

## EDUCATION OFFER OF CIVIL-MILITARY HIGHER-LEVEL INSTITUTIONS USING MALF IN WROCLAW AS AN EXAMPLE

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### Abstract:

*Since the beginning of the 1990s, for over a decade, Poland experienced an education boom, springing from social ambitions and the population boost. It is history now. At the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century this trend started to decline. In accordance with the estimates such a state of affairs can continue until 2025. Higher education institutions do not exist in the void, nor do they operate as islands. Therefore, it should be asked how, under these circumstances, a civil-military higher-level institution, such as the Military Academy of Land Forces (MALF), can be competitive on the demanding education market? How will it attract the most talented students? What should be the focus of the Academy?*

### Key words:

*civil-military schooling system, military academy, training, education, MALF*

## INTRODUCTION

The year 1989 marked a breakthrough for Poland. It was the start of the system transformation in our country, which affected almost all spheres of social life. The tertiary education sector was not immune to these changes, either. The initial outburst of non-public educational establishments (being closed for the last few years), changes regarding the majors in numerous tertiary institutions, and sometimes their consolidation, and first of all a demographic decline – are just some of the factors that have to



be taken into consideration by these institutions to enable them to persist and develop.

The military schooling system holds an interesting and important position in the tertiary education sector. It can be exemplified by a paper on the history and the present of the Military Academy of Land Forces written by Lieutenant Colonel Krzysztof Nowacki, Ph.D., and published in *Bellona* quarterly<sup>1</sup>. The above-mentioned paper makes also a contribution to the discussion on the present condition of civil-military higher-level institutions on the demanding and competitive education market and to the broader considerations regarding the future of the military schooling system as a whole.

The purpose of the article is to describe the Wrocław Academy as a modern institution adapted to market realities. It will be supported by the conducted SWOT analysis, synthetically outlining the characteristics of MALF and its environment.

### 1. BRIEF HISTORY OF MALF

During the years of service for the nation and its Armed Forces the Polish military schooling system created many core values and standards. MALF would refer to them throughout its existence, irrespective of the political circumstances prevailing in respective historical periods. This subject was often discussed in the literature, from the perspective of both the education system in general<sup>2</sup>, and respective educational institutions<sup>3,4</sup>. At present, a wide range of publications are available, recounting the history of the Polish military schooling system during its different periods. Starting from the history of the Nobles' Academy of the Corps of Cadets<sup>5</sup>, through the education system in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and up to the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the most recent years. The 20<sup>th</sup> century was not a uniform period in our country's history, which had its imprint on the schooling system. Its beginnings date back to the onset of the process of paving the way to independence<sup>6</sup>, but it developed with equal dynamism along with the army's revival after 1918<sup>7</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> K. Nowacki, Wyższa Szkoła Oficerska Wojsk Lądowych we Wrocławiu. Przeszłość i teraźniejszość, [in:] "Kwartalnik Bellona" no. 3/2015, p. 163-175.

<sup>2</sup> Vide: S. Rutkowski, Zarys dziejów polskiego szkolnictwa wojskowego, Warszawa 1970; J. Karwin, E. Pomianowski, S. Rutkowski, Z dziejów wychowania wojskowego w Polsce, Warszawa 1969.

<sup>3</sup> Vide: Cz. Grzelak, Wyższa Szkoła Piechoty w Rembertowie 1948-1954, Warszawa 1984.

<sup>4</sup> Vide: D. S. Kozerański, Wyższe szkolnictwo wojskowe w Polsce w latach 1947-1967, Wydawnictwo Neriton, Warszawa 2005.

<sup>5</sup> Vide: K. Mrozowska, Szkoła Rycerska Stanisława Augusta Poniatowskiego, (1765-1794), Wrocław – Warszawa – Kraków 1961; J. Z. Matuszak, Akademia Szlacheckiego Korpusu Kadetów (we wspomnieniach absolwentów), [in:] "Wojsko i Wychowanie" Pismo żołnierzy zawodowych WP, no. 11/1999, Warszawa 1999, p. 92-98.

<sup>6</sup> Z. Moszumański, Z. Kozak, Wojenne szkoły dla oficerów artylerii (1914-1921), Oficyna Wydawnicza Ajaks, Pruszków 2002, p.159.

<sup>7</sup> J. Celek, Skrzydlata szkoła. Dęblińska Szkoła Lotnicza w latach 1925-1939 i wojenne losy jej wychowanków, Poznań 2000, p. 263.

The next chapter in its history covers the years of World War Two and the military schooling taking place both in the East<sup>8</sup>, and in the West. Many papers in the literature focused on the military education conducted after the year 1945, that is already after the end of warfare operations. These are both monographs on individual establishments<sup>9</sup>, and synthetic studies on the entire educational activity<sup>10</sup>.

