



RAFTO

Timeline constitutional reforms in Poland

October 2015 :

- PiS, wins Poland's parliamentary election with a big majority.

December 2015:

- A legislative amendment give the PiS-dominated parliament the right to choose replacements for five constitutional court judges.
- The head of the court refuses to acknowledge the new appointments saying they are illegal and not allowed to participate in judgments.
- PiS introduces legislation that could allow it to remove the head of the Constitutional Tribunal but the tribunal rejects it as unconstitutional.
- The president signs legislation that forces the head of the Constitutional Court to include the five judges chosen by the PiS-controlled parliament in decision-making.

January 2016:

- The European Union launches an unprecedented inquiry under its new Rule of Law Framework into whether Poland's government has breached the EU's democratic standards by taking greater control of the judiciary and public media.

March 2016

- The functions of justice minister and prosecutor-general are merged, giving justice minister (Zbigniew Ziobro) direct oversight over all prosecutors.

June 2016

- New media law allows government to appoint heads of Public TV and radio.



RAFTO

July 2016 :

- Parliament eases some restrictions on the Constitutional Tribunal in a move the government says addresses concerns that it has undermined the rule of law. The opposition calls the changes insufficient.

December 2016 :

- The term of Constitutional Tribunal president Andrzej Rzeplinski expires. PiS-nominated judge Julia Przylebska is appointed as the new chief.

July 2017:

- President (Duda) vetoes legislation overhauling the Supreme Court and the National Council of the Judiciary. Signs legislation giving the justice minister the power to hire and fire the heads of courts of general jurisdiction.
- European Commission launches an infringement procedure against Poland over legislation giving the justice minister more control over judges.

December 2017:

- President Duda signs into law an overhaul of the Supreme Court. The EU launches action against Poland under Article 7 of the 2009 Lisbon Treaty on the same day. On 20 December 2017, the Commission made a fourth recommendation and referred Poland to the [European Court of Justice](#) for "breach of EU law", stating,^[1]
- Over a period of two years, the Polish authorities have adopted more than 13 laws affecting the entire structure of the justice system in Poland, impacting the Constitutional Tribunal, Supreme Court, ordinary courts, National Council for the Judiciary, prosecution service and National School of Judiciary. The common pattern is that the executive and legislative branches have been systematically enabled to politically interfere in the composition, powers, administration and functioning of the judicial branch. [European Commission](#)

March 2018 :

- Under new rules, the PiS-dominated parliament selects a new National Council of the Judiciary, a body that advises on the nominations of judges, after the mandate of the previous one was terminated early. The previous council was appointed mostly by judges, not by parliament.
- New laws make it an offence to attribute Nazi atrocities to the Polish state



RAFTO
July 2018 :

- The European Commission opens fresh legal case against Poland on Monday over changes to the Supreme Court.
- New law instructs all judges over the age of 65 to retire, moving 27 of 27 judges off the Supreme Court, including its chief justice Malgorzata Gersdorf whose term onlu expires in 2020.