



1 / 2025

Newsletter of the Community of the Students and Teachers of Historical & Social Studies

Newsletter wspólnoty studentów i nauczycieli przedmiotów historycznych i społecznych





HISTORIA I POLITYKA WSPÓŁCZESNA interdyscyplinarne studia nauczycielskie (II stopień)

Gospodarze kierunku:

Wydział Historii oraz Wydział Nauk Politycznych i Dziennikarstwa Uniwersytet im. Adama Mickiewicza, Poznań

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EDITORIAL

EDITORIAL



The Concept of Degree Education "Contemporary History and Politics - Interdisciplinary Teacher Studies" (AMU)



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The idea of a degree education program has been developed with the prestige of the teaching profession and teachers' professional autonomy in mind. The curriculum assumes that teacher studies should prepare for work in schools as well as for conducting research (Social-Historical Approach), especially research into one's own professional practice (Action Research, Participatory Action Research). With heightened awareness, sound knowledge, skills and competences for working in a socially, culturally and ideologically diverse academic and educational environment, our graduates are fully prepared to act responsibly and ethically for the benefit of social-historical education and civil society.

The concept of education in the field of "Contemporary History and Politics..." is distinguished by its close connection between the content, skills and social competences of the students and their proficiency in designing and conducting research, and teaching interdisciplinary school subjects: contemporary history, social studies and civic education.

THE LEARNING OUTCOMES IN THE FIELD ARE DISTRIBUTED AS FOLLOWS:



1. 12 outcomes concern in-depth knowledge of history, politics and contemporary society, as well as the command of the methodology in historical and political science research, including educational knowledge in connection with subject teaching, topped with preparation for the teaching profession;



2. the next 12 outcomes concern skills, with special emphasis placed on research and professional skills, as well as language skills in specialist language, and a selected modern foreign language at B2+ level, coupled with managing team work;



 with social competences in mind, 7 learning outcomes have been written with the emphasis placed on critical assessment of the place and role of researchers and teachers in academic and social life as a result of their knowledge, skills and substantive, interpersonal and social competences in connection with the need for continuous development.



THE PROGRAM PROVIDES EDUCATION IN THREE COMPLEMENTARY AREAS:



1. the subject area concerns in-depth and issue-related knowledge, skills and competences in contemporary history and knowledge of politics and contemporary society;



2. the teaching and teaching area concerns knowledge, skills and professional competences in subject teaching, general teaching, pedagogy and psychology in connection with pedagogical and teaching practices;



3. the third area, research, concerns methodological knowledge and research skills in historical and political science research related to contemporary history, political science and administration, and education in connection with subject teaching.

IN TERMS OF KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND SUBJECT COMPETENCES, THE PROGRAM INCLUDES THE FOLLOWING CLASSES:

- 1. selected issues of contemporary history politics and culture, economy and society;
- 2. contemporary political thought and culture;
- 3. the state and party systems in Poland and Europe after World War II;
- 4. global contemporary political systems;
- 5. the political system of the Third Polish Republic;
- 6. Sovietization of Central and Eastern Europe;
- 7. contemporary international relations;
- 8. mechanisms of social life:
- 9. basic command of law;
- 10. selected issues from the history of the European Community in the 20th and 21st centuries;
- 11. the intercultural nature of the contemporary world; society and civic participation.



THE RESEARCH CURRICULUM INCLUDES:

- 1. 84 hours of research laboratories;
- 2. 60 hours of historical and political science master's seminar;
- 3. the laboratories and seminars are selected by the students from a wide range of teaching offers in semesters 1 and 2;
- 4. the research laboratories and seminars are interconnected in such a way that participation in specific laboratories prepares the students for continued research and completing a diploma thesis as part of seminars conducted in the 2nd year of studies.

By choosing the research path: 3×28 hours of research laboratory and 2×30 hours of seminar, the students are supported by the tutors whose competences are developed as part of training and workshops in academic teaching.

In terms of substantive and teaching-pedagogical preparation, the program combines civic education and the conditions provided for the standard of education in the teaching profession of social studies.

In this respect, the following subjects are planned as provided for in the standard:

- 1. student safety at school;
- 2. voice production;
- 3. basics of teaching;
- 4. basics of pedagogy for teachers;
- 5. basics of psychology for teachers;
- 6. students with special education needs at school;
- 7. teaching contemporary history and social studies;
- 8. psychological and pedagogical laboratories preparing for internships and serving evaluation;
- 9. teaching contemporary history and social studies action research;
- 10. pedagogical and teaching internships: 30 hours of pedagogical and 120 hours of teaching internships carried out in training schools cooperating with the Faculty of History of Adam Mickiewicz University on a permanent basis.