The Military Academy of Land Forces is the successor of progressive traditions of the Polish Armed Forces and military education, dating back to the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. They were initiated by the establishment of the Knights' School in Warsaw, on 15 March 1765. The Knights' School, founded by King Stanisław August Poniatowski, played an important role in the development of the Polish Army at its final stage before the partitions of Poland and during the struggle for independence. Its influence on our nation's political life at the turn of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries could not be overrated. During almost 30 years of its activity the School had nearly one thousand graduates, including, among others, Tadeusz Kościuszko, Jakub Jasiński, Julian Ursyn Niemcewicz, Maurycy Hauke, Karol Kniaziewicz, Stanisław Fiszer, Stanisław Mokronowski, Michał Sokolnicki, Karol Sierakowski and Józef Sowiński. Then, the staff of officers continued education at the Corps of Cadets in the Duchy of Warsaw and the Infantry Officer Cadet School in the Kingdom of Poland.

During the times of annexation and in the years preceding the Great War prospective officers were educated in numerous Polish military schools in exile. After regaining independence in 1918, the armed forces recovered their national character and military education started to develop dynamically. The military academies established at that time, including, among others, the Infantry Officer Cadet School in Ostrów-Komorów, the Engineering Officer Cadet School in Warsaw or the Cavalry Officer Cadet School in Grudziądz, performed a prominent role in preparing the army's command staff of the Second Polish Republic. The traditions of the Infantry Officer Cadet School in Komorów near Ostrów Mazowiecka, founded in 1917, are particularly important to the community of MALF. The Academy itself, as the place where the command staff is "forged", has made a considerable contribution to the tradition of the Polish military science.

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<sup>8</sup> Cz. Grzelak, *Wojenna edukacja kadr Wojska Polskiego na froncie wschodnim 1943-1945*, Warszawa 2004, p. 303.

<sup>9</sup> Cz. Grzelak, *Wyższa Szkoła Piechoty w Rembertowie 1948-1954*, Warszawa 1984, p. 259; Z. Głuszczyk, J. Karwat, *Wyższa Szkoła Oficerska Wojsk Pancernych im. St. Czarnieckiego. Tradycja i współczesność*, Poznań 1994, p. 160; *Rozwój techniki wojskowej – kształcenie inżynierów dla potrzeb Wojska Polskiego w XX wieku. 50 lat Wojskowej Akademii Technicznej*, Warszawa 2000, p. 250.

<sup>10</sup> D.S. Kozerański, *Wyższe szkolnictwo wojskowe w Polsce w latach 1947-1967*, Warszawa 2005, p. 409; *Z dziejów szkolnictwa i rozwoju techniki w Wojsku Polskim*, pod red. nauk. J. Skowronka i Z. Trejnisa, cz. I i II, Warszawa 1992, p. 314; *Z dziejów szkolnictwa i rozwoju techniki w Wojsku Polskim*, pod red. nauk. J. Skowronka i Z. Trejnisa, cz. III technika – polityka – etyka, Warszawa 1992, p. 191.

The initiative to inherit the traditions of the Infantry Officer Cadet School was approved by the Minister of National Defence and the process of their adoption was concluded with the relevant Decision taken by the Minister<sup>11</sup>.

Graduates from the School in Komorów and from other military schools functioning in the period of the Second Polish Republic were put to the sternest test in September 1939, and in the subsequent years, taking part in the fights on the front lines of World War Two. At that time, an important role was played by schools of land forces in Crawford (Great Britain), in Latrum (Palestine) and also in Ryazan (the USSR), where in June 1943, a Divisional Officer Cadet School was established. It existed to 1945. More than 2,000 of its graduates served in the Polish First and Second Armies and in the 1<sup>st</sup> Armoured Corps, fighting in the battles on their way from Lenino to Berlin and the Elbe. After the war the school was transferred to Kraków, where it functioned as the Infantry and Cavalry Officer School for two more years. In October 1944, the Engineering Officer School was founded in Przemyśl. In the second half of the 1940s, both schools were moved to Wrocław. In September 1962, the Infantry Officer School in Wrocław was renamed the Tadeusz Kosciuszko Mechanised Infantry Officer School.

In 1967, as the armed forces' demand for highly qualified staff was increasing, all officer schools were given the status of tertiary education institutions. At the beginning of the 1990s, due to a reduction in the armed forces, some of these institutions were dissolved. In 1994, from the existing higher-level military institutions three academies were formed: the Tadeusz Kosciuszko Military Academy in Wrocław (established as a result of the merger of the Military Academy of Mechanised Infantry and the Military Academy of Engineering), the Stefan Czarniecki Military Academy in Poznań and the Józef Bem Military Academy in Toruń.

