

Polskie szkoły prywatne w Wielkiej Brytanii po 1947 roku w świetle doniesień prasowych

Polish private schools in the UK after 1947 in the light of press reports

Summary

The article addresses Polish education in the United Kingdom from the end of the Second World War to the present day as seen through the prism of emigration press reports. It focuses on the most important educational institutions of the “steadfast” generation and on the problems of Polish emigrants’ Saturday schools in the EU era. The methodology applied to the study was content analysis of the magazines “Polish Daily and Soldier’s Daily”, “White Eagle” and “New Time”.

Poles of the “steadfast” generation, even during the Second World War, established military schools in a collaborative effort and continue to maintain paid, private native schools at different education levels ranging from elementary, through secondary to higher education faculties, firstly created by British universities, then as independent institutions. After Polish accession to the European Union in 2004, actions taken in the field of Polish schools abroad became of particular importance, as many Polish children attended British schools. Polish emigration is challenged to keep youth for their nation, to make them feel the need to identify with Polish culture. Conferences organised in London revealed a significant deficiency of the Polish schools’ teaching of native subjects in the new and old Polish communities, the lack of a coherent curriculum, and deficiency of operating policy for these schools, a lack of textbooks, a lack of professional help in the process of establishment and administration of these institutions by teachers educated in Poland who tied up their lives with Great Britain. The bilingualism problem is particularly related to the second generation of the newest migrants. Since the British government legally declared Polish as a foreign language which can be taken at the secondary school graduation exam, Polish Saturday schools have become increasingly popular among our Poles living in the United Kingdom.