, when the parliamentary and presidential elections were held within a short period of time and there was

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<sup>7</sup> During this period it is worthwhile to pay attention to the parliamentary election in 2011. The team working on the campaign of the Civic Platform (PO) consisted of two advertising agencies *DDB Warsaw* and *Brain*, two interactive ones, among others: *Tribal DDB* and *OS3* agency, as well as Tomoho Umeda – a network marketing specialist, two research firms, a media house: *Pan Media Western*, a marketing advice company, a production company and a public relations agency. About 100 people worked three shifts in the party headquarters in Warsaw. The main recipient of the agency's work was chief of staff Jacek Protasiewicz.

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a re-evaluation of the dispute in the political discourse, wider use of the mass media and so-called “new media”. However, the commencement of the permanent campaign can be connected with the viewership of the two parliamentary inquiry committees. Then, on the screens of their TV sets citizens could watch a wide, dramatic spectacle, largely spontaneous, taking place “live”, without a previously prepared script (Zaręba 2009: 152-153).

### *Elements of the permanent campaign*

A constant element of the permanent campaign are surveys and opinion polls. They originated in the United States in the 30s of the twentieth century. Opinion polls check how well the public is informed about various issues, inspect interests, individual systems of values, attitudes and preferences<sup>8</sup>. The purposes of the surveys are, among other things, understanding public sentiments especially in cases of specific tensions and crises, examining the response to current events, checking the degree of social approval or disapproval for certain political, economic, social events, the unveiling of deeply rooted prejudices and irrational stereotypes, analysing the state of knowledge

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Apart from him the team included: government spokesman Paweł Graś, secretary of state in Prime Minister’s Office and his trusted PR person Igor Ostachowicz, Maciej Grabowski and Michał Nowosielski, a specialist in advertising, creative director of an advertising agency *Young & Rubicam Brands*. The headquarters of the Civic Platform began the preparations for the election campaign in April 2011. Then the work on the first stage of the campaign began under the slogan “Poland under construction” which voters saw at the beginning of August. Primarily an advertising agency *DDB Warsaw* and an interactive agency *Tribal DDB* were responsible for this stage of the campaign. At the turn of July and August the following companies started working for the PO headquarters: an advertising agency *Brain* (commonly serving companies such as ING and BMW), a media house *Pan Media Western* (working, among others, for Suzuki and Energa); a marketing advising company *ADHD* founded by Roman Jędrkowiak, former head of marketing of ING and a public relations agency *Meritum Lab* run by Adam Łaszyn. Advertising spots for the PO were filmed by *ATM Group* which produces such series as “Ranczo” (Ranch), “Pierwsza miłość” (First Love) or “Świat według Kiepskich” (The world according to the Kiepscy). Janusz Palikot and his party officially admitted that they did not use the assistance of professional marketing companies. His only adviser was Peter Tymochowicz, who was a member of the Movement. The Polish Peasant Party, due to limited financial resources did not have expert media backup. The Democratic Left Alliance collaborated, among others, with a media house. The election campaign in the party was the responsibility of the election team consisting of A. Lipiński, Mark Kuchciński, Mariusz Błaszczak and Jacek Kurski at the helm. However, according to unofficial sources, advertising spots for the Law and Justice (PiS), as in previous campaigns, were shot by a company *Odeon* and reportedly Stanisław Janecki, a journalist, former editor of the “Wprost”, was an advisor (Makarenko 2011: 6, Borowska 2011).

8 These reflections on the role of surveys and public opinion polls are included in the deliberations on public opinion research and political advising (Zaręba 2014: 145-159).

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about the surveyed phenomena and problems, the assessment of the effectiveness of tools of political communication used by political parties in the struggle for voters' benevolence and votes (*Public opinion polls*). Summarising these considerations, we can enumerate three functions of public opinion surveys. These are cognitive, persuasive and political functions (Sułek 2001: 56-86). These research results may clearly indicate the lack of objectivity and bias of individual public opinion surveys. Currently, in Poland, surveys and opinion polls are conducted by many specialised companies, among others, the Public Opinion Research Centre (CBOS), TNS Polska, PBS (*Partner in Business Strategies*), GfK Polonia.

