



# FOLK HIGH SCHOOL FROM THE PRACTITIONERS' PERSPECTIVE

Selected pedeutological and methodological aspects

Editor: Angelika Felska

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# Introduction

This publication is the result of the ERASMUS+ program “A teacher of Folk High School against the challenges of modern Europe” (TechMe in short).

The project was implemented in cooperation with 5 institutions from three European countries:

- West Pomeranian Folk High School in Mierzyn, Poland;
- Folk High School in Brenderup, Denmark;
- Folk High School in Radawnica, Poland;
- Folk High School in Seddiner See, Germany,
- Adamów commune, Poland.

This publication is the result of the work carried out as part of the project, describes in detail the curriculum used in the training course, planned and initiated at the West Pomeranian Folk High School, and thanks to the contribution of all participating partners, it shows the diversity of approaches to methodology, organization of courses and characteristics of the teacher’s work at folk high schools (hereafter FHS).

In additions, as part of the project, a course for teachers working at participating folk high schools, a scientific conference in Szczecin and a number of online meetings were carried out.

The aim of the project is to prepare teachers to apply the well-received methodology and teaching methods known from the Danish FHS. This methodology has shown its strength in aspects of lifelong learning, and thus provides and incentive for increased participation in courses that support students with a low level of basic skills. In Poland, there are many people in rural areas at risk of exclusion from the labor market or educational offers, which is why we will work on improving their situation as part of this project.

The publication will serve as an inspiring guide for adult education teachers – with a strong emphasis on the possibility of engaging listeners who, for various reasons, have peripheral contact with the labor market and who face challenges with the formal education offers in the field of raising job competences.



The guide is divided into several chapters, each of which presents different aspects of the role and work of the teacher outside of the formal adult education.

The first chapter presents the characteristics of FHS from its historical origins in Denmark in the mid-nineteenth century to the present day, when the concept has spread to many other countries. It draws attention to the particular emphasis that FHS places on teacher-student collaboration to support the student's ability to achieve greater competences in their adult lives.

The second and third chapters deal with the principles of teacher's work at FHS and how teachers can prepare/educate themselves for this type of work.

The fourth chapter presents the methods and forms of work at FHS and outlines the importance of the teacher having an appropriate pedagogical preparation and a wide range of competences in the actual work of planning, preparing and conducting classes.

The fifth chapter describes a variety of course scenarios that show how each of the participating partner institutions organizes specific subjects in their school.

Chapter six describes how challenges can disrupt pre-made lesson plans and the importance of keeping an open mind about changing your initial plans. The need for constructive communication on the teacher's part in order to overcome the crisis occurring during the course was also outlined.

The seventh chapter describes how the participants perceive their work in the folk high school courses, as well as how the FHS teacher sees their role.

At the West Pomeranian Folk High School, a 240-hour pilot course was prepared, planned and conducted for the target group of people belonging to the NEET = Not in Education, Employment or Training.

The eighth chapter presents the teaching program developed by all partner organizations. The program includes the implementation of a pilot course.

The ninth chapter deals with evolution, which is commonly used in many spheres of social life as well as educational institutions. This chapter provides a broad overview and shows the examples used in the FHS in Radawnica.

The last chapter contains a summary and proposals for alternative sources for folk high school teachers.

Katarzyna Iskra  
(Folk High School in Radawnica)

## Characterization of folk high schools



When characterising folk high schools, it is necessary to start from the genesis of this type of educational institutions. The creator of the idea of folk high schools was a Danish clergyman, philosopher, historian, educational reformer, and politician – Nicolai Fredrik Severtin Grundtvig (1783-1872). His concept of “education for the people”, was reflected in the activities of these institutions. Folk High Schools were supposed to support the universal education of citizens, raise their knowledge level and skills. Folk high schools, in the Grundtvig’s sense, were to counteract social exclusion, serve to promote culture, native history and language, create a sense of unity, identity.

For Grundtvig, the concept of the “living word” was very important, which was to link two worlds together: the world of ideas and the real world. Language should arouse emotions, promote activism. It should be understandable for everyone, but also have a symbolic meaning. According to Grundtvig, language understood in this way should be used in the communication between participants of the education process<sup>1</sup>.

Grundtvig’s pedagogical views oscillated around the reality of life, where everyday contact with nature influences the emergence of a special type of empathy. According to him, this special bond determines the expe-

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<sup>1</sup> K. Pierścieniak, *Models of learning in folk high schools. From practice to theory*. [in:] *Folk High Schools – between old and new challenges*, T. Maliszewski, Małgorzata Rosalska (ed.), Toruń 2016, p. 43.

riences in which the problems of individual, community in which they live, nature, and faith are shown<sup>2</sup>.

Travelling to England, gaining more and more experience as a teacher and moralist, resulted in Grundtvig building his own assumption of three important concepts: democracy – folk culture – adult education. It was also related to the political changes that took place in his homeland. That is why he wanted to prepare the Danish citizens to participate in the greatest possible range of social issues<sup>3</sup>.

The premise of the timeless adult education created by Grundtvig is that the adult education should serve human development and raise the level of their general competences. The versatility of his pedagogical postulates meant that they could be adapted for the needs of folk high schools emerging in other countries. The main goal of creating this type of institution was to create an institutional form of organization for members of society who were excluded from formal education for various of reasons, in which self-improvement would lead the way. At the same time, such an institution would not be another one of many places where knowledge is conveyed<sup>4</sup>.

Grundtvig argued that human development resources lie in the personal competences, therefore the curriculum should be versatile enough that everyone could begin learning in this type of school. Promoting such values as: history, tradition, myths, legends, influenced the perception of a folk high school as a cultural institution, which will contribute to development of the individual and the whole community<sup>5</sup>.

According to Grundtvig, there should be three types of interactions between the teacher and adult folk high school students, classified as:

1. Interpersonal interaction – consists of appropriate relationship between the teacher and the adult student. The aim was to develop the resources hidden in the individual, to make people aware of the quality of the already acquired knowledge, and to give the right direction of the adults' thinking.
2. Team interaction – referred to the postulate about creating collegial bodies in student institutions, the task of which was collect various data on the process of joint learning. Grundtvig's premise was that the folk high school was welcome to people with different backgrounds. Collecting information about the expectations of these peo-

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<sup>2</sup> Ibidem, p. 43.

<sup>3</sup> Ibidem, pp. 44-46.

<sup>4</sup> Ibidem, p. 47.

<sup>5</sup> Ibidem, p. 47.

ple towards the content discussed during class, learning their opinions on the teachers' didactic work or talents, interests of members of the group learning together, what was to influence the appearance of their reflections, increase the level of educational impact and guide them towards the "education for life".

3. Social interaction – refers to the direct contact with works of culture. The analysis of songs, sagas, parables, or chronicles which are the testimony of the times, was to have a greater educational value for adult students than using traditional textbooks<sup>6</sup>.

Nowadays, folk high school emphasize on self-development of the individual in combination with the development of the civic awareness and preparing them to take an active attitude in the life of society, including the local community, sensitization to its problems and needs, to be the initiator of positive changes. The acquired knowledge and skills are to meet the current life and social needs. The implementation of these concepts is possible, among others thanks to the curriculum flexibility, which is needed in a rapidly changing reality. Which is characteristic of this type of educational organisations and is in a way complementary to the systemic, formal education.



**Photo 1. Folk High School in Radawnica – Pottery workshops (photo by Katarzyna Sypniewska)**

<sup>6</sup> Ibidem, pp. 49-50.

The acquisition of new knowledge and skills is to contribute to building the so-called “life wisdom”, which equips a person with more competences, creates self-esteem. The implementation of these concepts is possible thanks to their basis on the following principles and values<sup>7</sup>.

1. Mutual respect, interactions and partnership between the teacher and the student and the students themselves.
2. Creating a learning community by acquiring the ability to function and work in a team. Promoting such values as: democracy, shared responsibility, community, teamwork skills, solidarity, and empathy.
3. The holistic nature of education, resulting from the perception of man as a whole, moving away from specializing in one field, emphasizing on such values as: personal development, discovering one’s own talents, developing one’s potential, building motivation for further development etc.
4. Putting more emphasis on practice than theory. The learning process must have a real reference to life, it cannot only rely on the acquisition of textbook knowledge. It should be practical and shape such attributes as: commitment, activity, entrepreneurship.
5. In the process of education, the master-pupil relationship is important, based on the active participation in the master’s work, listening to their instructions and gradual independence in the tasks performed.
6. Freedom to express one’s own views and to conduct open dialogue. Thanks to this, values such as: freedom, the ability to express one’s views, the ability to debate, tolerance and acceptance of people who think differently is developed.
7. Freedom in choosing a worldview.
8. Using the living word technique, promoting culture, history, care for the native language, regional and national traditions, respect and attachment to the place of origin, patriotism.
9. The overarching goal of a folk high school is “awakening, revitalizing and educating students who understand how to combine what is local and regional with what is national”.
10. Using modern technology in the educational and learning process, which will allow to avoid digital exclusion.
11. The teaching process at a folk high school should take into account modern technological achievements and develop digital competences in accordance with contemporary principles of methodology<sup>8</sup>.

