

EDUCATIONAL PROJECT ABOUT EUROPEAN EDUCATION – 2006

This project raised the following issues: globalization, multiculturalism, migrations, membership of Poland in E.U. and its consequences, dominance of English language all over the world as well as new trends in education and on the labour market: voluntary work, e-learning and homeschooling.

1. Globalisation versus culture
2. Poland in era of globalisation
3. Is Poland more likely to win or lose in the process of globalisation?
4. Migrations vs Multiculturalism
5. Voluntary work
6. Dominance of English
7. English as a passport to the world
8. Pros and cons of e-learning
9. New trends in education – homeschooling vs traditional school
10. Education vs social skills



Globalization would mean the end to individual national cultures. Do you agree?

Globalization is a controversial issue which concerns almost everybody. There are lots of diverse opinions *on this issue*. Some people notice many advantages *referring* to globalization while others perceive only *its* drawbacks. Moreover, some believe that globalization contributes to disappearing peculiar features of countries. When it comes to my point of view about this case, I agree that globalization has bad influence on individual national cultures.

First of all, because of globalization, there is *no* problem with access to different cultures and foreign languages. Variety of food, music, literature or religion is widely available. Therefore, we are constantly tempted and encouraged to choose foreign *objects* and tools. That's why very often we *forget* about our national ones. We think that foreign things are better than these from our homeland. There is a very similar situation with our cultures. In the process of globalization local and regional traditions and customs are likely to disappear because we are slowly *giving up* cultivating them.

Secondly, due to globalization the world is becoming Americanized. The cultural expansion of the United States is incredibly fast. American symbols are being adopted by more and more foreign countries. An indication of this may be the spread of fast food which is detrimental to health and results in growing obesity.

What is more, the Western point of view is imposed. The global mass media present the world from just one perspective. Rich countries use mass media to spread their propaganda. *Consequently*, the opposition between "us" and "them" increases. Some *countries* are losing their individuality and become weaker.

The last but not the least important aspect relates to spreading some diseases and so-called "evil" technologies more easily. Because of globalization, there is now the danger of several pandemic diseases for example SARS and bird flu. We *cannot* also forget about weapons of mass destruction and the constant threat of their application. If our homeland suffers from one of these reasons, *its* national culture will *suffer*, too.

To sum up, there are strong arguments confirming that globalization affects threat of extinction of cultural variety and idiosyncrasies. However, globalization is inevitable that *is* why it would be better to focus on *its* assets, for instance, better protection of environment, easier travelling or establishing new factories and businesses, which *is conducive* to fighting unemployment in poor regions. *The vital is also awareness among all people that strength lies in cultural diversity of our globe and not its standardization.*

Written by Aleksandra Zuch IIIA

Poland in era of globalisation

Nowadays the mankind faces the process of globalisation. *Technological* progress constantly accelerates, which brings us closer to the rest of the world *more* than whenever. Currently media can affect not only our lifestyles, but *also can* change reality which surrounds us. Globalisation has become to rise extremely rapidly since

nities of the *twentieth* century as the USSR *collapsed*. Consequently, many *socialist* countries turned into *democracy*. Thus, they started to be more susceptible to the West's influence. In case of Poland it was the same. However, there are positive and negative *sides* of *our* participation in this process.

First of all, we ought to consider economic aspect. Globalisation is favourable for developing countries such as Poland. Rich countries establish numerous organisations that help poor regions *go* through the transitional stage. They assure both professional advice and financial or technical support for them. Besides, all countries benefit economically. World companies invest capital in *industrially*-less attractive areas. New factories and businesses are established, which contributes to fighting unemployment in poor regions. In Poland special economic zones are open especially for foreign capital to attract *investors*.

In addition, all countries unite in case of serious diseases (for instance cancer). Special organisations deal with collecting the money in order to do research. Rich countries have helped the Third World defeat tuberculosis, pneumonia, malaria and other *incurable in the past* diseases.