The strengths & weaknesses of the program after two years of operation

Strengths	Weaknesses
pedagogical and teaching education implemented as action- based research	a rigid framework of degree education resulting from the Polish and European Education Framework
engaging the students and their ability to work in teams	limited organizational and financial possibilities for external cooperation
practice supported by theoretical knowledge	intensive two-year teacher training program
small student groups	students work professionally during their studies
good cooperation with training schools	student internships take place in parallel with classes at the university

We are about to finish the first cycle of studies in the subject in question. We are therefore preparing for an internal evaluation of the program. In the meantime, a team of academic teachers is improving their teaching skills in Action Learning and Tutoring. We are expecting a study visit and a search for academic and teaching partners in Poland: the Center for Civic Education and Maynooth University (Ireland) where, thanks to Prof. Hana Červinková, we are improving our competences in Action Based Learning.



CIVIC EDUCATION CIVIL SOCIETY: RESEARCH AND CONTEXTS

CIVIC EDUCATION – CIVIL SOCIETY: RESEARCH AND CONTEXTS



Social Circulation of Academic Knowledge (SOWA)



AGATA SKÓRZYŃSKA - ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR (DR HAB.), works at the Institute of Cultural Studies at Adam Mickiewicz University (AMU, Poznań, Poland). She was the Institute's director between 2020 and 2024. She is member of the Committee on Cultural Studies of the Polish Academy of Sciences. She was also vice-president of the Polish Cultural Studies Association. She has authored a book "Praxis. An Exercise in Engaging Cultural Studies" (Peter Lang, 2024). She has co-authored, among others, "Cultural urban studies. Introduction" (Warsaw 2014), and "Diagnosis in culture" (Warsaw 2015). She has co-founded the Center for Educational Practices in Poznań and has established the Very Young Culture – a national program for cultural education in Poland. Currently, she has co-founded the nationwide research network Social Spread of Academic Knowledge (SOWA) and is leading a research project devoted to the practices of disseminating knowledge in humanities and social sciences. She conducts research into urban studies and critical cultural studies, and is interested in the philosophy of praxis, participatory action research methodology, cultural animation, and education.

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The SOWA Team is a nationwide research team, bringing together researchers from five universities in Poland: Poznań, Warsaw, Wrocław, Katowice and Toruń. The team includes 14 researchers representing cultural studies, philosophy, social anthropology and sociology. In 2020, we launched a research project "Social circulation of knowledge in the practices of academic humanities", under the auspices of the National Science Centre. The project revolved around the social role of academic knowledge represented by humanities and social sciences in the conditions of polycrisis: erosion of the democratic public sphere, the pandemic crisis, the climate crisis, the war in Europe and the subsequent crises of neoliberal capitalism. We also touch upon the crisis of today's university as a public institution operating in radical neo-liberalization and ideological control, and about the internal causes of the decline in reliance on academic knowledge and expertise.



ABOUT THE PROJECT/OBJECTIVES

The "SOWA" is the first research project in Poland dedicated to the social impact of humanities which combines theoretical-conceptual and critical-emancipatory goals with empirical research. Inspired by Grounded Theory, we want to propose a new concept of circulation knowledge, derived from the practical experiences of researchers and academic teachers as well as critical analyses of the institutional and political contexts of university operations.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

One of the starting points is the tradition of Polish cultural studies, within which academic education and teaching are studied as a field of culture, and academic changes are explained in connection with the changes in the global state of culture and social life.

We have adopted the perspective of Critical University Studies (CUS), paying attention to the institutional, economic and political transformations that affect the state of universities and define barriers to everyday research and educational practice.



We have drawn inspiration from the Science and Technology Studies and the Actor-Network Theory to explain how knowledge contributed by practitioners of humanities and social sciences functions in the network of relationships of various agents of social life.

We have critically adapted Jürgen Habermas' concept of cognitive interests to ponder how universities can pursue emancipatory cognitive interests today.

THE METHODOLOGY AND THE COURSE OF RESEARCH

We have conducted qualitative research using mixed methods to achieve both empirical and theoretical outcomes.

- 1. Autoethnography serves to achieve research goals (avoiding assumptions) and ethical goals (getting closer to the interlocutors' experience);
- 2. IDIs: we have conducted almost 90 in-depth interviews with researchers representing humanities and social sciences in six academic centers in the country. The questions revolve around real experiences and practices rather than the requirements of the systems for evaluating scholarly and teaching activities;
- 3. Participatory Action Research: we work through continued dialogue with the practitioners from the academia and their collaborators with various social backgrounds;
- 4. Case studies: we look for experiences of practitioners in humanities and social sciences who, by escaping the limitations of the institutional system, pursue the emancipatory goals of research and academic teaching.