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<sup>7</sup> T. Maliszewski, *Folk High Schools – an educational open-air museum or an effective remedy for contemporary civilization challenges?* [in:] M. Gromadzka (ed.) *Spaces and places of adult education in Poland*, Warsaw 2018, pp. 214-215.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 214-215.

The tasks that are carried out by folk high schools these days consist of:

1. Promoting mature patriotism and respect for the historical accomplishments of the nation while respecting others' differences.
2. Promoting civic education and building a civil society, the development of local democracy and the idea of social partnership.
3. Undertaking inclusive activities for the benefit of groups/environments and socially excluded/disadvantaged individuals.
4. Implementation of cultural tasks – including the protection of cultural heritage and multifaceted regional education.
5. Support in the development of the self-education movement and amateur artistic and cultural activity in small local communities.
6. Developing key competences enabling functioning in the social, political, professional, and personal life.
7. Conducting vocational education in the selected fields with a holistic approach to the individual and their needs.
8. Promoting ideas and practical solutions in the field of sustainable socio-economic development of the local community in the region and nation.
9. Conducting free time classes, developing the individual needs of members of the community in which the institution operates.
10. Preparation for understanding an accepting civilizational change taking place in the modern world<sup>9</sup>.

Folk high school as a school for life should confirm an individual's belief that they are able to create their own lives and is able to bear responsibility for it. It should give a chance for comprehensive development of the individual, not only in the cognitive and social sphere, but also in the emotional one. This is important in order to prevent the widening differences between particular social groups, discouraging from taking action and raising cultural awareness<sup>10</sup>.

Since the appearance of the first folk high schools, the role of this type of education has changed. The means used in the educational process and the forms of its organization have changed. The characteristics of the social environment in which adult education institutions operate today have also changed. Contrary to the changes taking place, it can still be assumed that education at a folk high school fosters intergenerational bonding and the transfer of specific values and behavior patterns, especially important for the local community<sup>11</sup>.

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<sup>9</sup> Ibidem, pp. 216-217

<sup>10</sup> M. Byczkowski, *Folk High School – „School for Life”* [in:] *Folk High School – School for Life*, M. Byczkowski, T. Maliszewski, E. Przybylska (ed), Wieszca 2003, p. 363.

<sup>11</sup> K. Pierścieniak, op. Cit, pp. 74-75.





**Photo 2. Folk High School in Radawnica – Iconography workshops (photo by Katarzyna Sypniewska)**

Contemporary folk high schools face many challenges and tasks. Whether they will be achieved depends on people and their perception, understanding such concepts as: community, unity, empathy for other people and their needs.

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## Vocational training of a Folk High School teacher



Who is a Folk High School teacher? It is difficult to unequivocally answer this basic question, the difficulty is due to several reasons. First of all, Folk High Schools have not yet received (although the National Folk High School Network is trying to take action in this area) legislative regulations that would define its function. Thus, there are no regulations specifying who can be a teacher at such (niche) institutions. Secondly, folk high schools in Poland (but not only) have a strongly specified profile, meaning the only available subjects are, for example, ecology or artistic studies. Such activity, based on the institution's own profile, requires the employment of people with various competences. Thirdly, most commonly, such institutions do not complete their courses by issuing the participants with certificates confirming the acquisition of specific qualifications, which does not require the employment of specially trained teacher with a permit. However, one should be aware that not every teacher is fit to teach at a folk high school. This is due to the need of having specific qualifications, identification with Grundtvig's pedagogy and the methods and forms of work used there. So, who is a folk high school teacher? Narcyz Kozłowski wrote in 1981:

*A folk high school teacher should be a friend, consultant, truth and trust for their students. It is not the teacher who penetrates the pupils' ego, their conscience, but the pupils themselves delve into this wisdom, the solidity of the teacher. Only then the teacher can influence the hot and rebellious heart of the youth. And here, a great*



*pedagogical knowledge is necessary to delve into everyone and each one individually*<sup>12</sup>.

Such a view is already quite outdated, but nevertheless it still reflects the uniqueness of a folk high school teacher. An educator at a folk high school is a partner of their students. The relationship between them is unconventional, because it is with the students that the curriculum and often methods and forms of work as well are determined. However, what characterizes a folk high school teacher is most and foremost their work based on Grundtvig's pedagogy, and thus, as Erik Lindsø (longtime headmaster of one of the Danish folk high schools) writes:

*You cannot be a folk high school teacher without having many different skills. It is often shown that the best lecturers at a folk high school are people who can talk freely about the subject. Although they do not possess any formal education in this field, they do, however, are passionate about it*<sup>13</sup>.

This difficult role, which should be fulfilled by the folk high school teacher according to the Danes (the fathers of this idea) is based on a specific decalogue<sup>14</sup>:

1. *"Learn a quarter of a hundred stories by heart", because according to the Danes' assumptions, work at a folk high school is based on the "living word", i.e., the ability to tell passionately on various topics and enable the students to actively participate in the class,*
2. *"Avoid being too superficial", which means that the teacher should be able to express their opinion on a given subject, without giving only fragmentary and perfunctory answers,*
3. *"Constantly look upon important questions about life", a folk high school teacher should be open, tolerant and respect the differences of others. Matters important for a contemporary man should be crucial to them as well, even if they do not identify with them privately. The teacher should not underestimate them,*
4. *"Break the patterns of thinking and acting", which means that the teacher should not act routinely and schematically. Each course, each class, each group of students is different. Such situations require a lot of flexibility from the teacher,*

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<sup>12</sup> N. Kozłowski, *Ideas of a contemporary folk high school*, [in:] *With people towards people*. Report from the 2nd Congress of the Folk High School Society, ZK ZMW, Warsaw 1982, p. 17.

<sup>13</sup> E. Lindsø, *The Decalogue of a Folk High School Teacher*, [in:] T. Maliszewski, (ed.) *School for Life. A guide to contemporary folk high schools*, Kashubian Folk High School, Wieżyca-Grzybów 2016, pp. 101-102.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 101-106.



Photo 1. West Pomeranian Folk High School – Macrame workshops (photo: Lidia Król)

5. *“Be a preacher to the helpless”, that is, to not let themselves “lower the bar”, even when the students lose their willingness and enthusiasm for work,*
6. *“Get involved in life outside the folk high school”. **As folk high schools are institutions operating in a social environment,** its teachers should not forget about that, thus act on its behalf and cooperate with residents, as well as local authorities and other entities.*
7. *“Take care of the traditions in your own environment”, because it is the teacher’s responsibility to cultivate contacts with the entire folk high school community, but also take care of their own institution,*
8. *“Respect your school without waiting for praise”, which means that **working at a folk high school, one should not expect recognition and awards, but have the satisfaction of working for the benefit of the school and students,***
9. *“Love life and be willing to change the world”. Only a man who loves life is ready to work at a folk high school, and thus contribute to participating in transforming their student and the change of the world,*
10. *“Instill civil attitudes among the pupils”. A folk high school teacher should remember their duty to their country. Through education and work with people, they have a unique opportunity to build civic attitudes and shape democracy.*

Following in the Danes' footsteps, the above decalogue is a "signpost" in the work of a folk high school teacher. The teacher should not forget their duties, because the work of a teacher-educator has an impact on the student and their life. A teacher at a folk high school, by establishing a partnership with their students, allows said students to participate in the teaching process, not just learning. Constant reflection on their own actions carried out by a folk high school teacher, allows them to adjust both the methods and forms of work to the current situation, and not only carry out the ones they have planned and prepared in advance. This approach means **that the teacher should be prepared and open to changes**. However, after introducing the change, they should reflect on why the change was needed, what initiated it, and whether making this change brought the expected result. As Mieczysław Malewski writes in one of his texts, permanent change is the challenge for the contemporary adult educator. In order to be able to cope with these changes, an adult educator should be (in Angelika Felska's opinion) a reflective practitioner. All this means that a folk high school teacher can be anyone who, in the opinion of the headmaster of the institution, meets the above personality traits, has practical skills necessary to conduct specific classes and identifies with the methods and forms of work at above-mentioned institutions.



