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## **PREPARATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN POLAND TO OPERATE IN DANGEROUS SITUATIONS AS AN ELEMENT OF NATIONAL SECURITY SYSTEM**

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**ABSTRACT:** Education is one of the basic ways of shaping security. Its level depends on values, attitudes and messages, people's awareness as well as the skills necessary to prevent and deal with threats. Information activities in the field of counteracting threats should be supported by properly prepared education, especially for children and young people, which plays a special role in shaping safe behaviors and attitudes. Education for security of young people in Poland is an important and comprehensive undertaking involving state authorities, relevant services, organizations and the whole society. There is a conviction that only permanent and broad-based activities involving the whole society can bring the expected results, and thus raise the level of citizens' awareness of security.

**KEYWORDS:** education, youth, threats, defense education, education for security

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## **PRZYGOTOWANIE MŁODZIEŻY W POLSCE DO DZIAŁANIA W SYTUACJI ZAGROŻENIA JAKO ELEMENT SYSTEMU BEZPIECZEŃSTWA NARODOWEGO**

**ABSTRAKT:** Edukacja stanowi jedną z podstawowych dróg kształtowania bezpieczeństwa, od jej poziomu zależą wartości, postawy oraz wiadomości, świadomość ludzi, a także umiejętności niezbędne do zapobiegania i radzenia sobie w sytuacji zagrożeń. Działania informacyjne w zakresie przeciwdziałania zagrożeniom powinny zostać poparte poprzez odpowiednio przygotowaną edukację zwłaszcza dzieci i młodzieży, odgrywającą szczególną rolę w kształtowaniu bezpiecznych zachowań i postaw. Edukacja dla bezpieczeństwa młodzieży w Polsce jest ważnym i kompleksowym przedsięwzięciem angażującym władze państwowe, odpowiednie służby, organizacje oraz całe społeczeństwo. Dominuje przeświadczenie, że tylko ustawiczne i zakrojone na szeroką skalę działania angażujące całe społeczeństwo mogą przynieść oczekiwane rezultaty, a więc podniesienie poziomu świadomości obywateli w zakresie bezpieczeństwa.

**SŁOWA KLUCZOWE:** edukacja, młodzież, zagrożenia, wychowanie obronne, edukacja dla bezpieczeństwa

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## INTRODUCTION

The roots of the tradition of defense education in Poland reach far into the history, because the Polish nation inherits the traditions of the Piasts and Jagiellons armed forces, the First Polish-Republic and the Napoleonic era, the period of national uprisings and the Second Polish-Republic as well as the struggles for independence in the years of I and II World Wars. Documented examples of defense education, constituting the oldest confirmation of the existence of the awareness of the need of defense education of the youth, date back even to the X and XI centuries. Over the years, this model has changed and from the twelfth century the type of knight's education began to develop in Poland, based on the preparation of noble youth for military and court functions. The second half of the eighteenth century brought new projects for defense education of the youth and the establishment of knights' schools, and the most important one was the Knight's School founded by King Stanisław August Poniatowski in 1765, called the Cadets Corps. The program of the Knight's School, whose author was Prince Czartoryski, assumed education through military discipline and arousing patriotic feelings.

National Education Commission established in 1773 as the first one in Poland and in Europe played a significant role in the patriotic and military upbringing of the youth, which is also the greatest cultural achievement of the Polish Enlightenment<sup>2</sup>. One of the Commission's projects was a draft of military preparation for noblemen, bourgeois and peasant youth, assuming the necessity of teaching children and young people useful activities in everyday life, public work and, above all, national defense.

The First World War was the time when Polish people proved their defensive skills, they also showed a deeply developed patriotic awareness, while the year 1918 brought Poland independence, it was also the beginning of an intensified movement for the education of schoolchildren in the patriotic-military spirit<sup>3</sup>. The Second World War brought a high mobilization of all the previous upbringing movements. At that time, in particular, educational activities undertaken by the "Polish underground state", education of the Home Army, as well as paramilitary education of the Gray Ranks, had unprecedented effectiveness in shaping the Polish patriotic spirit and awareness of the defense needs of the state.

Life in the modern times is not much safer than it was in the past. Military threats, understood as armed conflicts, exploding in various places, in the global dimension, are a potential danger for the world and are very important for our security. There are many conflicts in the world that have a significant impact on international security, in the continental or local dimension. However, we should not limit ourselves only to military threats, because we also face threats of a continental, local or social character, and their occurrence means that we can never feel fully safe, and thus we can't disregard the proper defense preparation. Polish accession to NATO and the European Union certainly significantly improved the security of the

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<sup>2</sup> *Vide* J. Bogusz, Z. Kosyrz, *Shaping the patriotic and defensive attitudes of young people*, Warszawa 1979.

