

## REPORT ON THE SERIES OF LAW CONFERENCES "ISKRA AT SCHOOL. THE INDIVIDUAL IN SOCIETY"

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The Interdisciplinary Student Organization of Administration Development (ISKRA) is an association of students and PhD students of the Faculty of Law, Administration and Economics of the University of Wrocław. Its guardian from the very beginning being PhD hab. Magdalena Tabernacka. In recent years ISKRA has worked actively for the university community. Numerous organized scientific conferences, bringing together scientists from Poland as well as from foreign research centres and collaboration, contributed to the fact that ISKRA was awarded every year, by the Council of Scientific Organizations, the title of the most active organization operating at the Faculty of Law, Administration and Economics of the University of Wrocław. This year, for the second time, ISKRA took first place in the ranking.

In the academic year 2016/2017 ISKRA established a direct collaboration with the Ursuline School Complex in Wrocław – Public Middle School and Public High School Ursuline Sisters of the Roman Curia. The result of this cooperation was the organizing of a joint venture - a series of law conferences entitled "*ISKRA at school. The Individual in society*". Honorary patronage of the event was undertaken by the Marshal of Lower Silesia and the Governor of Lower Silesia. Meetings were held every two months, both in the Ursuline School Complex and at the Faculty of Law, Administration and Economics of the University of Wrocław.

A series of conferences was attended by several hundred young people from Wrocław and the surrounding area. In addition to students from the Ursuline School Complex, the individual lectures were also attended by students from other schools such as the 14th Middle School, the 23rd Middle School, the 28th Middle School, the 29th Middle School and also the first and second degree Music School in Wrocław.

The first inaugural meeting was held on 24 November 2016. The judge Anna Maria Wesołowska was invited, leading the lecture entitled "*How to avoid conflict with the law in the contemporary world of threats*." The judge told in a very interesting way about her own experiences in the courtroom, invoking real stories, accompanied by her personal observations. Among

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many stories, there was also the recollection of the most difficult case that she has led, when - as she said - she wondered if she is suitable for the work of a family court judge.

It is worth adding that the first meeting began with lectures from two PhD students from ISKRA, the main organizer of a cycle of meetings. Barbara Zyzda and Agnieszka Kuriata, presented results of their research performed on a group of middle school and university students on the issues of hate speech and hostility in speech. Targets of which could be qualified into seven groups: younger people, elderly people, people with different skin color, people with different religion, people with different gender, people of different sexuality and disabled. The subject of research was both level of aggression and hostility, and language used to express it.

Few conclusions can be formulated based on the study. Not surprisingly word aggression among boys is several times higher than among girls. University students have come into contact with word aggression more frequently with one exception - aggression towards younger people. They noticed that education has significant influence on vocabulary since university students much more often use longer and more descriptive expressions, directed at specific targets, while secondary school students use more random vulgar words with strong emotional load, without much difference in who they are directing at.

The subsequent meeting has already been held in this year (11 January 2017) and its special guest was the Representative of the Ombudsman - Katarzyna Sobańska-Laskowska. The meeting was entitled: *"Protecting the rights and freedoms of the individual; what is the work of the Ombudsman?"* The presentation by the special guest was preceded by a short lecture of PhD hab. Magdalena Tabernacka - the main organizer of the series of lectures - who lectured students about the issue of violence against children. PhD hab. Tabernacka presented the results of her research in which respondents defined their approach to, among other issues, "spanking" and the use of corporal punishment against children. As it turns out, results show that a similar percentage of survey participants, think that such a method of raising a child is frowned upon (40%) as the number of people declaring that it is tolerated (34%). Furthermore, 14% of the respondents said that it is "common educational practice". Various speeches on changes in this area over recent years in Poland have also been addressed, as well as the legal tools offered by the Polish legal system.

Then, Katarzyna Sobańska-Laskowska - the Representative of the Ombudsman - told the students what her daily work consists of. She stated that, according to article 208 of the Constitution of the Republic of Poland, the role of the ROP is to safeguard the freedom as well as the human and civil rights specified in the Constitution and other normative acts. And, as a result, that it prevents unequal treatment on grounds of race, ethnic origin or nationality, sex, religion, belief, disability, age or sexual orientation. During her lecture the speaker emphasized the need for young people to know their rights, because only then are they able to defend them.

For the occasion of International Women's Day, 8 March 2017, part of the third lecture in the series *"Iskra at school. The Individual in society"* featured Agnieszka Kuriata, a PhD Student and Expert of the Centre for

Oriental Law Research. She presented to the students a lecture about the situation of women in Iran; in particular their rights, customs and cultural nuances. During her presentation, which lasted almost an hour and a half, she talked about topics including marriage, divorce, employment, education and legal regulations concerning Muslim women's clothing. The fact being that wearing a hijab is mandatory in Iran and is regulated by law. The speaker drew attention to it, among other things such as the serious problem of the world's lowest permitted marriage age for females. In Iran, the girl may in fact be forced to marry at age 13, and in some cases even at the age of sexual maturity, so at the age of 9 years old. The Iranian Civil Code also provides for the controversial subject of a temporary marriage, which can last for as little as just a few minutes.

A short speech on marriage in Japan was prepared and presented by Barbara Jelonek, PhD Student of the Faculty of Law, Administration and Economic and also a member of Centre for Oriental Law Research. Both events provoked great emotions and also ended with a series of very interesting and smart questions addressed to both speakers.