Photo. 2. West Pomeranian Folk High School – Workshops as part of the Academy of Local Social Worker (photo: Lidia Król)

There are no formal requirements which would impose on the heads of folk high schools the employment of people with minimum qualifications. Thus, a teacher at a folk high school can be both a person with a professor title, as well as “Mr. Smith”, who has finished 5 years of primary school, but is, for example, the only person in the region creating endangered folk art. Thanks to such autonomy, the headmasters of folk high schools must have a large dose of intuition when employing teachers, but also be able to present the expectations that a folk high school teacher who candidates for this position should meet.

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## Principles of teacher's work at a Folk High School



Undoubtedly, any pedagogical activity will depend on the people participating in it. However, the leading role is taken by a teacher-educator. Nowadays, in the face of constant social changes, there is also a need to redefine the role of the teacher. The perspective of their tasks is also being transformed, which currently includes among others – in Andrzej Radziejewicz-Winnicki's opinion – the need to make a scrupulous description of reality, the ability to interpret it, building ideas and values with a global reach, performing experimental and advisory activities, as well as initializing creative actions. Such a situation – a situation of permanent change – causes that the teacher is constantly faced with new challenges which condition their work. As rightly so Ignacy Solarz noticed 80 years ago:

*A high school, in the Grundtvigian sense, is the teachers. Not the organization, not the rigid curriculum, but them as a living curriculum, their personalities with a clear idea and love for it. School alone will not educate the educators – they must have congenital predispositions<sup>15</sup>.*

Thus, the teacher working at the School for Life is its “heart”. One can – or even should – wonder how the indicated by Solarz “congenital predispositions” manifest. The leading disposition of a folk high school teacher should be the ability to adopt a partnership attitude in relations with their

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<sup>15</sup> I. Solarz, Rural Orkan High School, Institute of Adult Education, Warsaw 1937, p. 10.



students. A teacher cannot be a man who thinks they have superiority over their own listeners. Rather, a teacher should be a pupil's guide and friend. As well as remember that they bear responsibility for the future fate of their students, because through their own work they help build the students' civic and patriotic attitude. A teacher working in such an institution of adult education is a social activist who prepares subsequent generations of activists.

An obvious matter, but worth pointing out, seems the fact that an educator at a folk high school should identify with its ideas and Grundtvig's views. In such a job one cannot pretend, cannot be an educator "just a little bit" in a School for Life. Such inconsistency in views and a lack of identification with the folk high schools' ideals will be quickly detected by the students as well as the institution's staff. Thus, as Tomasz Maliszewski says:

*How to become a folk high school teacher cannot simply be taught. (...) this job can only be performed by someone who fulfills a number of certain conditions. A master's degree and specific professional skills may be an asset, but to become a full-fledged teacher at a School for Life, you need much more<sup>16</sup>.*

It is safe to assume that the Author, saying "much more", meant teacher's predispositions and numerous competences – both professional and personal. A teacher working at a folk high school should also be a man with a high level of flexibility, a reflective practitioner who deeply reflects both on their own professional activity and the need to update their knowledge.

In 2003, as a result of the international project Folk High School – School for Life, a scientific monograph was published, edited by Marek Byczkowski, Tomasz Maliszewski and Ewa Przybylska. In one of his texts, Marek Byczkowski<sup>17</sup> draws attention to the importance of the issue of work competence of a folk high school teacher. According to the Author, the competences of a teacher at a folk high school are as follows:

- Ability to empathize, directness, strong personality, high level of skills and knowledge in the selected field, communicativeness, ease of making contacts, ability to have conversations and discussions, as well as listen to others,

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<sup>16</sup> T. Maliszewski (ed.), *School for Life. A guide to contemporary folk high schools, Kashubian Folk High School*, Gdańsk-Wieżyca 2016, p. 107.

<sup>17</sup> Marek Byczkowski, born in Chmielno, where he's been interested in culture, traditions and history of his „Little Homeland” since his school years. Author, lecturer and a retired in 2018 principal of the Kashubian Folk High School (since 1982). Always involved in the development of Kashubia and Pomerania, taking into account the historic and contemporary multiculturalism of this region.



**Photo 1. West Pomeranian Folk High School – Workshops as part of the “Budget in a nutshell” course (photo: Anna Kryszkiewicz)**

- Be ready to unconditionally server others with passion and commitment (...),
- Flexibility related to the possibility of creating a class schedule by the listeners themselves, therefore being open to their needs and expectations towards the classes,
- Good contact with the social environment of the institution, a sense of its capabilities and expectations, awareness in its problems, needs and vision of the development of the region etc.,
- (...) focusing on understanding the situation of another person, accompanying them in designing an action strategy, considering their needs, aspirations and capabilities<sup>18</sup>

Another area related to educator’s work at a folk high school, are the actions performed by them. The number of an adult educator’s functions is as collective as the environment of their listeners. Therefore, for some an adult educator must be a moderator, initiator or informant, and for others a mediator, advisor, instructor or guide. However, all these tasks are linked by the issue of their absolute authority. And as Lucjan Turowski points out:

<sup>18</sup> M. Paczkowski, *Folk High School – School for Life*, (in:) Byczkowski, Maliszewski, Przybylska (ed.): *Folk High School – School for Life, Kashubian Folk High School, Wieżycza 2003*, p. 357.



*An educator should be a liberating authority for the students, awakening lasting cognitive and self-educational inspirations in the participants of the course. They should have a personal charm. To stimulate the students to reflect, to work on themselves and teamwork. Striving towards overcoming social and mental resistance<sup>19</sup>.*

On the pages of Polish folk high schools' history there are such educators (undeniably respectable) as: Ignacy Solarz and his wife, Feliks Popławski, Narcyz Kozłowski, Antoni Ludwiczak, Antoni Kozieł, Józef Kret or Waldemar Babinicz. Of course, these are only few examples among a much greater number of prominent teachers, founders and activists at folk high schools. Among the contemporary activists and educators, one should mention Marek Byczkowski<sup>20</sup>, Barbara and Mirosław Mincewicz<sup>21</sup>, Monika Wolańska<sup>22</sup>, Ewa Smuk-Stratenwerth<sup>23</sup> and others.

Concluding the reflections related to a teacher working at the School for Life, it is also worth getting acquainted with the catalogue of traits of such adult educator, which Lucjan Turowski proposed in one of his texts about folk high school teachers:

*It must be a teacher who does not accept routine in educational and didactic work and is a creator-educator; appreciates the role of intellectual and emotional element in education; loves people, so is kind to their pupils and trusts them; is an optimist; draws no attention to themselves, but on issues, matters and the social truth; is a good example to follow; constantly educates themselves and can create a habit of self-education in their students; does not virtue-signal, but educate with their good deeds; has no prejudice towards anyone, is demanding towards themselves and their students; is social; can make sacrifices for their pupils and strongly commits to their educational and didactic duties; critical and self-critical; works consistently, with a high mental initiative; is always ready to be socially involved; has a suggestive way of conveying knowledge and experiences to their students; can effectively evoke a state of deep intellectual and emotional experiences in their listeners; is morally just<sup>24</sup>.*

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<sup>19</sup> L. Turowski, *Ignacy Solarz's Folk High School and his pupils*, Folk Publishing Cooperative, Warsaw 1970, p. 100-101.

<sup>20</sup> Retired Headmaster of the Kashubian Folk High School.

<sup>21</sup> Barbara Mincewicz – Headmaster of the Poland's oldest Folk High School in Radawnica, operating continuously since 1945; Mirosław Mincewicz – has been a teacher at the Folk High School in Radawnica for 34 years.

<sup>22</sup> Headmaster of the Folk High School of Arts and Crafts in Wola Sękowa.

<sup>23</sup> Headmaster and founder of the Ecological Folk High School in Grzybowo.

<sup>24</sup> L. Turowski, op. cit., p. 100.



**Photo 2. West Pomeranian Folk High School – Knitting workshops (photo: Lidia Król)**

I deliberately cited such an extensive list of characteristics of a folk high school educator to, in conclusion, indicate that not everyone can become a teacher at the School for Life. Setting such high requirements means that not every teacher is able to meet them. Constant cooperation with students, a close relationship (even friendship) with them and the type of daily work make the professional life dominate the entire life of the teacher, often involving their family and friends as well. It can quickly turn out that working at a folk high school has become their whole life. If the teacher be ready for such a sacrifice, they will quickly burn out, which their students will quickly notice.

