

INVITATION**BÖLL LUNCH DEBATE****The Polish Parliamentary Election and the Rise of Right-Wing Populism: Consequences for Poland and Europe**

The Polish parliamentary election to be held on 25 October, will take place in the middle of an unprecedented refugee crisis in Europe and in the context of rising support for right-wing populist movements in almost all EU Member States. If and how the migration issue will affect the election remains to be seen, but it is likely that it will boost support for the right-wing opposition, not only the Law and Justice Party, but also more right-wing fringe parties with an anti-immigration and anti-EU stance, such as Janusz Korwin-Mikke's Coalition for the Renewal of the Republic Freedom and Hope (KORWiN). It is with parties like KORWiN that Law and Justice would have to build a coalition in order to be able to form a government.

A crucial aspect of the rise of right-wing populism in Poland is the backlash against women's rights and gender equality, reinforced by the ideology of the Catholic Church. What makes this issue even more interesting is that both main prime ministerial candidates, Beata Szydło, Law and Justice and current premier Ewa Kopacz, Civic Platform, are women.

As Poland is the biggest of the 'new Member States' and a serious player on EU level, the consequences of a return to power of the Right after the elections in combination with growing right-wing sentiments among the population would be disastrous for Europe and Poland alike. The outcome of the Polish election could strengthen the right-wing movement in Europe, feed into negative attitudes towards refugees among European public opinion elsewhere and reinforce tendencies against further European integration. Will Poland continue to grow as a modern European democracy or will it fall back into a right-wing nationalism drenched with conservative Catholicism?

Date **Wednesday, 21 October 2015, 12:30 – 14:00**
(light lunch 12:00-12:30)

Venue **Hotel Leopold**
Rue du Luxembourg 35,
1050 Brussels

Speakers **Dr Jacek Kucharczyk**, President of the Executive Board,
Institute of Public Affairs, Warsaw
Aleksandra Niżyńska, Policy Analyst and Programme Manager, Gender
Equality Observatory at Institute of Public Affairs, Warsaw
Ulrike Lunacek, Member of the European Parliament Greens-EFA, Austria
and Vice-President of the EP

Moderator **Klaus Linsenmeier**, Director Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung European Union

No admittance without confirmed registration. E-Mail registration only. Please send the attached reply form to: marianne.ebertowski@eu.boell.org

The meeting is held under Chatham House Rule.

Conference language English – no translation.



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