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Andrzej Duda

Andrzej Sebastian Duda (Polish pronunciation: [ˈandʐɛj ˈduda] (listen); born 16 May 1972) is a Polish lawyer and politician who has served as President of Poland since 2015.^[1] Prior to assuming the presidency, he was elected to the Sejm from 2011 to 2014 and the European Parliament from 2014 until 2015.^[2]

Duda was the presidential candidate for the Law and Justice (PiS) party during the 2015 presidential election in May 2015. In the first round of voting, Duda received 5,179,092 votes—34.76% of valid votes. In the second round of voting, he officially received 51.55% of the vote, defeating the incumbent president Bronisław Komorowski, who received 48.45% of the vote. On 26 May 2015, Duda resigned his party membership and the European Parliament as the president-elect.

On 24 October 2019, he received official support from PiS ahead of his re-election campaign in 2020. He finished first in the first round and then went on to defeat Rafał Trzaskowski in the runoff with 10,440,648 votes, or 51.03% of the vote.^[3]

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Andrzej Duda



Official portrait, 2019

President of Poland

Incumbent

Assumed office

6 August 2015

Prime Minister Ewa Kopacz
Beata Szydło
Mateusz Morawiecki

Preceded by Bronisław Komorowski

Additional positions

Member of the European Parliament

In office

1 July 2014 – 25 May 2015

Constituency 10 - Kraków

Member of the Sejm

In office

8 November 2011 – 1 July 2014

Constituency 13 - Kraków II

Member of the Kraków City Council

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Early life and education

Duda was born on 16 May 1972 in Kraków to Janina Milewska and Jan Tadeusz Duda, professors at the AGH University of Science and Technology. His maternal grandfather Nikodem Milewski fought in the Polish–Soviet War of 1918-1921 and later served in the Home Army during the Second World War.^{[4][5]}

Between 1987 and 1991 Duda attended Jan III Sobieski High School, Kraków, where he studied humanities.^[6] He subsequently studied law at the Jagiellonian University in Kraków. In October 2001, holding a Master of Law degree, he was appointed as a research assistant in the Department of Administrative Law of the Jagiellonian University's Faculty of Law and Administration. In January 2005, Duda also obtained a Doctor of Law degree (LL.D.) at the Jagiellonian University. Due to complications in his political career, he has been mostly on unpaid leave from the university since September 2006, except for a 13-month interval beginning in September 2010, when he returned to the university.^[7] Additionally, Duda worked as a lecturer at Mieszko I College of Education and Administration in Poznań.^[8]

Political career

Duda began his political career with the now-defunct Freedom Union Party in the early 2000s. After the 2005 parliamentary elections, he joined the Law and Justice Party (PiS).^[9] From 2006 to 2007, Duda was an undersecretary of state in the Ministry of Justice. Then, from 2007 to 2008, Duda was a member of the Polish State Tribunal.

From 2008 to 2010, during the presidency of Lech Kaczyński, Duda was an undersecretary of state

In office

2 December 2010 – 8 November 2011

Constituency 2 - Prądnik Biały/Krowodrza

Undersecretary of State in the Chancellery of the President

In office

16 January 2008 – 6 July 2010

President Lech Kaczyński
Bronisław Komorowski
(Acting)

Undersecretary of State in the Ministry of Justice

In office

1 August 2006 – 15 November 2007

Minister Zbigniew Ziobro

Personal details

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Born | Andrzej Sebastian Duda <div> <div> <div>16 May 1972</div> <div>Kraków, Poland</div> </div> </div> |
| Political party | Law and Justice (2005–present) |
| Other political affiliations | Freedom Union (2000–2001) |
| Spouse(s) | <u>Agata Kornhauser</u> (m. 1994) |
| Children | 1 |
| Residence(s) | <u>Presidential Palace</u> |
| Alma mater | <u>Jagiellonian University</u> |
| Signature |  |