SOME CONCLUSIONS

- 1. The findings to date show that the progressive neo-liberalization of universities in Poland, promoted by the existing systems of scholarly evaluation (strongly inspired by the British REF) and teaching, as well as institutional reforms, have an increasingly negative impact on the practices of social dissemination of knowledge, contributing to the crisis of trust in knowledge based on scholarly/academic expertise;
- 2. One of the problems is the adoption of a reductive vision of the social impact of science, referred to as the "bullet model". It assumes a vision of a one-way relationship between academic knowledge and the so-called social environment of the university, and separates the social impact of science from the daily cooperation between researchers and academic teachers with various social groups;



- 3. The problem results from a false image of research and educational work, and a simplified model of an academic career, rewarding only individual scholarly achievements based on publications and ignoring collaborative relationships, teamwork and social dialogue;
- 4. According to our interlocutors, one of the key areas of cooperation and social influence is academic teaching and everyday work with students and graduates. They tend to initiate networks of relationships and actively stimulate knowledge flows as they work in various social environments on a daily basis. They are most often our partners and mediators with public institutions, the third sector organizations, public administration, and various professional environments;
- 5. In the existing system of evaluation of science and teaching and in the model of an academic career, now promoted in Poland, cooperation with students and graduates has been put on the back burner. All forms of daily involvement of academics in social cooperation have been ignored and not supported by their own academic institutions. Only highly indexed publications and high-budget research grants are rewarded. Unfortunately, this prevents the spread of knowledge, limiting academic knowledge only to the closed environment of scholarly journals and financing institutions. Ironically, it reduces rather than expands its social impact.

CIVIC EDUCATION – CIVIL SOCIETY: RESEARCH AND CONTEXTS



Education and Civil Society in Poland: the Systemic Contexts



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CIVIC EDUCATION – CIVIL SOCIETY: RESEARCH AND CONTEXTS



Education and Civil Society in Poland: the Systemic Contexts



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The introduction of a new subject, *History and the Present (HiT)* in 2022 to the Polish education system marked a significant change in historical and civic education, impacting various levels of secondary schools. The new subject partially replaced the previous Civic Education, expanding historical content to include contemporary social and political issues. The implementation of HiT sparked off a wider debate regarding its curriculum, teaching methods, and educational tools, including the textbooks.

The *History and the Present* curriculum was differentiated based on the type of school, resulting in varied approaches to civic education. In general, in secondary schools and technical schools, the content focuses on a critical analysis, interpretation of political and social processes, and reflection on contemporary challenges. In vocational schools, the program takes a more practical approach, emphasizing fundamental principles of being a member of a society and democratic institutions.

The textbook, authored by Wojciech Roszkowski, stirred up controversy, facing criticism for its ideological bias, lack of objectivity, and a selective presentation of facts. This criticism triggered off extensive discussions about the quality of educational materials in the context of shaping students' civic attitudes.

In response to these changes and the emerging issues in civic education, new academic and educational initiatives were launched, including the *History and Contemporary Politics – Interdisciplinary Teacher Studies* program. The introduction of HiT and its consequences highlighted the need for broader reflection on civic education, the role of social organizations, and the academic responsibility in shaping reliable knowledge about historical processes and contemporary political challenges.

Additionally, following the changes introduced by the authorities to the curriculum, non-governmental organizations (the third sector) began to play a significant role in civic education. The NGOs undertook actions to fill the gaps resulting from the potential ideologization of teaching. Their activities allowed for the promotion of pluralism and the provision of alternative sources of knowledge, which contributed to shaping an informed civic attitude among young people.

Alternative programs for teaching the subject were prepared by the third sector organizations focused on non-formal education, also in close cooperation with the academic community. This resulted from the needs of teachers and the market. The Ministry did not suggest an alternative solution. In 2022, after the changes were introduced, out of 2,336 schools tested by Wolna Szkoła, only 2% declared that they would work with Prof. Roszkowski's textbook. Activities were consolidated and support mechanisms were developed.



In Poland, a coalition of more than 66 organizations has been working since 2020 for the public school system to improve education (Network of Social Organizations). The aim is to promote and exchange good practices, monitor the condition of education and develop changes at the systemic level, and develop solutions for local governments and schools. The coalition works towards a modern, civic and democratic school. In 2023, the Civic Pact for Education was established and signed by 78 NGOs, 3 teachers' organizations and 5 local governments. The document contains key priority areas for the sustainable improvement of education in Poland. The Civil Pact for Education was the first comprehensive document that described the most important areas of education in need of improvement, and recommended directions for change.