<sup>3</sup> *Vide* J. Odziemkowski, *Army and society II. Republic*, Warszawa 1996.

Polish society, but it did not eliminate all the threats. Therefore, Poland, experienced by history, appreciates the issue of broadly understood education for security, which results in shaping such personalities of the youth and adults, who will have a high level of awareness of the threats to human life and health, adequate knowledge and skills to counteract these threats or limit their effects. Shaping creative personalities and having the ability to perceive the most important problems in the field of social security is a particularly important task for today's education for security in Poland.

The widespread belief that the contemporary educational system in Poland is undergoing far-reaching changes to improve the functioning of broadly understood education is undoubtedly connected with the thought that in the new century, the idea that universal education will decide about the future, prosperity, strength and stability of nations. In modern education, it is particularly important that students can develop their personality and prepare for adult life, not only to meet the requirements arising from the goals and tasks of teaching individual school subjects.

The new perception of education is closely related to the changes in educational theory and practice, the implementation of which requires a lot of changes in social awareness. This refers to a new understanding of these areas of education, which are aimed at preparing the entire society to oppose various kinds of security threats. It must be remembered that security covers a multitude of phenomena and processes that have not only a personal and structural dimension in a specific local environment, or in relation to the country, but also refer to civilization and cultural changes in the world. The rise in interest in the subject of security observed nowadays has made education, including education for security, one of security determinants.

## **MODERN CONSTRUCTIONS OF EDUCATION FOR SAFETY**

Contemporary Polish education focuses on the future, on innovation, activity and development. In the widest sense, education is undertaken to transfer knowledge, shape skills, multilateral development and human development, as well as to create, promote and consolidate attitudes, behavior and values. The changing world forces the continuity of education, because a man who wants to meet the demands of the world around him must learn all his life. Education for security is also subject to these changes and the challenges resulting from them, putting even higher demands on teachers, as it concerns not only skills development, but also pro-defense attitudes and behaviors, patriotism and a sense of responsibility for our own security, region and country. The essence of this education is defense education, understood as a preparation of society and the youth for defense and rational behavior in the face of threats<sup>4</sup>.

The education of young people in Poland in the field of elimination and opposition to the threats should be considered because of its humanitarian and caring character for social pedagogy. This task is carried out by a compulsory subject in schools referred to as education

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<sup>4</sup> *Vide* J. Kunikowski, Knowledge and education for safety, Warszawa 2002.

for security (formerly defensive adoption and then defense education). Education for security prepares young people to cope with difficult conditions that modern civilization brings.

Education for security of young people in Poland constitutes the national education department, whose main goal is to prepare young people for rational behavior in the face of civilization and military threats. The aim of education for security understood in this way is to disseminate awareness and knowledge about the sources and consequences of everyday life and extraordinary situations and to master the ability to recognize, prevent and counter these threats.

At the turn of the eighties and nineties, there was a marked increase in interest in axiological matters in education. The collapse of traditional models of life, the crisis of values that have been preserved for centuries, numerous social and various significant institutions crises, the collapse of ideologies and the disappearance of many authorities, all that contributed to the renaissance of the reflection on values, including a critical look at educational axiology<sup>5</sup>. Educational views have been developing for decades and have undergone many changes. It can therefore be assumed that contemporary understanding of values is deeply rooted in the tradition of pedagogical thought on which people should constantly draw. What seems most important in the formulated educational ideals and what the best reflects their transformations in Poland, can be presented mainly on the basis of the analysis of the views from the period of knightly education, the times of the Knight's School, the Kościuszko Insurrection, Second Polish Republic and the period after the Second World War.

In the humanities and in education, the word "value" usually refers to what a human or social group values, which is considered important and thus lived. Particular values do not exist in an isolated way and usually relate to each other, therefore the manifestation of one value favors the implementation of bound up with another. Among a variety of universal values that are exposed today the following activities are mentioned in the educational activity: justice, freedom, responsibility, subjectivity and human identity, life free of threats, democracy, family, work, education, a decent level of spiritual and material life, opportunities for self-realization, political and worldview pluralism.