The contemporary history of the Military Academy in Wrocław started on 1 October 2002, when, pursuant to the Regulation of the Council of Ministers of 18 December 2001, relying on the potential offered by the Military Academies in Wrocław, Poznań and Toruń, the Military Academy of Land Forces was established, with its seat in Wrocław. In August 2003, the Academy was named after its patron, General Tadeusz Kościuszko (Decision of the Minister of National Defence No. 237/MON of 27 August 2003, on naming after its patron the Military Academy of Land Forces in Wrocław).

## 2. POSITION OF MALF ON THE EDUCATION MARKET

The concurrent positioning of the Wrocław Alma Mater in the structures of both the Ministry of National Defence and the national tertiary education system defines its specific character and the essence of preparing graduates for service for Poland in both military and civil areas. MALF operates under fierce competition conditions. On the part of civil-military higher-level institutions the competition is fuelled by the Mili-

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<sup>11</sup> Decision of the Minister of National Defence No. 133/MON of 15 April 2014 on the inheritance of the traditions of the Infantry Officer Cadet School by the General Tadeusz Kościuszko Military Academy of Land Forces in Wrocław.

tary University of Technology in Warsaw, the Polish Naval Academy in Gdynia and the Polish Air Force Academy in Dęblin. In the direct environment, i.e. in the Lower Silesian Province, the competitors on the market of civil tertiary education are represented by 13 public and 25 non-public establishments.

MALF educates candidates for professional soldiers (from the beginning of its operation the Academy graduated more than 33,000 officers) and, since 2009, also civil students, specialists in security and management. This convergence of the military and civil worlds is highly beneficial for both parties. It provides the possibilities of exchanging experience, bringing different perspectives on the solution of the same problems or learning how to cooperate, e.g. in special interest groups or sections<sup>12</sup>. Thus, the historical form of relations between the army and the society can also be preserved.

### 3. CURRENT EDUCATION OFFER

The basic forms of education at MALF are bachelor (1<sup>st</sup> degree) and master (2<sup>nd</sup> degree) programmes, offered as a full-time or part-time study, at the Faculties of Management and National Security. Graduates may seek and are offered employment, apart from the Armed Forces, with the institutions of the Ministry of National Defence and the Ministry of Internal Affairs, government and self-government administration, academic research institutions, implementation centres, culture and education institutions, tertiary education establishments, defence industry sector, and civil and military cooperation sector, which is under a fast-track development, as well as other institutions providing services to the multinational allied forces.

Furthermore, MALF provides postgraduate studies addressed to people who want to expand their knowledge of crisis management aspects. The relevant education offer includes two-semester postgraduate courses, "Crisis Management in Contemporary Organisations" and "Crisis Management in the State Security System". Educating the staff for the needs of the Armed Forces forms an important part of the activity, apart from the five-year study for officer trainees. The Academy runs the Officer Commissioning Courses offering a three-month course (doctors, paramedics, musicians, chaplains of all religions), six-month course (non-commissioned officers with distinguished service records, holding a master's degree), eight-and-a-half-month course (legal service, economists) and twelve-month course (IT specialists, privates holding a master's degree).

The Academy enables professional soldiers and armed forces employees to enhance their language skills. Qualification courses are also organised, to reach the ranks of lieutenant and captain, and advanced qualification courses up to the rank of brigade staff officer. In general, this form of education is chosen by about 1,300 soldiers a year.

The name of the Academy may also suggest that its education efforts focus on and concern the largest formation of the Armed Forces – the Land Forces. It could not be more misleading. During numerous specialist courses the Academy prepares also sol-

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<sup>12</sup> [online]. Available on the Internet: <http://wso.wroc.pl/pl/kola-i-sekcje-inne.html>.

diers serving with the Polish Air Force, Special Troops, the Polish Navy, the Armed Forces Support Inspectorate, the Command of Warsaw Garrison and the Military Gendarmerie.

**Table 1.** Educational tasks accomplished by MALF in 2015 (recipients of education 2014/2015) and planned for completion in 2016 (planned recipients of education 2015/2016)

STUDY MAJORS		STUDENTS							
		MILITARY		CIVILIANS				TOTAL	
				FULL-TIME		PART-TIME			
		2015	2016	2015	2016	2015	2016	2015	2016
MANAGEMENT	I <sup>o</sup>	405	531	229	236	46	63	967	1068
	II <sup>o</sup>	149	98	61	85	77	55		
NATIONAL SECURITY	I <sup>o</sup>	-	-	452	324	243	196	1312	1072
	II <sup>o</sup>	-	-	314	318	303	234		
SECURITY ENGINEERING	I <sup>o</sup>	37	55	78	123	16	15	148	232
	II <sup>o</sup>	-	-	17	39	-	-		
POSTGRADUATE COURSES		29	29	-	-	18	18	47	47
QUALIFICATION, ADVANCED QUALIFICATION AND LANGUAGE COURSES		1119	1488	-	-	-	-	1119	1488
MILITARY TRAINING (MEDICAL CORPS)		295	-	-	-	-	338	295	338
COMMISSIONING COURSES (12-, 8.5-, 6-, 3-MONTH COURSES)		110	296	-	-	-	-	110	296
TRAINING COURSE FOR RESERVISTS/NATIONAL RESERVE MILITARY FORCE		251	207	-	-	-	-	251	207
TOTAL		2366	2704	1151	1125	703	919	4220	4748

