

“The American Trojan Horse”

Belarusian propaganda on Karol Nawrocki’s victory in the Polish
presidential election

Information and analytical review

PREFACE

On June 1, 2025, Karol Nawrocki, a historian, president of the Institute of National Remembrance, and a member of the opposition Law and Justice party, won the second round of the presidential election in Poland by a narrow margin. The Belarusian authorities and state-controlled media actively discussed the election and the candidates’ statements. The Lukashenka regime’s close attention to developments in the neighboring country is not only due to Poland’s geographical proximity, the long shared border, and close historical ties, but also to the Polish government’s decisive and firm policy toward Belarus today. Poland initiates and supports EU sanctions and restrictions against Belarus and its leadership in connection with the violent suppression of peaceful protests in 2020, the “migration crisis” on the Polish-Belarusian border, and Belarus’s complicity in Russia’s full-scale armed invasion of Ukraine. Poland has also become a refuge for tens of thousands of Belarusian political emigrants, supports the democratic forces of Belarus, and actively advocates for the release of Belarusian political prisoners.

iSANS has analyzed the “expectations” of Lukashenka’s propagandists from Nawrocki’s victory in the presidential election. Statements and quotes were divided into topics related to Polish domestic policy, the EU, Polish-Ukrainian and Polish-Belarusian relations.

General goals of Belarusian propaganda during the election period

The analysis of media statements shows that propagandists aimed not as much to objectively cover the presidential election in Poland as to discredit it as much as possible in the eyes of the Belarusian audience. However, this applies not only to this particular election, but to any other election held in Western countries and covered by the Belarusian state media. A more “lofty” goal can also be seen in numerous comments: to sow distrust in the entire democratic electoral process in the West. The result of this manipulation is noted, for example, by the propaganda outlet Minskaya Prawdа.

Andrei Lazutkin:

“Belarusians are so overwhelmed by negative news about the elections in Europe that it is unclear whether democracy there is completely dead or just barely hanging on. The answer to this question was given from the campaign in Poland. After Trump’s deputy J.D. Vance arrived in Munich and told Europeans how to live, the EU prickled like a hedgehog and decided, on the contrary, to conduct the elections as dirty as possible and in its own interests, ignoring Vance.” ([Minskaya Prawdа](#), 04.06.2025)

In addition to “dirty,” state-controlled media used epithets such as “insignificant,” “caricatured,” and “manipulative” to describe the Polish election. They accused the European Union, the U.S., and other external players of interfering and financing the candidates’ election campaigns.

“On the election day, about a hundred violations were recorded, ranging from illegal campaigning to incorrectly sealed ballot boxes. The election campaign itself was so scandalous that it was heard overseas.” ([STV](#), 02.06.2025)

With regard to the candidates who made it to the second round – Rafal Trzaskowski and Karol Nawrocki – it was claimed that neither of them meets the demands of Belarusians, that both lack independence and autonomy, and that they travel to Washington and Brussels to bow down to their masters. Trzaskowski was labeled a “Brussels puppet” by the propaganda because of his commitment to values of the European Union, while Nawrocki was called a “Trumpist” because of his close ties to the U.S. president’s administration.

“Both candidates are following the same line. Trzaskowski repeats certain statements made by Tusk and Ursula von der Leyen. Nawrocki repeats Trump.” ([Piotr Piatrowski](#), [BelTA](#), 18.05.2025).

“The ‘liberal’ Trzaskowski and the ‘right-wing’ Nawrocki met in the ring. I deliberately put both terms in quotation marks. For there have been no true liberals in the West for a long time. They suppress freedoms, silence dissent, destroy those who disagree with them, and build an absolute totalitarian utopia. A true liberal, in the classical sense, in the

spirit of genuine freedom, is Lukashenka.” (Ryhor Azaronak, [Minskaya Prauda](#), 02.06.2025)

On the eve of the second round, pro-government “political analyst” Aliaksei Dzermant claimed that both candidates had “[broken all records in terms of degradation](#).” In his opinion, “the possibilities for Trumpists in Eastern Europe are limited,” since “Brussels [has a firm grip on the region](#), as evidenced by the victory of Nicusor Dan in Romania.”