In generally understood education for security, it is very important what values are considered by young people and what are the aims of adults' aspirations. It is known that values as the object of desire constitute a relatively constant perspective of the experience of the world, or its location in the world, they are a constant challenge, conditioning directly emotional processes. Therefore, in education for security, the most important is the consistent recognition of the need to shape these values, which depends on citizens' involvement in matters of defense, civil protection, civil defense and broadly understood security.

Education for security isn't and can't be a separate system, as it is a relatively permanent element of the national education system. An inseparable element of each educational system are goals and content, and their formulation is the basis for determining tasks and selecting the

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<sup>5</sup> *Vide* T. Lewowicki, *Changes in education*, Warszawa 1995.

forms and methods of didactic and educational activities. The main goal of the analyzed education is to shape and develop defense awareness of young Polish people to not only quickly and accurately predict the various threats, but also define them and actively participate in undertakings related to ensuring security in various social environments. Among the specific goals of broadly understood education for security, the following points can be mentioned:

- shaping the sense of responsibility for the security of the country and expanding interests in defense issues, as well as developing the ability to acquire knowledge independently;
- dissemination of necessary messages and shaping skills in the field of counteracting threats to personal and structural security;
- preparing the participants of the education to work in a team, developing their head skills and pro-social attitudes.

Education for security in Poland is closely related to patriotic, civic, moral, defensive, ecological and physical learning. As an element of broadly understood upbringing, education for security aims to direct and consolidate all the pedagogical efforts favorable in shaping patriotic and defensive attitudes. The concept of education for security includes a constantly expanding content scope, comprising in its structure military preparation, defensive adoption, patriotic-defensive education and defense education. It happens so mainly due to the experience flowing from the past and the nature of the contemporary threats. In the past, military and defense preparation meant providing the possibility of opposing external security threats. Today, we strive to form the ability of the states and societies to cope with many other threats, for this reason the importance of broadly understood education is increasing, aimed at preparing the whole society to ensure the greatest possible chances of survival and development, regardless of the type and scale of emerging threats.

Considering the essence of the Polish security system, the most important are military, economic, political and organizational issues. The awareness-based determinants of the state of security of Poland, in which the defense education of society plays an extremely important role. The attitude of the citizens to defense matters, the issue of national security, the perception of existing and potential threats, and the ability to cope with threats are significant. It should be remembered that the ongoing transformations, both in the country and on the international arena, require constant changes in the field of defense education of young people and the whole society.

The system of defense education of young people in Poland consists of a set of elements including the goals and the content of education and upbringing as well as the ways of their implementation, people managing education processes, addressees and the didactic-educational environment and specific relationships between these elements. The main idea of the defense education system is to shape these elements and relationships so that, as a harmoniously working whole, they best serve to achieve the goals of defensive society preparation.

The goals formulated in the defense education system result from the assumptions agreed in the basic state documents, including the Constitution of the Republic of Poland and defense doctrine, including the anticipated social needs and expectations in the event of the threats, both during peacetime and armed conflicts, as well as international obligations. The most important goal of defense education is introduction of positive changes in values, skills and messages desired in times of peace and war times.

One of the important functions of the modern nation is to provide the citizens with basic conditions of protection against potential and real dangers related to the occurrence of natural disasters and other similar events caused by the forces of nature or human activity, as well as those resulting from military operations. This function can be successfully implemented by, among others, defense education of the society.

The functionality of the defense education system decides about the quality of the readiness of the population, among others, in the field of self-defense in the event of threats. An important factor in ensuring the efficiency of the state's defense system is widespread education of the society, implemented in a comprehensive and systematic way. The basis for effective and necessary institutional solutions in this area are the proper legal regulations, which are a condition for the implementation of an effective defense education of the society.

The United Nations Charter constitutes a basic act of international law, was signed on June 26, 1945, and contains only general guidelines that could be applied, among others, to the issue of defense education of the societies of United Nations member states. Direct indications regarding educating societies were included in the Geneva Conventions of August 12, 1949. The Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols contain the obligation addressed to the States Parties of the Convention to include their content in military training programs as well as a request to include this content in civilian education programs.

The basic legal acts in force in Poland that regulate the issues related to the defense of the state in non-military systems are the Constitution of Poland of April 2, 1997 and the Act on the Universal Defense of the Republic of Poland of November 21, 1967 (and executive acts issued on its basis).