Source: Own work

Studies at MALF require a lot of effort and pose challenges. Apart from focusing on the typical academic disciplines such as mathematics, physics or management, students take part in numerous practical classes, a significant share of which are conducted on the military training grounds.

As part of the classes students undergo parachute, skiing, horse riding and mountaineering training. All this is done bearing in mind that "*the more sweat on the training field, the less blood on the battlefield*". Students can develop their qualifications participating in the activities of Research Groups. In respective groups different camps and training courses are organised. Thus, it is possible to obtain, already in the course of the study, additional licences, highly useful in future jobs.



#### 4. THE ACADEMY'S LEARNING FACILITIES AND STAFF

The Academy has ample and diverse training infrastructure. Apart from modern lecture theatres, auditoriums, foreign language studios and computers labs, it makes available to students, among others, "Śnieżnik", a small arms educational and training system, with which individual soldiers can learn and practise their shooting skills and which makes it possible to direct a squad's fire, and VBS3 (Virtual BattleSpace 3), a tactical simulation training system. MALF can boast of being the only owner in Poland of the PACAST system (Polish Academy Command and Staff Trainer), used for simulating tactical operations from the platoon to division level, and SK1-Pluton, a comprehensive tactical simulator of a motorised infantry platoon equipped with Rosomak AMV. The European Social Fund provided the finance for building and equipping two laboratories – for physics and strength of materials.

In its plans for the years 2016-2019, MALF provides for the construction of a modern tactical and technical laboratory comprising, among others, a Laser Shooting Simulator, a trainer for practising procedures to call for artillery support and air support, a Spike ATGM launcher trainer, a GROM AAM launcher trainer, a UAV trainer, a fire support management system simulator, a radio access network simulator (computer simulator including the integration with radio stations) and a training package related to the design and use of armament and military equipment (vehicles), relying on augmented and virtual reality. Soon, the Academy will also gain a crew simulator and a Rosomak AMV driving simulator and the Battlefield Management System.

Apart from providing the training that makes use of the state-of-the-art equipment the Academy seeks to ensure that its students have the appropriate accommodation and social and cultural conditions, and creates the opportunities for developing individual abilities, passions and hobbies. Well-equipped teaching rooms available for students include auditoriums, lecture theatres, laboratories and specialist workshops. Field base facilities comprise exercise yards, an obstacle course, rifle ranges, specialist field centres, including the "Wysoki Kamień" Training Centre in the Sudety Mountains, the "Raków" Horse Riding Centre and sports facilities (sports stadium, tennis courts, asphalt playgrounds for team sports, indoor swimming pool, bodybuilding gym and martial arts gym). Wrocław students and young academics have access to libraries, reading rooms and the academic information centre.

The advantage of MALF is its experienced research and teaching staff. Pursuant to the requirements of the State Accreditation Committee and the provisions of the Higher Education Law, the Academy has in its structures the relevant number of senior academic staff members, i.e. Professors and Doctors of Science.

**Table 2.** Qualifications of academic staff

QUALIFICATION LEVEL	PROFESSIONAL SOLDIERS	CIVILIAN ACADEMIC STAFF	TOTAL
PROFESSOR	1	8	9

QUALIFICATION LEVEL	PROFESSIONAL SOLDIERS	CIVILIAN ACADEMIC STAFF	TOTAL
DOCTOR OF SCIENCE	4	17	21
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY	47	35	82
HIGHER EDUCATION (2 <sup>nd</sup> degree) (M.A./M.Sc., M.Sc. Eng., medical doctor/	56	51	107
TOTAL	108	111	219

Source: Own work

As MALF is under continuous development, the number of research and teaching positions increases. Taking into account the employment of higher education teachers with academic titles and degrees, it should be noticed that all from among eight academics holding the title of Professor are Full Professors. The Academy is able to attract the top level academic staff. All newly created Full Professor positions are smoothly taken up by valuable scholars with an outstanding record of academic achievement, recognised also in the civilian environment.

At the start of the academic year 2014/2015, for the first time in the history of MALF, the positions of assistants were included in the structure. Eight assistants were employed and this number has been increased by one this year.

