

# GENDER AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN RURAL POLAND: THE CASE OF VILLAGE REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 30 1:30p.m. – 3:00p.m.  
International Center Room 201

Dr. Ilona Matysiak will analyze the increasing participation of women in the local government in rural areas in Poland, focusing on the traditional position of village representative (sołtys). The share of women among village representatives in Poland has increased significantly in recent decades, from only 0.8% in 1958 to currently exceeding 35.0% on the national level.

What mechanisms lie behind this change: What are its reasons? Do female village representatives differ from their male colleagues in their ideas and initiatives? Does it mean that rural women in Poland actually gained better access to power and local decision-making processes? The presentation is based on a recent qualitative empirical study conducted in rural areas of 10 municipalities located throughout Poland.



Center for Gender  
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Dr. Ilona Matysiak holds a PhD in sociology and works as assistant professor at Maria Grzegorzewska University in Warsaw, Poland. She is also a member of the Center of Interdisciplinary Gender Studies at the Robert B. Zajonc Institute for Social Studies, University of Warsaw. Currently, she is a post-doc Fulbright scholar at the Institute for Social Research (ISR) at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.