The recipients of public opinion surveys, and also ordering entities, are the mass media and political parties. The media typically use the services of several regular, befriended experts giving the opportunity for many possible interpretations. Another frequent reason for the abuse of polls may be the use of a single public opinion research centre, which in the absence of comparisons with the results of other centres may lead to distortions (Francuz 2005). One of many such examples slightly distorting the reality was the survey of probable results of the European Parliament election in 2014, according to which the coalition Europe Plus – Your Movement had a chance to win seats (Gašior 2014). It is worth noting that previous polls contradicted these results. The results of the election to the European Parliament dispelled hopes of the coalition to gain seats. A few days after the election the coalition was dissolved.

Other recipients and ordering entities of surveys are political parties (i.e. candidates' teams during the election campaign). They have access to three types of surveys. Firstly, open-access ones, i.e. standard opinion polls conducted at periodic intervals by various centres usually for commercial purposes. Secondly, polls ordered by the individual mass media stations, aimed at obtaining new information, creation of news, attracting the audience, and even the desire to influence voters. Thirdly, private ones, performed at the request of candidates' teams, whose unique results could be an important element of the election strategy (Francuz 2005). A good example of a survey conducted in Poland on behalf of a candidate's team was the one carried out during the presidential election in 1990<sup>9</sup>. In fact, the impact of this survey on the course of the

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9 The research was carried out by PBS Sopot on request of Lech Wałęsa's campaign staff and pertained to the characteristics of an ideal president. It seems that since it was the first research of this type, a little more space should be devoted to it. During the campaign, respondents were asked a question, what features a perfect candidate should have. 11 categories were distinguished, according to which the ideal president should be characterized primarily by high qualifications 52% (objectivity, intelligence, should have political imagination, a coherent programme, to be open to problems), in the next place there were qualities such as modesty, honesty, religiosity, justice – 10%. According to 9% the president should have the characteristics of man of fashion (eloquent, educated), 7.5% of respondents indicated charm, truthfulness, gaining trust and 6.5% understanding, caring, kindness. 53% of respondents

campaign was marginal. It is true that it helped to revise the campaign strategy, Lech Wałęsa's aggressive statements were slightly reduced, although the candidate realized his own idea for the campaign.

Presentation of the results of public opinion surveys generates specific activities. The transfer of votes to the candidates who, according to the survey, are supposed to win or lose is the most frequent effect connected with the exposure of the data from surveys. Typically, in the first case it is the effect of gathering around the winner, while the other is the effect of empathic compassion and solidarity (Francuz 2005). Other studies suggest that the results of polls generally influence the decisions of those voters who do not have specific political preferences. In addition, when in the analysis of public opinion surveys one took into account the profession of respondents, it was found that it had an impact on the behaviour of voters. It turned out that manual workers have a stronger tendency to flip their votes to candidates losing in the polls, while the public administration employees – to the leaders of public opinion polls. Piotr Francuz's (2005) opinion seems interesting in this context. According to him "blue-collar workers are anyway condemned to the opposition, officials willingly and with greater success aspire to power". The influence of polls on voters' decisions is the result of many factors, often difficult to predict. However, considered together they may indicate the absence of any influence on their part. Darrell M. West obtained such results in the studies relating to the conduct of the presidential election in the United States in 1980. They revealed that there was no direct relationship between the knowledge about which politician is a leader in pre-election polls and taking up a particular position to him (Francuz 2005).

