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# Opportunities to increase Poland's defence capacity through in-service training for teachers of military preparation units

## Introduction

The professionalisation of the Polish Armed Forces in 2010 resulted in a reduction to a 100,000-strong force. This significantly decreased the supply of trained reserve personnel. In addition, until 2013, there was no training in this area, and these reserves were supplemented by professional soldiers leaving service, numbering about 7,000 per year. Therefore, in 2014, the Polish authorities restored and intensified the training of reserve personnel, and at the end of 2015, they made decisions aimed at doubling the size of the Polish army. Thus, the Polish Armed Forces today are facing the task of rebuilding their personnel reserves, including ensuring a large inflow of younger reserve soldiers.<sup>1</sup> New forms of short military training for volunteers have been created for this purpose, in line with the objective that within the next few years, the number of soldiers and employees of the military will exceed 200,000, while the

<sup>1</sup> *Koncepcja obronna Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej*, Warszawa: Ministerstwo Obrony Narodowej, Maj 2017 / *The Defence Concept of the Republic of Poland*, Warsaw: Ministry of National Defence, May 2017, p. 56.

Act on the Defence of the Homeland (ustawa o obronie ojczyzny),<sup>2</sup> currently being debated by the Polish Parliament, makes provisions for the Polish Armed Forces to grow to 300,000. Hence, it is now essential to conduct systematic monitoring of military human resources, and to take action to increase the number of recruits where necessary.<sup>3</sup>

With the above in mind, this article aims to analyse the possibility of increasing Poland's defence capacity through in-service training for teachers of military preparation units. The main problem is formulated in the following question: What are the possibilities of increasing the defence capacity of Poland through in-service training for teachers of military preparation units? To solve this research problem, a systemic approach was used, focused on the study of phenomena in their entirety, taking into account their characteristic features and qualities, and on determining the diversity of their internal relations.<sup>4</sup> An important element of the research was the analysis of literature on the subject of military education classes in Poland, as well as the study of regulatory documents in the area under consideration. The supporting research used theoretical methods such as analysis, synthesis and inference were applied.<sup>5</sup> The study presented here includes an account of the origins of the military preparation units and a description of the features of the in-service training for teachers of those units, conducted at the War Studies University. The discussion ends with a set of conclusions.

## The origins of military preparation units

One finding that resulted from efforts to monitor and increase the defence capacity of Poland was that the number of students in Polish secondary schools with military education classes<sup>6</sup> was about fifty thousand.<sup>7</sup> An analysis of the educational content

<sup>2</sup> Ustawa z dnia 11 marca 2022 r. o obronie Ojczyzny, tekst ustawy przyjęty przez Senat bez poprawek, [http://orka.sejm.gov.pl/opinie9.nsf/nazwa/2052\\_u/\\$file/2052\\_u.pdf](http://orka.sejm.gov.pl/opinie9.nsf/nazwa/2052_u/$file/2052_u.pdf) [accessed: 26 March 2022].

<sup>3</sup> *Koncepcja obronna ...*, op. cit., p. 56.

<sup>4</sup> P. Sienkiewicz, *Podstawy teorii systemów*, Warszawa: Akademia Obrony Narodowej, 1993.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. J. Apanowicz, *Metodologia ogólna*, Gdynia: [Wyższa Szkoła Administracji i Biznesu], 2002, pp. 24–28; M. Pelc, *Elementy metodologii badań naukowych*, Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Akademii Obrony Narodowej, 2012, pp. 67–71.

<sup>6</sup> The term “military education classes” (or “uniformed service classes”) is used in Poland to describe high school classes that follow a broadly defined educational programme, including topics related to national defence, the history of the Polish military, and the shaping of patriotic attitudes among children and youth. Cf. I. Urych, *Potencjał obronny klas wojskowych. Teoretyczno-empiryczne aspekty kształcenia obronnego*, Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Akademii Sztuki Wojennej, 2019.

