

Institute of National Remembrance

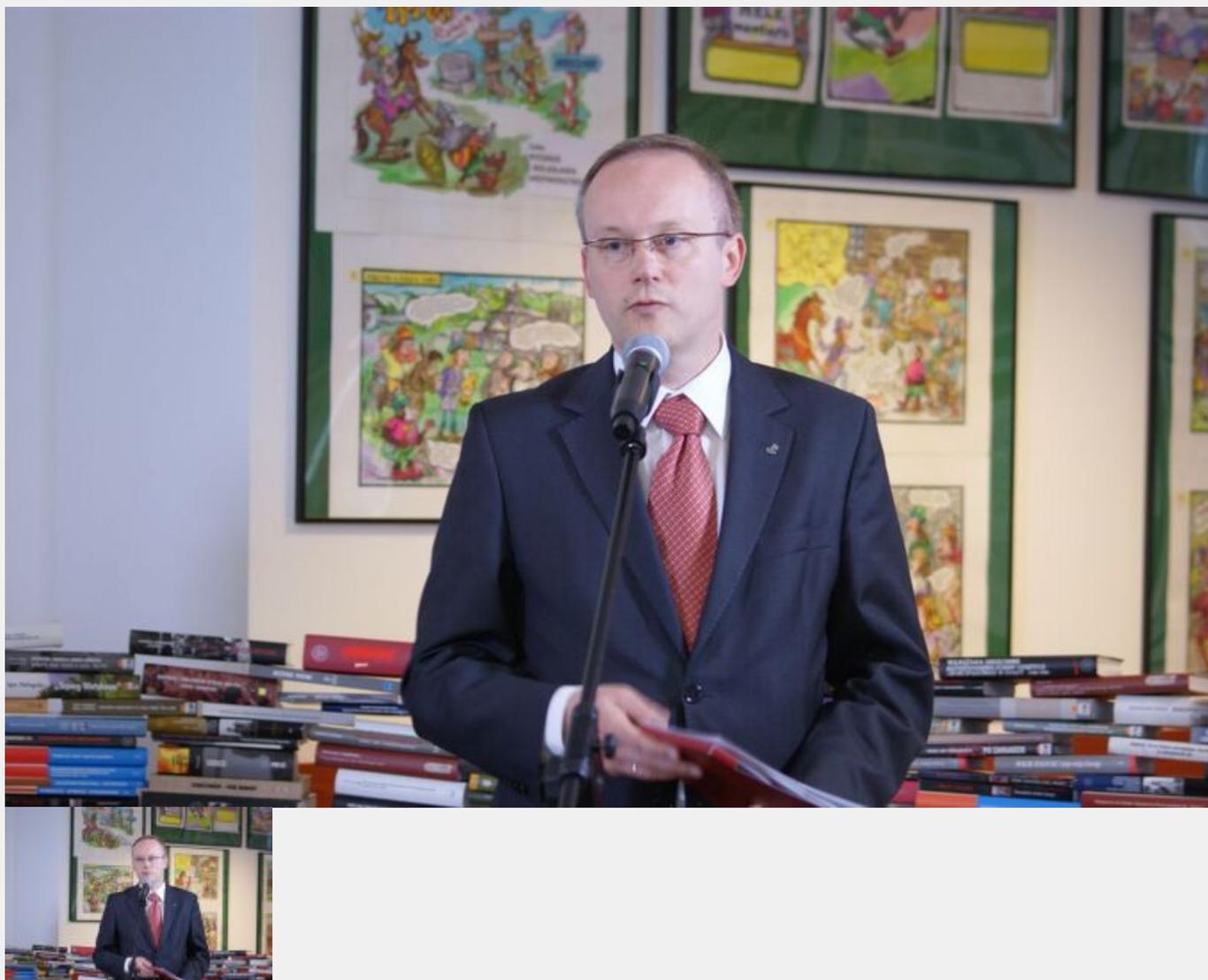
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15 years of the Institute of National Remembrance in numbers





President of the Institute of National Remembrance Dr. Lukasz Kamiński during a briefing in connection with the 15th anniversary of the IPN (photo: Aleksandra Wierzchowska)

Fifteen years of the Institute of National Remembrance in numbers

The Institute of National Remembrance (IPN) was set up under the Act of 18 December 1998. Its activity began on 8 June 2000 along with the choice of Prof. Leon Kieres as the first President of the Institute. The preamble to the Act establishing the Institute of National Remembrance lists among the tasks of the Institute the remembrance

of victims and heroes of the fight against the occupiers during World War II and the struggle for independent existence of the Polish State after the war. The document refers to the obligation to prosecute crimes against peace, humanity and war crimes, the need to redress for victims, and the disclosure of unlawful actions of the Communist state.

