

# Polish far right targets UK Poles

From *Rafal Pankowski* in Warsaw

The Polish far right is increasingly active in the UK and the Polish far right events in the UK are often much bigger than the British far right meetings. The Polish community in the UK has been subjected to discrimination and a wave of post-Brexit hate crime and, in turn, many young Poles are being radicalised by the Polish far right groups.

A Polish far right leader active among the Polish community in the UK is Janusz Korwin-Mikke MEP who became notorious internationally for claiming in a European Parliament speech that women were less intelligent than men and deserved smaller salaries. Korwin-Mikke was subsequently interviewed on ITV's Good Morning Britain (on 8 March, the International Women's Day) by Piers Morgan who called the Polish MEP "a pig" and "the most sexist man in politics". The misogynist remark was not, however, the only offensive statement ever made by Korwin-Mikke.

He likes to talk about "Jewish communism", claims Hitler didn't know about the Holocaust, and calls for disabled children to be kept away from "normal" schools. He has been censured for "Sieg heiling" and using the "N" word in the European Parliament, too.

Alarming, Korwin-Mikke got 20 per cent of the vote as a Polish presidential candidate among the Polish community in the UK who voted in the Polish election in 2015.

When visiting Britain he speaks to packed houses. An almost 3-hour long recording of one of the meetings can be watched online. It took place in London in October 2015. In a room

full of Polish migrants, Korwin-Mikke thundered against the European Union and Muslim immigration. He also said: "If I were Jewish I would have made a much better career in government circles" and his speech was punctuated with applause.

In April 2017, Korwin-Mikke visited the UK again and the University of East London cancelled his meeting on 27 April, an event planned by the Young British Heritage Society. It was stopped thanks to information provided by the 'NEVER AGAIN' Association, the Polish anti-racist group that has monitored the far right since the mid-1990s.

Korwin-Mikke's other meetings in the UK went ahead, organised by the UK branch of his political party called "Freedom". The "Freedom" party is allied with UKIP and it maintains a high level of activity in the UK. It is one of several Polish far right groups targeting the Polish community in Britain that is close to 1 million people.

Extremist activity among Poles in Britain was raised during a discussion hosted by the Demos think-tank and the Ebert Foundation in London on 23 May this year.

The time is ripe for addressing the current surge of far-right activity among the younger generation of the UK Poles, the 'NEVER AGAIN' Association is eager to address the challenge together with its British sister group HOPE not hate.



Janusz Korwin-Mikke MEP, Polish far right leader active among the Polish community in the UK