

Lech Wałęsa to Address World News Media Congress in Kraków.

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Lech Wałęsa, former President of Poland and Nobel Laureate, will be among 100 speakers to address media leaders at the World News Media Congress (WNMC25) in Kraków, Poland, from 4 to 6 May.

the three-day [World News Media Congress](#) organised by the World Association of News Publishers (WAN-IFRA) in partnership with [Agora SA](#), publisher of Gazeta Wyborcza, will bring together participants from over 60 countries to examine how news organisations are innovating and adapting in the face of relentless technological changes, political pressures, and financial challenges, while upholding independent journalism.

Wałęsa, as the leader of the pro-democracy Solidarity movement, played a key role in toppling communism in Poland in 1989, helping to pave the way for the end of the Cold War. Still an active voice in democracy and geopolitics, he will share his insights in an on-stage interview in the opening ceremony of the Congress.

Evolving Attitudes to Journalism

"We face a crucial challenge: understanding the role of media companies in a changing world. Shifting views on journalism make our work more important than ever. We must protect journalism and democracy," writes Ladina Heimgartner, WAN-IFRA President, in her invitation to media leaders.

With declining trust in journalism and increasing threats to press freedom, WNMC25 will focus on restoring credibility, protecting independent reporting, and ensuring financial sustainability, as the programme features a plethora of best-practice cases.

Bartosz Hojka, CEO of Agora, highlighted the significance of Poland hosting this year's Congress: *"I am extremely pleased that WAN-IFRA distinguishes Poland among its global network of members and partners and has given Agora the privilege to host the World News Media Congress. This recognizes the stand taken by Poland's independent press in confronting populism and authoritarian regimes."*

Key Topics

With more than 800 participants expected, [WNMC25](#) will feature three main conference tracks with over 100 speakers:

- Media Leaders' Summit – For CEOs, publishers, and executives shaping the future of media.
- Editors' Summit – A forum for newsroom leaders focused on trust, audience engagement, and AI.
- Digital Revenue Summit – Exploring recent developments in the digital news business.

Featured Speakers

- **Ladina Heimgartner**, Head Media & CEO Ringier Medien Schweiz
- **Marty Baron**, retired Executive Editor, The Washington Post
- **Louis Dreyfus**, President & CEO, Le Monde, France
- **Rainer Esser**, CEO, Die Zeit, Germany
- **Bartosz Hojka**, CEO Agora SA
- **Catherine So**, CEO, South China Morning Post, Hong Kong
- **Julia Angwin**, Journalist & Founder, Proof News, USA
- **Zach Seward**, Editorial Director of AI Initiatives, The New York Times, USA
- **Rupa Jha**, CEO and Co-Founder, Collective Newsroom, India
- **Lisa Irenius**, Editor in Chief, Svenska Dagbladet, Sweden

Media:



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- **Nikita Roy**, Podcast Host, Newsroom Robots, USA
- **Ezra Eeman**, AI Expert & Director of Strategy & Innovation, NPO, Netherlands
- **Mariah Craddick**, Executive Director of Product, The Atlantic, USA
- **Styli Charalambous**, CEO, Daily Maverick, South Africa
- **Mariam Mammen Mathew**, CEO, Manorama Online, India
- **Emily Withrow**, VP of Product and Head of Subscriber Experiences, The New York Times, USA

Golden Pen of Freedom Award

The Congress will also present the 2025 [Golden Pen of Freedom](#), recognizing individuals or groups who have made significant contributions to press freedom. Past recipients include Gazeta Wyborcza (Poland), Jimmy Lai & Apple Daily (Hong Kong), Jamal Khashoggi (Saudi Arabia), and Maria Ressa (Philippines).

Why Kraków?

Kraków, with its history of independent journalism and free expression, provides a relevant setting for discussions on the future of the media. Poland's press continues to adapt to political and economic shifts, making it an important location for this year's Congress.

WNMC25 will feature over 100 speakers. See Who's coming:

Contact and Inquiries

For more information, please contact:
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? [Programme and Registration](#)

About

[WAN-IFRA](#), the World Association of News Publishers, is the global organisation of the world's press, comprising 3,000 news publishers and technology companies and 60 national publishers' associations representing 18,000 publications in 120 countries. With a mission to protect the rights of journalists and publishers around the world to operate independent media, WAN-IFRA provides its members with expertise and services to innovate and prosper in a digital world and perform their crucial role in society. The World Editors Forum is its network for editors. wan-ifra.org

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