<sup>7</sup> *Program nauczania dla szkół ponadgimnazjalnych przedmiotu „Edukacja wojskowa”*, Warszawa: Ministerstwo Obrony Narodowej, 2017, pp. 4–12, 61; *Koncepcja sprawowania opieki (nadzoru) przez Akademię Sztuki Wojennej nad przebiegiem procesu edukacyjnego uczniów wybranych*

showed that the level of education of young people in those classes was varied and often based on teachers' own programmes.<sup>8</sup> As a result, graduates of military classes often exhibit varying degrees of military training and selective military knowledge. Therefore, in 2017, in 57 selected certified secondary schools with military education classes, the *Program nauczania dla szkół ponadgimnazjalnych przedmiotu „Edukacja wojskowa”* [Military Education Syllabus for Secondary Schools] was introduced. This syllabus mainly covered three semesters lasting from 4 September 2017 to around 11 February 2019 (the beginning of the 2019 school winter holiday). The implementation of the *Program pilotażowy przedmiotu Edukacja wojskowa* [Pilot Programme for Military Education] was supported by military units, training centres, and Territorial Military Administration Bodies (Terenowe Organy Administracji Wojskowej, TOAW) responsible for the regions in which the schools were located,<sup>9</sup> and with the support of the War Studies University on the matter of the course content.<sup>10</sup>

Another reform of the classes introduced the formula of what came to be known as military preparation units, created under provisions of the Act of 19 July 2019 on amendments to the Educational Law and the Act on the financing of educational tasks (ustawa o zmianie ustawy – Prawo oświatowe oraz ustawy o finansowaniu zadań oświatowych), which came into force on 1 January 2020.<sup>11</sup> The first recruitment procedure for military preparation units was conducted in the 2020/2021 school year, at which time, 120 such units were formed. In the following school year, 30 more units were set up. These actions serve to make education popularising defence more widespread, which is considered by the Ministry of National Defence to be of particular importance. The ministry's objective is to supply the personnel reserves of the Armed Forces, the Territorial Defence Forces, with volunteers, increasing the number of troops in the long term, as well as strengthening defence education in society.<sup>12</sup>

Educational supervision over the implementation of military training in secondary schools with military preparation units is exercised by the Minister of National Defence, who, in consultation with the Minister of Education, is responsible for establishing appropriate regulations determining the following:

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*klas mundurowych szkół ponadgimnazjalnych prowadzących przedmiot nauczania „Edukacja wojskowa”, Warszawa: Akademia Sztuki Wojennej, 2017, pp. 1–4.*

<sup>8</sup> L. Kanarski, M. Koter, K. Loranty, I. Urych, Wstępna diagnoza funkcjonowania klas mundurowych – wyniki badań pilotażowych, [in:] *Klasy mundurowe. Od teorii do dobrych praktyk*, eds. A. Skrabacz, I. Urych, L. Kanarski, Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Akademii Obrony Narodowej, 2016, pp. 71–82.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibidem.*

<sup>10</sup> *Koncepcja sprawowania..., op. cit.*

<sup>11</sup> Ustawa z dnia 19 lipca 2019 r. o zmianie ustawy – Prawo oświatowe oraz ustawy o finansowaniu zadań oświatowych, Dz.U. [Journal of Laws of the Republic of Poland], 2019, item 1681.

<sup>12</sup> Wojsko Polskie, Oddziały Przygotowania Wojskowego, <https://www.wojsko-polskie.pl/opw/> [accessed: 20 February 2022].

- 1) the Syllabus implemented by the military preparation units, with a view to preparing students for military service, developing skills useful in such service, and shaping patriotic and pro-defence attitudes among students;
- 2) the organisation and form of classes carried out under the aforementioned Syllabus, including the minimum number of hours of theoretical and practical instruction, the place where these classes are held, and the size of a unit;
- 3) the conditions in which practical classes are conducted, taking into account the safety of students, the need to ensure the uninterrupted operation of military units, and the possibility of some practical classes being conducted by instructors of pro-defence organisations to enable students to acquire practical military skills.<sup>13</sup>

The formation of a military preparation unit must not violate the rights of a student to obtain the knowledge and skills necessary to complete the type of school in question, or the conditions and manner of conducting the appropriate examinations, and in the case of public schools, it must not violate the rights of a student to free education and care as provided by Polish law. The military preparation unit training programme, therefore, constitutes extracurricular content whose theoretical part is provided by the school, and the practical one – by the patron military unit. The training ends with a 50-hour training camp organised at the beginning of the final year of schooling.<sup>14</sup>