The act on universal obligation to defend the Republic of Poland<sup>6</sup>, which obliges the Council of Ministers to determine, by regulation, the organization of defense training in the country, entities covered by this training, tasks in the planning and implementation of defense training and the competence of the authorities in these cases. It should be noted that according to art. 137 of the Act, civil defense aims to protect people, workplaces and public utilities, cultural goods, rescue and assistance to victims of war and to cooperate in combating natural disasters, environmental threats and removing their effects. Article 139, 1 statute of the Act stipulates that the obligation of the citizens in the field of civil defense consists of serving in civil defense, defensive preparation of school's youth and training in the field of universal

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<sup>6</sup> Act of November 21, 1967 on the general obligation to defend the Republic of Poland (Journal of Laws from 1967, No. 44, item 220, as amended).

self-defense of the population. Article 17 of the Act stipulates that the central organ of government administration in matters of civil defense is the Head of Civil Defense of the country, who is appointed by the Prime Minister at the request of the minister competent for internal affairs. Records of art. 20 of the Act indicate that the management of defense matters in the voivodship belongs to the voivode, who organizes, among other things, education of the society regarding defense preparation and conducts training and defensive exercises.

The issue of defense education in Poland lies within the competence of both the minister competent for education, due to the assignment of the tasks in the field of education and the minister of internal affairs, due to the tasks in the broad sense of security and public order. The basic legal act that indicates the scope of tasks of individual ministers is the act on government administration departments<sup>7</sup>, in which the following matters are defined: protection of public safety and order, civil defense and fire protection. The issue of defense education or education for security is a common area of interest for the Ministers of National Education and Internal Affairs and Administration, which obliges them to cooperate in this scope.

The legal act regulating the issue of education is the Education Law Act<sup>8</sup>, which as one of the basic tasks of the education system determines the dissemination of knowledge about safety among children and youth and the development of appropriate attitudes towards threats and emergency situations.

Education for the security of young people in Poland is inseparably connected with the national security system. The most important function of each democratic state is ensuring national security of the state as an institution, and especially the security of citizens. Education for security is a natural consequence of the constantly expanding content range of such terms as: military adoption, defensive adoption, or defense education. In the past, military and defense preparation was related mainly to ensuring the possibility of opposing external threats, today it primarily concerns shaping the ability of the states and societies to deal with many other threats that affect the level of personal and structural security, especially in the non-military sphere.

Education for security is a specific didactic and educational system of family, school, army, mass media, youth organizations and associations, workplaces, state institutions and autonomy, focused on shaping the system of values, disseminating messages and shaping skills important for ensuring national security<sup>9</sup>. As the above definition shows, the understanding of education for security has a multi-faceted, multi-threaded and interdisciplinary dimension.

Education for security for young people in Poland, which is also characterized by continuity, includes a number of activities:

- transferring knowledge about the occurrence of threats,

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<sup>7</sup> The Act of September 4, 1997 on Government Administration Departments (Journal of Laws of 1997, No. 141, item 943, as amended).

<sup>8</sup> The Act of 14 December 2016 on Educational Law (Journal of Laws of 2017, item 59).

<sup>9</sup> *Vide* Contemporary education issues for security, red. R. Stępień, Warszawa 1999.

- shaping safe behaviors and needs,
- motivating to take actions to ensure safety,
- disseminating the necessary knowledge and skills in the field of counteracting threats,
- raising awareness of the scale and type of needs in difficult situations,
- developing a sense of responsibility for taking specific actions,
- developing appropriate habits in emergency situations,
- caring for values in relation to human life and health.

The world in which we live is characterized by constant variability, and the list of civilization and social challenges is constantly growing. Living in the modern world, we must be aware that the effect of civilization development and progressive industrialization and urbanization cause a result in the increase in the number of factors causing or affecting the immediate threat to human life and health, but also a growing danger to the ecological and cultural environment of man.

Meeting these challenges, the reform of the educational system initiated in 2007, thanks to which, during work on reforming the education system, it was re-noticed that one of the basic conditions for the existence and the development of every society is to ensure its safety and, as shown by experience from previous years, the most common and an effective way to prepare for various risks is to educate young people in schools. The school should become a safe place and it should teach how to deal with extreme situations such as: fire, traffic accident, flood, tank failure with dangerous substances, poisoning with toxic agents, but also in minor events taking place at home or school. A young person should enter an adult life prepared not only to fulfill professional duties, but also to ensure the safety of himself and others.

The introduced changes enabled the teacher to influence the creation of the subject curriculum - the educational path, among others by start-up a new way of constructing and approving teaching program, which enabled the adjustment of detailed content to the rapidly changing reality. In connection with the above, it became necessary to revise the content of curricula and make some shifts in the selection of knowledge from less-significant areas causing overloading pupils' learning to more important areas. Education for security has become one of such areas, so far perceived traditionally as a kind of opposition to threats. However, nowadays in this area the most important is teaching the ability to deal with many other threats that affect the level of security, both personal and structural.