Secondly, we should *focus* on cultural aspect. Thanks to globalisation, more interaction between people of different *culture and background* contributes to the spread of tolerance. Nowadays *no-one* is astonished in Poland when they see for instance black people. The ideas of democracy, free trade and national minorities' rights are propagated. People feel they have common goals and interests, as they all inhabit a global village. Besides, *as the* border between countries is perceived only symbolically, communication between nations is simplified.

Thirdly, it's worth mentioning the issue of the environment. The joint efforts of the countries and numerous non-profit organisations help spread an environment-friendly lifestyle. Standards of environment protection have been established and the countries which do not comply with the rules are penalized. Global awareness of ecology issues and the necessity of economizing on non-renewable energy sources are much publicized.

Nevertheless, we are aware of negative consequences that globalisation involves, namely disparity between wealthy and developing countries increases because globalisation generates *inequities* between nations. World companies *exploit* workers from other countries and treat them as a cheap labour force, who will not protest against bad *working* conditions and underpayment. In Poland, some employers *are said to deceive* their employees. *Furthermore, although* rich countries lend money to developing countries, at the same time they impose on them harsh restrictions and regulations. Under the cover of lending a hand they expand their sphere of influence.

What's more, in process of globalisation local and regional traditions or customs disappear. We can notice the cultural expansion of *the* United States. Foreign countries adopt American cultural symbols, for instance spread of fast food, which is detrimental to our health. Besides, less control at border crossings and a simplified immigration *procedure* result in illegal immigration and crimes. Poland is located specifically between West and East, and smuggling is a serious problem.

Finally, we face the process of global warming. Globalization leads to industrialization, which in turn *brings about* dramatic environmental effects. The global warming caused by the skyrocketing emissions of carbon dioxide is easily discernible everywhere. As a consequence, humankind is thoughtlessly destroying the Earth.

To conclude, the process of globalisation is a huge opportunity for Poland to

decrease disparity between us and western countries. Thanks to *it*, we have got many chances to develop ourselves. *I wish we would not miss this opportunity.* Poland is an example that globalisation is favourable for every country. *It's time we offered help to other countries as rich countries helped us in the past.*

Elaborated by Robert Najuch III F

Is Poland more likely to lose or win in the process of globalization?

In general terms "globalization" refers to integration process and correlation between countries. Poland is one of many countries which undergo the globalization *process*. It *raises a* very important question: Is Poland more likely to lose or win in the process of globalization? *It's hard to give a clear-cut answer to this issue.*

First of all, we should consider *its merits*. World companies invest capital in industrially less attractive areas here in Poland. New factories and businesses which are established result in decrease *of* unemployment in Poland and *improvement of* working conditions. This is *especially good* for people who live in poor regions for example *on the outskirts of towns, in villages or in the outback.*

Secondly, the globalization aims at borders between countries being treated only symbolically. It leads to *simplification of* communication between Poland and other countries, and what is more, it may help abolish *a visa to the* United States.

The third important aspect of globalization is that *it* helps spread an environmentally-friendly lifestyle. Factories will not pollute air and water because if they do not comply *with* the rules and standards of environment protection, they will be penalized.

On the other hand, globalization *involves some* drawbacks. One and, most important of them, is *the fact* that in process of globalization local customs are likely to disappear. Poland is a state with many cultural traditions - we *cannot* allow them to vanish, and have to *preserve* them for our descendants.

On balance, Poland can derive many profits from globalization process, but we should use its goods with moderation. In my opinion, *the answer to the* question asked in the introduction to this composition depends on *the way we make use of globalization.*

Wojtek Jajdek III A

Are immigrants and ethnic minorities a potential source of problems or a way to enrich the country's culture?

That's not an easy question. This topic arouses a lot of controversy. As each controversial issue, it has both proponents and opponents. I have gathered some arguments for and against, and I will try to answer this difficult question.