On 9 December 2005 the Polish Parliament elected the second President of the Institute, Prof. Janusz Kurtyka, who died in a plane crash in Smoleńsk on 10 April 2010. On 10 June 2011 the Parliament elected Dr. Łukasz Kamiński as President of the IPN.

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The Institute of National Remembrance - Commission for the Prosecution of Crimes Against the Polish Nation deals with the recent history of Poland and reckoning with the crimes of World War II and Communism. The IPN is a huge archive of the twentieth-century Polish history, research and educational centre, public prosecutor office pursuing the perpetrators of crimes, and the institution examining the compliance with the truth of lustration statements of candidates for the public office.

The fifteen-years-old legacy of the IPN consists of more than 90 kilometers of archival materials collected, 1,794 publications, 453 exhibitions and 817 conferences and 30 educational portals. It is also more than 103,000 witnesses heard and 508 persons covered by the acts of indictment, which resulted in the courts sentencing 137 people. The IPN has analyzed 53,235 lustration statements and developed,

constantly updated, online directories of communist functionaries of security authorities, persons under surveillance, people in leadership positions in the Communist era, and people holding the most important public functions today.

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The IPN archive department - Office for Preservation and Dissemination of Archival Records (BUiAD) collects and compiles the files of the Communist security authorities (PRL and USSR, in the years 1939-1956) and documents of the German army during World War II. It makes them available to victims of repression, as well as scientists and journalists.

The IPN archives have gathered **90,412.11 linear meters of documents**, of which **31,065.23 m** is held in Warsaw. For 15 years of archival activity BUiAD has realized 956,303 requests for access to documents, with 2,425,265 archival units being made accessible.

BUiAD cooperates with foreign archives and documentary centres. As part of this cooperation with the Czech Republic, France, Georgia, Israel, Lithuania, Romania, the United States, Switzerland, Ukraine and the United Kingdom 664,410 copies of documents (7,072 archival units) went to Poland. The documents were mostly digital, depicting the fate of Polish citizens during World War II and afterwards.

The IPN archive department achieved significant successes in digitization of its archives. The Institute Digital Repository is one of the largest in the country. 312,645 archival units (27,195,056 digital files) have been digitized so far. 243,831 photos, 4,783,840 card-index cards

(11,258,993 digital files), as well as movies (1,175 of archival units) and records (1,202 archival units) were digitized as well.

The Centre of Information on the Victims of World War II and the index of repressed by the authorities of the Soviet rule in 1939-1956 also function in the BUIAD structure. The IPN archive department prepares collections of documents for publishing and it issues the annual „Archival Review of the Institute of National Remembrance”.

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The Public Education Office (BEP) conducts scientific research, as well as educational activities and publishing. It organizes scientific conferences and collects eyewitness accounts of historical events. It publishes books and scientific and popular journals. It organizes trainings, lectures, film screenings, exhibitions and competitions, and prepares educational materials, including multimedia and the Internet, for students and teachers.

The shortest statistical summary of the 15-years' operations of the educational-scientific department of IPN is **1,794 publications** - both books and magazines ("IPN Bulletin", „Memory and Justice”, „Pamięć.pl”, „The Apparatus of Repression in the People's Republic of Poland 1944-1989”, „CzasyPismo”), of which 638 volumes were published by the IPN Headquarters and 1,156 by different divisions of the Institute. The IPN prepared **453 exhibitions**, which were presented a total of 6,763 times, including 288 foreign presentations. Over the past 15 years the Institute has organized **817 conferences**, including 95 international ones. When you consider all forms of

educational activities of the Institute (youth competitions, lectures, training for teachers, workshops, historical film screenings along with lectures, educational rallies, activities for children, courses for school-leavers, etc.), Then their sum reaches 35,000!

The IPN has created **30 educational web portals**. Regardless of the constantly extended site ipn.gov.pl and the most important educational portal [pamięć.pl](http://pamiec.pl), the employees of the Institute prepared a series of thematic portals. Some of them (truthaboutcamps.eu, zbrodniawolynska.pl and others) were prepared in several languages. They relate to important people (including Captain Pilecki, Fr. Jerzy Popiełuszko, „Inka”) and historical events (September 1939, June '76, martial law) and the priority projects of the Institute ("Traces of the crime", „The search for unknown burial sites of victims of the communist terror 1944-1956”).

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The IPN investigating department - Chief Commission for the Prosecution of Crimes Against the Polish Nation deals with the prosecution of Nazi and Communist crimes in the years 1939-1990, war crimes and crimes against humanity. The IPN prosecutors are required to conduct investigations even when the perpetrators are dead. Their aim then is to clarify the circumstances of the crimes and to determine the number of the victims. It is important to their families. Researchers investigating recent history may also benefit from the prosecutors' output.