Teaching in the field of education for security has been included in the core curriculum for all types of schools which requires the inclusion of educational content for safety in school didactic and educational programs at every stage of education. The main task of the education system for security is to learn first aid. The comprehensive rescue education program was built according to a spiral system, which is based on gradual training, starting from the first stage of education and every time recalling the most important elements in higher education stages with simultaneous expansion, thanks to which the scope of the subject becomes richer



and more detailed. Repetition and improvement of the skills and habits in next educational stages is a great advantage.

In 2008, the Minister of National Education and the Minister of National Defense signed an agreement on cooperation for civic, patriotic and pro-defense education of schoolchildren, according to which from the school year 2009/2010 in junior high schools and secondary schools there appeared a new subject of education – “education for security” instead of the previous “defensive adoption”. In the same year, the Ordinance of the Minister of National Education appeared on the core curriculum of pre-school education and general education in particular types of schools, which introduces the subject “education for security” in junior high schools from the school year 2009/2010, and from the 2012/2013 in high schools. According to the Ministry of Education, school programs required modernization and adjustment to the times of peace, as most European Union countries did. The changed program focused on teaching first aid and avoiding modern threats, from car accidents to terrorist attacks. The direction of education has been transferred from a strongly pro-security to general safety and preparation in the event of threats to life and health.

A year later, the Regulation of the Minister of National Education on the way of education for security was published. Although education for security as a subject of teaching is carried out at further educational stages, its elements appear already in the kindergarten. The new core curriculum it was written that a five-year child after kindergarten is supposed to know how and whom he or she should ask for help in an emergency situation, be aware that you are not allowed to take medication and use chemicals, and most importantly, your child will learn to move safely along the way.

Recent changes in the education system<sup>10</sup> introduced education for security at the elementary school stage, where it serves to prepare students for proper behavior and appropriate reactions in situations threatening health and life risks. The course covers various contents of education in the field of state security, content regarding the organization of rescue operations, health education and first aid. State security is understood as an area of knowledge that explains the mechanisms of ensuring order, system, stability of human communities, as well as the concepts, methods and forms of behavior. Education, as part of preparation for action in emergency situations, is interdisciplinary, focused on effective action and dealing with individual units in situations of specific threats. One of the most important skills acquired at school is the ability to provide first aid. At an early stage of education, issues related to health and life protection are introduced: assessment of the safety of the place event, identification of potential life threat based on simple symptoms, effective call for help, undertaking preliminary life-saving activities.

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<sup>10</sup> Regulation of the Minister of National Education from 26 July 2018 amending the Regulation on the core curriculum of pre-school education and the core curriculum of general education for primary school, including moderate or severe moderate schoolchildren, general education for the industry level school, education general for the special school for the preparation for work and general education for the post-secondary school (Journal of Laws No. 2018, item 1679).

## SUMMARY

In modern civilizations, man created extraordinary material, technical and scientific goods, thus achieving high standards in these areas of social life. Comprehensive development has brought a sense of economic security, increased standard of material existence, multiplied labor productivity, created unprecedented opportunities for communication between people and nations. Simultaneously with positive changes, there was globalization of threats and new unfavorable phenomena, such as: degradation of the natural environment, deterioration of the health condition of societies, or intensification of civilization diseases.

Security issues rankle people all over the world, that's why the school, as an educational institution, should educate citizens in terms of security in order to face modern threats. Currently implemented education for security fulfills, among others, such contents as: first premedical help, fire protection, protection against contamination, warning about threats and alerting, civil defense. In the educational curriculum for security a lot of attention was devoted to issues related to rescue and first aid, which is undoubtedly very right, because first aid is a necessary and useful skill for everyone and the ideal situation would be when every member of society mastered it.

Taking into account the more effective preparation of young people in this area, using the interdisciplinary nature of education for security, the content of other subjects should be used to a greater extent, using time saved to develop issues related to what modern life brings with it. It should be remembered that today's young people are increasingly confronted with the threats of the Internet, addictions, threats related to the pathology of social life and sexual crime, and these issues should be extended to educational content for security, in accordance with the assumption that the teaching content included in the core curriculum of the subject, education for safety is oriented on developing skills to behave in situations of various threats that may arise in the student's immediate environment.

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