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## **Report from the 2nd International Conference: Teacher. Management – Development – Change**

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The 2nd International Conference: “Teacher. Management – Development – Change” was held in Kraków on 19–20 May 2025. It was jointly organised by the Hugo Kołłątaj University of Agriculture in Kraków (Department of Statistics and Social Policy) and the Pedagogical University of Kraków, under the auspices of the Institute of Management and Social Affairs and the Institute of Law, Economics and Administration. For the second time, the Conference served as a pivotal platform for the exchange of knowledge and experience among experts in education, teacher development, and the management of human potential within educational settings. Its central focus was the teacher, as practitioner, academic, knowledge manager, and agent of growth and change who operates within an ever-evolving socio-cultural and civilisational landscape.

This focus reflects the widespread recognition that, in today’s complex world, it is teachers who often initiate processes of self-development and actively manage the personal resources of their pupils. Development and change are not only conducive to new undertakings and initiatives but also bring to light previously unrecognised challenges—challenges that inspire the search for new working strategies and innovative solutions. A distinct strength of the conference was once again its ability to bring together a wide circle of distinguished researchers. The event’s guest of honour was the esteemed Polish scholar, pedagogue, and educational researcher—an intellectual guide and mentor—Professor Bogusław Śliwerski, PhD, DLitt, Doctor honoris causa of several leading universities.

The opportunity to meet in person, to participate in lectures and engage in discussions with individuals deeply committed to the educational profession, created a meaningful space for collaborative action directed towards “the good of the human being”. Contemporary educational trends increasingly call for reflection on the key factors that determine the effectiveness of some approaches and the decline of others. Among these emerging trends, those that prioritise the development of the principal stakeholders in education—students, teachers, and parents—are of particular significance. This includes recognising the unique potential of each individual and applying appropriate strategies to manage both this potential and the human resources within educational teams (for example classroom groups or teaching staff).

It was therefore considered essential to present and critically examine, in an international academic forum, the most recent developments in human resource management. A further priority was to define the necessary conditions for adapting these

trends to the realities of educational institutions operating within the dynamic context of today's schools and universities. Given that the conference was centred on the role of the teacher—whether as classroom practitioner, academic educator, knowledge manager, or catalyst for growth and transformation operating within a world of rapid socio-cultural and civilisational change—it was recognised that teachers must also become primary initiators of actions related to self-directed development and the management of human resources. In doing so, they can effectively promote the growth and transformation of others within the educational community.

Development and change not only foster innovation, new initiatives, and the realisation of educational goals, but also bring to light emerging and often unfamiliar challenges. These include, for example, the deepening divergence in how education and teaching methodologies are understood among key stakeholders, the building of learning communities, or the management of the potential within academic staff, teachers, students, and pupils. These challenges, in turn, compel educators to seek new strategic approaches—approaches that harness the human resources and untapped potential of teachers, learners, and parents alike.

Despite a growing body of research focused on the teaching profession, educational institutions, and recent modernisation efforts, effective systemic solutions are still unsatisfactory. Addressing this gap, the conference aimed to fulfil the following objectives:

1. To identify emerging trends in human resource management within education.
2. To disseminate innovative practices in managing human capital and optimising teachers' personal potential—both in the context of individual growth and the cultivation of learning communities.
3. To explore perspectives on development in relation to teachers' life satisfaction and their professional fulfilment.
4. To determine key factors influencing teachers' personal and professional development.
5. To assess teachers' psycho-physical well-being and competencies in light of socio-cultural and civilisational shifts.
6. To promote contemporary scientific reflection and research on teachers' roles in times of change and the opportunities this presents for managing their professional development.

In response to the evolving dynamics of the profession, and in alignment with the objectives outlined above, the conference organisers sought to build on current research and educational practice to support the professional development of in-service teachers and more effective management of their potential. This vision was brought to life through a scientific event that gathered 139 distinguished participants representing 62 academic institutions from Poland and 26 countries across the globe, including: Japan, the United States, Canada, Israel, Spain, Hungary, Greece, Italy, South Africa, Portugal, Lithuania, Cyprus, Romania, Albania, Moldova, Kazakhstan,

Bulgaria, Sri Lanka, Saudi Arabia, and New Zealand, among others. The conference structure comprised four plenary sessions accompanied by discussion panels, along with ten thematic sections addressing specific areas of interest.