We can point to yet another factor that generates the influence of public opinion polls on voting behaviour. Generally it involves the transfer of votes to the party, the support for which begins to grow rapidly in the polls. Typically, it happens when citizens have to choose the so-called lesser of two evils, e.g. a vote against the party whose victory they consider to be the least desirable. This effect occurs regardless of whether the voters joining now from the beginning supported the party (or the candidate) gaining in the polls. This behaviour is defined as an expression of a high level of citizenship sensitivity and personal involvement in the campaign. Moreover, it also expresses their concern to take the most sensible (and perhaps the most rational) election decision in

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attributed the positive features to Lech Walesa, and 51% to his rival Mazowiecki. According to respondents, the former one had special features included in the category: a highly qualified politician, "a strong man", a distinguished politician, a leader with large social support. More people, as many as 57%, characterized Lech Wałęsa in the context of negative traits, while only 37% of respondents had a negative opinion about Tadeusz Mazowiecki. Negative traits attributed to Wałęsa included: incompetence and aggression, instability in views, impulsiveness (Pieńkowski, Podlaszewska 1991:171-173).

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the current situation (Francuz 2005). At this point it is worth noting that all campaigns of the Civic Platform since 2007 have been based on the axis of the PO-PiS conflict. Almost every campaign of the PiS has tried to direct campaigns to a new system problem, other members of the political game also attempted to break the existing dichotomy in the political discourse (among others Your Movement, the Democratic Left Alliance, the United Poland, the party of Jarosław Gowin). Till the presidential and parliamentary campaign in 2015 the PO strategy ensured the mobilisation of the electorate. The Platform was additionally supported by the mainstream mass media.

In 1997 the CBOS conducted a survey on interest in elections. In the CBOS survey questions were asked, among others, about: interest in pre-election polls, the impact of the results of pre-election surveys and research on the outcome of the election, and whether respondents will be guided by the results of public opinion polls when choosing a party. It turned out that 53% of respondents showed interest in pre-election polls, while 45% were not interested in the results of public opinion polls. In the case of the influence of polls on election decisions, 56% of respondents stated that they had some influence on their election decision, while for 27% of respondents they had no impact. It is worth noting that the opinion concerning the impact of the polls on election results prevailed in Polish society. What is also interesting is the observation concerning the choice of voting for a particular party by the respondent under the influence of pre-election polls. It turned out that only 24% of respondents confirmed the influence of polls on the choice of a particular party, while 71% of respondents said that they would not take into account the survey results when making a particular election decision. Undoubtedly, this kind of remark undermines the earlier American studies, although people tend to be reluctant to admit to be influenced during the study (CBOS 117/97). In the years 2004-2010 the number of people who opted for idea that the opinions expressed in the polls should be crucial in making political decisions increased. In 2010 it was 49% of respondents, while in 2004 56% and in 2006 55% of respondents felt that the results of opinion polls should oblige the authorities to take into account the demands of citizens concerning a particular social issue. According to more than a third of respondents (36%) in 2010 and 29% in 2004 and 33% in 2006, the authorities should take into account the results of surveys in making decisions, but not necessarily adhere to them. In contrast, other respondents believed that surveyed people did not have enough knowledge to make adequate political decisions (CBOS 135/2010).

The CBOS survey constituted an introduction to the presentation of further empirical research by the Interdisciplinary Research Group in 2014. The formula expanding the electoral situation to general actions of politicians

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was deliberately used in the question directed to the respondents. The constant publishing of surveys, as I mentioned earlier, is an element of the permanent campaign, which blurs the difference between governing of the state and the campaign process.

Empirical studies confirmed the thesis that voters generally support the view that the actions of politicians are determined by surveys and opinion polls. In this case, more than half of respondents shared this opinion regardless of their political preferences. Almost 55.5% (38.3% – rather yes and 17.2% – definitely yes) of Civic Platform voters were convinced of the impact of public opinion polls and surveys on the actions of politicians. Given the behaviour of the ruling party and the prime minister they shared the opinion of their electorate. This type of phenomenon can be often observed in adapting policies to the specific survey results. That case of ACTA is not an isolated example (Staszkiwicz-Piekut 2012).

