

The University Juliusz Słowacki High School, Chorzow, Poland (EU) – general info

Polish educational system is based on three stages: primary schools, high schools and universities.

High schools provide students with four-year education concentrating on either technical or academic subjects.

The Juliusz Słowacki High School in Chorzów has been under the scientific patronage of the University of Silesia since 2007 (that is why its full name is the University Juliusz Słowacki High School).

The Juliusz Słowacki High School, with a vast range of subjects taught, has always been the source of academic knowledge. The principal task and duty of the school is to develop young people's interests and to prepare students for public external examinations and for their future university studies in Poland and abroad.

Another goal of the school, apart from preparing for further education, is to teach young people how to function in the modern world and Europe. All students learn two foreign languages: English and, depending on the class, French, Spanish or German. To make learning languages more effective and interesting our school organizes numerous trips and language camps to Spain, France, Germany and the United Kingdom.

In 1996 European Education classes were introduced as the extra-curricular subject. Students can learn more about the European Union, its history, institutions and opportunities that it creates for the citizens of the member countries. In order to observe the integration process in practice, our school co-operates with schools in many European countries. One of the examples of such a cooperation is the International Mathematical Duel competition that has been organized since 1993 for students from Austria, Czechia and Poland.

We are also trying to make our students and graduates aware of the threats and problems of the contemporary world. We teach tolerance towards other nations, cultures, religions and encourage them to oppose aggression, violence and human rights violations. We show that helping those in need is our moral duty. One of the ways to attain these goals are school geographical expeditions organized since 1991 and aimed mainly at the countries of the south and south-eastern Asia and Africa. During most of the expeditions our students were engaged in volunteering projects like rebuilding a school in Sri Lanka that had been destroyed by tsunami or supporting Nepalese schools and students after 2015 earthquake. Every two or three years students work in Mother Teresa's houses in Kolkata, India.

Although acquiring knowledge and skills is undoubtedly the primary objective of every school, we need to remember that young people want also to develop their interests and passions. Our school gives them every possible chance of doing that by organizing extra-curricular clubs, circles and societies where young people can share their fascinations with others. These are, among others, the Literary Café which gives many concerts in Poland and abroad, Club of History Lovers, European Club, Ecological Club, Economists' Circle, School Sports Club, School Geographical Club *Penepłena*, Volunteers' Club, English Song Club *Fama*, school monthly magazine „SŁOWAK” and many others.

Situated in Upper Silesia, the most densely populated and industrialized region in Poland, our school retains high position in the yearly ranking of high schools organized by the popular monthly *Perspektywy* in cooperation with the Ministry of Education. Among our students and graduates there are a lot of finalists and laureates of national and international competitions related to different subjects. Probably the most well-known graduate of the Juliusz Słowacki High School is Professor Jerzy Buzek – the Prime Minister of Poland from 1997 to 2001 and the President of the European Parliament from 2009 to 2012.

Chorzów is a town situated in the Silesian Upland at the height of 265-341 metres above sea level, within the boundaries of the Silesian Voivodship. This region, with Katowice as its capital city, is inhabited by 4.5 million people. Katowice together with more than a dozen other cities form a specific conurbation where one town borders another. Chorzów, with the population of 93 thousand people, is situated in the very centre of this conurbation. The town is conveniently located – only a few minutes away from the main motorways in the area and 30 km from the Katowice International Airport.

Education is one of the main functions of the town. Consequently, about 50% of the town's budget is spent on it each year.