There are many pros of immigrating. Firstly, immigrants' knowledge and culture may be of benefit to the society and can be very useful as they introduce their own traditions and customs to the country they immigrated to.

Moreover, multiculturalism provides variety and richness to the culture of the "new" country. It allows to observe similarities that help people of different cultures to live peacefully next to each other.

Finally, multiculturalism develops understanding of one's own culture. It makes us cherish our own culture traditions and values that are inherent to way of thinking and behaving.

On the other hand, there are drawbacks of immigrating. First, immigrants are often uneducated, so they cannot find any job. Then unemployment *rate* increases. They are often poor, therefore in their settlements violence and crime is widespread. Riots also can take place in such communities.

Furthermore, ethnic minorities are often discriminated. They get low-paid jobs *or worse working conditions*, and they are frequently neglected by the government, regardless of their skills and education.

Still, another disadvantage of immigrating is the fact that sometimes appreciation of our own culture leads to hostility and aggression towards another culture. Ethnic minorities are often perceived as a threat to the traditions and *values of the host country*.

All things considered, immigrating cannot be stopped, *because* people move and change their place of living. Our world has become a global village. The only way to solve the problem is to get used to new *challenges globalization brings*, be tolerant and respect both foreign and local traditions as well as different way of thinking.

Karol Langer III A

Unpaid voluntary work – only for wealthy idealists or for everyone? What are its advantages and drawbacks.

Nowadays unpaid voluntary work is becoming more and more popular *not only* with young people but also adults. *Volunteers are mainly people who are altruists, sensitive to other people's needs, willing to help in emergency or also those who treat it as a new useful experience in their life to be later included in C.V.* Working for free has good and bad sides.

First of all, by doing voluntary work people have a chance to *test and* improve own qualities of character. By serving others they gain new skills and abilities for instance responsibility and patience.

Secondly, voluntary work gives both adolescents and grown-up a feeling of fulfillment in life. The elderly and disabled children appreciate their efforts, *sacrifice and the time devoted to them, hence* pay them back for it with a smile.

Thirdly, the fact of being a voluntary worker may convince the employer about *assets* of such an employee by showing his/her self-reliance, diligence, industriousness, or perseverance. Such a candidate deserves a fully-paid employment contract.

On the other hand, voluntary work does not bring financial profit. People should have a steady income in order to support a family, therefore they are forced to find another source of making money.

Moreover, serving others is not as easy as we think. It can turn out that a person does not have enough mental strength of character and too much patience which voluntary work requires.

Furthermore, working as a volunteer is very time consuming. People who do not have family or have a lot of free time can decide on such a tiring work. Otherwise, a voluntary work must be someone's passion.

All in all, unpaid voluntary work has advantages like bringing a smile on faces of people in pain or need but may be also a demanding challenge. It is not only for *wealthy people but also the ordinary one who* can contribute to making this world a better place to live.

Anna Pawłowska III F

Could English one day become the only language in the world?

Languages are not only communication tools, but in their diversity and ethnicity they are also integral parts of the world. Nowadays there are over 6500 languages on our planet. At present they are in danger of extinction because of the most influential language – English. Two thousand years ago English did not exist. A thousand years ago it was used by less than 2 million people. Now it is widely used and taught all over the world. It's just a global language, spoken by more than a billion people. But what will happen with English in the next years? Could this language one day become the only one in the world? Opinions are shared.

One view is that English is going to become even more important as a global language. First of all, it dominates science, business, the mass media and culture. It's now used in diplomacy and most fields of science and technology. It's one of the official languages of the main international organizations and the mother tongue of leading industrial nations. Besides, it's easy to come across English in many situations, it's just everywhere e.g. in the movies, TV, music and newspapers.

