

Kamil Aksiuto, Report from the ISSEI 2016 Conference (11–15 July 2016, Łódź, Poland)

On 11–15 July 2016, the Department of British and Commonwealth Studies of the University of Łódź held the 15th conference of the International Society for the Study of European Ideas (ISSEI). Previous ISSEI conferences took place in: the Netherlands, Belgium, Denmark, Austria, Israel, Norway, the United Kingdom, Spain, Malta, Finland, Turkey, Cyprus, Portugal.

ISSEI conferences offer a forum for academics from different countries, backgrounds and disciplines to present the results of their work and to keep track of the new intellectual trends and research in areas of study other than their own. Furthermore, they enable participants to survey the new developments in the current-day Europe, where the forces of nationalism, unification, globalism, and the impact of a rapidly changing world shape and reshape academic practices. ISSEI conferences are held every two years and so far their main themes included issues such as: “Turning Points in History”, “European Nationalism”, “European Integration and the European Mind”, “Twentieth Century European Narratives: Tradition and Innovation”, “The Narrative of Modernity: The Co-existence of Differences”, “The European Mind: Narrative and Identity, Images of Europe: Past, Present, Future”. The central theme of the 15th conference in Łódź was: “What’s *New* in the New Europe? Redefining Culture, Politics, Identity”.

Scholars from the Department of Political Movements of the Maria Curie-Skłodowska University regularly participate in the ISSEI events. This time, the Head of the Department, Professor Maria Marczevska-Rytke chaired a conference workshop titled “Direct Democracy in Central and Eastern Europe after 1989” and presented a paper “National Referendum in Poland after 1989”. Other employees of the Department of Political Movements also contributed to the workshop. They presented the following papers: Professor Wojciech Zięta – “National Referendum as an Example for Legitimizing Authoritarian Rule (the Case of the Republic of Belarus after 1991)”, Marta Drabczuk, Ph.D. – “Referendum in Ukraine”, Dorota Maj, Ph.D. – “Local Referendums in Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia: A Comparative Study”, Marcin Pomarański, Ph.D. – “National Referendums in Hungary and Albania. The Comparative Perspective”.