Former President Lech Kaczyński appointing Duda as undersecretary of state in the Chancellery of the President, 16 January 2008

in the Chancellery of the President of the Republic of Poland.^[10] In 2010, he was an unsuccessful candidate to become the Mayor of Kraków as a PiS candidate,^[11] but was more successful in the 2011 parliamentary election, where he received 79,981 votes for the Kraków area, and thus became member of the Sejm.^[12]

In September 2013, the news magazine *Polityka* commended Duda for being one of the most useless members of parliament, at the time, describing him as being open to opposition arguments and as refraining from personal attacks, as part of his role at the Commission for Constitutional Responsibility, although later he was accused of severely limiting free speech and communications during his presidency.^[13] Duda remained a member of the Sejm until he was elected to the European Parliament in 2014.^[14]

2015 presidential campaign

As Bronisław Komorowski's first presidential term was expiring, Komorowski was able to seek re-election in a scheduled presidential election. Duda was Komorowski's Law and Justice rival in the election.

In the first round of the 2015 presidential election, Duda came first, receiving 5,179,092 votes and thus 34.76% of valid votes.^[15]

In the second round Duda took 51.55% of the vote against the 48.45% share of his rival, then-incumbent president Bronisław Komorowski.^[16] On 26 May 2015, he officially resigned from party membership.^[17]

2020 presidential campaign

In the first round of the 2020 presidential election, Duda appeared to come in first, receiving almost 44% of the votes. Warsaw mayor Rafał Trzaskowski came in second, with just over 30% of the vote. The second round took place on 12 July.^[18] Duda won reelection narrowly against Trzaskowski in the 2nd round. He got 51% of the vote to Trzaskowski's 49%.^[19]

Presidency (2015–present)

First Term (2015-2020)

The five-year term of Andrzej Duda began on 6 August 2015 with taking an oath of office during a National Assembly session.^[20]

Duda rejected the European Union's proposal of migrant quotas to redistribute asylum seekers, saying: "I won't agree to a dictate of the strong. I won't back a Europe where the economic advantage of the size of a population will be a reason to force solutions on other countries regardless of their national interests".^[21]

In September 2015 Prime Minister Ewa Kopacz declared that Poland, as an expression of "European solidarity", would take in 2,000 people over the next two years, mainly from Syria and Eritrea (out of 3,700 originally requested).^[22]

Duda and Croatian President Kolinda Grabar-Kitarović were the originators of the Three Seas Initiative.^[23]

Duda repeatedly met with general secretary of the Chinese Communist Party and China's leader, Xi Jinping,^{[24][25]} stating that "Polish companies will benefit hugely" from China's Belt and Road Initiative.^[26] Duda and Xi signed a declaration on strategic partnership in which they reiterated that Poland and China viewed each other as long-term strategic partners.^[27] Duda said that he hopes Poland will become a gateway to Europe for China.^[28]

In September 2017, his approval rating stood at 71% and in February 2018, at 72%, a record surpassed only by Aleksander Kwaśniewski, whose approval ratings surpassed 75% from 1995 to 2005.^{[29][30]}

Pardon of Mariusz Kamiński

In November 2015, basing on Art. 139 of the Constitution of Poland, Duda pardoned former Central Anticorruption Bureau (CBA) head Mariusz Kamiński and three CBA officers convicted by a court of 1st instance in the so-called "Land Affair",^[31] marking the first pardon granted by a president before reaching a final verdict.^[32] In the opinion of some lawyers (including professors Jan Zimmermann – Andrzej Duda's doctorate promoter, Leszek Kubicki – former Minister of Justice and Andrzej Zoll – former president of the Constitutional Tribunal), Duda breached the Constitution of Poland with personal biases.^{[33][34][35]}