Secondly, learning process is not difficult. It has a simple alphabet, easy plurals and many short words. Books and learning resources are *widely*-available, so we can study on our own, too. Besides, it's important to master this language because many companies make it a prerequisite for employment. Furthermore, English allows us to travel more easily (we can communicate with everybody), economically (we don't have to hire a translator) and less stressfully (we don't have to worry that somebody won't understand us).

Thirdly, English *influences* many other cultures. To some extent, this language has an impact on Polish culture. Many young people use abbreviations in text messages and e-mails. Poles use swear words although they don't know their meaning. Besides, lots of words have been borrowed into Polish without no equivalents (e.g. bar, weekend). Moreover, more and more singers release their records in English.

On the other hand, some people think that English won't be the only language in the world. Firstly, it won't wipe out all other languages. It may be adopted and

used officially but as history has shown there will always be native forms of communication that *will be used* at home. It means that native cultures won't disappear.

Secondly, in many countries there seems to be *an* increasing awareness to the dominance of English and ensuing reservations to this phenomenon. We can observe it for example in France and Germany. Besides, in recent years there has been a proliferation of non-English Internet sites (Spanish, Chinese). Moreover, governments around the world started to protect *other* languages and respect the importance of linguistic diversity.

Thirdly, the major contribution of English to the worldwide culture will probably *be* only in creating new generations of bilingual and multilingual speakers. For example, mixed marriages are more common.

To sum up, it is not very likely that English will be the only language on our planet. In my opinion it will never happen. Languages are more than just a mere means of communication. They make up a significant part of regional cultures and national identities. Besides, they create personalities, attitude and *allow* people to express feelings. Although the dominance is still on the increase, other languages will fight back against the iron grip of English.

Małgorzata Machnik II E

English is a passport to the world. Do you agree with this saying?

I totally subscribe to this statement. Nowadays English is spoken in almost every single country in the world. It's our global language. I can even say that it *is* essential to lead *less stressful and more varied* life.

Firstly, English is helpful in overcoming *differences*. The existence of English facilitates communication between people of different cultures and speakers of different languages who in today's world often live side by side. Having a common language improves the understanding between them and helps to overcome *obstacles*.

Secondly, thanks to it we can travel less stressfully. We do *not* have to worry that we *will not* be able to communicate with the local people if we go abroad. English is taught in almost every single school in every town of the world, so there will be someone who can speak English for sure. The knowledge of it makes every external journey much more comfortable and *easier*.

Thirdly, English encourages progress in science. Since English has become the international language of science, most of the resources for various fields are in English. It enables scientists to participate in international conferences, trace the latest developments in their fields and contribute *to the results of* their own research for the benefit of others. It means that *not only is it beneficial to* scientists, but also to *us* – ordinary people.

Finally, English offers equal opportunities to everyone. As a world language, it helps people *enjoy* the same opportunities, regardless of their cultural background. If you want to learn it, it *is* not important where you live. You just must be ambitious, tenacious and never give up. As you learn the language, you *will*

gain access to literature, music and Internet resources which are mostly in English. You can also study and work in many countries and communicate with people from the most *distant* places in the world.

To sum up, I think that thanks to English our lives can be much easier. We all ought to improve ourselves in speaking this language, because it *is* our passport to the contemporary world.

Elaborated by Karolina Zielińska II E

Pros and Cons of E-learning

Today, there are many different ways of learning. One of them is e-learning, a new unusual form of acquiring knowledge which contradicts the common misbelief that people can learn only at school. Although e-learning has quite a few advantages, it also has some drawbacks.

On the one hand, e-learning has many strong points. First and foremost, this way of learning appears convenient for learners: *they* are not constrained by the arrangements made in traditional schools. *I mean no necessity to fit in the school timetable. The pupils can also learn in their own pace.* Secondly, e-learning *allows for easier and faster assessment of students' work* as teachers are able to send instant feedback to them. Finally, this form of learning seems cheaper because the *maintenance costs of infrastructure* can be reduced.