**Table 3.** Employment of civilian academic staff by position

POSITIONS	NUMBER OF ACADEMIC TEACHERS	
	2014	2015
RESEARCH AND TEACHING POSITIONS		
Full Professor	7	8
Associate Professor	18	17
Visiting Professor	5	5
Assistant Professor	31	32
Assistant	8	9
TEACHING POSITIONS		
Senior Lecturer	8	8
Lecturer	15	18



POSITIONS	NUMBER OF ACADEMIC TEACHERS	
	2014	2015
RESEARCH AND TEACHING POSITIONS		
Instructor	3	2
Foreign Language Teacher	12	12
TOTAL	107	111

Source: Own study

## 5. AREAS OF NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

In MALF students interested in taking up an individual or team sports activity can join one of the lively sports sections (e.g. Close Contact Combat, Mountaineering Training, Military Patrol Race or Soccer). Apart from obvious benefits derived from doing sport reasonably (health) students have the opportunity to integrate into the academic environment by taking part in league games (e.g. the WROCBAL amateur soccer league).

The Academy is the meeting place for scholars, both those wearing uniforms and civilians. Scientific conferences organised regularly in cooperation with other tertiary education institutions or meetings focused on dispositional groups provide an excellent platform for exchanging experience. Examples of the above include the conferences "Society and War" (co-organisers: the University of Wrocław, Fakultät Für Soziale Arbeit Hochschule Ravensburg-Weingarten, the Faculty, the University of Łódź, Polskie Towarzystwo Nauk o Bezpieczeństwie /the Polish Society for Security Sciences/ and the Polish Sociological Association<sup>13</sup>) or the scientific symposia "Modern Technologies in Military Training" (co-organiser: Research and Development Centre for Mechanical Appliances "OBRUM"<sup>14</sup>).

The Academy occupies a permanent place in the landscape of the Lower Silesian capital. The staff and officer trainees, always ready to help, took part in the construction of a rotunda to house the Panorama of the Battle of Raclawice and provided assistance to the inhabitants of Wrocław during the floods in 1997 and 2010. The impressive graduation ceremonies or the Officer Cadet Day celebrations attract numerous supporters and friends of the Academy<sup>15</sup>.

The Military Academy of Land Forces has been cooperating with foreign partners for many years. The cooperation focuses mainly on exchanging experience relevant for

<sup>13</sup> [online]. Available on the Internet: <http://wso.wroc.pl/pl/aktualnosci-wnob/aktualnosci-wydzialu-nob/1755-iv-miedzynarodowa-konferencja-naukowa-z-cyklu-spoleczenstwo-a-wojna.html>.

<sup>14</sup> [online]. Available on the Internet: <http://www.obrum.gliwice.pl/test-content1/iii-symposium-naukowe-nowoczesne-technologie-w-szkoleniu-wojsk>.

<sup>15</sup> [online]. Available on the Internet: <http://wroclaw.naszemiasto.pl/artukul/obchody-dnia-podch-orazego-we-wroclawiu-zdjecia,1636773,artgal,t,id,tm.html>.

educating professional staff for the needs of land forces. The Academy's staff and students become familiar with the education process and military service conditions in other armies and participate in joint internships and training. The scientific cooperation between academies is also further promoted.

International cooperation is an important aspect of modern education. Therefore, MALF takes part, among others, in Culture Understanding and Language Proficiency, Erasmus+ Programme, Strategic Partnership aimed at creating a programme for an international semester (partnership between five military higher education institutions from Poland, the Czech Republic, Austria, Romania and Hungary), the International Military Academic Forum (IMAF, gathering representatives of military academies and institutions from the UE, Canada, the US and Turkey), Peace Support Operations course for officer trainees (PSO Course, participants include officer trainees from MALF and foreign partner academies), international championships for military higher education institutions<sup>16</sup>, climbing and mountaineering training, the European Military Initiative on Exchange of Young Officers, the European Military Academies Commandants Seminar, and the International Symposium on Development of Military Academies.

MALF maintains extensive contacts with foreign military academies. It represents the Polish Armed Forces at the Baltic Sea Military Academies Conference, formed by military academies from Denmark, Norway, Finland, Sweden, Germany, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and Poland.

Furthermore, since 1995, the staff and officer trainees have participated in the international NATO exercises under the Partnership for Peace programme, gaining the knowledge and experience of peace support operations.

Professional soldiers from MALF took part in the missions in Iraq and Afghanistan, successfully completing their tasks in the training teams designed to prepare the command staff of the Iraqi army. The Academy's staff served also as observers in many missions of NATO and the UN, e.g. KFOR, UNIFIL and UNDOF. The conclusions drawn and experience gained during foreign missions provide the basis for continuous modifications of the education process and acquainting students with the latest training solutions.