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# Methods and forms of Folk High School work



## Methods and forms of Folk High School work

Formally speaking, a Folk High School is an adult education institution. The range of courses offered by a Folk High School extends from one-day and multi-day seminars to courses lasting several months. But what determines the quality of a seminar? This question cannot be answered in a general way, because there are numerous factors that affect learning processes: the students, the teacher, the set of learning objectives, the working materials used as well as the resources available (e.g. room, technical equipment, seminar budget) and the (teaching) time available. Not all factors can be influenced equally well and centrally. However, it is important to take a closer look at the factors, which are essential in the subject discussion, because they form the basis for good planning and implementation of a seminar.

At the centre of a learning process are the students, the subject, and the teacher. Their relationship to each other is described in the literature by the so-called "didactic triangle". It illustrates how these three factors are connected to each other.

## The students

At Folk High Schools, learning is usually done by adults, i.e. people who have already left the institutionalised learning of general education schools. They bring with them a wealth of knowledge from their everyday



**Photo 1. KMH – Students play Escape Game (Photo: Bianca Thiel)**

lives and professions, and they already have a personal and professional identity with which to represent their own opinions and interpretations. Accordingly, adults learn in a goal- and interest-driven way. They voluntarily choose the Folk High School as their place of learning because its offers are geared to their life worlds.

### **The topic**

Of course, the topic to be taught plays an essential role, because it is the reason that students choose to attend a seminar. The topic can refer to different areas of human activity: the knowledge, the skills, or attitudes/opinions/mindsets that a person adopts. The relevant material has to be analysed by the teacher and adapted to the students. In the learning process, the students deal with the topic in different ways. Newly acquired knowledge is thereby classified in already existing cognitive and subjective perceptions.

## **The teacher**

The teacher is the central person in the seminar because they plan the teaching and learning process. It is their task to deal appropriately with the learning content and to prepare it. However, since learning is an active process of each individual, it can only be supported from the outside. Therefore, the tasks of a teacher are very diverse and are not limited to the mere transfer of knowledge: they guide the students, cooperates with them, corrects, motivates, gives impulses, and supports. The teacher observes the students on their way to the learning goal and recognises when the students need support.

Folk High Schools represent an understanding of education in which education does not serve to educate someone but to give an impulse so that self-learning processes are set in motion. Statistically, we perceive and remember:

- 10% of what we read,
- 20% of what we hear,
- 30% of what we hear and see,
- 70% of what we see, hear, and reproduce,
- 90% of what we see, hear and do ourselves.

While students have certain preferences about how they learn, it is most effective for seminar design when students process information in different ways and with as many senses as possible. It is common to distinguish between four types of students. They differ in which sensory or perceptual channels a student prefers to use to absorb and process new information:

- the eye (visual),
- the ear (auditory),
- communication with others (communicative) or,
- touch (moto-kinesthetic).

Nowadays, each student is said to have an individual mix of the four basic learning types, because no one learns through just one channel of perception.

## **Planning a seminar**

Good seminar planning is at the beginning of every teacher's work and makes later implementation much easier. Among many other planning



models, the “Modell Didaktische Analyse” by Wolfgang Klafki (1962) is a well-structured planning aid. With the help of 8 guiding questions, individual elements are related to each other and are built upon each other:

1. What competences should the students achieve in the seminar? (Formulation of the overarching learning objective and detailing through sub-objectives).
2. What prerequisites or knowledge do the students have? (Initial situation)
3. What should the students do? (Learning activities)
4. Do the students work individually, in groups or in partnership? (Social and working form)
5. What materials are used to achieve the learning objective? (Teaching/learning materials)
6. What media/aids such as CD players, blackboards, books, cards, transparencies are needed? (Media selection to support the use of the teaching/learning materials)
7. What is the teacher’s task? (Teaching activities)
8. How can it be checked/how can it be seen whether the expected competences have been achieved? (Evaluation)

At the beginning of planning the seminar, the question should be asked which overarching learning objective is to be achieved. Then break it down into sub-objectives (point 1.). Helpful formulations for the sub-objectives are, for example, “The student knows.../can.../can...assess/can...apply”. The students’ previous experiences and knowledge should be taken into account as far as possible (point 2.). The formulated sub-objectives should be achievable and show through observable student behaviour whether and to what extent a student has also achieved the intended learning objective (point 8.).

After the overarching learning objective has been broken down into its sub-objectives, the sub-objectives are put into a meaningful sequence. Each sub-objective is then differentiated in a table with the help of the guiding questions 3.-8.:

All learning activities should encourage students to try things out and to want to explore their environment themselves (point 3.). They should be designed in such a way that as many different senses of the students as possible are addressed and the proportion of action-oriented content is in the foreground. In order to support learning together, the teacher looks for suitable methods and uses different social forms (point 4.). Depending on whether the whole learning group is addressed or divided up, we distinguish between:

- Frontal teaching (a lecture by one teacher in the plenary),
- group work (more than two students cooperate),
- partner work and,
- individual work.

With the help of changing social forms, it is possible to integrate all students into the seminar. This leads to a high learning success because it increases motivation.

Based on this, the teacher compiles suitable teaching and learning materials or creates them himself/herself, which fit the contents and have an activating character for self-doing (points 5./6.).

According to a student and action-oriented seminar design, the students and their learning processes come to the fore. They learn through their own actions. In order for this to succeed, the teacher must think about which activities can be carried out by the students themselves and what they can use to give impulses so that the students can experience themselves as self-effective (point 7.).

It is important for teachers to think about how much time is needed for each learning activity when planning the seminar. Either you can make a note of how long a learning activity will take approximately or you can name the time at which a corresponding activity should start. It is advisable to plan about 15% more time than planned, because unforeseen delays can occur which can upset the planning.

## Conducting a seminar

In principle, communication in a seminar should be based on mutual trust, appreciation, and respect.

In order to build up an arc of tension, the teacher should follow a certain basic structure when conducting the seminar. For this purpose, the seminar is structured into three different phases:

- the initial phase,
- the working phase and
- the final phase.

The three phases can be clearly distinguished from each other, and each has different goals. The amount of time for each phase can be oriented in relation to the time available with 15% (beginning) – 75% (work) – 10% (conclusion).

**The initial phase** serves to get to know each other and to introduce the topic of the seminar. The teacher arouses the interest of the students and creates the first attention for the topic.





**Photo 2. KMH – Hybrid event with live broadcast on Youtube 11/2021 (Photo: Bianca Thiel)**

When a seminar/course starts with unknown participants (students and/or teacher), a short introduction round at the beginning gives all participants the opportunity to get to know each other. This creates trust and enables communication among equals.

The teacher can support the students in entering the topic by asking about individual previous experiences and knowledge. This increases students' motivation and enables them to feel competent.

To give the students orientation at the beginning of a seminar, the seminar plan is presented. At the same time, the teacher and the students can share their expectations with each other. By agreeing with the students on the way to the learning goal, the teacher invites the students to take responsibility. However, students' expectations should only be asked if they are taken into account by the teacher in the further course.

**The working phase** of a seminar is dedicated to the actual content. Here, the teacher introduces new knowledge about the topic and the students discover, practise, and apply thematic content.

In the work phase, the teacher should also include the students' previous experience and knowledge in the learning process and remind them of the knowledge they have already acquired.

In addition to conveying knowledge building blocks, the teacher's task is specially to support the students in working on tasks independently and to help in situations where the students are not very successful. They support the students in recognising their learning outcomes and motivates them to see and tackle learning objectives. Therefore, learning objectives should be very carefully planned and clearly formulated, because from them it can be deduced what exactly the students will be able to do independently or with each other, how they will be able to do it and with what they will be able to do it.

**The final phase** serves to summarise and reflect together in order to support the sustainable impact of the learning processes. It is important to allow enough time for the students to have their say. The teacher can encourage the students to reflect on their learning process by asking specific questions or using feedback forms. Questions can be asked about the content, the way it was delivered, the seminar process, learning together and feelings about the seminar experience. The students themselves decide what and how much they want to discuss with the others. Feedback on the seminar/course offers the teacher and the students security: the teacher can plan the next teaching step and students know that their teacher has them and their prerequisites for the next learning goal in mind.

"Products" (works of one's own creative activity) created in the seminar can be presented and/or exhibited.

If the teacher asks about the students' expectations at the beginning of the seminar, it should also be checked together at the end of the seminar whether the agreed goals of the learning path have been reached and the expectations fulfilled.

In case of open questions, book and material recommendations can be made or information can be sent afterwards by e-mail. If there is a desire for more in-depth knowledge, then a preview of planned follow-up events can be given here.

## **Self-reflection as part of one's own teaching competence**

In order to further develop one's own teaching competence, a teacher should reflect on their own actions after completing a seminar or a respective unit. The feedback of the students, the accumulated teaching experiences as well as the use of scientific theories offer a valuable fund for this. If these are included in the self-reflection, the teacher can further develop their own didactic action on the basis of their already existing competences.