“If Americans do not seriously intervene in the situation, the same thing could happen in Poland [*as in Romania*], and the candidate from the Euro-gays will win,” Dzermant [concludes](#).

Anton Papou, in an article for the newspaper *SB. Belarus Segodnya*, also predicted a “Romanian scenario”:

“We cannot rule out the possibility of increased external interference and even the launch of a Romanian scenario, since Poland is a tempting target for the EU and democrats from across the Atlantic due to its geographical location and political system, which is already occupied by the West.” ([SB. Belarus Segodnya](#), 28.05.2025)

Aliaksandr Shpakouski:

“If we consider Poland, there is a stable anti-Belarusian consensus among the main candidates for the presidency. Therefore, we do not support anyone there, but simply note the dirty, rather caricatured nature of the ongoing election.” ([Shpakovskiy. Po sushchestvu](#), 31.05.2025)

SECOND ROUND. NAWROCKI'S VICTORY

Poland

Immediately after the results of the vote were announced, state media began to denigrate Nawrocki, portraying him as a “populist” who had won the hearts of the “blue-collar workers” – the simplest and least educated class of employees, workers, and farmers.

“There is a clear division: Trzaskowski is popular among educated city dwellers and entrepreneurs, while Nawrocki is popular among peasants and poorly educated Poles. This means that the Soros liberal model, which the Polish government has adopted, no longer works, and the lower classes, which European authorities have mercilessly kicked around in recent years, are finally becoming a decisive force capable of changing politicians in power.” ([Zheltiye Slivy](#), 02.06.2025)

Pro-government commentator and dean of the journalism faculty at BSU Aliaksei Bialiayeu hints at Nawrocki’s lack of independence, basically calling him a Washington protege:

“Essentially, everyone understands that this is a kind of American Trojan horse. It was done so that Poland could knock Germany off its pedestal, act as an instigator of constant quarrels, disputes with Russia, prevent Europe from establishing normal relations with its eastern partner. As we can see, this has a negative impact on the economic situation of the European Union, which is beneficial to the U.S.” ([SB. Belarus Segodnya](#), 02.06.2025)

“Once again, the choice was not made in favor of Poland: **instead of national policy, there is external governance.** [...] The country is on the verge of a split: the president and the government are pulling in different directions. A political crisis is only a matter of time. The EU has lost this game.” ([Minskaya Pravda](#), 02.06.2025)

“What a misfortune! The Polish government is torn between Washington and Brussels. [New] President Nawrocki is leaning towards Washington, while Prime Minister Tusk – towards Brussels. And Polish interests are somewhere far away.” ([Minskaya Pravda](#), 02.06.2025)

Belarus and Russia

Propagandists also do not expect anything good from the new Polish president with regard to Belarus and its union with Russia. According to most channels, Nawrocki will continue to promote the “anti-Russian” line of his predecessor Andrzej Duda and is not interested in improving Polish-Belarusian relations.

Aliaksei Bialiayeu:

“Nawrocki is a man with strong anti-communist, anti-Russian, I would even say Russophobic views. He was involved in the complete demolition of monuments to Soviet soldiers in Poland. Given this background, it is clear that this candidate does not represent anything good for Belarus, for example.”

“For us, Nawrocki was and remains an ideological enemy. His position is to destroy any memory that Poland once had good relations with the Soviet Union. [...] It is clear that ideologically we are completely at odds with such a comrade.” ([SB. Belarus Segodnya](#), 02.06.2025)

Deputy and propagandist Aleh Haidukevich:

“[Nawrocki is] a Russophobe, a Belarusophobe, hates Russia, a man who will do nothing good for the development of relations between our countries. A strong Poland, and indeed a strong Europe, can only be strong if it has good relations with Belarus and Russia. Therefore, Poland's aggressive policy will continue.” ([ZhS Premium](#), 02.06.2025)

“Who became the new Duda in Poland is not that important. For us, it's [all the same].” ([ZhS Premium](#), 02.06.2025)

“Belarusians absolutely do not care who won. Russophobia and saber rattling along the borders will continue, and there is no reason to expect a warming of relations between the countries.” ([ZhS Premium](#), 02.06.2025)