During the period of a conservative approach to civic education, the teaching materials were developed in the form of comprehensive solutions, including textbooks. These are: **Obywatelski HiT** (Civic HiT), **Cyfrowy HiT** (Digital HiT), **Centrum Edukacji Obywatelskiej** (Civic Education Center), **Otwarta Szkoła** (Open School). How to turn HiT into a hit, **Zintegrowana Platforma Edukacyjna** (Integrated Educational Platform, ZPE), **Historia bez kitu** (History's not a joke), **Towarzystwo Edukacji Obywatelskiej @historie** (Civic Education Society @histories), **Stowarzyszenie 61**. **Mamprawowiedzieć.pl** (Association 61. I have the right to **know.pl**). The concept of civil society appears as a more precise term in the context of the international environment, globalization and historical social movements. The term fits into the context of a particularizing society and corresponds to the modern approach to globalization as a political and social process. Civil society is defined as a positive, multidimensional phenomenon that requires competence in civic participation and activation. It is understood in terms of mechanisms for controlling power and as participation in the decision-making processes.

CIVIC EDUCATION - CIVIL SOCIETY: RESEARCH AND CONTEXTS



Does the Polish school system need civic education? Results of a survey among secondary school students in Poznań



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The fall of the communist system in Poland in 1989 resulted in the democratisation of the state institutions and the transformation of the socio-economic system. As a consequence, a radical change in schools was required which – as was believed at the time – should have been given the opportunity to educate children and young people in the spirit of the needs of a modern civil society. While the change was taking place, it was not at the pace expected at the beginning of the Third Republic.

In the area of civic education, the first symptom of de-communisation was the de-ideologisation of history curricula and the subject that bore various names in the Polish People's Republic: the study of Poland and the contemporary world, civic education, introduction to social studies. After 1989, the subject was renamed social studies and began to be treated (at least on the declarative level) as a place for students to acquire basic knowledge about the state, human rights, the principles of democracy and the modern world. Understandably, it also lost its former indoctrination function and, to a certain extent (or in a certain sense), became an extension of contemporary history.

During the first term of the Law and Justice Party (2005-2007), the idea emerged to discontinue social studies and replace them with patriotic education. Mariusz Menz, the co-author of this text, spoke up at the time, publishing in 2006 in 'Wiadomości Historyczne. A magazine for teachers' an article entitled Does Polish school need civic education? (1). He argued that 'not only is it impossible to eliminate the subject, it should actually not be allowed!'(2). Referring to Józef Tischner's words that 'one can never rule out the democratic end of democracy' and that the difference between democracy and totalitarianism is that 'humans are given totalitarianism even if they do not want it, but humans can only have democracy if they really want it', he stated: 'If we want to be a civil society, we have to educate ourselves to be one. If we want to support democracy, we need to instil its values in schools and show its essence and procedures. If we want to teach patriotism, we need to teach the best kind: civic patriotism' (3). Now, almost 20 years later, the meaning of the statement seems even more obvious than it did back then.

CIVIC EDUCATION AS A NEW SCHOOL SUBJECT

After the collapse of the so-called United Right government, led by Jarosław Kaczyński, the chairman of the Law and Justice party, power was taken over by the centre-left coalition that won the parliamentary elections held on 15 October 2023. This happened with a record turnout of 74.38%, the highest in the history of the Third Republic of Poland.

The Ministry of Education is headed by Barbara Nowacka, a politician of Platforma Obywatelska (Civic Platform) with a leftist history. One of her first decisions was to start working on a concept for a new subject in secondary schools, named *edukacja obywatelska* (civic education).



The regulation introducing civic education into secondary schools was signed on 6 March 2025(3). A week later, on 13 March, Minister Nowacka signed another regulation, this time defining the framework curricula, providing for a total of 3 hours for the subject in secondary schools: two in the second year, and one in the third year (4).

Six general learning objectives have been set for the new subject. These are:

- 1. Understanding of the public life: students should understand the most important social and political phenomena and processes, as well as the principles governing them, and should be able to analyse and evaluate them.
- 2. Understanding and respecting the values and principles of democracy students should understand the basic principles and mechanisms of a democratic state governed by law, including human rights, and be able to relate them to everyday situations.
- 3. Interest in public events and holding their own opinions students should be interested in selected areas of the socio-political reality and, based on values and verified information, be able to express and justify their opinions on public issues.
- 4. Respect for the opinions of others students should understand and respect the perspectives and opinions of others, recognise controversial issues, present their own opinions on different views and seek agreement in dialogue.
- 5. Civic engagement students should identify social problems and look for solutions to them; they should get involved individually or in cooperation with others in activities for the common good or the homeland.
- 6. Influencing public authorities and state-citizen interactions students should be able to handle selected administrative matters and take action in their interactions with the state representatives, understand and employ mechanisms and forms of civic participation(5).

Achieving the above objectives requires a special teaching approach, which is why, in accordance with the core curriculum, civic education consists of two equivalent elements:

- 1. mastery of the material (in terms of knowledge and skills), and
- 2. undertaking at least three practical civic activities chosen by the students from among the sixteen listed by the Regulations.



