

Institute of National Remembrance

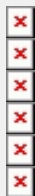
<https://ipn.gov.pl/en/news/1795,IPN039s-History-Point-in-Brussels-28-30-March-2019.html>

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IPN's History Point in Brussels 28-30 March 2019

The theme of IPN's History Point IPN in Brussels was the Polish Armed Forces in the West.



On March 28, 2019 Artur Orzechowski, the Ambassador of the Republic of Poland to the Flemish government in Brussels, opened the exhibition "First to fight. Poles on the fronts of World War II" at the IPN History Point, which was hosted in the embassy building at Gaulois str. from 29 to 30 March. The exhibition was prepared by the IPN Branch Office of National Education in Łódź. Its authors presented the contribution of Poles to the armed struggle during World War II. Many members of the Polish community in Belgium came to the opening of the exhibition. The parts of the exhibition focusing on the combat trail of the 1st Armored Division under the command of General Stanisław Maczek proved to be particularly interesting. The children and grandchildren of the heroes from Breda and Falaise were able to see the story of their grandparents, known from memories and books, on the boards of the exhibition.

The exhibition was accompanied by a lecture by Dr hab. Janusz Wróbel from the IPN Historical Research Office in Łódź entitled "On foreign soil for the freedom of Poland. Polish Armed Forces in the West 1939-1945".

The history of Poland and Central Europe in 1938-1939 was the subject of classes for children and youth from the Polish school at the Polish Catholic Mission in Brussels. On 29-30 March 2019, the amphitheater hall of the school turned into a workshop center, where the students learned about the history of Poland using the "IV Polish Partition" educational puzzles to

arrange the map of the Second Polish Republic. Basing on the map, the children found cities and towns recorded on the pages of the history of the Polish campaign of 1939. The dramatic history of Łowicz, Warsaw, Lwów, Grodno and Kock, where the fate of the war of 1939 was resolved, was also talked about. The classes were further accompanied by lectures and presentations about the Polish Armed Forces in the West, reminding the students about the heroes from Monte Casino, Breda and Falaise. The workshops and lectures were conducted by Grzegorz Nawrot and Dr hab. Janusz Wróbel from the IPN Branch Office in Łódź.

The opening of the exhibition "**First to fight. Poles on the fronts of World War II**", prepared by the Łódź branch of the Institute of National Remembrance, will be part of a meeting at the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Brussels. It will be followed by a lecture by Dr hab. Janusz Wróbel (OIPN in Łódź) - "On foreign soil for the freedom of Poland. Polish Armed Forces in the West 1939-1945".

Apart from the meeting at the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Brussels, there will also be historical workshops and lectures at the John Paul II School Consultation Center by the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Brussels.

The History Points of the Institute of National Remembrance outside of Poland are special places - they are the result of effective cooperation between Polish communities abroad and the Institute of National Remembrance. During regular meetings with compatriots, we reflect upon and discuss the history of Poland in the 20th century as part of

lectures, open meetings, book presentations and IPN exhibitions. Lessons and workshops for students and teachers, disseminating knowledge about the history of Poland and presenting the Institute's activities are all part of the IPN History Point project.

We regularly meet Poles in Vilnius, Grodno, Lviv, Zhitomir, Gnojnik, Zaolzie, Brussels, London, New York and Chicago.

'First to fight'. The Poles on the front lines of World War II

The exhibition *'First to fight'. The Poles on the front lines of World War II* is to recall Polish military efforts in World War II. We salute all Polish soldiers: those who fought in the Polish armed Forces in the west alongside: the Americans, the Australians, the British, the French, the Canadians, the New Zealanders, the South Africans, as well as those who had to fight in the east in military formations under Soviet command. For Poland World War II began in 1939, with the German and Slovak invasion on 1 September, and with the Soviet invasion on 17 September. Polish soldiers were the first to fight against the overwhelming forces of both aggressors who were better armed, and the Poles paid an enormous price for their resistance. This, however, did not deter the Polish Government's determination to continue fighting. The government, established in France was recognised by all the members of the anti-German coalition. This determination also manifested itself in the nascent underground movement at home and the reconstruction of the Polish Army in France, and subsequently in Great Britain by the Prime Minister and Commander-in-Chief, General Władysław Sikorski.

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