

Instytut Pamięci Narodowej

<https://ipn.gov.pl/pl/nauka-i-edukacja/badania-historyczne/konferencje/238376,Churches-and-religious-associations-behind-the-Iron-Courtain-part-four-1978-1989.html>
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Churches and religious associations behind the „Iron Courtain” part four: 1978-1989, September 23-24, 2026, Warsaw (The deadline for the submission of abstracts: May 30, 2026)

[Kościół](#)

23.09.2026

Institute of National Remembrance (Poland), Nation’s Memory Institute (Slovakia) and Committee of National Remembrance (Hungary) have the honour to invite you to an international conference *Churches and religious associations behind the „Iron Courtain” part four:1978-1989*, September 23-24, 2026, Warsaw.

As a result of the Second World War, Europe was divided into two parts: the West and the countries under the domination of the Soviet Union, or how it was assumed to be behind the “Iron curtain”. The conference organizers decided to take a closer look at the broadly understood situation of Churches and religious associations in the European countries of the Eastern Bloc in 1978-1989. In 1978, John Paul II became Pope and introduced significant changes in the Holy See’s policy, particularly with regard to the Eastern Bloc. The 1980s in the countries dominated by the Soviet Union were a period of growing religiosity and anti-Communist resistance, which ultimately led to the collapse of the Eastern Bloc in 1989.

We will try to look for similarities and differences between their activities, religious policy of the authorities, and the situation of the followers of particular Churches. We are interested in how churches and religious associations found themselves in the realities of functioning in an extremely hostile political environment, in countries whose ideological assumption was to fight with every religion.

The topics of the papers may relate to the following issues:

- international context of churches and religious associations situation
- activities of the Holy See in the countries of the Eastern Bloc and its attitude to the Soviet Union.

- religious policy of the Soviet Union and Eastern Bloc countries
- persecution against the church hierarchy and believers
- the internal situation of individual Churches and religious associations
- position and attitudes of the church hierarchy
- position and attitudes of the clergy and the faithful
- position and attitude of individual Churches and religious associations to the activities of the political opposition
- important events in the internal life of the Churches
- relations between individual Churches and religious associations
- relations of emigration to Churches activities
- communist political police and the Churches
- evolution of ecumenical relations locally and internationally

Language of conference it is English.

Coordinators: Rafał Łatka, Gergely Isó, Peter Jašek

The deadline for the submission of abstracts: May 30, 2026.

Please send paper proposals consisting of paper title, a brief (up to 250 words) abstract and a short biographic entry (up to 100 words) to rafal.latka@ipn.gov.pl ; jasek@upn.gov.sk ; gergerly.iso@neb.hun

Pliki do pobrania

[Application form \(doc, 26.5 KB\)](#)

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