These include:

- 1. active participation of a student in a debate on a selected social topic; presenting one's opinion, justifying and defending it, as well as engaging in dialogue with people with different views;
- 2. active participation in a meeting with representatives of public authorities, during which the students ask questions within their area of competence;
- 3. active participation in the preparation of the anniversary of an important historical event (not organised as part of the school's activities) or other celebrations;
- 4. expressing and publishing their own opinions on a public issue that is important to the students in the local or school media, while respecting the views of others and the democratic legal system;
- 5. organising a social campaign or fund-raising for a cause chosen by the student who encourages other people or institutions to participate;
- 6. organising a social campaign or fundraising for a cause chosen by the student, in which the student encourages other people or institutions to participate;
- 7. establishing cooperation with a local public institution or social organisation as a volunteer to help it accomplish its statutory objectives, whereby the students should present the effects of their involvement to the class;
- 8. writing a project application for a student budget, local participatory budget or another grant application;
- 9. writing and sending (publishing) a petition, letter or open letter to public authority representatives on a matter important to the student;
- 10. exercising the right to vote in class or school elections, including conducting an election campaign;
- 11. preparing the documents necessary to register an assembly (protest or picket);
- 12. completing an application for an identity card, passport or other document;
- 13. analysing the election programme and campaign of a selected party or candidate;
- 14. participating in public consultations on a selected topic or public hearings, and then forming their own opinion and communicating it to the competent authorities;
- 15. co-organising and conducting a school or street survey on a selected topic and presenting the results;
- 16. conducting and documenting an interview with a witness of recent history (e.g. a veteran) or another important local figure;
- 17. participating in a simulation of a meeting of public authorities or an international organisation (6).



Before undertaking any activity, the student should discuss the topic with the teacher. Each topic should be related to a different level of community (school, local community, Poland, Europe, the world). If the students would like to undertake an activity that is not included in the list above, they may do so with the teacher's consent.

We must admit that the core curriculum for civic education developed in this way will be a real challenge for schools. For the first time, the practical and skills-based side of civic education in a democratic school has been emphasised so strongly. We recognise the influence of the Centre for Citizenship Education (CEO), which has been operating since 1994 and whose role in this area cannot be overestimated. We have had the opportunity to participate in the training offered by Poland's largest educational non-profit organisation on many occasions. We hope that what the CEO has previously been able to achieve on a smaller scale will be successful on a national level (7).

A SURVEY OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN POZNAŃ AND ITS RESULTS

Before civic education becomes a new subject in Polish secondary schools, we have decided to identify three general issues:

- 1. how today's secondary school students rate their civic knowledge;
- 2. what civic awareness they represent, and
- 3. what civic behaviour they demonstrate.

Indirectly, the intention was to diagnose the needs and expectations of young people regarding civic education.

To this end, we selected a school that we considered representative in the sense that it did not belong to the so-called elite schools (according to rankings) and was a large neighbourhood school attended by young people from different social backgrounds. It was one of Poznań's secondary schools. The survey covered 125 students: 71 girls, 43 boys, 11 people who did not specify their gender or indicated it as 'other'. We focused on students who are now in the second grade (107 respondents), and third grade (17). One person indicated being in the fourth grade. This selection was made because civic education would cover second and third graders, i.e. generally 16-18-year-olds, from the 2025/2026 school year.

We conducted the survey online between 3 and 7 March 2025. The students completed the survey anonymously during class (with the teacher present), using the Microsoft Forms application. There were 29 questions, and the average completion time was less than 6 minutes (05:54).



In the survey, we first asked about the assessment of one's own civic knowledge in the scope of the functioning of the state and local government, civic rights and obligations, the electoral system in Poland, human rights and international organisations. The students were to assess their knowledge on a scale of 1-5, where 1 meant very poor knowledge, and 5 - very good knowledge. The secondary school students rated their knowledge as moderate (average grades ranging from 3.04 to 3.66). Their knowledge of human rights was rated the highest (3.66), and knowledge of international organisations the lowest (3.04).

The next questions pertained to civic awareness and trust in democratic institutions and values. In the first case, we asked if young people follow current political and social events, their source of information about public affairs, and if they should get involved in public life. The results showed that 38% of the students regularly follow political events, but a whopping 18% do not do it at all. On the other hand, the main sources of information are social media (41%) and websites (36%), and only 19% get their information from television. The results regarding public involvement of young people were very optimistic – as many as 82% of secondary school students believe that young people should get involved in public life. This bodes well for the future civil society.

On the other hand, we checked the trust in institutions and democratic values by first asking 'How do you rate the fairness of elections in Poland?', to which 24% answered 'lowly', and 6% 'very lowly'. This means that as many as 30% of young people have doubts about the fairness of elections in Poland (only 1% rate them very highly, 21% highly, while 48% are neutral).