Officer trainees are successful participants of the "Xtream" survival courses organised by the University of Defence of the Czech Armed Forces in the Czech Republic<sup>17</sup>, or the "Winter Survival" competitions, hosted by the General Staff of the Czech Republic and the University of Defence in Brno<sup>18</sup>. The list of achievements includes also the first place in the Italian Raid Commando, an international competition in Italian Lom-

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<sup>16</sup> [online]. Available on the Internet: <http://www.polska-zbrojna.pl/home/articleshow/10511?t=Miedzynarodowe-Mistrzostwa-Uczelni-Wojskowych>.

<sup>17</sup> [online]. Available on the Internet: <http://www.wojsko-polskie.pl/pl/nauka-i-szkolnictwo/szkoly-wojskowe/19293,wiesci-z-wsowl.html>.

<sup>18</sup> [online]. Available on the Internet: <http://www.polska-zbrojna.pl/home/articleshow/6375?t=Zimowy-sukces-podchorazych>

bardy<sup>19</sup>, and a silver medal won in the international reconnaissance exercise of the British Army, "Cambrian Patrol 2013", considered to be one of the most demanding contests in Europe<sup>20</sup>.

Under the international exchange programme the Wrocław Academy is visited by, among others, French cadets from the Special Military School of Saint-Cyr Coetquidan. Officer trainees from MALF return the visit and, as part of the international semester, they can undergo the "Stage aguerrissement" training in tropical rainforests in French Guiana<sup>21</sup>. Polish students attended the classes for prospective commanders at Fort Benning in the US, famous for, among others, its extreme Ranger courses<sup>22</sup>.

## 6. ACTIONS PROMOTING MALF ON THE EDUCATION MARKET

The Military Academy of Land Forces puts in place a number of initiatives related to the promotion of the Academy, preparatory service, the National Reserve Military Force, professional military service and the Polish army traditions and patriotic attitudes.

One of the most effective promotional activities is the participation in education fairs organised by tertiary establishments, schools and other military and civilian institutions. The most important of these include: Poland International Education Fair "Perspektywy" organised in Warsaw and Wrocław<sup>23</sup>, the Educational Trade Fair Career Festival in Małopolska organised in Kraków<sup>24</sup> and the International Rzeszów Fair<sup>25</sup>.

The representatives of MALF take part in the meetings with young people taking their GCSE exams to present the principles of admission applicable to military and civil courses and the specific character of the Academy<sup>26</sup>. Such meetings are organised together with the Military Draft Offices in, among others, the following Provinces: Dolnośląskie, Łódzkie, Śląskie, Małopolskie and Kujawsko-Pomorskie. Every year camps are organised for the uniformed services forms of the upper secondary schools coop-

<sup>19</sup> [online]. Available on the Internet: <http://www.kresy.pl/wydarzenia,bezpieczenstwo-i-obrona?zobacz/podchorazowie-z-polski-najlepsi-w-europie#>

<sup>20</sup> [online]. Available on the Internet: <http://www.wroclaw.pl/podchorazowie-ze-srebrnym-medalem>

<sup>21</sup> [online]. Available on the Internet: <http://wroclaw.wyborcza.pl/wroclaw/1,35771,19209850,wojskowy-erasmus-w-sercu-dzikiem-dzungli.html#ixzz3ruqYzHC#BoxLokWroclmg>.

<sup>22</sup> [online]. Available on the Internet: <http://www.wojsko-polskie.pl/pl/z-zycia-wojska/24651,podchorazowie-na-kursie-dowodzenia-w-usa.html>.

<sup>23</sup> [online]. Available on the Internet: [http://www.perspektywy.pl/portal/?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=4&Itemid=115](http://www.perspektywy.pl/portal/?option=com_content&view=article&id=4&Itemid=115).

<sup>24</sup> [online]. Available on the Internet: <http://www.targi.krakow.pl/pl/strona-glowna/aktualnosci/archiwum-aktualnosc/ponad-15-tys-osob-na-targach-edukacyjnych-festiwalu-zawodow-w-malopolsce.html>.

<sup>25</sup> [online]. Available on the Internet: [http://edukacja.targirzeszowskie.pl/?page\\_id=1304](http://edukacja.targirzeszowskie.pl/?page_id=1304).

<sup>26</sup> [online]. Available on the Internet: [http://wroclaw.wku.wp.mil.pl/pl/7795\\_10430.html](http://wroclaw.wku.wp.mil.pl/pl/7795_10430.html).

erating with the Academy. Their objective is to foster patriotic values and familiarise the participants with the basics of military demeanour<sup>27</sup>.

