

Democracy is Europe: Remember to Revive

21 - 22 October, 2021, Gdansk, Poland

Poland is the fastest autocratising country in the world. In the last decade, no other country has regressed so much from a liberal democracy to an electoral democracy. Yet Poland, with the Solidarność movement supported by the Catholic Church, played a decisive role in the peaceful revolution and democracy movements of 1989/90. In the meantime, conservative forces have turned away from the European values once aspired to, such as freedom, democracy and the rule of law. How can we explain rapid turn away from once common values? More importantly, how can we create a liberal democracy that is not perceived as a threat by conservative forces? Liberal democracy is characterised precisely by the EU's guiding principle "united in diversity": Liberals, conservatives, socialists and supporters of other world views all have an equal right to live their interpretation of our common values.

The two-day hybrid event starts with an overview of the path of Poland in the European Union. Participants could discuss with eyewitnesses the role of Solidarność Movement to better understand how current political opponents once strove for shared European values. A concluding panel debate focusses on current challenges to liberal democracy in Poland. How can Europe and Poland find a solution to the increasing tension over European values? How can Poland return to becoming a liberal democracy? Right after this rich morning, UEF organises a guided tour through the most significant place of the communist period and the revolution. A final training session provides up to 20 democratic activators with insights into the latest research findings on backsliding liberal democracy in Central and Eastern Europe.

1

Thursday, October 21, 2021

11.30 – 15.00 CET

Lech Walesa Tour – Guided Tour throughout the city of Gdansk including the European Solidarity Centre and St. Bridget church, and brown bag lunch provided by UEF

16.00 - 17.00 CET

Democracy is Europe: Remembrance to revive

30 years after the end of the Soviet Union, what can we learn from the transition for the future of Europe?

Welcome speech by **Sandro GOZI**, UEF President.

Keynote speech by **Ewa KOPACZ**, former Prime Minister of Poland and Marshal of the Sejm, Vice-President of the European Parliament, TBC

Aleksandra DULKIEWICZ, Mayor of Gdańsk TBC



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Timothy GARTON ASH, historian, author and commentator. He is Professor of European Studies at Oxford University, Professor of European Studies in the University of Oxford, TBC

Q&A

17.00 - 18.00 CET

Network activities

18.00 CET

Dinner – provided by UEF

Friday, October 22, 2021

9.00 – 10.00 CET

Experiencing History – Poland 1989 memories and developments from the protagonists

- **Jaroslav KURSKI**, journalist and Director of Gazeta Wyborcza, TBC
- **Jolanta KURSKA**, President of the Bronislaw Geremek Foundation in Warsaw TBC
- **Michal KOBOSKO**, Vice-President, Polska 2050 TBC
- **Radosław MARKOWSKI**, Institute of Social Sciences, Head of the Center for the Study of Democracy, Faculty of Social Sciences in Warsaw, Department of Social Studies TBC

Moderates: Dr **Tomasz SAWCZUK**, Dean of the Political Department, Kultura Liberalna

2

10.00 – 10.15 CET

Coffee Break

10.15 – 12.00 CET

Panel Debate

From Friends to Foes? The Conservative Renunciation of European Values in Poland

- Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. mult. **Danuta HÜBNER**, Member of the European Parliament, Brussels TBC
- Dr. **Jacek KOŁTAN**, Director's Plenipotentiary for Research, European Solidarity Centre, Gdańsk
- **Ania SKRZYPEK**, Director for Research and Training, Foundations for European Progressive Studies (FEPS) TBC
- **Sophia IN 'T VELD**, Member of the European Parliament, and Member of the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs TBC
- **Piotr MACIEJ KACZYNSKI**, freelance writer at Euractiv.com, Onet.pl & Balkan Insight, member of Team Europe Poland.



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*Chair: Dr. **Natasza STYCZYŃSKA**, Assistant professor, Department of Society and Cultural Heritage of Europe, Jagiellonian University Krakow*

11.45 – 14.00 CET

Lunch Break – provided by UEF

14.00 – 16.00 CET

Training: How to Fight Democratic Backsliding and Populism in our daily life?

***Tobias GRALKE**, Trainer, author and moderator between the cultural sector, political education and democracy research.*