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## In-depth literature:

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- Methods of adult education – micro-didactics (seminar planning): Method pool according to phases of a seminar: <https://mikro-didaktik.de/methoden-der-erwachsenenbildung/>

**Sample course scenarios  
in folk high schools**



# Course scenario from the Folk High School in Adamowo

## Trash and... what's next?

### **The goal of the course:**

- The participant knows what waste is and how it is generated.
- The participant can read the instructions for segregating garbage.
- The listener searches for information on the Internet.
- The participant formulates conclusions regarding the problem of non-segregated litter.
- The participant knows the basic symbols on the packaging.

### **Methods:**

- talking,
- brainstorming,
- expository,
- working on a computer.

### **Form:**

- group,
- individual.

### **Materials:**

- computer station with access to the Internet,
- sheets of great paper, markers,
- photos of the negative impact of littering the environment,
- multimedia film projector,
- instructions for segregating garbage,
- garbage printouts, glue,
- printouts of the symbols visible on the packages.

1. Greeting the participants of the meeting and stating the goals of the course.

2. Using the Internet: The participant gets acquainted with statistical data regarding the production of waste by man – information is sought on the Internet. (approx. 20 min.)
3. What is the wastes' impact on the environment and man? – brainstorming lead by the teacher; use of photos, e.g., contaminated forests and rivers. Writing down the conclusions. (approx. 15 min.)
4. Trying to determine the answer to the question, do we know what happens to the segregated garbage? How are they recycled? Watching the selected video: (approx. 20 min.)  
<https://odpady.net.pl/2021/05/03/co-sie-dzieje-z-naszymi-smieciami-sprawdzilismy-to/>  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RMMJR27RkdI>
5. Reading and discussing instructions on how to segregate trash. Segregating printed out photos/words – choosing from the prepared parts of garbage and gluing them to the right container, e.g., paper to the blue one, plastic to the yellow one etc. (approx. 15 min.), discussing the waste segregation.
6. Talking about the symbols visible on the packaging. Distributing the symbols to the participants and determine what each means. Mentioning e-waste and its storage. (approx. 10 min.)
7. Quiz on waste segregation. Seeking the answers to the questions: What happens to waste? How to segregate it? How can we reduce waste production? (approx. 10 min.)
8. Summary of the course.

# Course scenario from the Folk High School in Radawnica

## Theoretical and practical basics of macramé technique

**Duration:** 5 hours (2 hours of theoretical classes, 3 hours of practical classes).

Moderator: Jolanta Surma

### Goals:

- Cultivating braiding traditions.
- Getting to know the role and value of tradition and cultural heritage in life.
- Shaping handicraft interests and passions.
- Spending free time in an active and creative way.

**Methods:** expository, reporting, practical, influencing activism, individual and group instructions.

**Forms of work:** collective, individual.

**Means of teaching:** the book „Macramé. Flowers woven with string,” written by Jolanta Surma, instructions for making patterns.

**Materials:** cotton braided string 5 and 3 mm, twisted string 3 mm, beads, metal hoops for dream catchers, wooden rings, branches, profiles for wall macramé.

**Tools:** stands, scissors, pliers.

*Theoretical part:* 2 teaching hours

1. Beginning of classes – welcoming the students.
2. Discussion of the basic safety and hygiene regulations of the course.
3. Presentation of theoretical concepts of the string tying technique – macramé.
4. Discussion of materials used in braiding, presentation of basic weaves and bindings, history of macramé, presentation „Magic of weaves”, videoclip „Weaves”.



**Basic knots:**

- wavy knot – spiral,
- flat weaving knot,
- top knot,
- rib knot (threaded)
- Józefina knot,
- band, barrels,
- fishing knot.

*Practical part – 3 teaching hours*

Dream catcher is a circle-shaped amulet. Sometimes it occurs in the form of drops or even tears. Inside the shapes is a grid resembling a spider's web. It is decorated with beads, shells, feathers, strings and ribbons. Dream catchers were most likely first invented and created by native tribals in North America. Catchers are credited with mysterious powers of protection against nightmares. They can be hanged by the window or door frame. The best solution is to tie one to the wall above the bed frame, where it will catch the first rays of the sun. Thanks to this, good dreams will flow down from the feathers directly to our dream subconscious. Nowadays, they are original decorations. We create them with positive energy and this energy will inspire us to further search for artistic space for ourselves.

During the course, we will learn how to put strings on the hoop, calculate the length of the strings, weave the space withing the ring and outside of it.

1. Preparing materials.
2. Weaving according to formula.
3. Exposition of work.
4. End of the course.
5. Evaluation.

# Course scenario from the Folk High School in Brenderup

At Brenderup FHS, the teachers are obliged to make a description of each of their subjects. The paper/file of the description is a demand from the Ministry of Culture and must be produced prior to start of the subject. The description must contain the objective, the content and competence goals for the subject.

The teachers at Brenderup FHS does not make a detailed lesson plan for their subject – the afore mentioned description and the assessment of the learning abilities for that specific group of students will decide the progression during classes.

## Subject description for “Sewing and printing”

### Objective:

- To increase students’ knowledge and respect for resources and crafts
- To strengthen the students’ desire and craftsmanship to work independently in re-designing recycled materials
- To strengthen the students’ joy in and belief in their own creativity
- To strengthen students’ creativity and sense of shapes and colors
- To give the students an insight into the current debate on sustainability/fashion/culture and design
- To strengthen the students’ desire and ability to collaborate on idea and product development
- To strengthen students’ desire and courage to put a personal stamp on products and life

### Content with progression:

#### The course contains

- Sewing on sewing machine and by hand
- Frame printing
- Materials knowledge

- Form and color theory
- Idea development
- Creation of patterns/models and products
- Instruction in correct use of sewing machine and other tools
- Presentations and discussions on sustainability/fashion/design
- Setting up exhibitions and “fashion show”

The difficulty of the various print forms increases as the students’ ability and understanding of the subject develop. At the end of the course, students are expected to challenge their personal expression and technical skills as much as possible, and to work independently with the different print forms.

### **Teaching:**

The subject is predominantly practical with teaching of techniques and methods and theoretical presentations on sustainability/fashion/design. The lessons are mainly held in the textile workshop. With joint presentations from the teacher, students work in pairs, groups or independently to develop ideas and make products. The emphasis is on students working together as much as possible.

Throughout the course, the teacher will challenge each student in developing ideas and designing products, to include considerations of shape, color and the various techniques.

### **Competency Objectives:**

#### **Expectations:**

- increase students’ knowledge and respect for resources and crafts,
- that the students acquire a greater desire, creativity and craftsmanship to work independently with re-designing recycled materials, and that the students’ enjoyment of and belief in their own creativity is strengthened, so that in the future they will have the courage to put a personal stamp on both the craft and their own lives,
- to strengthen the ability of students to cooperate in developing ideas and products,
- strengthen students’ understanding of the current debate on sustainability/fashion/culture and design.

# Course scenario

## from the Folk High School in Seddiner See

**Where Germany is heading- the future of our society after the coronavirus pandemic. What conclusions can the society, economy, governments, and the world draw from the pandemic? Assessment of the current state and conceptions of the peaceful, social, ecological and economic society of the future.**

**Date:** 2021

**Target group:** everyone who is interested in political and social issues.

**Teaching objectives:**

- Outlining the economic, social, political and ecological situation in Germany before 2020.
- A critical approach to globalization as an economic model without an “alternative”.
- A consumer society at all costs? A critical approach to the winner and losers in this form of trade.
- Naming “fake news” in political disputes and recognizing their goals.
- Evaluating the function of the press in a state of emergency.
- Describing the meaning of the term “fundamental rights” and assessing the necessity of issuing extraordinary decrees in a democracy.
- Clarifying the “rights and duties” of resistance, even in democracies.
- Naming the possibility of change in the future due to the pandemic for social competences, trade and environmental protection.
- Which values will we need in the future and what is essential to reach a broad consensus in times of pandemic and national disasters?

**Methodology:** lectures with discussion, papers, talks, discussions, methods inspiring activism, feedback method, trips.

**Equipment:** laptop, projector, maps, boards, flipchart, film documentation.

**Participants:** 20 people.

**Speakers:** according to the program.

**Seminar venue:** Folk High School in Seddiner See (Heimvolkshochschule am Seddiner See), lecture halls.

**Announcements:** advertising flyers, exhibitions, Internet (HVHS website), various educational media, dungsfrestellung-Suchportale speaker in verschiedenen BL, Referent.

