
MIGRATION IN POLAND: WHERE THE TWO PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES STAND

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Frey Lindsay

Poland is to hold a second-round runoff election in early June to elect the next President. The two candidates appear polar opposites. Liberal-centrist Warsaw mayor, with Prime Minister Donald Tusks Civic Platform party, is facing off against conservative Karol Nawrocki who is technically independent but supported by the right-wing Law and Justice party (PiS). Both candidates are using migration in Poland as a core campaign issue.

Migration, particularly irregular migration, is one of the dominant issues in the country, particularly with regards to the war in Ukraine and Polands eastern border with Belarus. In recent years, Belarus has been accused of deliberately shepherding asylum seekers and other irregular migrants over the border with Poland, as well as other EU member states such as Lithuania and Latvia, allegedly in order to destabilize the bloc. Amid this, PM Tusk announced the right to asylum in Polish territory had been suspended, a move which was condemned by human rights groups but defended by Tusk as part of his duty to protect the Polish and European border. At the same time, Poland is currently facing accusations in the European Court of Human Rights that its forces have violently repelled people trying to seek shelter.

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