**The international cultural programme of the Polish Presidency of the Council of the EU has launched – nearly 100 events in over 20 countries!**

**On 14th January 2025, the international programme of the Polish Presidency of the Council of the European Union was officially inaugurated in Brussels. From January to June 2025, under the slogan ‘Culture Sparks Unity’, nearly 100 cultural events will take place in over 20 European countries. The programme, organised by the the Adam Mickiewicz Institute, will include both EU Member States and candidate countries, with most events planned in the Belgian capital.**

*Culture is a natural and powerful element of Poland's presidency in the Council of the European Union. The international cultural programme is based on dialogue, diversity, and collaborative work for the future. At its core are young artists. Their everyday work guarantees real intercultural exchange, freedom of speech and opinions. It is the foundation of European identity, civic awareness, and a carrier of fundamental democratic values. Today, we focus on young creators, but also on technology, which directly influences the way we participate in culture. We will also work on mechanisms that shape the system, such as collective management organizations. These will be exceptional 6 months of the present, which will impact the future of the younger generation* – said Marta Cienkowska, Undersecretary of State at the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage, during the inauguration.

**Solidarity and international cooperation: The Polish cultural scene as a safe space for artists from all over Europe**

*The Polish Presidency of the Council of the European Union 2025 is a unique opportunity to emphasise the importance of culture as one of the most essential tools in building international relations. The position of a country is based not only on political action, economic strength or negotiating skills but also on culture, which is the foundation of so-called “soft power”. I call this “national charisma”. A well-thought-out cultural policy cements a country’s position as a leader in the international arena and fosters alliances*, underlines Olga Wysocka, director of the Adam Mickiewicz Institute, which is responsible for the Polish Presidency’s international cultural programme.

What distinguishes the cultural programme of the Polish Presidency is not only the inclusion of artists and creators of other nationalities but also its scope – in addition to EU Member States, it will include European Union candidate countries such as Serbia, Georgia, North Macedonia and Moldova. The programme was developed with Polish and foreign partners and the support of Polish Institutes and local institutions.

*Our programme will feature artists from Poland and those who, for various reasons, were forced to leave their homes and are now living and creating in Poland. This shows our country’s significant role in the international cultural scene by creating a safe space for creative expression for people from countries subjected to war and persecution. The programme prepared by the Institute is the result of the cooperation of artistic circles from across Europe and is intended to encourage further creative exchange across borders* – says Olga Brzezińska, deputy director of the Adam Mickiewicz Institute.

The Presidency inauguration was combined with the opening of several exhibitions presenting Polish art, design and graphics in the buildings of the Council of the European Union and the European Parliament. In the evening, the inauguration gala will be graced by a performance by the world-renowned Polish jazz band, the Marcin Wasilewski Trio.

It is in the buildings of the Council of the European Union and the European Parliament in Brussels that key decisions on the future of the Member States and their citizens are made. MEPs, government representatives and experts meet there every day. They are visited by the media, world leaders and experts in all fields. Here, in the Justus Lipsius and Europa buildings, these important spaces are where strategy meetings and critical conversation take place, where you can now admire bespoke art installations by Polish artists Alicja Patanowska and Alicja Biała. In addition, until June 2025, the works of contemporary Polish artists, designers and graphic designers will fill the buildings’ Presidency rooms.

**Solidarity and concern for shared resources: Polish art, design and graphics by artists of the young generation in the most important spaces of the EU Council**

Curated by Aleksandra Kędziorek, the presentation of Polish design and art consists of works by Polish artists and creatives, often of the youngest generation, boldly entering the international art and design scene. The presentation’s overall theme is “Regeneration” and emphasises the need to care for our shared resources, build resilience, practice interpersonal and interspecies solidarity, and foster a sense of security. The exhibitions will be on display from 14th January until 30th June 2025.

* **“We Are the Weather” installation by Alicja Patanowska (Justus Lipsius building, Brussels)**

The installation’s central motif is water, which is a symbolic life source and a metaphor for interspecies interdependence. The piece by Polish potter, visual artist and designer Alicja Patanowska consists of three complementary elements that create a narrative about the need for cooperation and solidarity in the face of global challenges.

* **“Beneath the Soft Ground, Hard Ground” installation by Alicja Biała at the headquarters of the Council of the European Union (Europa Building, Brussels)**

1. Young Polish artist Alicja Biała boldly takes on the main forum of the Europa building with an installation created using one of the oldest graphic techniques, copper-plate engraving, in a modern and relevant way.