**Monday, 26.07.2021**

hour	part of the program	contents	method	duration in minutes
10.30			arrival	
11.00	<b>greeting, organizational matters and presentation of the program</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>greeting, presentation of the company and the seminar teachers</li> <li>information on the main topics</li> <li>a short presentation of the program</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>stimuli</li> <li>exchange of views with the participants</li> </ul>	90
12.30			lunch	
14.00	<b>preparation for the seminar</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>presentation round</li> <li>getting to know your interests</li> <li>getting acquainted with the structure of the program, and the first impulse on the topic</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>meeting method</li> <li>getting to know the expectations</li> <li>lecture with discussion</li> </ul>	90
15.30			coffee break	
16.00	<b>Germany before 2020 - higher, faster, further and much more...</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>globalization of the world and its consequences for industrialized countries</li> <li>the effects of world trade for Asia, Europe and Africa</li> <li>partnership or "We are up there; you are down there"</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>stimuli</li> <li>lecture</li> <li>discussion and exchange of views</li> </ul>	90
17.30	<b>From Wuhan to Heinsberg through Italy, Ischgl and the Canary Islands</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the response of totalitarian systems to extraordinary disasters</li> <li>What can and must a citizen expect?</li> <li>Individual civil rights – protection or a phrase?</li> <li>personal experiences during the pandemic</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>stimuli</li> <li>lecture</li> <li>discussion and exchange of views</li> </ul>	120
19.30			dinner and end of the seminar day	
duration of the seminar day				390

## Tuesday, 27.07.2021

hour	part of the program	contents	method	duration in minutes
08.00			breakfast	
09.00	<b>Beginning of the day</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• presentation of the day's schedule</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• stimuli</li> </ul>	30
09.30	<b>Protest movements during the coronavirus pandemic</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• new movement in demonstrations – classification and motivation</li> <li>• What are the grounds for action of “conspiracy theorists” and “tin foil hats”?</li> <li>• What is the purpose of the movement?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• lecture</li> <li>• work in groups</li> <li>• video workshops</li> <li>• discussion and exchange of views</li> </ul>	120
12.00			lunch	
14.00	<b>Fake News – the problem of the present day?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• history and creation of fake news</li> <li>• forms of fake news in the present</li> <li>• truth or a lie in the past</li> <li>• false statements as a means of dictatorship</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• presentation round</li> <li>• lecture with discussion</li> <li>• examples from printed media</li> <li>• political fake news</li> </ul>	150
18.00			dinner	
19.00	<b>Truth by fact checking</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• fact checking as an occasion to verify statements in print and TV news</li> <li>• evaluation of the methods proposed to establish the truth</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• stimuli</li> <li>• Internet and DVD examples</li> <li>• discussion and exchange of views</li> </ul>	90
20.30	<b>Summary of the day</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• summary and evaluation of the day</li> <li>• feedback and prospects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• feedback method</li> <li>• discussion</li> </ul>	30
duration of the seminar day			420	

## Wednesday, 28.07.2021

hour	part of the program	contents	method	duration in minutes
08.00			breakfast	
09.00	<b>The power of the pandemic</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the power of the pandemic. Germany and Europe in a state of shock</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>stimuli</li> <li>lecture</li> <li>examples from the Internet</li> <li>discussion and exchange of views</li> </ul>	90
10.30			coffee break	
11.00	<b>continued</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>common sense of citizens or resistance against state authorities</li> <li>civil disobedience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>lecture</li> <li>examples from the Internet</li> <li>discussion and exchange of views</li> </ul>	90
12.30			dinner	
13.00	<b>Everything under control?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is there a state monopoly on the use of force during the pandemic, for example in demonstrations?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>lecture</li> <li>work in groups</li> <li>presentation and discussion</li> </ul>	90
15.30			coffee break	
16.00	<b>continued</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“Chaos” in times of exceptional police workload?</li> <li>What does “proportionality” mean from a police and political point of view?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>stimuli</li> <li>exchange of views</li> <li>illustrate with examples</li> <li>discussion</li> </ul>	90
17.30			end of the day	
19.00			dinner	
duration of the seminar day			360	

## Thursday, 29.07.2021

hour	part of the program	contents	method	duration in minutes
07.00			breakfast	
08.30	<b>Beginning of the day</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• presentation of the day's schedule</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• stimuli</li> </ul>	30
09.00	trip		individual trip to the Hohenschönhausen memorial	
10.30	<b>At the Hohenschönhausen memorial</b> sightseeing with a guide with the participation of the event witness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sightseeing with a guide with the participation of the event witness</li> <li>• consequences for the present and future of our democracy</li> <li>• visiting the core exhibition</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• guided tours</li> <li>• sightseeing</li> <li>• stimuli</li> <li>• discussion and exchange of views</li> </ul>	105
12.15			dinner (individually)	
13.00			return	
14.00	<b>Dictatorship and democracy. One life, two forms of the state</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opposition and loyalty to the state</li> <li>• 1990 Germany – adventurer</li> <li>• Freedom as a new way of life or as an individual challenge?</li> <li>• 30 years after the unification - summary</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• presentation round</li> <li>• lecture with discussion</li> <li>• presentation and discussion</li> <li>• sightseeing</li> </ul>	210
18.00	<b>Summary of the day</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• summary and evaluation of the trips</li> <li>• feedback and prospects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• feedback method</li> <li>• discussion</li> </ul>	30
19.00			dinner	
duration of the seminar day				375



## Friday, 30.07.2021

hour	part of the program	contents	method	duration in minutes
07.30			breakfast	
08.15	<b>Perspectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What social framework conditions do we need?</li> <li>• Can a “humanitarian society” be created?</li> <li>• What is the perception of the individual?</li> <li>• What can we add in?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• stimuli</li> <li>• discussion and exchange of views</li> <li>• work in groups</li> <li>• catalogue of ideas</li> </ul>	240
12.30			lunch	
13.30	<b>End of the seminar week</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• summary and evaluation of the seminary</li> <li>• final discussion</li> <li>• feedback</li> <li>• prospects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• feedback</li> <li>• round table</li> <li>• discussion and exchange of views</li> </ul>	120
duration of the seminar day			360	

# Course scenario from the West Pomeranian Folk High School

## Outline of culinary classes

**Croissants with marmalade – ability to read a recipe and prepare the ingredients.**

**Main goal:** preparing the croissants with the recipe, learning how to portion the ingredients.

### Goals of the course:

- shaping of mathematical skills in action – the ability to convert weight into volume and vice versa;
- learning to work with an instruction;
- improving the skills of working in a group;
- shaping the ability to plan your own work;
- maintaining hygiene during work;
- keeping your workstation in order;
- cooperating in a team;
- calculating the time for baking croissants;
- converting weight into volume and vice versa.

### In terms of skills:

- Interprets the recipe, explains the stages of work;
- Prepares the necessary tools and utensils;
- Understands the text of the recipe read by the teacher;
- Can measure [products with the help of a spoon and a glass;
- Works according to the verbal instructions;
- Performs cleaning chores after finishing work in the kitchen;
- The child understands the concept of healthy drinks for dishes.

## Shaping elements of attitudes:

- Strengthens confidence in one's own strength and the possibilities of achieving success.
- Draws attention to courtesy forms.
- Can find motivation to be active in class.
- Can be persistent in performing tasks.
- Combines success with the quality of the activity performed.
- Grow into experiencing the joy of working together and one's own achievements.
- Comply with the safety rules during the learning process – work and rest.

**Methods of work:** verbal, practical (preparing croissants, working in a group, games).

**Forms of work:** in a team, individual.

**Aids:** cooking recipe, scales, food products, knives, bowls, spoons, glasses, baking sheet, baking paper.

## Course of classes:

1. Greeting the children and inviting everyone to take a seat at the table.
2. Preparing yourself (washing your hands, putting on an apron) and workstations (cutting boards, knives, bowls).
3. Preparing the dough with the recipe and maintaining safety during work.
4. Baking the dough.
5. Cleaning the workstation after finishing the class.
6. Summary of the class and assessment of student activity.
7. Consumption of the baked dough.
8. Thanking students for participating in class.
9. Farewell.

## Ingredients needed:

- wheat flour – 2 kg
- butter – 4 sticks
- sugar – 800 g
- 4 eggs
- vanilla sugar – 2 packages

- baking powder – 2 packages
- marmalade – 1 kg
- fruit juice – 3 l

### **Execution:**

1. Pour flour on the table. Add butter and chop everything finely.
2. Add sugar, vanilla sugar, baking powder, 3 whole eggs
3. Knead the dough
4. Divide the dough into 8 pieces
5. Roll out each piece into a circle, approx. 4-5 mm thick.
6. Divide the circles into triangles.
7. Put marmalade on the wider end.
8. Roll up and bend the dough into a croissant.
9. Spread the dough with the remaining egg
10. Bake at a temperature of 190 degrees, approx. 15-20 min.