The organisational structure responsible for the operation of military preparation units is the Office for the “Become a Soldier of the Republic of Poland” Programme (“Zostań żołnierzem RP”). The activities of this Office are in line with the objective of the Minister of National Defence related to increasing the number of troops in the Polish Armed Forces, and with the objective of the President of the Republic of Poland related to reinforcing the personnel reserves of those forces. Hence, the mission of the Office is to create a coherent and integrated system for strengthening military potential. In other words, the Office strives to achieve a synergy effect, starting with organisational matters, and continuing through training programmes, in order to create an increased potential for the Armed Forces of the Republic of Poland. These actions are systemic in nature; therefore, the Office emphasises that the benefits of the programme will be achievable and perceptible within a certain time frame.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Rozporządzenie Ministra Obrony Narodowej z dnia 7 sierpnia 2020 r. w sprawie wsparcia dla organu prowadzącego oddział przygotowania wojskowego, Dz.U. 2020, item 1390.

<sup>14</sup> Wojsko Polskie, Oddziały..., *op. cit.*

<sup>15</sup> J. Graf, “Gen. Dębczak: Potrzebny spójny system rekrutacji do Wojska Polskiego [wywiad]”, *Defence24*, 21 February 2020, <https://www.defence24.pl/gen-debczak-potrzebny-spojny-system-rekrutacji-do-wojska-polskiego> [accessed: 21 February 2022].

## In-service training for teachers of military preparation units at the War Studies University

To meet expectations associated with the need to train teachers of military preparation units to teach the course, members of the War Studies University staff<sup>16</sup> have prepared a part-time postgraduate “In-service training programme in the implementation of the syllabus for military preparation units.”<sup>17</sup> The programme expands the knowledge and competences of teachers conducting the 70 hours of theoretical instruction contained in the *Program szkolenia realizowany w OPW* [Syllabus for Military Preparation Units].<sup>18</sup> In this way, the role of the War Studies University has also changed, and instead of merely supervising the content, it seeks to take part in the professional development of teachers in relation to the implementation of the Syllabus for Military Preparation Units.<sup>19</sup>

It is no coincidence that this form of in-service training is carried out at the War Studies University. This is because, as the successor to the National Defence University (Akademia Obrony Narodowej), since 1 October 2016,<sup>20</sup> it has continued in the tradition of the Military Training School (Szkoła Wojskowa Aplikacyjna) (1820–1831) and the Higher School of War (Wyższa Szkoła Wojenna) (1919–1946). It plays an important role in the system of preparation and professional development of command, staff, and logistics personnel of the Polish Armed Forces at all levels of command: tactical, operational, and strategic. It does so within the framework of relevant post-graduate studies and qualification and in-service training courses conducted as part of the professional development system of the Polish Armed Forces. The tasks of the University also include training civilians

<sup>16</sup> The authors of the programme of part-time postgraduate “In-service training in the implementation of the syllabus for military preparation units” are Ilona Urych and Col. Zbigniew Leśniewski, both associate professors at the War Studies University.

<sup>17</sup> *Program studiów podyplomowych Doskonalenie zawodowe w zakresie realizacji programu szkolenia w Oddziałach Przygotowania Wojskowego. Forma studiów: niestacjonarne*, Warszawa: Akademia Sztuki Wojennej, Wydział Bezpieczeństwa Narodowego, Wydział Wojskowy, 2020.

<sup>18</sup> Program szkolenia realizowany w OPW, załącznik do rozporządzenia Ministra Obrony Narodowej z dnia 21 maja 2020 r., Dz.U. 2020, item 977.

<sup>19</sup> I. Urych, *Możliwości doskonalenia zawodowego w Akademii Sztuki Wojennej, w zakresie realizacji programu szkolenia w oddziałach przygotowania wojskowego*, paper delivered at IX Ogólnopolskie Forum Szkół „Edukacja Obronna Młodzieży”, Wrocław: 9–10 January 2020; I. Urych, Z. Leśniewski, *Naprzeciw oczekiwaniom... O nowo tworzonych oddziałach przygotowania wojskowego*, paper delivered at I Pedagogiczno-Mundurowa Krajowa Konferencja Naukowa “Bezpieczeństwo a edukacja w świetle współczesnych zagrożeń”, Kielce: 21–22 February 2020; I Pedagogiczno-Mundurowa Krajowa Konferencja Naukowa „Bezpieczeństwo a edukacja w świetle współczesnych zagrożeń”, <https://konferencjapedagogicznomundurowa.konsorcjum.edu.pl/> [accessed: 2 March 2020].