* **A presentation of Polish art from the collection of the European Parliament and other Polish collections (European Parliament, Brussels)**

Works by renowned Polish artists are on display at the European Parliament creating a space for reflection and marvelling at nature’s magnificence. Aleksandra Kędziorek, the exhibition’s curator, selected pieces from the European Parliament’s art collection, augmented by paintings on loan from Warsaw galleries and private collectors.

* **A presentation of Polish design, graphic design and illustration in the headquarters of the Council of the European Union and the European Parliament, interior design: Katarzyna Baumiller (the Justus Lipsius and Europa buildings, the European Parliament building, Brussels)**

The exhibition of Polish art will be complemented by specially designed spaces for relaxation and quiet work by Katarzyna Baumiller, using the most interesting designs by contemporary Polish designers.

**Art that drives action: the “Women Go Vote” exhibition (European Parliament, Brussels)**

1. From the 13th to the 17th of January 2025, the European Parliament will present the “Women Go Vote” exhibition, curated by Olga Adamkiewicz and Sylwia Chrabałowska of the Moc Kobiet Foundation (PL: Women’s Strength Foundation). The collection of posters on display was created as part of a nationwide apolitical pro-voter turnout campaign for the 2023 parliamentary elections in Poland. The artists who took part in the event wanted to use their art to show their support for the idea of active participation in democratic processes, proving that the language of art can effectively transcend communicative barriers and inspire action.

**The Polish cultural programme in the heart of the European Union: What to expect in Brussels**

The programme, organized by the Adam Mickiewicz Institute under the slogan "Culture Sparks Unity" is part of the cultural programme coordinated by the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage and aims to promote the ideas of solidarity and international cooperation. It presents the most interesting phenomena of the contemporary Polish art scene, putting particular emphasis on showcasing the new generation. The official inauguration took place in Brussels, the heart of the European Union, and it is there that most events of the international cultural programme will take place over the next six months.

* **24th January – 23rd February 2025**: *Post Tourism*, an exhibition of Ada Zielińska’s work at La Nombreuse Gallery (Photo Brussels Festival, Brussels) as part of the series *Photography – More Than Reality: The Art of Imaging*
* **5th February 2025**: A meeting with Nobel Prize-winning author Olga Tokarczuk (Henry Le Boeuf Hall, BOZAR Centre for Fine Arts, Brussels)
* **14th–15th February 2025**: Unsound Festival (Terarken Hall at the BOZAR Centre for Fine Arts and Club Reset, Brussels)
* **20th–21st February 2025**: *null & void*, an experimental dance show by Agata Siniarska

(Beursschouwburg Art Centre, Brussels)

* **5th March 2025**: *Solidarity on Screen: The Polish Presidency Film Review*, NEW VOICES: Damian Kocur (Cinema at BOZAR Centre for Fine Arts, Brussels)
* **14th March – 29th June 2025**: (ACCOMPANYING PROGRAMME) *Familiar Strangers*, an exhibition curated by Joanna Warsza (BOZAR Centre for Fine Arts, Brussels)
* **25th March 2025**: *Stabat Mater* performed by NOSPR and the NFM Choir conducted by Marin Alsop (Henry Le Boeuf Hall, BOZAR Centre for Fine Arts, Brussels)
* **26th–30th March 2025**: *Solidarity on Screen: The Polish Presidency Film Review*, CLOSE-UP: Małgorzata Szumowska & Michał Englert (Cinema at BOZAR Centre for Fine Arts, Brussels).
* **9th May – 30th June 2025**: Display of works by Małgorzata Mirga-Tas (Royal Museums of Art and History, Brussels)
* **18th June 2025**: The Tomasz Stańko Experience in concert (Studio 4, Flagey, Brussels).
* **24th June 2025**: Closing gala of the international cultural programme of Poland’s Presidency of the Council of the EU – a concert by acclaimed countertenor Jakub Józef Orliński, featuring the world premiere of *Unity*, a composition by Aleksander Dębicz created for Poland’s Presidency, with participation from renowned Polish instrumentalists (Studio 4, Flagey, Brussels)

The partner for events taking place in the capital of Belgium is the Polish Institute in Brussels. Detailed information on the international cultural programme of the Polish Presidency can be found on the website run by the Adam Mickiewicz Institute: <https://poland2025eu.culture.pl/>.

The partner for all events held in the capital of Belgium is the Polish Institute in Brussels. The Adam Mickiewicz Institute brings Polish culture to people around the world. As a state institution, we create lasting interest in Polish culture and art by strengthening the presence of Polish artists on the global stage. We initiate innovative projects, support international cooperation, and promote cultural exchange. We advance the work of both established and emerging artists, showcasing the diversity and richness of our culture. We also run the CULTURE.PL website, a comprehensive source of knowledge about Polish culture. Find out more: [www.iam.pl](https://www.iam.pl)

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