*Elżbieta Gontarz  
(Folk High School in Adamowo)*

## Crisis within a group



A group of participants of folk high school courses is most commonly a group of adults who bring in a luggage of their own personalities-competences, experiences and emotions, characteristics, and individual expectations. By joining the group, they want to co-create a new reality through teamwork, communication with each other, participation in joint activities. Belonging to a group allows one to gain new experiences, diversify your passions through various forms of activity and creativity.

At the beginning, the participants got acquainted with each other, observed each other, became aware of what the group expected of them and the principles of its functioning. However, in the course of further work, disagreements among group members regarding their interests, beliefs or individual goals begin to emerge. There is resistance to the group's demands, conflicts emerge which lead to tension which, if not overworked by the trainer, may cause a crisis within the group.

In each group, it is important to achieve a good atmosphere that favors effective work. However, phases of stagnation emerge here as well, as a result of resistance or fear, which can also lead to a crisis. People who object to the group's activity are often seen as a threat to the good atmosphere. In fact, their comments or difficult questions lead to certain changes and behavior that allows the groups to move forward, to act. This does not apply to people within the group who accept the principle: I do not demand from others; I do not give anything from myself. They go with the flow, and therefore all changes arouse resistance and opposition in them instead of being an element introducing new challenges.



**Photo 1. Folk High School in Adamowo – Dry felting workshops (Photo: Elżbieta Gontarz)**

Conflict usually means a clash of views, needs interests, and motives for action. It is inevitable in a group of people who change, whose needs and ways of acting are dynamically transforming. In such cases, the most important thing is whether people can talk to each other about their needs, goals and views, because the conflict itself is not the problem, but the way to solve it. Conflicts in a group may arise for the following reasons:

- Individual frustration of the participant;
- Conflicting goals of the participants;
- Conflicting values of the participants;
- Competition for the place within the group;
- Competition for the person conducting the classes;
- Disappointment with the way the group is run;
- Disappointment in the behavior of the group participants;
- Fear of new and difficult situations.

Conflict is primarily intended to server the development of the group, it cannot be bypassed because the group will not act effectively, discouragement will appear. Therefore, with the help of appropriate methods and tools, conflicts

must be resolved. This process should be conducted in a educational for the group, and these solutions should be creative and lead to the creation of new ideas. And here, a huge role plays the leader of the group, who should take the initiative. It can be either good or bad. Good – if it leads to the development of the group, bad – if they leader does not take action to calm the conflict.

Crisis within the group is a good time to name feelings, verify the needs and interests of the group and its members. It carries a certain risk of causing damage in the group, but this only applies to weak elements, which in turn contributes to the purification of the situation. In this case, functioning in the group is usually better. The crisis shows some irregularities of the matter to be dealt with, but it is a chance for new ideas and interesting solutions. It is an impulse to improve, it stimulates and counteracts apathy.

Underestimating conflict by the leader is a great danger to the group because it can lead to an increase in tension and the emergence of negative emotions in new situations. Then, crisis can cause mutual accusations and relation, which in turn can lead to a significant reductio of the action level of the group or, at worst, it's dissolution.



**Photo 2. Folk High School in Adamowo – Powertex workshops (photo: Elżbieta Gontarz)**

## Sources used:

<https://ludzkastronazarzadzania.pl/bazawiedzy/1-z-sali-szkoleniowej-mamy-kryzys-i-dobrze/>

[http://www.structum.pl/czytelnia-pdf-op/Proces\\_grupowy\\_Poradnik\\_dla\\_trenerow\\_nauczycieli\\_i\\_wykladowcow\\_procg.pdf](http://www.structum.pl/czytelnia-pdf-op/Proces_grupowy_Poradnik_dla_trenerow_nauczycieli_i_wykladowcow_procg.pdf)

*Sadine Rudert  
(Folk high school in Seddiner See)*

## Teachers' and participants' impressions



Continuing education in Brandenburg is an “integrated and equal part of the education system.” So says §1 of the Brandenburg Continuing Education Act. The goals of continuing education include the “acquisition of new knowledge and qualifications that serve to provide orientation and help in life.” They should enable the participants to “act independently and critically” (...). In rural areas, the institutions of further education include the home education centers. In addition, also the Folk High School in Seddiner See (HVHS) ranks beside three further folk high schools in the country Brandenburg. Further it is called: The carriers and mechanisms of the further training have the right on independent curriculum organization. This includes the independent development of content as well as the didactic and methodological objectives of seminars aligned with the requirements of adult education. Particular attention is paid to Section 4, Paragraphs 24 ff of the so-called educational leave. Employees have the opportunity to be released by their employer for up to 10 working days within 2 years for general, political, and cultural education. They take part in events organized by recognized further education institutions and pay the costs. The employer continues to pay their salary during this time.

The HVHS offers a variety of seminars, including educational release. In a comparison to a seminar in presence and an online seminar, different methods and planning guidelines are presented. This then results in the evaluation of the lecturers and participants.



## **Seminar I – Classroom seminar (12 participants)**

A seminar was designed for the summer of 2021, which was entitled “Where Germany is headed - the future of our society after Corona”. This seminar was conducted in presence. In the following, the conception of the seminar, the choice of topics and the methodology are outlined, in order to conclude with the evaluation by lecturers and participants.

### **Seminar concept**

The participants should gain new insights and expand their knowledge. They should question their own points of view and critically deal with striking statements. They should use the new knowledge effectively for their own everyday life.

### **Finding a topic**

The determination of the topic arose from various points of view. It was asked which topic was massively present in the media in 2020/21, which topic occupies many people in their everyday lives and whether the topic would still be topical in 2021 at the start of the seminar.

### **Target group**

The seminar should be open to all interested parties in civil society.

### **Seminar planning**

Basically, it was considered which contents could be covered by the seminar leader and the lecturer themselves and where external speakers would be necessary for individual topics. For a five-day seminar, the following sequence was taken as a basis: Introduction to the topic; deepening of information; development of own points of view; drawing conclusions in exchange with other seminar participants; asking questions about the utilization of the newly acquired knowledge and discussing in exchange with the other seminar participants where the new knowledge can be profitably applied in personal everyday life.

### **Method**

The method results from the following parameters: The more exactly the composition of the seminar group is known, the more purposefully contents and methods can be applied to the group, i.e., the educational qualifications

play a not insignificant role in the didactic design. The following methodological approaches emerged for the seminar envisaged here: It was planned to work with changing speakers, who were partly connected online. There was regular group work in different constellations. The presentation of the group work was done by developed posters and always new named group spokespersons. The participants' own Internet research provided an up-to-date reference to the current state of affairs (incidences, fact checks, comparison of scientific statements, etc.). Visits to topic-related institutions, for example a police station, enabled the theoretically acquired knowledge to be checked, in this case on the state of internal security.

### Evaluation and feedback:

From the instructor's point of view, the evaluation of the seminar yielded good to very good feedback. One indicator of a successful seminar is the registration of at least 50 percent of the participants for a follow-up seminar. This interest was expressed. The lecturer rated the organization of the technical requirements, the premises, and the atmosphere by the HVHS as very good.

From the point of view of the participants, the following conclusions could be drawn on the basis of the feedback forms submitted: The majority of participants (approx. 80%) rated the event overall as very good to good. They were asked, for example, about the program, the conference venue, and the size of the group. The participants' feedback on the content of the event was also very good to good. The question as to what the participants particu-



**Photo 1. Political bike seminar with a trip (Photo: Kathrin Harms)**

larly liked about the event was also answered very positively by the majority of participants, who said it was a good atmosphere and a relaxed, harmonious get-together. The personal exchange among each other and the discussions that were possible after the seminar were also rated as very important and positive by many of the group participants. In terms of content, a third of the participants rated individual presentations, e.g., on fake news, as very good. In addition, most participants rated the excursions to external conference venues as an important addition and thus very good for gaining knowledge. Voice of a participant: "The educational vacation in Seddiner See was once again top!"

## **Seminar II Online seminar in 2 runs (for 15 to 20 participants).**

Forced by the limitations of the corona pandemic, the HVHS offered an online seminar with the title "Toolbox: Youth in the Village" in anticipation of summer/fall 2021. The seminar took place online in two rounds, each on three consecutive days, with a kick-off event and a closing event in attendance. It has not yet been completed.