Then we asked the respondents to rate their trust in the government, parliament, local government, schools, NGOs and the media. We used a scale of 1-5, where 1 means no trust and 5 means complete trust. The results were not very optimistic. The students expressed very low confidence in the government (2.29) and parliament (2.36), while they rated the local government (2.79) and NGOs (2.69) slightly better. School and the media also do not earn much trust: 2.53 and 2.54, respectively.

The subsequent questions related to attitudes towards democracy and civic attitudes. It is encouraging that as many as 82% of young people plan to vote in the elections, and 78% consider voting to be an obligation. The vast majority agree or partially agree with the statement: 'My vote and actions can make a difference in society.' That is the opinion of 91% of the respondents.

We were very curious to see the replies to the question: "To what extent do you agree with the following statement: democracy should be replaced by a more autocratic system"?. We had a pleasant surprise, as only 2% of the respondents agreed with this statement, and 61% disagreed. However, it should be noted that more than a third of the respondents (36%) expressed partial support for this statement (they chose the answer 'I partially agree').



As for civic attitudes, 72% of the students had experience in volunteering or social actions, which shows that young people eagerly get involved in social activities. The level of involvement in the work of the school council is relatively low, with only 22% of the students participating.

When asked 'What measures can boost young people's involvement in social life?', the respondents most often answered 'actions organised by schools and student governments' (29.6%), 'better information about opportunities for involvement' (23%) and 'greater presence of civic topics in the media' (22.4%). It is surprising that only 12% chose the answer 'more civic education at school'. This result corresponds to the answer to another question: 'Do you think that schools should have a subject dedicated to civic education?'. The majority (40%) have no opinion on the subject, and 26% are against it. On the other hand, 34% of the respondents, i.e. every third person, were in favour of the new subject. It can be assumed that this result is related to the poor knowledge among students about the programme of this subject. However, this should not come as a surprise.

The young people had an opportunity to express their opinions on the preferred content of civic education classes and to choose the most interesting forms of them.

In terms of the content, the rights and obligations of citizens (89 mentions) and human rights (85) were the most frequently reported. Young people are also interested in learning about political systems and the functioning of the state (76), the media and disinformation (72), and elections and self-government (67). The topic of social activity and volunteering is the least popular (41).

The forms of civic education considered the most interesting by young people included simulations and educational games (27%), and discussions and debates (26%). Workshops and projects were chosen by 21%, and 20% would like to attend meetings with experts. These expectations should not come as a surprise, as 74% answered 'no' to the question 'Have you ever participated in workshops, debates or classes related to civic education?'.

We will wrap up by presenting the results regarding the civic and social activity of young people in social media. When asked 'Do you use social media to express your civic views?', 75% of the respondents answered 'no'. On the other hand, when asked 'Have you ever signed an online petition on an issue that is important to you?', 40% answered positively, which is a good result. And finally, to the question 'How do you assess the impact of the internet on involving young people in civic affairs?,' the results were as follows: 23% gave a positive rating, 14% a negative rating, 48% were neutral, and 14% had no opinion.



SURVEY RESULTS AND SUMMARY

The following conclusions can be drawn from the survey results:

- 1. Secondary school students' civic knowledge is average or even poor in their opinion, but the willingness to get involved in public life is heightened.
- 2. Young people have very little trust in state institutions, but more in social organisations and local governments. Almost every third secondary school student has doubts about the fairness of elections in Poland.
- 3. The students declare considerable willingness to vote in the future, but few of them get involved in the school council.
- 4. Young people generally value democracy, but more than a third of secondary school students show a certain tendency towards more autocratic systems.
- 5. Social media is the main source of information about public life for young people. Secondary school students hardly use traditional press anymore, and only every fifth student gets their political news from television.
- 6. There is a need among young people for more civic education, but only one in three pupils is in favour of introducing civic education as a new subject. However, it should be borne in mind that the pupils surveyed will no longer benefit from civic education at school, so they are unlikely to be interested in it.
- 7. Three quarters of the students say they have never participated in workshops, debates or other activities related to civic education, which shows that the assumptions of the core curriculum of the new subject, which places such strong emphasis on civic activities, are correct.
- 8. The young people indicated that they prefer active methods such as simulations, educational games, debates and discussions as part of civic education. On the other hand, when it comes to content, high school students would definitely like to see more classes on human and civil rights.

GENERAL CONCLUSION:

Based on the survey, it can be assumed that the introduction of a new subject called civic education and its conceptual assumptions should serve the Polish school well in the long-term programme of strengthening the foundations of democracy and building a strong civil society.