<sup>20</sup> Ustawa z dnia 20 maja 2016 r. o utworzeniu Akademii Sztuki Wojennej, Dz.U. 2016, item 906.

in the field of national security and defence, particularly for the needs of the central administration and local government, or in other words, preparation of individuals for public tasks, especially in the field of national security and the emergency response system.<sup>21</sup>

The programme for part-time postgraduate “In-service training in the implementation of the syllabus for military preparation units” consists of four educational modules consistent with the *Program szkolenia realizowany w OPW* [Syllabus for Military Preparation Units].<sup>22</sup> These are as follows: Basic Civic and Military Education, Combat Training, Logistics Training, and Legal Training. Within the framework of these modules are subjects<sup>23</sup> whose Syllabus and number of hours correspond to the content of the instruction provided by the military preparation units (table 1). In the Basic Civic and Military Education module, the subjects taught are Military Drill and Regulations, and Civic Education, Military Practice and Discipline. The Combat Training module includes Tactics, SERE (Survival, Evasion, Resistance, and Escape), Marksmanship Training, Military Reconnaissance, Engineer-Sapper Training, Defence against Weapons of Mass Destruction, General Air Defence, Communications, Topography, Protection and Defence of Facilities, Fitness Classes, and Medical Training. The Logistics Training module is itself a subject that includes content on Construction and Operation of Armament and Military Equipment, Logistics Security, Environmental Protection, Fire Prevention, and Occupational Health and Safety (OHS). The Legal Training module consists of Legal Training and Protection of Classified Information.

The studies last for two semesters, in a system of 7–8 meetings each semester, held on Saturdays and Sundays. A prerequisite for graduation is earning at least 30 ECTS credits, and the basis for calculating the final grade for the studies, recorded on the diploma, is as follows:

- 1) 60% – cumulative average of all examinations and final class grades earned over the entire course of studies;
- 2) 30% – positive grade for the diploma thesis, according to the assessment of the thesis supervisor;
- 3) 10% – grade for the diploma examination, which is calculated by the examination committee as the average of the grades given by each of the individual members of the committee.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Wojsko Polskie, Misja i zadania, <https://www.wojsko-polskie.pl/aszwoj/o-akademii-misja-i-zadania> [accessed: 2 June 2022].

<sup>22</sup> *Program studiów...*, *op. cit.*

<sup>23</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 3–5.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 17–19.

Table 1. Subjects in the programme of part-time postgraduate “In-service training in the implementation of the syllabus for military preparation units”

No.	Subject name	Hours
1	Military Drill and Regulations	14
2	Civic Education, Military Practice and Discipline	20
3	SERE	8
4	Tactics	26
5	Marksmanship Training	28
6	Military Reconnaissance	6
7	Engineer-Sapper Training	6
8	Defence against Weapons of Mass Destruction	6
9	General Air Defence	4
10	Communications	12
11	Topography	18
12	Protection and Defence of Facilities	4
13	Fitness Classes	12
14	Medical Training	10
15	Logistics Training	10
16	Legal Training and Protection of Classified Information	8
17	Diploma Seminar	28
<b>Total</b>		<b>220</b>

Source: *Program studiów podyplomowych Doskonalenie zawodowe w zakresie realizacji programu szkolenia w oddziałach przygotowania wojskowego. Forma studiów: niestacjonarne*, Warszawa: Akademia Sztuki Wojennej, Wydział Bezpieczeństwa Narodowego, Wydział Wojskowy, 2020, p. 19.

Admission to the diploma exam is contingent upon the above and on the submission of documents required for the award of the diploma. The diploma exam is conducted by an appropriately designated committee. The committee includes a chairperson and the supervisor of the diploma thesis, and at least one member of the committee should hold a post-doctoral degree (*dr hab.*) or an academic title. The diploma exam is an oral exam during which the student should demonstrate knowledge and skills in the subject area of the thesis and the course of study. A positive grade is required for the diploma to be awarded.

