

Right-wing Karol Nawrocki wins Polish presidential election

Nawrocki's victory is a huge triumph for Trump *From the [Telegraph](#), and [again](#).*



Karol Nawrocki edged out Rafal Trzaskowski with 50.89 per cent of the vote to his rival's 49.11 per cent, a dramatic turnaround from initial figures
Credit: Sean Gallup/Getty Images

Karol Nawrocki has narrowly won Poland's [presidential election](#) in a contest seen as a choice between a pro-EU or Trump-style nationalist direction for the country. "This is the time to save Poland," Mr Nawrocki said after the first round.

Poland has a history of confounding its critics and opponents to its West as well as its East. In Brussels or Moscow, the outcome of Poland's presidential election is a disappointment.

The EU Commission had obviously hoped for the victory of the liberal Europhile mayor of Warsaw, Rafal Trzaskowski, who was

a vocal proponent of the Brussels consensus on abortion, gay rights and even the liberalised migration rules backed by Poland's current premier and ex-EU insider, Donald Tusk. But these views were vehemently rejected by the nationalist winner, [Karol Nawrocki](#).

The new president also has a track record of being a fierce critic of Russia and has personally antagonised the Kremlin by supporting the removal of Soviet war memorials as well as Communist monuments in Poland, but his victory is a [mixed blessing for Ukraine](#). Unlike the EU's two pro-Russian governments in Hungary and Slovakia, Nawrocki is no Kremlin apologist.

As an historian Nawrocki has emphasised Poland's long history of repression by the Russian empire as well as the Soviet Union, so he is not a friend of the Kremlin. But, like his ally, the current Polish President, Andrzej Duda, Nawrocki does not ignore the bitter history of Polish-Ukrainian relations which Putin's invasion briefly papered over. Economic factors also haunt Warsaw's relations with Kyiv.

Polish farmers made up a key component of the new Polish president's election winning coalition.

Given the powerful voice that the Polish president has in foreign affairs and defence matters, Nawrocki's election will give Trump an important ally among the European leaders and sideline Donald Tusk, whose status as [the EU's man](#) in Warsaw makes him a red rag to the US president.

Nawrocki's victory is the first success for Trump-style populism . . . Nawrocki's victory will add to Trump's pressure to turn EU rhetoric about rebuilding European states' defence capacity into concrete measures on the Polish model. Poland will emphasise US leadership rather than the more nebulous European strategic autonomy as promoted by France's Emmanuel Macron. Nawrocki's upset victory is a win for the West, but

not for "Europe".