The second group of respondents declaring support for the Polish Peasant Party supported the idea in a slightly smaller scale – 52.5% (8.2% – definitely yes and 44.3% rather yes). In the case of respondents supporting the Law and Justice the support for the claim concerning the impact of surveys on the activity of politicians amounted to 56.6% (21.4% – definitely yes and 35.2% rather yes). In the case of respondents declaring support for Your Movement there is an almost identical arrangement of percentage as in the case of supporters of the Law and Justice. This thesis was supported by 56.2% of respondents (24.6% – definitely yes and 31.6% rather yes).

The case of respondents representing the Democratic Left Alliance was quite interesting. In their case, 64.5% of respondents (18.9% – definitely yes and 44, 3% rather yes) declared their support for this statement. We may infer from this that avowed voters of the SLD are conscious participants of political life, they know mechanisms and possibilities of democratic influence.

Respondents declaring support for other political options also expressed a high level of support for the statement the actions of politicians were largely determined by surveys and opinion polls (56.3% in total and 22.1% definitely yes and 34.2% rather yes). The last group of respondents not taking part in elections supported the thesis in 40.8% (11.0% – definitely yes and 29.8% rather yes). It seems that despite the open declaration of non-participation in political elections this group follows events of political life. Unfortunately, respondents declaring non-participation in elections have excluded themselves from participation in political life. There can be many reasons for such a decision. Most often these are the reasons concerning the failure to improve the prospects of living conditions, disappointment with party elites ruling the country, etc.

Generally, the threshold of respondents having no opinion on the dependence of the actions of politicians on surveys and polls ranged from 17% to 31%. Avowed supporters of the Democratic Left Alliance declared the lowest level (17.1%) and the result was the highest in the case of persons who do not vote – 31.5%. Both cases confirm the abovementioned assertions. In other cases, respondents declaring support for other parties expressed almost equal level of support for the issue under examination - 27.8% among supporters of the PO, 26.2% among supporters of the PSL, 27.6% in the case of followers of the PiS, 24.6% – Your Movement and 22.8% – the SLD.

The lack of dependence of activities of politicians on surveys and public opinion polls was declared by only 16.7% of PO supporters, 15.7% PiS followers, 19.5% Your Movement supporters, 17.8% SLD, and 20.8% representing other political options, while 21.3% of respondents supporting the PSL did not see the relationship between the actions of politicians and polls. It seems that the PSL is generally not in favour of such phenomena as the publication of opinion polls two weeks before the election. It should be noted that this party usually has a low position in pre-election polls, on the border of the so-called electoral threshold. It turns out that for at least 25 years it has exceeded this threshold with satisfactory results. The largest group of respondents, as many as 27.4%, which did not support the examined statements was the group declaring no vote.

It is interesting that three identifications of respondents to the axis of the right-left wing shared the view concerning the dependence of politicians' activities on surveys and opinion polls. In the case of respondents declaring support for leftist views – 55.5%, centre – 53.8% and 58.4% of the right-wing. The last group – 41% of respondents who cannot identify their views on the left-right scale is most likely the group which declares the lack of participation in elections. It suggests that the interests of these respondents are most likely not represented at all by specific features on the left-right axis. It can also be the evidence of the material, as well as educational exclusion. This analysis confirms citizens' awareness of the impact of public opinion polls and surveys on the actions of politicians. Citizens perceive the elements of the permanent campaign in Poland. Undoubtedly, the actions of politicians inspired by political polls are part of the Polish political reality.