The latest meeting, which was held at the Ursuline School Complex was dedicated to crime and punishment. This time the main event was a debate between Prof. Tomasz Kalisz, specializing in penitentiary and criminal law, and prosecutor Tomasz Błaszczuk. The entire event was moderated by PhD hab. Magdalena Tabernacka. The meeting started with a question addressed to the audience - "*What is punishment?*" As it turned out later, there is no easy way to answer to this question.

For the end of the cycle of meetings "*ISKRA at school. The Individual in society*" an expert debate, was held on 30 May 2017 at Faculty of Law, Administration and Economics. It was attended by over 500 students from Lower Silesia high schools, middle schools and primary schools. The meeting, entitled "*Law in questions and answers*" was attended by:

- Anna Maria Wesołowska - Judge of the District Court in Łódź and Social advisor to the Ombudsman for Children; speech: *Penal law aspect of children functioning in society*;
- PhD Monika Drela - Specialist in civil law; speech: *Rules of law in social functioning*;
- Agnieszka Kantczak – Makowska - Judge of the District Department of Family and Juvenile Court;
- Agnieszka Templin - Legal advisor; speech: *Civil law contracts*;
- Prof. Adam Sulikowski - Specialist in the theory and philosophy of law; speech: *Criticism of the law*;
- Paweł Mysłowski – Prosecutor; speech: *Child against crime*.

It was not a standard conference. The audience was very demanding. Experts, in addition to short speeches on topics they specialize in, also responded to questions previously submitted by young people. Their thematic scope was very broad, and the questions themselves were extremely precise, interesting, and sometimes even controversial. Invited specialists had to deal with questions concerning constitutional, criminal, civil, administrative and tax law.

Professor Adam Sulikowski, defining himself as a critic of the law, answered one of the questions from the students: "*What are the disadvantages*

*of the Polish Constitution?*" He pointed out that the introduction of the Polish constitution was accompanied by three compromises, and its main disadvantage is its eclecticism - that there is everything in it and nothing is settled in it. On the question of whether now is the right moment to change the Polish Constitution, he replied that of course we could do it, but there were no major event in the country that would legitimize this process.

Attorney Agnieszka Templin, specializing in tax law, in the meantime focused on another interesting issue and answered the question *"Do parents have to pay wealth tax on the donation of an apartment to their own children?"* She sent interested students to research the tax on inheritance because it was primarily intended to be educational in nature. Experts pointed to scientific literature that students can use to seek answers to their questions. In addition, she discussed in detail Article 4a of the Inheritance and Gift Tax Act, indicating that the tax exemption is an exception to the rule that tribute must be paid to the state.

Prosecutor Paweł Mysłowski answered the question bothering one of the students: *"What happens when an adult is caught providing alcohol and other substances that are not allowed, to minors?"* The prosecutor began by explaining the differences in the Polish law of adults, minors and juveniles, and what kind of stimulants we can consider as "allowed in adulthood." As he further explained, the sale of e.g. alcohol to an underage person in Poland constitutes an offense punishable by a fine. The prosecutor also pointed to very severe penalties for the sale, possession or the use of drugs. Another interesting question to which prosecutor Mysłowski replied is: *"What kind of punishment could my friend receive, when they create, without my knowledge or consent, a FB account in my name along with my personal data?"*. As the prosecutor explained, whether that person will be subject to criminal liability, is dependent on the intention with which this act was made.

The last one was Anna Maria Wesołowska, who introduced herself as a "real judge" and not just a television actress. Her speech created strong emotions, especially regarding to the fact that the judge narrated real stories known from television and courtrooms. In casuistic terms, she explained complex issues of criminal law. She referred to the case of Ania from Gdańsk, a victim of mental harassment who took her own life. In tribute to Ania, art. 190a of the Penal Code was introduced. The judge also mentioned the "law corners" in schools that arise from its initiatives in Poland and aim to raise the awareness of young people as to their rights and obligations. In one case, the "law corner" contributed to decreases in alcohol consumption by 50%. As was pointed out by Wesołowska, it is very important to speak not only with children during similar events, but also with their parents. She admitted reflectively that from conversations with children their dreams are not obvious to their parents. Children dream about a greater amount of time that they could spend with their parents. They also dream for them to not smoke cigarettes because they want them to be healthy.

There was also a poster session during the conference *"Law in questions and answers"*, where PhD students presented the results of their research. Experts from the Centre for Oriental Law Research submitted

posters focused on oriental law. Barbara Jelonek, dealing with the laws of Japan, presented the issues of marriage in Japan (*“Marriage law in Japan and the EU”*), while Agnieszka Kuriata and Katarzyna Sadowa, dealing with Islamic law, prepared posters devoted to the legal issues of *“Muslim women and European law”* and *“Honour crimes’ in Muslim and European countries”*. During the meeting, students could also refer to research in the area of administration (Berenika Czerwińska *“eGovernment services or digital administration available on your smartphone!”* and Barbara Zyzda *“Mediation as a way of resolving conflicts”*).

Both the summing up and the whole series of meetings proved to be a great success. These gatherings enabled the transfer of a huge amount of knowledge of the law in a way accessible and understandable enough for children to use it in practice. The conference cycle also attracted the interest of the Faculty of Law, Administration and Economics, as it was an excellent way to interest prospective students in the choice of law or administration as a field of study. To encourage such a decision, a class with a law profile was created at the Ursuline High School, where subjects will be taught by members of Faculty of Law, Administration and Economics University of Wrocław.

Today we know that these were not the last meetings in this cycle and in that form. And in the next academic year, future events from this cycle will be announced.