



How International Schools Challenge Authoritarian Education and Advocate for Inclusion and Diversity: A Case Study of LGBTQ+ Students in Poland.

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Poland

- **Central and Eastern Europe CEE) tendency for 'democratic backsliding' (Cianetti, Dawson, and Hanley 2018)**
- **Democracy is deteriorating (Kochenov 2008; Sedelmeier 2014)**
- **visible illiberal nationalism (Cianetti, Dawson, and Hanley 2018)**

- Authoritarian policy of education
- University of Gothenburg 2023 (V-Dem Institute) Report: DEMOCRACY REPORT 2023; Poland mentioned next to China, Iran, North Korea, Saudi Arabia

Authoritarian government in Poland 2015-2023

1

Opposition march for "tolerant, open, European Poland" in Warsaw ahead of elections



Protests in Warsaw June 2023
Law and Justice is a **right-wing** populist and national-conservative political party

2



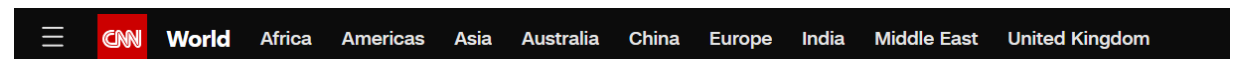
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Poland election: Tusk's opposition eyes power after pivotal vote

October 2023 elections
75% of Poles took part
Political change



Poland's opposition has path to oust populist ruling party, exit poll shows



Right wing populists

In Poland 2015-2023

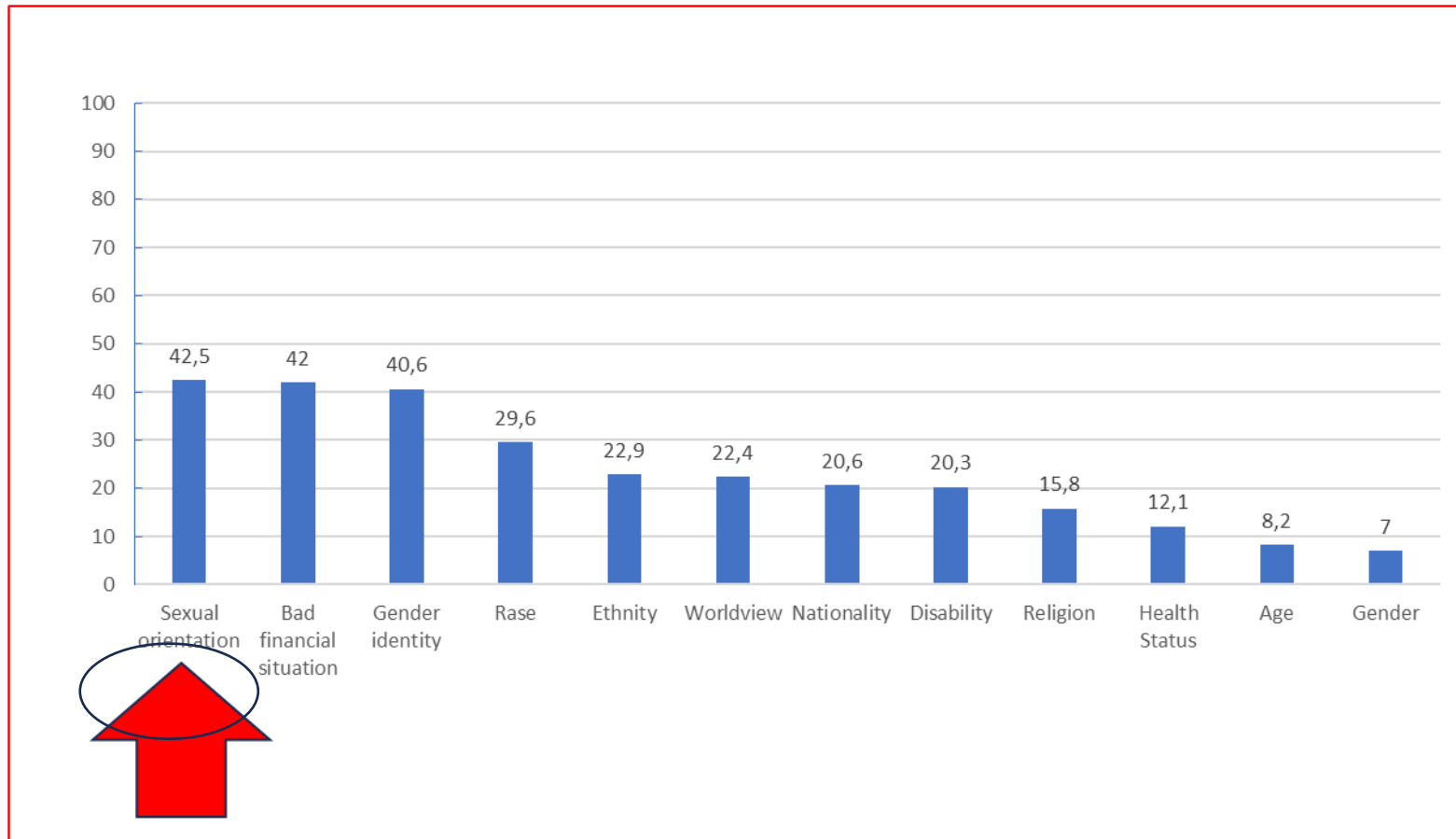
❖ **Polarisations** between „we” and „the others”