Another equally prominent element of the permanent campaign is a conflict which also affects the attractiveness of the media coverage. It is a source of constant stimuli for promotion. According to the "logic of the media" a destructive conflict as "bad news" becomes "good news" for certain mass media (bad news is good news). This kind of conflict attracts the attention of the audience, and is also attractive for both the media and politicians. Radosław Marzęcki cites Jesper Strömbäck position, according to whom

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“the media favour stories that include conflict, as conflict lends itself to more dramatic storytelling. The media’s need for stories that are dramatic and have the potential to capture people’s attention might explain their propensity to focus on scandals to frame politics as a horse race or strategic game rather than as issues” (Marzęcki 2012a).

Antagonism is a permanent element of the Polish political scene. Planes of divisions were present from the nineteenth through the twentieth and twenty-first century history and attention should be drawn to the symbolic divisions (Marzęcki 2012b: 284; Janion 1992: 17; Mocek 2004: 256-276; Grabowska 2004: 111, Załuska 2005: 5; Janicki & Władyka 2005: 6-12; Indulski & Pleśniak, 2005: 8-13; Szawiel 2002: 178-214). In the period from 2001 to 2005 there was no conflict between the Law and Justice and the Civic Platform. This resulted from the fact that on the political market they were united against their common enemy – the Democratic Left Alliance, none of the parties had real power then. In 2005, both parties became the main contenders to power and had to diversify their own political offers (Marzęcki 2012b: 288). At that time the idea of liberal Poland vs. solidary Poland appeared. (Łukasiak & Zalewska 2005: 31-32). In the course of campaigns in 2005 and in 2007, four planes of mutually exclusive divisions between the main opponents were created: 1) the new – old state (PiS); 2) IV Republic of Poland – III Republic of Poland (PiS); 3) “solidary Poland” – “liberal Poland” (PiS); 4) “civilisation of the East” – “Western civilisation” (PO). The depth of the conflict between the PiS and the PO is so significant, because for both parties this strategy is beneficial. Primarily for reasons of identity. The clear conflict serves the defence of own position and mobilises the electorate. Furthermore, for image reasons – a pronounced conflict, as already mentioned, ensures “media visibility” (Marzęcki 2012a). Additional factors contributing to the severity of the permanent campaign from 2005 to 2007 were the difficulties of the ruling party – PiS in the creation and maintenance of the ruling coalition and the risk of an earlier election. The latter phenomenon was twofold. Firstly – tensions occurred within the ruling coalition, due to different visions of the solutions to problems. Secondly – the risk of an early election was to play the role of a factor disciplining the group coalition. Survey results indicated that the PiS had a chance to gain more support in the early election, and even number of mandates that would enable it to govern by itself (Garlicki 2010: 37-38).

The Civic Platform turned out to be the winner of the election campaign in 2007. This was achieved as a result of a higher turnout and the mobilisation of a significant part of the electorate under the slogans of pushing the PiS away from power. Such instruments of communication as sending messages by e-mail, text messages transmitted via cell phones, blogs and political discussions

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on the Internet were used in Poland on a larger scale. Instruments of this kind were used by the staff of the Civic Platform. Voters communicated with each other using the Internet and other new media. The intensification of activities in the field of political communication was observed in the second half of 2009, i.e. after two years of the PO – PSL coalition. What was conducive to this was, on the one hand, the wide media coverage of events dubbed *the gambling scandal* and *the shipyard scandal*, on the other hand, the closeness of the election marathon in Poland, that is, the presidential and local elections in 2010 and the parliamentary election in 2011. The Internet introduces additional communications features, such as personalisation of communication, decentralisation of communication (citizens turn from recipients to broadcasters) and the redefinition of the role of traditional media and journalists, participating journalism – grassroots journalism<sup>10</sup> (Garlicki 2010: 40-41). The conflict between the PiS and the PO is characterised by the following features: it is a conflict of values, in objectives and operation methods, interactions between the parties have a conflicting character, the conflict is indelible, it enforces fight (defence of endangered values), neither party sees itself as the cause of the conflict, the conflict resolution is to defeat the enemy (Marzęcki 2012a).