### **Plenary Session I**

The opening lectures for the first plenary session were delivered by distinguished speakers, setting the stage for in-depth discussions. The Honorary Guest of the Conference, Professor Bogusław Śliwerski, PhD, Doctor honoris causa (multiple), University of Łódź, Poland, presented on “Teacher as Authority or Wisdom Keeper?”. This was followed by Professor Hirofumi Hamada, University of Tsukuba, Japan, with his address entitled “Let’s Make Reforms to Realise the Vision of Teachers Who Think and Continue to Learn Autonomously!”. Professor Joanna Madalińska-Michalak, University of Warsaw, Poland, contributed a lecture on “Enhancing Teacher Education through European Teacher Academies: The Role of TAP-TS in Fostering Reflective Professional Learning”, while Professor Dr Mustafa Yunus Eryaman, Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University, Turkey, delivered an insightful presentation on “Harnessing AI and Big Data for Evidence-Informed School Evaluation: A Multi-National, Longitudinal Project Approach to Enhancing School Excellence”. The session and its discussion were jointly moderated by Professor Joanna Madalińska-Michalak and Professor Marcin Kaźmierczak, Universitat Abat Oliba CEU Barcelona, Spain.

### **Plenary Session II**

The second plenary session featured the following keynote addresses: Professor Dr Remigijus Bubnys, Vilnius University – Šiauliai Academy, Lithuania, spoke on “Embodied Professional Development: Pathways to Growth in Teacher Education and Reflective Professional Practice”; Professor Rafał Piwowarski, The Maria Grzegorzewska University, Poland, explored “The Image of the Teacher in the Light of Selected Research”; Associate Professor Masashi Asakura, University of Tsukuba, Japan, presented “Changes in the Teaching Profession and New Challenges in Lesson Study in Japan”; and Professor Jan Heystek, North-West University, South Africa, delivered a remote lecture on “School Leadership Development and the Improvement of Quality Education for All Learners”. This session was moderated by Professor Rafał Piwowarski and Professor Dr Remigijus Bubnys.

### **Plenary Session III**

The third plenary session included the following thought-provoking contributions: Professor Anna M. Mungai, Adelphi University, New York, USA, addressed “Key Issues and Challenges in Teacher Education in the USA: Adelphi University School of Education’s Success in Teacher Training”; Professor Istvan Zsigmond, The Sapientia Hungarian University of Transylvania, Romania, discussed “Artificial Intelligence in Education: Challenges and Opportunities”; Professor Vincenzo Piccione, Università Roma Tre, Italy (online), presented on “Changes Impacting Teaching Styles and the Case for Educational Sustainability”; and finally Professor Dr Jeremy Delamarter,

College of Education and Counselling, St. Martin's University, USA (online), delivered a lecture on "People Teaching People: Education and Humanity in the Age of AI". Professor Istvan Zsigmond and Associate Professor Bogdan Stańkowski, Ignatianum University in Kraków, Poland were moderators of this session and the accompanying discussion.

#### **Plenary Session IV**

The final plenary session included the following introductory presentations: Professor Dr Andreas Hejj, University of Pécs, Hungary, offered a critical reflection entitled "Initiation – What Is Missing from the Education of Western Youth"; Associate Professor Stefan T. Kwiatkowski, The Christian Theological Academy in Warsaw, Poland, spoke on „Positive Education in School and Classroom: Key Areas, Challenges and Benefits”; Associate Professor Anna Perkowska-Klejman, The Maria Grzegorzewska University, Poland, presented on "Academic Tutoring as a Space for Developing the Reflectiveness of Future Teachers"; finally, Associate Professor Judy Larsen, University of the Fraser Valley, Canada (online), shared early findings from her work on "Co-Teaching in Building Thinking Classrooms: Professional Learning, Surprise and Systemic Change". This session was moderated by Professor Andreas Hejj and Associate Professor Stefan T. Kwiatkowski.

The discussions that followed the plenary sessions led to the identification of several key research categories that are highly relevant to the study of the teaching profession and the preparation of future educators. Among the highlighted areas were the need to initiate or continue research—especially comparative studies—into:

- » innovations and the application of modern technologies in teacher education;
- » strategies for working with pupils with special educational needs and those from diverse cultural backgrounds;
- » teachers' personal and professional development;
- » human resource management within the teaching profession;
- » teacher reflectiveness and its role in shaping effective educational practice.

These categories were recognised as critical for advancing both theoretical understanding and practical approaches within the field of education.