❖ **Social Conservatism**

- ✓ Emphasis on Tradition
- ✓ Family Values
- ✓ Religious Influence
- ✓ Moral and Ethical Standards
- ✓ Resistance to Progressive Social Change
- ✓ Nationalism and Identity
- ✓ Limited Government
- ✓ Anti-immigration Stance

No antidiscrimination education in Poland

- Teachers about discrimination in Polish schools





European Commission Report 2020 (Students perspective)

Legal gender recognition in the EU. The journeys of trans people towards full equality

69% of Polish students participating in the study "always" or "often" experienced or witnessed negative comments or acts towards LGBT people in the school environment

Indoctrination *via* national education

Centralised system of education (top-down)

Curriculum (teaching content)

In and out of school activities approval (i.e. in cooperation of NGO)

International education out of supervision

- Authoritarian governments – no interest in International education
- In Poland growth in last 10 years of 200% of schools that implement International curriculum
- As of 2023 over 80 schools
- The most popular International Baccalaureate (80%)
- 60% of them are national / public schools where International curriculum is implemented next to national curriculum

Example of advocacy within social inclusion

LGBT+ Youth

Top 10 LGBT+ friendly schools (28.000 schools)



Top 10 szkół przyjaznych LGBT w 2023 roku

Oto wyniki ewaluacji 2023. Zebraliśmy blisko 20 000 ankiet. Poniżej prezentujemy TOP10 szkół w Polsce. W TOP10 i zestawieniach regionalnych prezentujemy szkoły, które zostały ocenione przez minimum 15 osób uczniowskich. Wszystkich szkół szukaj na mapie i na liście wyszukując np. po nazwie miejscowości.



- 1 LICEUM OGÓLNOKSZTAŁCĄCE "COLLEGIUM GEDANENSE" (Gdańsk)
- 2 „BEDNARSKA” I SPOŁECZNE LICEUM OGÓLNOKSZTAŁCĄCE IM. MAHARADŻY JAM SAHEBA DIGVIJAY SINHI (Wola)
- 3 XXX LICEUM OGÓLNOKSZTAŁCĄCE IM. JANA ŚNIADECKIEGO (Wola)
- 4 2 SPOŁECZNE LICEUM OGÓLNOKSZTAŁCĄCE Z ODDZIAŁAMI MIĘDZYNARODOWYMI IM. PAWŁA JASIEŃCZY SPOŁECZNEGO TOWARZYSTWA OŚWIATOWEGO (Śródmieście)
- 5 I LICEUM OGÓLNOKSZTAŁCĄCE IM. ADAMA MICKIEWICZA W OLSZTYNIE (Olsztyn)
- 6 XXXVIII DWUJĘZYCZNE LICEUM OGÓLNOKSZTAŁCĄCE (Poznań- Jeżyce)
- 7 IV LICEUM OGÓLNOKSZTAŁCĄCE IM. EMILII SZCZANIECKIEJ (Łódź- Śródmieście)
- 8 I LICEUM OGÓLNOKSZTAŁCĄCE IM. HENRYKA SIENKIEWICZA (Kędzierzyn-Koźle)
- 9 VII PRYWATNE LICEUM OGÓLNOKSZTAŁCĄCE IM. MIKOŁAJA REJA W KRAKOWIE (Kraków-Śródmieście)
- 10 WIELOKULTUROWE LICEUM HUMANISTYCZNE IM. JACKA KURONIA (Praga-Północ)

Distinctive features of antidiscrimination approaches in in-school law in Poland

Comparative analysis



- Analysis of in-school law documents 20 schools without International curriculum

Analysis of in-school law documents 20 schools with international curriculum

Research questions (RQ)

RQ1. What makes schools with international curriculum in Poland open to inclusion and youth diversity?

RQ2. What factors contribute to a more inclusive and supportive environment for LGBT students in terms of in-school law in schools with international curriculum?

Conclusions

- Prevention & intervention
- Inclusivity and Equity
 - ✓ no financial barriers
 - ✓ inclusion diverse learning needs



Inclusion & language

- Prioritizing language proficiency to create an inclusive and diverse learning environment.
- Equipping students with the language and cultural awareness needed to engage with a global community.
- In these schools, inclusion and diversity are not only celebrated but actively nurtured, contributing to a richer and more globally aware educational experience



Acknowledging individual differences

- Respect for individual differences
- Students are encouraged to embrace their unique identities and perspectives, fostering a sense of belonging and acceptance.



Psychologists in schools

- Intervention in cases of discrimination, bullying, or harassment



International curriculum

designed to support diversity



- Diverse Student Body
- Inclusive Philosophy
- Multilingualism
- Inclusivity and Equity
- Community and Service



School with international curriculum in Poland as advocates for discriminate youth



- These schools create safe spaces where students can express themselves freely, nurturing a culture of openness, expression, and acceptance.
- They actively advocate for marginalized youth.
- They serve as resilient bastions against authoritarian policies that aim to compromise these essential values. In doing so, they stand as beacons of hope and progress within the educational landscape within authoritarian educational policies



Thank you

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