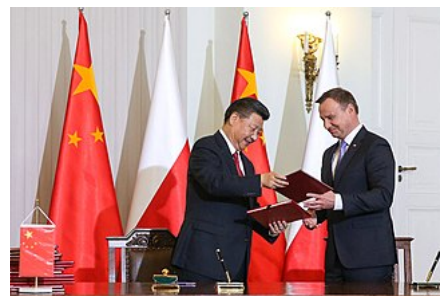
Constitutional crisis

Andrzej Duda has refused to swear in any of the five Constitutional Tribunal judge candidates selected by the Sejm of the VII term. Three of those were selected since 7 November 2015 whose election was declared constitutional.^[36] On 3 and 9 December 2015 Duda swore in five other candidates for the same office selected by the Sejm of the VIII term.^{[37][38]}

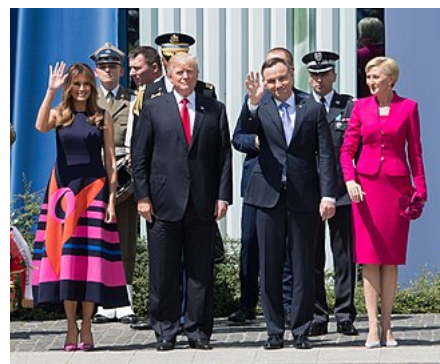
On 28 December 2015, Duda signed the Constitutional Tribunal bill (passed on 22 December 2015 by the Sejm), which unequivocally breaches the Constitution of Poland in the opinion of the National Council of the Judiciary of Poland,^[39] the Public Prosecutor General^[40] and the Polish



Andrzej Duda taking the oath of office, 6 August 2015



Duda and Xi Jinping signed a declaration on strategic partnership in Poland, June 2016



Duda and his wife Agata Kornhauser-Duda with U.S. President Donald Trump and Melania Trump in Warsaw in July 2017

Ombudsman.^[41]

In June 2016, Duda rejected appointing 10 judges selected by the National Council of the Judiciary of Poland while replacing much of the cabinet.^[42]

Controversy Over Institute of National Remembrance Act

In February 2018, Duda said that he would sign into law Amendment to the Act on the Institute of National Remembrance, making it illegal to accuse 'the Polish nation' of complicity in the Holocaust and other Nazi German atrocities, a measure that has roiled relations with Israel with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu going as far as accusing the Polish government of "Holocaust denial".^{[43][44][45]}



Andrzej Duda during a meeting with the Council of Seniors of the Sejm and the Council of Seniors of the Senate at the Sejm

Stance on LGBT rights

2nd term (2020-present)

In June 2020, Duda said that he would not allow gay couples to marry or adopt children, while describing the LGBT movement as "a foreign ideology" and comparing it to indoctrination in the Soviet Union. He also pledged he would ban LGBT teaching in schools.^{[46][47][48][49]} In response to Duda's comments, former Prime Minister of Belgium Elio Di Rupo publicly asked the European Commission for an official reaction.^{[50][51]} Soon after his comments, Duda invited presidential candidate Robert Biedroń (who requested meeting the President)^[52] and an LGBT activist, Bartosz Staszewski, to the Presidential Palace,^{[53][54]} though Robert Biedroń eventually did not take the invitation saying he won't until President Duda apologizes.^[55] According to Staszewski, during their meeting Duda cited freedom of speech as a defence for his words about "LGBT ideology".^[53]

On 4 July 2020, Duda proposed changing the constitution to ban LGBT couples from adopting children. On 6 July 2020, he signed a document with a presidential draft of the amendment to the Polish Constitution.^{[56][57][58]}

Foreign policy

On 4 November 2015, during a meeting with the President of Romania Klaus Iohannis in Bucharest, Romania, both leaders established Bucharest Nine,^[59] an organization created due to Russian expansionism over Ukraine. It has 9 members, which are Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania and Slovakia, apart from Poland and Romania.^{[60][61]}

In 2017, Duda met with President of Turkey Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, in which he praised Erdoğan's response to the European refugee crisis. Duda reiterated Poland's support for Turkey being admitted to the European Union. Duda stated that "I hope Turkey's and the EU's paths continue to lead in the same direction and that the membership, Turkey's full membership of the EU, will be the ultimate result of this common direction".^[62]