The ZhS Premium channel cited here, which is linked to the security services, [makes](#) a grim pun on the outgoing president's surname:

“Polish presidents change, but they all dance to the same tune.” [*“To dance to someone's flute (tune)” – an expression meaning to obey or follow someone's orders (a wordplay referring to the Polish president's name ‘Duda’, which sounds like ‘flute’ (‘duda’) in Russian)*]

The only positive aspect of the election, according to propagandists, is its outcome. According to vote counts, Nawrocki beat Trzaskowski by a narrow margin (50.89% to 49.11%), which, according to Lukashenka's ideologues, indicates polarization and a lack of unity in Polish society. And that is good for Belarus.

“For us, the result [*of the Polish election*] is not bad. The ruling coalition did not come together. [...] It is better for us when Pany [*a derogatory term for Poles*] tear each other's [*hair*] out.” (Ryhor Azaronak, [Minskaya Prawdą](#), 02.06.2025)

“On the positive side, the Polish elite is now completely divided and will fight among themselves.” (Aleh Haidukevich, [ZhS Premium](#), 02.06.2025)

Belarus's democratic forces

The propaganda used Karol Nawrocki's election to make another attempt to intimidate Belarusians living in Poland who disagree with the regime. The main line is that the new right-wing populist president will tighten migration policy, including towards Belarusian political refugees.

“[*Nervousness*] can be observed in migrant chat rooms following Nawrocki's victory. Many are wondering how to return [*to Belarus*] because the candidate chosen is too crazy.” ([ZhS Premium](#), 04.06.2025)

“*Those Zmahars who fled to Poland in search of a better life had better watch their backs – who knows how Pany will react to them.*” ([ZhS Premium](#), 02.06.2025)

Ukraine

Belarusian ideologues are convinced that Nawrocki's election as president does not bode well for Ukraine. They predict a cooling of relations between Kyiv and Warsaw, a reduction in military and financial aid, and a tougher policy towards Ukrainian refugees.

Aliaksei Bialiayeu:

"[Nawrocki] is quite tough towards Ukraine. For example, he would consider it normal to constantly mention the Volyn massacre, which is a source of tension in Polish-Ukrainian relations. He also does not feel much reverence towards Ukrainian refugees. Therefore, I think that Poland's Ukrainian neighbors should prepare for the fact that the new president will take a position on gradually loosening the supposedly friendly embrace and reducing support for Ukrainian refugees in Poland." ([SB. Belarus Segodnya](#), 02.06.2025)

CONCLUSION

Belarusian propaganda is negative and distrustful of Karol Nawrocki, who won the presidential election in Poland. It does not associate him with hopes for improved relations between the two countries and predicts another round of pressure on Minsk. Lukashenka's media portray Nawrocki as an "independent," "scandalous" populist, a "Trumpist" who takes orders from the U.S. president, and who was elected by the least educated and most conservative class of Polish workers and farmers. The election itself is traditionally described by propagandists as "dirty" and "corrupt."

However, any elections in Western countries are covered in a similarly negative and critical manner in Belarus. The efforts of channels loyal to the regime are not only aimed at discrediting a particular candidate in the eyes of the population, but also at discrediting the electoral process itself as the foundation of Western democracy. (The exception is Donald Trump, whose actions toward the Kremlin in the first three months of his presidency exceeded even the most optimistic expectations of the pro-Kremlin media).

Courtier commentators have only faint hopes for possible changes in Polish migration policy, where, in their opinion, the new president may take steps towards tightening restrictions. And then, as propagandists dream, Belarusian political emigrants seeking asylum in Poland will have a hard time.

Nawrocki himself has not yet made any clear and significant statements about the Belarusian regime. But it is precisely in his silence that independent observers see a bad sign. For example, Roman Imielski, deputy editor-in-chief of the Polish newspaper *Gazeta Wyborcza*, said in an [interview](#) with the Belarusian media outlet *Zerkalo* that it was worrying that the new Polish president had never once "directly called Aliaksandr Lukashenka a dictator" during the election campaign.