Over the past 15 years the investigation department of the Institute

has completed with a substantive decision 14,506 of the investigations, during which **103,334 witnesses** were interviewed, and 932 people were presented allegations. The IPN prosecutors brought to courts **326 indictments**, which **involved 508 people**. On the basis of these indictments courts sentenced 137 people. Against 140 persons the proceedings were discontinued due to the limitation, against 62 - because of amnesty, against 60 - because of the death of the accused. 33 persons were acquitted as a result of court proceedings.

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IPN was entrusted with **vetting tasks** under the parliamentary act of 2007. **The Vetting Office** examines the compatibility with the truth of lustration declarations submitted by candidates for public office. For transparency in public life, each of them must complete a lustration statement, i.e. give official information whether they collaborated with the communist security authorities or were their officer.

For the last 8 years the Vetting Office has received 368,000 lustration declarations. For 53,235 checks were commenced, aimed at the analysis of their veracity. 50,324 statements did not raise any doubts. The court sent 821 requests to initiate the lustration proceedings, of which 111 cases are on the docket, and 710 were already completed. In 468 cases the court shared the view of the prosecutor of the Vetting Office, ruling that there had been a lustration lie.

In addition, the Vetting Office publishes four catalogues on the Internet with personal data. In the catalogue of persons currently performing

public functions the data of 5,527 persons have been published so far, in the catalogue of functionaries of the Communist security bodies - of 43,585 persons, in the catalogue of people under surveillance in PRL - of 8,772 persons, in the directory of persons holding key positions in the communist party and state authorities - of 18,949 persons.

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Since 2011 the IPN has been conducting a nationwide research project **„The search for unknown burial places of victims of the Communist terror from 1944 to 1956”**. The Institute partners in this project are the Ministry of Justice, Council for the Protection of Struggle and Martyrdom Sites, Pomeranian Medical University, Wrocław Medical University, Poland genetic base of victims of totalitarian regimes, and Institute of Forensic Research in Cracow. The project seeks to establish the location of the graves of people executed and killed in the years of Stalinism, as well as the exhumation and identification of remains found. In total, at the lodgings „Ł" of the Powązki Cemetery in Warsaw and Białystok Remand Centre, as well as in many other places, we managed to find the remains of hundreds of victims. So far, 41 of them have regained identity.

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IPN cooperates with many foreign partners, especially from Europe, Israel and the USA. The result is a variety of joint activities: conferences, publications and exchanges of archives, presentation of

exhibitions of the Institute abroad, and educational projects, especially addressed to Poles living abroad.

For the last 15 years the IPN has entered into dozens of agreements on cooperation with various foreign partners. We should mention the agreement with the US Holocaust Museum and the world center for documentation, research, education and commemoration of the Holocaust Yad Vashem. The Institute is developing co-operation with Polish institutions at home and abroad (Polish Underground Movement Study, Józef Pilsudski Institute of America, Historical and Literary Society in Paris, Polish Museum in Rapperswil). We must note, signed by the IPN, multilateral agreements (like bringing together 20 institutions from the European countries Platform of European Memory and Conscience or grouping 7 countries the European Network of Institutions Possessing the Secret Police Archives).

Furthermore, we signed a number of agreements on cooperation with related institutions of the countries of our region, including the Hungarian Committee of National Remembrance, Ukrainian Institute of National Remembrance, Lithuanian Special Archives, Slovak Nation's Memory Institute and the German Office of the Federal Deputy for the State Security Service Materials of the GDR (known as Gauck Institute). We also cooperate with the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars.

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Under the patronage of the President of the IPN we created in collaboration with the World Association of Home Army Soldiers, a

network of the General Stefan Rowecki „Grot” Clubs. Annually for achievements in commemorating the history of Poland and Poles President of the IPN hands the Curator of National Remembrance awards and their regional counterparts - Witness of History awards. In cooperation with TVP and the Polish Radio the Institute organizes a competition Historical Book of the Year, and in cooperation with the Polish Academy of Sciences, Institute of History - Best Historical Debut of the Year Competition. Best radio broadcasts and historical documentaries compete for the IPN prize of the Historic Broadcast of the Year.

Since 2010 President of the IPN has applied to President of the Republic of Poland for granting a special state distinction - the Cross of Freedom and Solidarity - to meritorious opposition activists from the years 1956-1989.

11 offices of the IPN (in Białystok, Gdańsk, Katowice, Lublin, Łódź, Poznań, Rzeszów, Szczecin, Wrocław and Warsaw) cooperate fruitfully with various institutions and organizations, primarily as regards education. Their partners include local authorities, schools of all types, community centres, public libraries, archives, parishes, associations and foundations, or prisons. Nationally for 15 years of its activity the IPN has taken various types of cooperation at regional or local level with several thousand subjects.

President of the Institute of National Remembrance Dr. Lukasz Kamiński during a briefing in connection with the 15th anniversary of the IPN (photo: Aleksandra Wierzchowska)

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