

# EVOLUTION OF THE STATE AND THE LAW

REFLECTIONS ON A YEAR  
OF REBUILDING THE RULE OF LAW

**November 28-29, 2024**

Stefan Batory Foundation

J. Turowicz Hall

10a Sapieżyńska St., Warsaw



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# EVOLUTION OF THE STATE AND THE LAW

## REFLECTIONS ON A YEAR OF REBUILDING THE RULE OF LAW

On behalf of the Stefan Batory Foundation and the Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights, we invite you to a two-day conference dedicated to reflecting on the past year's efforts to restore the rule of law in Poland.

This event will bring together experts and practitioners from Poland and abroad, who will share insights on key reforms related to the rule of law in Poland.

The program will feature discussions on models and progress in restoring rule of law within the judiciary, the role of media and community organizations in shaping public debate, and the impact of populism on democracy. Key topics will include:

- **Populism and Democracy:** Analyzing the impact of populist methods on democratic standards.
- **Manipulation of Human Rights:** Examining how populist movements utilize human rights language for political purposes.
- **The Role of the Media:** Strategies for communicating rule of law issues to inform citizens without deepening polarization.
- **Independence of Institutions:** Strengthening independent institutions to effectively protect democratic values.

The conference is held under the patronage of Dziennik Gazeta Prawna.

Please confirm your attendance through the [registration form](#).

The conference will be held in Polish, with simultaneous interpretation into English and Polish Sign Language (PJM).

It will also be broadcast on the Batory Foundation's Facebook profile and YouTube channel.



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## DAY I, NOVEMBER 28, 2024 (THURSDAY)

9:30 – 10:00

Registration

10:00 – 10:15

Welcome on behalf of the organizers

10:15 – 11:15

Key-note speech

*Adam Bodnar, DSc, Minister of Justice, moderator:  
dr. Anna Materska-Sosnowska (Stefan Batory Foundation)*

11:15 – 11:30

Coffee break

11:30 – 13:00

The process of restoring the Rule of Law - where are we one year after?

*Changes in the law on the NCJ, attempts to rectify the situation in the Constitutional Tribunal and discussion of the so-called "neo-judges" - after a year since the start of the process of restoring the rule of law, can we talk about disappointed hopes, or just the beginnings of a difficult road? The discussion will cover the current state of reforms, an assessment of the effectiveness of the changes introduced and areas requiring further action, as well as the role of international institutions in the process.*

The discussion will be attended by:

- **Aleksandra Kustra-Rogatka, DSc.** (Nicolaus Copernicus University in Torun)
- **Prof. Ewa Łętowska** (judge of the Constitutional Tribunal in 2002-2011 and former Ombudsman)
- **Prof. Krystian Markiewicz** (president of the IUSTITIA Association of Polish Judges)
- **Maciej Nowicki** (president of the Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights)

Moderator: **Krzysztof Izdebski** (Stefan Batory Foundation)

13:00 – 14:00

Lunch break

14:00 – 15:30

How much populism in the fight against populism?

*Rebuilding democratic standards requires proportionate, one-time measures that will not lead to further violations of the constitutional and social order. At the same time, after a year of rule by the October 15 Coalition, a sense of acquiescence is emerging among its staunchest supporters to violate these standards in the name of the greater good.*

*On the other hand, representatives of the former ruling majority are discovering the meaning of the word "Constitution" and employing rhetoric that raises alarms about an alleged coup. What are the consequences of reaching for populist methods to dismantle the populist order? Will democratic hypocrisy stay with us for much longer?*

The discussion will be attended by:

- **Barbara Brodzińska-Mirowska, DSc** (Nicolaus Copernicus University)
- **Magdalena Góra, DSc** (Jagiellonian University)
- **Dr. Ben Stanley** (SWPS University)
- **Marek Tejchman** (Dziennik Gazeta Prawna)

Moderator: **Małgorzata Szuleka** (Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights)

15:30 – 15:45

Coffee break

15:45 – 17:00

How do populists use the human rights system and international institutions to achieve their own goals?

*The panel will examine how populist movements use the language of human rights and the structures of international institutions to strengthen their own political position and legitimize their actions. Experts will explore manipulations in the area of human rights – from selective invocation of international court rulings to creating a false image of political persecution.*

The discussion will be attended by:

- **Prof. Renata Uitz**, (University of London)
- **Dr. Edit Zgut-Przybylska** (Institute of Philosophy and Sociology, Polish Academy of Sciences)
- **Dr. Alain Zysset** (University of Glasgow)

Moderator: **dr. Barbara Grabowska-Moroz** (CEU Democracy Institute)





## DAY II, NOVEMBER 29, 2024 (FRIDAY)

9:30 – 11:00

### How to tell the story of the process of restoring the rule of law?

*Steadfastness, heroic struggle, heroism vs. technocratic legal language. How to talk about the rule of law so as not to polarize opinions and reach out to citizens? What is the role of the media in this process?*

The discussion will be attended by:

- **Anna Błaszczak-Banasiak** (Amnesty International Poland)
- **Paweł Cywiński** (Pacyfika Agency)
- **Viktoria Großmann** (Süddeutsche Zeitung)
- **Jarosław Gwizdak** (Instytut Państwa i Prawa)

Moderator: **Małgorzata Szuleka** (Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights)

11:00 – 11:30

### Coffee break

11:30 – 13:00

### Independent institutions in times of change

*Independent institutions are characterized by the absence of interference from political power and autonomy, which allows them to effectively perform their functions in defence of the rule of law. Their independence is ensured by, among other things, financial self-reliance, transparency of operations and legal guarantees that protect them from outside influence.*

*How to strengthen these foundations of independence to effectively protect democratic values?*

The discussion will be attended by:

- **Jacek Czaja** (judge, member of the Team of Legal Experts of the Batory Foundation)
- **Dr. Jacek Sokołowski** (Institute of Political Science and International Relations, Jagiellonian University)
- **Olimpia Barańska Małuszek** (judge of the District Court in Gorzów Wielkopolski)
- **Prof. Monika Florczak-Wątor** (Jagiellonian University)

Moderator: **Krzysztof Izdebski** (Stefan Batory Foundation)

13:00 – 14:00

### Lunch break

14:00 – 15:30

### Poland 2027

*After a year of the new government, is it clear in which directions Polish politics will develop? In a time of polarization, pop politics and crises occurring one after another, is there still space for building long-term strategies? And to what extent is there still room in these discussions to present arguments based on values, such as democracy, human rights and the rule of law?*

The discussion will be attended by:

- **Andrzej Bobiński** (Polityka Insight)
- **Marta Prochwicz** (European Council on Foreign Relations Warsaw)
- **Karolina Zbytniewska** (Euractive)

Moderator: **Edwin Bendyk** (President of the Stefan Batory Foundation)

15:30 – 16:00

### Conclusions



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