The Academy has also engaged in undertakings in cooperation with non-government organisations to promote the Polish Armed Forces. The most important ones include Zjazd Chorągwi Dolnośląskiej (the convention of the Lower Silesian Regiment of the Polish Scouting and Guiding Association<sup>28</sup>), the Children's University<sup>29</sup>, the Great Orchestra of Christmas Charity<sup>30</sup> and the contest "Uczę się bezpiecznie żyć" (I learn to live safely<sup>31</sup>). MALF organises, in cooperation with the Lower Silesian Province Governor, the Lower Silesian Competition "Jestem bezpieczny w domu, w szkole i na drodze" (I am safe at home, at school and on the road<sup>32</sup>).

Promotional and informational activities comprise also the publication of information about the principles of enrolment and admission conditions applicable to the Academy's courses in articles appearing in regional newspapers, in informational leaflets handed out during promotional events and on the Academy's website ([www.wso.wroc.pl](http://www.wso.wroc.pl)). Furthermore, informational materials containing the data on the education offer are distributed to the state administration offices, regional education boards and Military Draft Offices.

The main sources of information for prospective MALF students include the website ([www.wso.wroc.pl](http://www.wso.wroc.pl)), a social media site – facebook.pl, the infoline operated by the Recruitment Section and the promotion specialist, meetings organised as part of promotional actions, the Open Days and individual school trips. Moreover, the information is published in supplements on education in the national press and made available through TV and radio broadcasts.

The conducted promotional activities, apart from disseminating the information about the education offer and enrolment principles for prospective students, aim at maintaining the high confidence enjoyed by the Polish Armed Forces in the society. This goal is also pursued during the celebrations of regional and state events and the Academy initiatives.

The staff, armed forces employees, officer trainees and students attending the civilian study majors participate, among others, in the anniversary celebrations of the birthday of Tadeusz Kościuszko, the ceremony of taking military oaths, the Siberian Exiles Day,

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<sup>27</sup> [online]. Available on the Internet: <http://www.polska-zbrojna.pl/home/articleshow/16330?t=Klasy-mundurowe-szkola-sie-na-poligonie>.

<sup>28</sup> [online]. Available on the Internet: <http://www.gazetawroclawska.pl/artykul/909571,wroclaw-harcerze-w-rynku-czyli-zlot-choragwi-dolnoslaskiej-zhp-zdjecia,id,t.html>.

<sup>29</sup> [online]. Available on the Internet: <http://www.uniwersytetdzieci.pl/lectures/show/3945>.

<sup>30</sup> [online]. Available on the Internet: <http://promilitaria21.org/fresh/showpage.php?pageID=252&idgtxe11=17522>.

<sup>31</sup> [online]. Available on the Internet: <http://www.spkatarzyna.pl/2015/05/nasi-uczniowie-w-dolnoslaskim-konkursie-ucze-sie-bezpiecznie-zyc/>.

<sup>32</sup> [online]. Available on the Internet: <https://www.kuratorium.wroclaw.pl/okno/52349.pdf>.

the anniversary celebrations of the Battle of Racławice, the State Flag Day, the national holiday celebrating the 3 May Constitution, the commemorations of the end of World War Two, the celebrations of the Day of Veterans of International Military Operations and the International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers, the first commissioned rank promotion ceremony, the Polish Armed Forces Holiday celebrations in the Wrocław Market Place, the Community Ceremony of Inauguration of the Academic Year, the celebrations of the National Independence Day and the Officer Cadet Day.

Promotion on the Internet is focused on the information about the enrolment principles and admission conditions applicable to the Academy's courses. The target group is formed mainly by upper secondary school pupils, students and higher-level institutions graduates. In addition, the current news regarding the most important events happening in the Academy has been placed on the Academy's website and informational portals.

Moreover, a banner promoting MALF is displayed at the rifle range of the National Defence League in Wrocław and boards with the information on MALF as well as informational leaflets presenting the principles of admission and study majors are placed in the upper secondary schools with which the Academy has signed a cooperation agreement.

Promotional activities perform an important role in building the Academy's positive image. They add prestige and ensure the appropriate ceremonial setting for the celebrations of state holidays and anniversaries. Thus, the Academy makes a significant contribution to the strengthening of patriotic values of Lower Silesia inhabitants and to the formation and development of the Polish Armed Forces' positive image.

The Internet site, the Academy's profile on facebook.pl and contacts with media representatives during the events important for the Academy have occupied a significant role in the Academy's system for promotion and providing information for prospective students.

Promotional activities should still be focused on attracting candidates for civil and military courses, specifically taking into account the competition posed by other tertiary institutions active on the market.

The Military Academy of Land Forces improves its website, being the publicly available source of information about the Academy. Taking into account the prevailing market trends the emphasis should be placed on promotion via the Internet (electronic media, social networking sites, mobile platforms).