Completion of the Diploma Seminar is a prerequisite for the final diploma exam. The seminar is conducted by duly appointed prominent instructors at the War Studies University. The diploma thesis is prepared by diploma students in accordance with the *Wytyczne do przygotowania prac dyplomowych w Akademii Sztuki Wojennej od roku akademickiego 2019/2020* [Guidelines for the Preparation of Diploma Theses at the War Studies University as of the Academic Year 2019/2020].<sup>25</sup>

<sup>25</sup> *Wytyczne do przygotowania prac dyplomowych w Akademii Sztuki Wojennej od roku akademickiego 2019/2020*, Warszawa: Akademia Sztuki Wojennej, Oddział Organizacji Kształcenia, 2020.

The authors of this article, who are also the supervisors of the studies discussed here, believe that it is no easy task to complete this form of in-service training for teachers of military preparation units at the War Studies University. However, it should be pointed out that both the knowledge and skills gained during the studies, as well as the opportunity to formulate research inquiries in the form of a thesis, will contribute to an increase in the quality of education in military preparation units. Thus, this shall result in an increase in the number of recruits to the Polish Armed Forces.

## Conclusion

Against the background of the constitutionally mandated duties of the Polish Armed Forces and unfavourable changes in the Polish geostrategic environment in military terms, this article has described a particular measure aimed at increasing Polish defence capacity by enlarging the personnel of the Polish Armed Forces. This is made possible by the provision of military education classes and the evolution of that project into a statutory measure in the form of military preparation units. Therefore, the origins of military preparation units have been briefly presented in addition to a description of the in-service training for teachers of military preparation units, provided at the War Studies University. The authors of this article, and of the in-service training for teachers of contemporary military education classes in Poland that has been presented here, assume that only competent and committed teachers are able to motivate their students to take specific actions, and in the case of defence education, to become involved in national defence.

The institutionalisation of the educational efforts of the schools in which the programmes of military education classes are implemented, and their inclusion in the system of preparation of military reserves, are fully justified actions. This is because they may enable students or graduates of military education classes to take part in emergency response or to join mobilisation reserves, and above all, to contribute to building a civil society. Moreover, such directed activity would strengthen the defence capacity of Poland, thus complying with the objectives of the *Strategia rozwoju systemu bezpieczeństwa narodowego Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej 2022* [Strategy for the Development of the National Security System of the Republic of Poland 2022].<sup>26</sup>

To conclude these considerations, it should be recorded that in February 2022, the first course of the postgraduate studies described above was completed, during which 24 teachers were trained, and the second course began in March 2022.

<sup>26</sup> *Strategia rozwoju systemu bezpieczeństwa narodowego Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej 2022*, przyjęta uchwałą Rady Ministrów, 9 April 2013, p. 80, [https://www.bbn.gov.pl/ftp/dok/01/strategia\\_rozwoju\\_systemu\\_bezpieczenstwa\\_narodowego\\_rp\\_2022.pdf](https://www.bbn.gov.pl/ftp/dok/01/strategia_rozwoju_systemu_bezpieczenstwa_narodowego_rp_2022.pdf) [accessed: 26 March 2022].



All this is also intended to strengthen the ability of the Republic of Poland to defend itself in a strategically difficult time, when the drama of a regular war is playing out on the territory of our eastern neighbour, Ukraine.

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Ustawa z dnia 19 lipca 2019 r. o zmianie ustawy – Prawo oświatowe oraz ustawy o finansowaniu zadań oświatowych, Dz.U. 2019, item 1681.

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## Opportunities to increase Poland's defence capacity through in-service training for teachers of military preparation units

### Abstract

The substantial re-education of the Polish Armed Forces has necessitated replenishment of the number of reserve personnel. To this end, new forms of short military training for volunteers have been introduced, in line with the objective that within the next few years the number of soldiers and civilian employees of the military will initially exceed 200,000, and later 300,000. The aim of this article is to analyse the possibilities of increasing Poland's defence capacity through in-service training for teachers of military preparation units. The research included analysis of the literature on the subject of military education classes in Poland, as well as the study of regulatory documents in the area under consideration. Theoretical research methods such as analysis, synthesis and inference were also applied. The study presented here includes an account of the origins of the military preparation units and a description of the features of the in-service training for teachers of those units, conducted at the War Studies University.

**Key words:** defence capacity, Polish Armed Forces, military classes, military preparation units, teacher