The support for the PiS after the elections in 2011 was called “politically embarrassing”. A turning point in the permanent campaign was Barack Obama’s campaign and the use of the Internet (Sabato 2013: 105-225). In Poland, the Internet was similarly used in Andrzej Duda’s presidential campaign (Stysiak 2015, Wpolityce.pl 2015). After the parliamentary election in 2015 the axis of the division of the conflict between the PiS and the PO changed. Before and after the elections in 2015 the support for the PO became “politically embarrassing”. The first axis of the division in the campaign was a “good change” (PiS) vs. stagnation (PO). The slogan was associated mainly with the introduction of the 500+ programme (a programme designed to support families, that is PiS’s electorate). The other axis of the conflict is now focused around the dispute over the Constitutional Court – respect for the rule of law (the opposition – the PO and ModernPL) vs. the realization of the interest of the party (PiS). Another social centre is the Committee for the Defence of Democracy, which on the one hand wants to create an impression of an independent civil movement, on the other hand, expects the support of opposition parties, e.g. during demonstrations. Another axis of the division is focused on the defence of the Third Republic of Poland (PO) vs. the Fourth Republic of Poland (PiS)<sup>11</sup>.

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10 The essence of participatory journalism is the possibility of creation, transmission and reception of information independently of traditional media. The result of this phenomenon in politics is the essential limitation of the possibility of manipulation by the media message.

11 In particular, it is expressed in the case of L. Wałęsa and his cooperation with the communist security services.

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A similar axis of the division formed on the basis of the following characteristics – the beneficiaries of the Third Republic of Poland (PO) vs. the victims of the Third Republic of Poland (PiS) has a deeper social and economic context. An example of the power of television in exposing the conflict about the Constitutional Court was the promotion of Ryszard Petru in public opinion polls as a leader of the opposition in November and December 2015. It turned out that his frequent statements in the media, particularly public television resulted in an increase in support for ModernPL in public opinion polls. After the change of power in TVP, the rating of ModernPL fell in the rankings of popularity.

## *Summary*

The permanent campaign in Poland depends on several factors. First of all, its existence is possible thanks to the development of new media, political advising, and media visibility of politician's activity. The permanent campaign has lasted in Poland since 2004. It is connected with the development of political consulting and the appearance, for the first time in Poland, of specific media performances, such as inquiry committees. They were a kind of media attraction for viewers. Confrontations of persons connected with the preparation of the Act had the biggest audience<sup>12</sup>.

Due to the fact that the permanent campaign does not have a time frame it negatively affects both the governing period and the period of the election campaign. Governing the state becomes subordinated to the processes of maintaining a constant level of support in public opinion polls, unpopular decisions are often delayed in time or not implemented at all, due to the fear of losing the support of citizens. On the other hand, the period of the election campaign, which should allow voters to make a rational election decision, to confront different election offers, brings sometimes even more severe information chaos discouraging from participation in elections.

An important element of the permanent campaign is the functioning of a multi-dimensional conflict between the ruling party and the opposition. Antagonism is usually based on a different system of values, is difficult to eliminate, is profitable for both sides of the conflict as it arouses the interest of the media and the audience's attention. The axes of divisions can be diversified and are not always based on reasonable assumptions. It seems that politicians

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12 964,000 viewers of TVP3 and 140,000 viewers of TVN24 watched the confrontation of Bożena Szumielewicz and Janina Sokołowska (the market share of TVP3 broadcast – 15.9 per cent, TVN24 – 2.3 percent of viewers). The confrontation of Bożena Szumielewicz with Iwona Galińska took the second place and was watched by 832,000 viewers on TVP3 (the share of the station during the confrontation broadcast amounted to 17.2 percent) and 76,000 viewers on TVN24 (the shares of this station – 1.6 percent of viewers) (*AGB Polska...*)

in attracting the attention of citizens often forget about the limitations of public expression. Polish history knows victims of political antagonisms, for example, President Gabriel Narutowicz, who was shot dead by a young man.

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