On the other hand, e-learning has some weak points as well. First of all, this type of learning deprives students of real social interactions with their classmates. Consequently, they are not capable of making new friends. Moreover, learners' evaluation turns out to be not complete as only selected aspects of knowledge can be checked appropriately. For example, how to grade oral practice? In addition, the introduction of e-learning costs a large sum of money because new laws and regulations are required as well as bodies in charge of supervision.

In conclusion, it should be highlighted that e-learning turns out to have both benefits and *drawbacks*. Obviously, many people find this new way of learning attractive and efficient. Needless to say, everyone has to realize the fact that e-learning may cause some trouble for teachers and learners alike.

Łukasz Starzyk III A

SCHOOL EDUCATION IS BETTER THAN HOMESCHOOLING

In today's world of fierce competition people decide to choose between school education and homeschooling. School education is often regarded to be better than homelearning. However, there are many advantages and disadvantages of both choices.

On the one hand, going to school brings a lot of benefits. First of all, you are not worried about relationships with other people. Everyday you have a lot of opportunities to talk to your classmates. Cooperating with peers arouses competitiveness, self-confidence and team spirit, which are useful skills in your future

life. Not only can you make new friends, but you might also learn something new from them. Another advantage is that you have real interactions with your teachers. It is very important, especially when you have to ask some questions and get answers to them whenever you want. Moreover, in school students conduct a lot of experiments, especially during biology or chemistry lessons. Hardly ever do students do them at home.

On the other hand, there are some drawbacks. Firstly, every day you have to wake up early and go to school. Thanks to homeschooling you might have a flexible timetable, which means that you can stay at home and sleep as long as you want. Furthermore, you would be able to choose subjects in which you are interested and a pace of learning. For instance, when you love Maths, you don't have to learn history. Thus, you could focus on something you really enjoy learning and have better results. Besides, you can develop your talents and skills to the best of your potential. Your intellectual curiosity is also awoken.

To sum up, in my opinion school education has as many advantages as drawbacks. But I think that it would be a good idea to combine these two types of education. Thanks to it, students could learn some subjects at home through elearning and some at school, which might bring numerous benefits.

Andrzej Superson III A

The main purpose of education is to adapt children to their social environment. Do you agree?

Nowadays education *plays* one of the most important roles in everyone's life. It is necessary to have a good educational background as it is a factor contributing to our standing in community. *If you are well-educated, you might have an influential position in society in future. It's also one of essential requirements set by employers. The higher level of education, the better chances of a job career. Lastly, education teaches us adaptation to our social environment. Some people claim that the last factor is crucial, others emphasize the importance of factual knowledge and intellectual skills.*

The former group stress the need of teaching social interactions. In their opinion, school should teach discipline, respect to authority and interpersonal skills for instance: work in pairs or groups, ability to voice opinions at discussions or reach a compromise in controversial debates as well as self-presentation skills during conferences. Through the interaction with peers, children learn how to behave in their social environment. Thus, it prepares them for cooperation with others on the job market.

The latter group is not convinced that social abilities are more important than real knowledge. *For them education means not only gaining factual knowledge but also awakening students' intellectual curiosity and broadening their mind.* It's true that pupils forget a lot of dates and facts which they learnt by heart earlier and all that cramming for tests and swatting foreign words might seem useless at a certain stage of life, but if school teaches children to draw conclusions, generalize the ideas, this

education process is not in vain. I would subscribe to the saying that “education is what survives when what has been learnt has been forgotten”.

To conclude, In my opinion wide factual knowledge and the ability of adaptation to social environment are equally important because intellectual skills *such as critical thinking and logical assumptions are helpful in taking sensible decisions in future whereas well-developed social skills help establish good relationship with family, acquaintances, colleagues, which is useful in sorting out problems in adult life. Both roles are vital as education or its lack affects the vicissitudes (ups and downs) of our life.*

Compiled by Robert Najuch III F