The plenary sessions also served as a conceptual prelude to the presentations and discussions held throughout the conference, both within the plenary framework and during the thematic section meetings. This structure enabled participants and organisers alike to engage deeply with the conference themes and to contribute substantively to the discussions across ten thematic sections:

1. *Management of Educational Processes in an Inclusive School* Moderators: Assoc. Prof. Bogdan Stańkowski (Ignatianum University in Kraków, Poland), Prof. Ariel Fuchs (Gaia College Academy of Applied Science, Israel), and M.A. Naofumi Yoshida (Yamagata University, Japan).
2. *The Pre-school Teacher as an Inspirer of Children's Creative Development* Moderators: Prof. Panayiota Metallidou (Aristotle University of Thessaloniki,

- Greece) and PhD Anna Mróz (University of the National Education Commission in Kraków, Poland).
3. *Educational and Cultural Safety from the Perspective of Effective Leadership* Moderators: Prof. Istvan Zsigmond (Sapientia Hungarian University of Transylvania, Romania), Assoc. Prof. Sławomir Banaszak (Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, Poland), and PhD Candidate Michał Pierzchała (John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin, Poland).
  4. *Mathematics and Technology Education: Managing Students' Potential in Modern Schools* Moderators: Prof. Dorin Afanas ("Ion Creangă" State Pedagogical University of Chişinău, Moldova) and Assoc. Prof. Aleksy Kowalski (Korczak University, Poland).
  5. *Youth Confronting Contemporary Challenges: Personal and Career Management* Moderators: Assoc. Prof. Małgorzata Kuśpit (Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin, Poland) and PhD Katarzyna Jagielska (University of the National Education Commission in Kraków, Poland).
  6. *Work Engagement and Job Satisfaction in the Context of Teacher Well-being Management* Moderators: Assoc. Prof. Joanna M. Łukasik (University of Agriculture in Kraków, Poland) and Assoc. Prof. Norbert G. Pikuła (University of the National Education Commission in Kraków, Poland).
  7. *Managing Diversity in Education* Moderators: Prof. Ledia Kashahu (Xhelilaj), University "Aleksandër Moisiu" – Durrës, Albania, and PhD Natalia Twardosz (Pontifical University of John Paul II in Kraków, Poland).
  8. *Digital Competences and Artificial Intelligence in Education* Moderators: Prof. Dolapo Adeniji-Neill (Adelphi University, USA) and PhD Agnieszka Muchacka-Cymerman (Humanitas University in Sosnowiec, Poland).
  9. *New Educational Challenges – Between Inclusion and Exclusion* Moderators: Prof. Valentin Constantinov and PhD Victoria Stratan (both from "Ion Creangă" State Pedagogical University of Chişinău, Moldova).
  10. *Key Areas and Tasks in Education* Moderators: Assoc. Prof. Piotr T. Nowakowski (University of Rzeszów, Poland) and PhD Anuradha Iddagoda (University of Sri Jayewardenepura, Sri Lanka).

As a result of the rich discussions held within these thematic sections, researchers initiated collaborative efforts focusing on the core topics addressed. This has led to the development of several international academic initiatives, including the co-organisation of a forthcoming congress planned for 2027 in Kraków.

In addition to its scientific, research, and educational dimensions, the conference also offered participants a variety of aesthetic and cultural experiences. These included two curated photography exhibitions: "Spaces of Everyday Life" by PhD Seweryn Puchała (Pontifical University of John Paul II in Kraków, Poland) and "The Waking Kraków" by Alicja Jagielska (AGH University in Kraków, Poland). Participants also enjoyed a dedicated classical music concert "Love and Reflection – Memories Hidden Deep in the Heart", performed by outstanding Kraków-based musicians and

students from the Krzysztof Penderecki Academy of Music in Kraków. Additionally, guided tours of St. Mary's Basilica (Kościół Mariacki) were organised and led by art historians.

The second edition of this international conference, part of a planned biennial cycle, has reinforced the importance of international cooperation and scholarly dialogue focused on the teaching profession and teacher education. The conference's core mission—to encourage joint research projects and promote innovation in teacher training—has not only strengthened academic networks but has also fostered the development of pedagogy and pedeutology. The outcomes of shared research efforts will be reflected in forthcoming scientific publications, reports, and practical applications. Thanks to this event, academic bonds were deepened, and the community of researchers committed to advancing educational research and practice was broadened—one that transcends both disciplinary boundaries and national borders.