In May 2019, Duda visited Azerbaijan where he met with President Ilham Aliyev. He said that "gas and oil alike will flow... from Azerbaijan also to Poland. They will flow via Azerbaijan where the transportation corridors that are currently under construction constitute and will constitute the elements" of China's Belt and Road Initiative.^[63]

U.S. President Donald Trump praised Duda, saying: "He's doing a terrific job," and assisting him in his next Presidential campaign promises to make "American changes" throughout Poland. ^{[64][65]} In September 2019, Trump and Duda agreed to send 1,000 U.S. troops to Poland.^[66]

On 24 June 2020, Trump said at a press conference with Duda that the United States plans to move some U.S. troops from Germany to Poland.^{[67][68]} Trump said that "Poland is one of the few countries that are fulfilling their obligations under NATO — in particular, their monetary obligations — and they asked us if we would send some additional troops. They're going to pay for that."^[69]

In October 2020, Duda expressed deep concern over the escalation of hostilities between Azerbaijan and Armenia in the disputed region of Nagorno-Karabakh and called on both sides to "cease military operations and engage in dialogue".^[70]

Personal life

Duda is married to Agata Kornhauser-Duda, a teacher of German at Jan III Sobieski High School in Kraków.^[71] They met at a party while they were students in high school.^[4] The couple have been married since 21 December 1994.^[72] They have one daughter, Kinga, who was born in 1995.^[73] In September 2020, Duda appointed her to be an adviser on social issues.^{[74][75]} Duda's father-in-law is Julian Kornhauser, a well-known writer, translator and literary critic.^[76] Duda participated in the Polish Academic Championships in the Alpine skiing while being a university student.^[4]

Duda is a Roman Catholic. He has taken part in religious ceremonies on many occasions, including Midnight Mass, the blessing of food on Holy Saturday, and the Corpus Christi procession in Kraków.^{[77][78][79]}

Honours

National Honours

- Poland: Order of the White Eagle (*ex officio*)
- Poland: Grand Cross of the Order of Polonia Restituta (*ex officio*)



Duda with Bulgarian President Rumen Radev in an official visit to Bulgaria in November 2018



Duda with US President Joe Biden in March 2022

Foreign Honours

- Portugal: Grand Cross of the Order of Merit Grand Cross (2008)^[80]
- Belgium: Gran Cordon of the Order of Leopold (2015)
- Bulgaria: I Class Order of Stara Planina (Стара планина) (14 April 2016)^[81]
- Czech Republic: Collar of the Order of the White Lion (15 March 2016)
- Finland: Grand Cross with Collar Order of the White Rose of Finland (2017)
- Greece: Grand Cross of the Order of the Redeemer (2017)
- Latvia: Commander Grand Cross with Chain of the Order of the Three Stars (2018)
- Lithuania: Grand Cross with Golden Chain of the Order of Vytautas the Great (21 February 2019)^[82]
- Norway: Grand Cross of the Royal Norwegian Order of St. Olav (23 May 2016)
- Romania: Collar of the Order of the Star of Romania (10 July 2016)
- Slovakia: Grand Cross of the Order of the White Double Cross (2019)
- Hungary: Grand Cross of the Hungarian Order of Merit (2020)
- Ukraine: Order of Prince Yaroslav the Wise, 1st class (2021)^[83]
- International Olympic Committee: Gold Olympic Order (23 July 2022)^[84]

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- [Official Biography of President Andrzej Duda](http://www.president.pl/en/president/biography) (<http://www.president.pl/en/president/biography>)
- [The official website of the President of the Republic of Poland](http://www.president.pl/en/) (<http://www.president.pl/en/>)
- [Polish Sejm](http://www.sejm.gov.pl/english.html) (<http://www.sejm.gov.pl/english.html>)
- [Wprost](http://ludzie.wprost.pl/sylwetka/4102128/Andrzej-Duda.html) (<http://ludzie.wprost.pl/sylwetka/4102128/Andrzej-Duda.html>) (in Polish)

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