



POLAND AS A LABORATORY OF DEMOCRACY

A DEBATE AROUND THE PUBLICATION
"OXFORD HANDBOOK OF
POLISH POLITICS"

21 MAY 2026

POLISH ACADEMY OF SCIENCES
SCIENTIFIC CENTER IN ROME

PROGRAMME



Embassy
of the Republic of Poland
in Rome

PAN
POLISH ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

Rome
Scientific Center

UKSW

UNIWERSYTET KARDYNAŁA
STEFANA WYSZYŃSKIEGO
W WARSZAWIE



OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS



14:00 - 14:25 **Welcome Coffee & Book Display**

14:25 - 14:30 **Opening of the Event**

Magdalena Wrana (Director of the PAS Scientific Centre in Rome)

14:30 - 15:10 **OPENING: WHY POLAND, WHY NOW? · EDITORS IN CONVERSATION** _____

Katarzyna Walecka (Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University / Kellogg College, Oxford)

Simona Guerra (University of Surrey)

15:10 - 16:40 **PANEL I · HANDBOOK AUTHORS** _____

POLAND TRANSFORMED: HOW, FOR WHOM, AND AT WHAT COST?

Chair: **Simona Guerra**

1 Setting the Scene

Joanna Tyrowicz (University of Warsaw / Monetary Policy Council)

Growth for whom? The winners and losers of Poland's economic transformation

2 Follow the money

Marcin Walecki (OSGA, University of Oxford)

Did the way parties are funded serve democracy — or undermine it?

3 Who Takes Charge

Maciej Hartliński (University of Warmia and Mazury)

Has strong leadership been a democratic asset or a democratic risk?

4 Grievances Weaponised

Joanna Fomina (Polish Academy of Sciences)

Who weaponised migration as an issue — and who paid the price?

5 The Electoral Verdict

Michał Kotnarowski (Polish Academy of Sciences)

Who did voters reward — and when did they start punishing the mainstream?

Discussion

16:40 - 16:55 **Coffee Break**



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- 16:55 - 18:25** **PANEL II · OUTSIDE PERSPECTIVES** —————
SEEN FROM OUTSIDE: WHAT POLAND REVEALS ABOUT ITSELF AND ABOUT EUROPE
Chair: Katarzyna Walecka
- 1 The promise**
Antonio Macchia (University of Teramo)
What Europe saw in Poland then — and what it sees now
- 2 The Long View**
Mirela Marta Banach (Jagiellonian University)
What history tells us about Poland that current politics tends to forget
- 3 The Ideological Turn**
Małgorzata Fijał (Jagiellonian University / PAS Scientific Centre in Rome)
Is Polish populism a local product — or a European import?
- 4 Europe's Mirror**
Nicholas Startin (John Cabot University in Rome)
What can France, Britain, and Italy learn from what happened in Poland?
- Discussion**
- 18:25 - 18:40** **Closing Remarks**
Katarzyna Walecka
Simona Guerra
- 18:40** **Cocktail Reception**