The high level of promotional activity of other higher education institutions justifies the further participation in all kinds of educational exhibitions and fairs at both the regional and national level. It is also reasonable to continue the cooperation with the Military Draft Offices and the Provincial Military Staffs in organising meetings with young people from upper secondary schools. Furthermore, the distribution of promotional gadgets should be carried on as they reach a wide range of people.

## 7. SWOT ANALYSIS

A SWOT analysis is a tool for investigating and identifying the Strengths and Weaknesses of MALF, as well as the existing and potential Opportunities and Threats presented by the external environment.

### 7.1. Strengths

- unique character owing to the combination of specific features of military and civilian institution;
- campus facilities well-developed and situated close to each other;
- a wide range of students' research groups and sports sections;
- implemented electronic communication platform for students (Virtual Dean's Office);
- functioning of the MALF Convent – a body whose function is to express opinions and give advice and whose task consists in, among others, promoting the system of teaching and research conducted at the Academy as the significant element of the security system of the State, the system of education and the tertiary education sector, and the higher-level military education system. To this aim the Convent takes part in the works contributing to the development of personal and professional traits of MALF graduates and supports the Academy in implementing the state-of-the-art teaching solutions and methods of conducting research for the purposes of the State's defences;
- the Academy's positive financial result.

### 7.2. Weaknesses

- lack of a Visual Identification System;
- poor functionality of the website (obsolete design, problems with viewing on mobile devices, lack of intuitive features);
- outside perception of a low level of education quality;
- low level of involvement on the part of some academic staff in acquiring research funding and conducting research;
- insufficient promotion of the Academy;
- incorrect flow of information and reluctance to start cooperation between the Academy's units;
- lack of appropriate stimuli to identify with the Academy itself and its objectives.

### 7.3. Opportunities

- Wrocław being an academic centre with a highly favourable image;
- extensive cooperation in the area of higher education offered by the academic centre (cooperation within the Board of Rectors of Wrocław and Opole higher education institutions, the activity of the Wrocław Academic Centre);





- good employment prospects;
- possibility of better tailoring of the learning offer to the labour market needs, owing to a greater freedom in creating study majors, the National Qualifications Framework and the possibility of offering courses with a practical profile, with the participation of business entities, as provided for in the Higher Education Law;
- continuing worldwide trend for increasing expenditure on research and development;
- decreasing number of non-public education institutions in the region, resulting from demographic changes.

#### 7.4. Threats

- demographic decline;
- high cost of living (applicable to civilian students),
- it takes a long time to reach the Academy and moving around Wrocław is also time-consuming;
- strong competition (for the Faculty of Management in particular) posed by other public tertiary institutions in the region;
- competition created by non-public higher-level establishments which are capable of responding quickly to changes in the expectations concerning the education offer.

#### CONCLUSIONS

The General Tadeusz Kościuszko Military Academy of Land Forces has rich traditions. The Academy's advantages include its experienced staff, teaching facilities and education offer adapted to the labour market. However, the competition on the education market is strong and a demographic decline poses a threat to the functioning of higher education institutions. To strengthen the position and prestige of MALF it is necessary to build its image, promote its academic, teaching and sports achievements as well as its education offer, and develop good relations with the local community.

MALF enjoys the benefits of having a good brand, built for many years of its existence. Therefore, there are no problems with recruiting officer trainees for the military study majors. It is also facilitated by the profits received by candidates for professional soldiers: guarantee of employment, free of charge accommodation, full board and uniform, and pay, which during the last year of study totals about PLN 2,400.

These are civilian students who should be particularly addressed and any actions taken to attract them should be effectively supported by a wide use of Internet tools and keeping up with educational trends. It should be remembered that the website is the basic source of information about the Academy and its offer. It is fundamental that the site should be easily viewed by users of mobile devices. The site has to be transparent, well organised, intuitive and graphically attractive, to encourage the viewer to become acquainted with its content. The current version of [www.wso.wroc.pl](http://www.wso.wroc.pl) does not meet these standards and requires improvement.

Young people perceive the period of study as the phase of keeping the balance between the time devoted to education, personal development and building social links. The location of the Academy in Wrocław provides the opportunity that should be embraced. It is the city with a unique atmosphere, offering a multitude of attractions and activities as a cultural and entertainment centre, hosting numerous cultural and sports events and very friendly to students.

The advantages of MALF should be promoted through web portals, education fairs, cooperation with the media and cooperation with regional administrative authorities and employers. The scholarly potential should be publicised through academic conferences, symposia and seminars, expert opinions for the media, publications of the Academy's staff and also by preparing a programme offer addressed to interested companies and institutions. The strengthening of bonds between the current, former and future students and employees of MALF may not be neglected, either. The above should be achieved by organising meetings between different generations and cultural and entertainment events, and by supporting students in their professional and scholar development (internships, additional classes, specialist courses).

The application of these principles will be rewarded by students' willingness to learn at the Academy.

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