

68th Anniversary of Poznan June 1956 Uprising



Ceremonies related to the 68th anniversary of the workers' uprising lasted throughout Friday. Their culmination took place in the evening on the Adam Mickiewicz Square, where flowers were laid at the Monument of Poznan's June. On this important day to the capital of Wielkopolska arrived government officials from across the country.



Uroczyste obchody 68. rocznicy Powstania Poznańskiego Czerwca 1956 roku. Fot. PAP/Jakub Kaczmarczyk



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68 years ago, on June 28, 1956, in Poznan, the workers' protests, which turned into street fights, started. It was the first Polish workers' revolt against the injustice of the communist system. The authorities used the army to suppress the protests, which led to the deaths of at least 58 people plus several hundred injured.



Once the protest was suppressed, a series of show trials of actual and presumed participants was held in autumn 1956. The authorities tried to prove the existence of a conspiracy against the state and socialism in Poznań.

June in Poznan was victorious. It was the heroism of the Poznan workers that made socialism stumble for the first time in its most horrible, Stalinist form. The effects of the Poznan events were manifold. The state propaganda lost its credibility and strength. The political thaw, which was tentatively coming to an end, became a necessity because of the Poznan June. Soon there was a change of power in Poland, censorship was relaxed for a while, borders opened a bit wider, culture revived. People could breathe more freely for a while. True democracy was still a long way off, but the first steps towards freedom were taken in Poznań.



Prezydent RP Andrzej Duda. Fot. PAP/Radek Pietruszka



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During the 68th anniversary commemorations, Stanisław Żaryn, advisor to the President of Poland, read a letter from President Andrzej Duda. The President praised the bravery of the protesters who stood against the communist regime. He likened the struggle to the Greater Poland Uprising of 1918, emphasizing the continuous fight for dignity and freedom by the people of Poznań.

Duda highlighted the significant impact of the protests, which hastened political and economic reforms in Poland.

President Duda underlined that although the regime violently crushed the protests, the sacrifice of the participants was not in vain. The bloodshed resonated across Poland, undermining the regime's credibility and leading to the October Thaw, which ended the Stalinist era. The courage of the Poznań workers laid the groundwork for future uprisings and ultimately contributed to the collapse of the communist system and the restoration of Poland's sovereignty.

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Sources: <https://poznan.ipn.gov.pl/pl7/aktualnosci/203037,68-rocznica-Poznanskiego-Czerwca-1956-roku-Poznan-28-czerwca-2024.html>

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