



WE TAKE  
**AIR**  
UNDER OUR  
**WINGS**

## **Must Urban Economic Development Come at the Expense of the Environment?**

An Oxford Debate on the Economy and the Environment

 EU  
**GREEN  
WEEK**



Silesian  
Voivodeship



Integrated LIFE project "Silesia. Blue Sky Restored". Comprehensive implementation of the Air Quality Plan for the Silesian Voivodeship. LIFE20 IPB/PL/000007 - LIFE-IP AQP-SILESIA-SKY

# “Must Urban Economic Development Come at the Expense of the Environment?”

## An Oxford Debate on the Economy and the Environment



**When:** 9 June 2026, 10:00 – 15:00

**Where:** Kino na Starówce Żory, Tadeusza Kościuszki 3, 44-240 Żory

**Host:** Joanna Szerzyńska-Grabowska, eco-manager of the Żory Municipality

*The initiative is an official EU Green Week Partner Event.*

Does economic development in cities necessarily come at the expense of the environment? This question will form the central theme of an Oxford-style debate prepared for secondary school students in Żory. The event will be one of the key elements of the local celebrations of World Environment Day and will create a space for meaningful discussion among young people about the challenges faced by modern cities.

Representatives of secondary schools in Żory, including general secondary schools and technical schools, will participate in the debate. Students, divided into teams supporting and opposing the proposed thesis, will present arguments addressing the relationship between economic growth and environmental protection. The Oxford-style debate format will allow participants to develop critical thinking skills, analyse social and environmental issues and conduct evidence-based discussions.

The thematic scope of the debate will cover key issues related to sustainable urban development. Participants will address topics such as climate change and urban adaptation to new environmental conditions, the energy transition and improved energy efficiency of buildings, the development of environmentally friendly transport systems, waste management and the principles of the circular economy. The discussion will also highlight the impact of environmental quality on public health and on the quality of life in cities.

The debate has both an educational and inspirational character. Its aim is to show young people that economic development and environmental protection do not have to be in conflict. Increasingly, technological innovation, new economic models and informed social choices make it possible to combine urban growth with care for the climate, natural resources and air quality.

The best teams and participating schools will receive vouchers as prizes, symbolically recognising students who engage in discussion about the future of the environment and the economy. The Oxford-style debate in Żory demonstrates that discussions about the future of cities should actively involve the younger generation, who will soon play a key role in shaping economic development and environmental policy.

**The event is organised as part of the project “Silesia. Blue Sky Restored”.**



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