FOOTNOTES

- 1. M. Menz, Czy polskiej szkole potrzebna jest edukacja obywatelska? (O potrzebie zachowania wiedzy o społeczeństwie słów kilka), "Wiadomości Historyczne. Czasopismo dla nauczycieli", 2006/5, pp. 40-45.
- 2. Ibidem, p. 45.
- 3. Ibidem, pp. 43-44. Zob. Also: J. Tischner, W krainie schorowanej wyobraźni, Kraków 1997, p. 22.
- 4. Regulation of the Minister of Education of 6 March 2025 amending the regulation on the core curriculum for pre-school education and the core curriculum for general primary education, including for pupils with moderate or severe intellectual disabilities, general education for lower-level vocational schools, general education for special schools preparing for employment, and general education for post-secondary schools.
- 5. Regulation of the Minister of Education of 13 March 2025 amending the regulation on framework curricula for public schools
- 6. Regulation of the Minister of Education of 6 March 2025, op. cit.
- 7. See.: https://ceo.org.pl/

CIVIC EDUCATION – CIVIL SOCIETY: RESEARCH AND CONTEXTS



Tutoring in Tertiary Education



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During laboratory sessions and seminars, students receive support from academic teachers who are also certified tutors. They have completed an intensive 64-hour training program as part of the Academic Tutors School, organized by Collegium Wratislaviense. The program has been designed to equip participants with theoretical knowledge and, most importantly, practical skills necessary for tutors in tertiary education. The training covers three core areas: the theoretical foundations of academic tutoring, tools for academic and developmental tutoring, and a hands-on, workshop-based component.

The training began by exploring the distinct nature of tutoring as a personalized educational approach, differentiating it from other forms of student engagement (seminars, coaching, and mentoring). The participants have developed structured plans for initial tutoring sessions, drafted tutoring contracts, and worked with academic essays as learning

tools. Strong emphasis has been placed on putting open-ended/Socratic questions and providing constructive feedback. The methodological segment introduces elements of developmental psychology and tutoring, including the concepts of FLOW, the talent sieve, skill ranking, and the SIGN/FREE models.

The participants have also designed case studies, integrating essential components, various case types, and structured action plans. To support goal-setting and prioritization while considering the available resources (the turors' and their students'), effective tools like the goal grid and the SMART/GROW model have been employed. The final stage of the training involves comprehensive tutoring session planning, complete with milestone tracking and documentation. Additionally, the participants have reflected on potential challenges and disruptions in the tutoring process, developed personal tutoring portfolios (tutor-student-my tutoring), and engaged in self-evaluation exercises.

Armed with the skills and competencies gained through this training and pedagogical workshops, the tutors actively support their students by guiding them through laboratory sessions and/or master's seminars. They foster relationships based on partnership, individualization, and integrity - integrating the character, knowledge, skills, and values into the learning experience. This approach to teaching and learning promotes a holistic development and encourages the students to engage in critical self-reflection throughout their educational journey.



ACTIVITY

ACTIVITY



Future Teachers as Activists: We are not waiting for change – we take action!



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Democracy and social life are not abstract concepts from textbooks – they are a part of the reality of here and now, as we witness them on the streets of our cities and within local communities. To teach young people civic values, the teachers must go beyond the walls of the school. They must become catalysts for change, cooperation, and active participation in public life. Only when education meets real action can we nurture a generation of informed and responsible citizens.

As students of History and Contemporary History and Politics – Interdisciplinary Teacher Studies - and members of the Historical Education and History Didactics Section (AMU Students' Academic Association of Historians), we believe that education is more than just knowledge transfer. For the past 18 months, we have been actively involved in social initiatives, gaining valuable experience in organizing and implementing educational and social projects that make a tangible impact on our environment. We understand that the future of education lies in engagement and practical action. Our work is not just theory – it consists, above all, of real initiatives that teach us how to create a strong and informed society.

WHAT WE HAVE DONE. PLANS FOR THE FUTURE...

Working with non-governmental organizations (NGOs): we implement joint projects that allow students and PhD students to engage directly in solving real social issues. We learn how to work with the local communities, assess their needs and implement effective initiatives in cooperation with NGOs: CIL (Centre for Local Initiatives) and Magiel Artystyczny.

Co-organizing educational family festivals: we create space where learning meets fun. Through interactive games and activities, we show that history education can be engaging and accessible to everyone. We promote intergenerational integration and lifelong learning. We participated in Family Neighbour's Day held in Poznań's Piątkowo district (June 7, 2024) and the Neighbourhood Cheesecake Day (July 27, 2024). Currently, we are preparing a field game, along with an academic study (action research) for the Royal Festival, commemorating the 1000th anniversary of the coronation of Poland's first king, Bolesław I the Brave.

International collaboration with cultural institutions: as part of their teaching internships preparing them for the role of civics teachers, Marta Rybczyńska and Jakub Nowocin conducted workshops under the supervision of teacher Piotr Matuski and with the support of Katarzyna Witek-Dryjańska. The event was held for a group of third-year students from Bilingual Secondary School No. 38 as part of the "Nowa Amerika" exhibition at the Arsenał Municipal Gallery.



Before the "Creating our own education system" workshop, secondary school and university students participated in a curator-led tour by Michael Kurzwelly, author of the "Nowa Amerika" project. A roundtable discussion followed, where participants envisioned the ideal school – "The School of Nowa Amerika." The results of their discussions were displayed on posters on the gallery walls. The project showed the gravity of understanding different perspectives and engaging in cooperation. It highlighted that education still needs human-centred reforms, not just student-focused changes. The project was run from June 2024 to October 25, 2024.

WHY WE DO THIS

We believe that teachers are leaders of social change. We want our graduates to be not only excellent educators in civics and civic education but also informed citizens ready to take action for a better tomorrow. Through our initiatives, we provide them with the tools and inspiration to actively participate in public life.





ACTIVITY



Civic & Historical Education in the Context of the Migration Crisis



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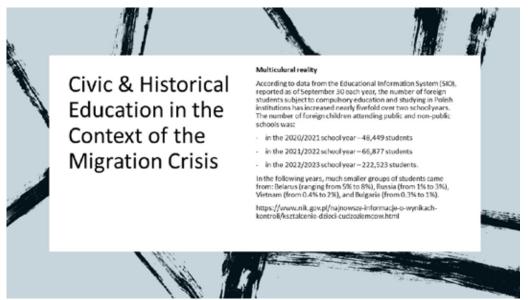
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After the outbreak of the war in Ukraine (February 24th, 2022), Polish schools faced an unprecedented challenge: accommodating tens of thousands of Ukrainian students fleeing the conflict. This sudden influx of refugees created significant difficulties for the education system. Neither the system nor the teachers were fully prepared for such a situation. The language barrier, systemic differences, lack of documentation, the preceding pandemic, and hybrid education all posed serious obstacles to daily learning and teaching. Schools had to quickly organize additional Polish language lessons for the newcomers from Ukraine. Many schools also conducted lessons for Polish students about the situation in Ukraine and the arriving refugees to foster an atmosphere of understanding and support. Additionally, electronic devices were provided to enable students to participate in both Polish and Ukrainian distance learning programs. Free meals were also avilable in schools, ensuring that children received breakfast and lunch.

Polish schools, teachers, students, and their families demonstrated great solidarity and empathy, striving to create a welcoming and supportive environment for the newcomers. Assemblies, integration lessons, and additional classes were organized to help Ukrainian and also Belarusian children adapt.

The rapid increase in the number of students led to organizational challenges, such as overcrowded classes of around 30 students and communication difficulties as schools became intercultural environments almost overnight. The situation was further complicated by the presence of children from Belarus and, in some cases, Russia too, leading to additional tensions and conflicts that spilled over into Polish schools.





From an organizational perspective, schools had to address lack of textbooks for new students, as well as too few school lockers, desks, and chairs in the classrooms. Educators also had to navigate issues related to trauma, adaptation, language differences, and intercultural education, not widely practiced in Poland. These challenges extended beyond the teaching methods to include complex topics in history and social studies, which, being largely Polish- and Eurocentric, often lacked a strong focus on Central and Eastern European issues. Teachers had to mediate tensions among students and parents, including conflicts between Russian and Ukrainian students and divisions within the Ukrainian student community itself. For many teachers, this was an intense crash course in intercultural education and conflict resolution within the classroom.

The long-term integration of Ukrainian students remains a challenge that will require continued support for schools, teachers, and students, as well as adaptations to the Polish education system to accommodate this new multicultural reality.

Civic &
Historical
Education in
the Context of
the Migration
Crisis

Intercultural education

- communication: eliminating language barriers, adopting a multi-perspective approach to the content (especially on difficult topics),
- creating communication-friendly educational materials
- teamwork, dialogue
- systemic support for teachers and students
- emotional support for students
- cooperation with parents to change attitudes towards the newcomers.

CALENDAR





2022/2023

- designing the curriculum for the Contemporary History and Politics Interdisciplinary Teacher Studies (2nd Degree) program
- grant 077 Research University Excellence Initiative:
 a call for proposals for a research project for the second cycle of the studies
- training for academic teachers in Action Based Learning
- study visit to the Center for Civic Education (CEO Warsaw)
- resolution of the AMU Senate on the opening of the History and Politics
 Interdisciplinary Teacher Studies (2nd Degree) program
- first recruitment for History and Politics Interdisciplinary Teacher Studies (2nd Degree)

2023/2024

• Grant 078 Research University - Excellence Initiative: a call for proposals for academic teachers of research-oriented studies

2024/2025

- teachings and research faculty completed by the School of Academic Tutors
- study visit to Maynooth University (Ireland)
- work on student projects using the concept of action research
- completion of the first cycle of education internal evaluation.



EXCHANGE & COLLABORATION

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