In the following, the conception of the seminar, the topics and the methodology are outlined. Subsequently, the lecturers and the participants will give an evaluation and feedback, respectively.

### **Seminar concept and target group:**

In contrast to the previously outlined seminar, the online seminar was aimed at a special target group, consisting of employees working in municipalities and districts, who deal with the participation of young people in political processes in their field of work. This includes youth coordinators, youth welfare officers and social workers. They were joined by volunteers from citizens' initiatives and associations, local chiefs, and regional managers.

### **Topic identification:**

The seminar topic arose from the question of how young people can be successfully involved in political planning processes at the municipal level and thus participate in shaping municipal policy in a better and more sustainable way. The topic was developed together with the lecturers, who already have very good experience of youth participation in political processes. The Fachstelle Kinder- und Jugendbeteiligung (kijubb) was acquired as a cooperation partner.

Topics were determined that were to be worked through in one seminar day. The first module dealt with the legal basis for youth participation according to the Brandenburg constitution, the initial situation in the municipality or in the institution that the seminar participants find themselves in (survey and analysis). Another module was the life situations of children and youth. In further modules, methods and tools of youth participation were seminar content, followed by different strategies for youth participation and the development of action concepts. The seminar also dealt with the question of how politics can be addressed and won over for the interests of young people.

### **Seminar Objectives:**

The participants should be sensitized for a municipal participation of children and youth. They should be enabled to develop a municipal strategy for the participation of children and young people in planning processes. Furthermore, a networking of the actors among each other should be aimed at, so that a permanent exchange about processes of youth participation would be possible in perspective.

### **Seminar planning:**

In contrast to a seminar in presence, the following factors had to be considered: What digital knowledge do the participants bring with them in terms of communication platforms, e.g., Zoom; what previous knowledge of working with digital tools, e.g. Padlet, Whiteboard, etc. is available; is the respective, technical equipment sufficient to be able to participate in the seminar at all on a permanent basis? Does everyone have a stable internet connection? During planning, it became necessary to schedule a second instructor, in addition to the instructor responsible for the content, to set up chat rooms, monitor the chat process, and provide technical support. In addition, the participants were introduced to the video conferencing system and the digital tools used in the seminar before it began.

Longer breaks (lunch break) were included in the schedule from the outset, as the lecturers already had experience in this area that was to be incorporated.

### **Method:**

In order to enable the seminar participants to get to know each other, the kick-off event was to take place in presence. It was offered online shortly



**Photo 2. Political bike seminar with a trip (Photo: Kathrin Harms)**

after the lockdown and was also used to discuss the technical requirements and possibilities so that potential technical problems could be clarified in advance.

For the six-day online modules, impulse lectures and group work with digital tools were planned in alternation. Chat rooms were used repeatedly to enable participants to exchange ideas in small groups with alternating seminar members. This was followed by a plenary session in which the results were made visible to all participants via screen sharing. The chat rooms remained open after the official seminar modules to enable an informal exchange between the participants.

The seminar concluded with a day in which all participants met to evaluate the online seminar. They present their concrete action steps using the example of their municipality.

### **Evaluation and feedback:**

From the instructors' perspective, the following evaluations of the online seminar emerged: As a big challenge both lecturers stated that the personal "performance" in the online seminar was very important. Since one's own personality can "only" be perceived via the screen, methodologically greater



attention must be paid to varied seminar design with a view to the attention of the participants. This requires a different approach to conveying the content. It has proven effective to plan 1 third of the time for the impulse lecture and 2 thirds for the work in small groups (3-4 participants). In contrast to a face-to-face seminar, more teaching material has to be made available, since “you get through it faster”. It has proven successful to frequently alternate between impulse and group work. The group work in the chat rooms is very important for informal exchange. Therefore, a correspondingly large amount of time must be planned for it. The greater range of an online seminar was rated as advantageous, i.e., more members can participate, even from further away. In addition, self-organization and self-learning would be promoted more strongly in an online seminar. An important indicator for a successful seminar is the visibility of the participants. If many participants keep their cameras on most of the time, this is very positive and means that the seminar has been a success. On the other hand, by switching off the camera, the participants also have self-determined opportunities to withdraw. It was also advantageous to use digital tools (Padlet in this case) for the seminar work, since these could be “taken along” immediately and a time-delayed processing of the seminar materials could be omitted.

One seminar participant gave the seminar a predominantly positive rating. It was well structured, and the concept was clearly recognizable. The technical requirements were easy to master, except for minor difficulties. The orientation of the content was very good. However, in order to transfer this to practice in a targeted manner, additional external, individual support was required after the seminar. In general, the participant would prefer a seminar in which she was present, since a personal exchange with other participants was easier to implement. Depending on the topic, she is also open to further online seminars. She particularly enjoyed working with the digital tools Padlet and Mural.

In summary, it can be said that the methodological conception of a seminar, whether online or face-to-face, should take place in close coordination with the lecturers and with a view to the composition of the group. Nevertheless, different approaches to face-to-face and online seminars are necessary. An online connection of lecturers is a good methodological supplement to lecturers in presence.

## **In depth literature:**

<https://bravors.brandenburg.de/gesetze/bbgwbg>

# Sample syllabus

## **SYLLABUS FOR “BUDGETING ESSENTIALS” COURSE IN WEST POMERANIAN FOLK HIGH SCHOOL**

### TYPE OF SCHOOL

1. SYLLABUS FORMAT
  2. SYLLABUS TYPE
  3. AUTHORS, REVIEWERS, AND SYLLABUS CONSULTANTS
  4. LEGAL BASIS OF EDUCATION
  5. GENERAL OBJECTIVES OF EDUCATION
  6. INFORMATION ABOUT „PROFESSION”
  7. JUSTIFICATION OF THE IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATION
  8. SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES OF EDUCATION
  9. SYLLABUS
  10. SYLLABUS FOR INDIVIDUAL MODULES
    - 10.1. MODULE I – Healthy cuisine
    - 10.2. MODULE II – Home/garden
    - 10.3. MODULE III – Sport/fitness
    - 10.4. MODULE IV – Household management
    - 10.5. MODULE V – The use of the Internet
    - 10.6. MODULE VI – Cosmetics and natural chemicals
  11. SYLLABUS EVALUATION PROJECT
- ### BIBLIOGRAPHY

## Type of school

The West Pomeranian Folk High School is a non-public institution devoting its activities to adults (over 18 years of age), which:

- operates in rural areas or places where adults experience difficult access to different form of education,
- provides services related to vocational or non-vocational adult education,
- usually has a web-based database.

The mission of the Folk High School is to develop human and social capital through improving key qualifications (especially social and civic) and vocational ones, as well as shaping the citizen identity based on Grundtvig's<sup>25</sup> pedagogy derived from cultural richness of local community.

### 1. Syllabus format

Modular type of program – set of vocational education modules and corresponding modular units, separated based on specific criteria enabling the acquisition of knowledge as well as development of social and personal competences applicable to the professions. The modular syllabus is characterized by integration of theoretical and practical content; there is no division into theoretical and practical training.

### 2. Syllabus type

Linear type of program – each part of the material is a continuation of the previous one, hence the student learns given content just once. A good command of the previous part is required in order to move on to the next part of the material.

### 3. Authors, reviewers, and syllabus consultants: authors:

Felska Angelika – The West Pomeranian Folk High School,  
Gontarz Elżbieta – Folk High School in Adamów,  
Kwiatkowski Jarosław – The West Pomeranian Folk High School,  
Mincewicz Jakub – Polish Network of Folk High Schools, Folk High School in Radwanica,

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<sup>25</sup> Nikolaj Frederik Severin Grundtvig, Danish writer and poet, protestant pastor and theologian, historian, philosopher, teacher, and politician. He laid the foundations for a new type of educational institution called the Folk High School, the aim of which is to educate peasant youth. Soon similar institutions began to appear all over the world. The first institution in Poland opened in 1921.



Mogensen Peter – Brenderup Folk High School (Denmark),  
Przybyła-Myłka Magdalena – Folk High School in Radwanica,  
Schäfer Julia – Seddiner See Folk High School (Germany).

### **Reviewers:**

Dr hab. Maliszewski Tomasz – Polish Naval Academy of the Heroes of  
Westerplatte in Gdynia,  
Dr Iwański Rafał – The Univeristy of Szczecin.

### **Consultants:**

Dr Ciechanowska Dorota – The WSB University in Szczecin

## **4. Legal basis of education**

The determinants of principles of education in Folk High Schools is freedom of speech and democracy. The scope of legal frameworks of educative activities of institutions such as The West Pomeranian Folk High School are conceived in broad terms. They are determined by such legal acts as The Constitution of the Republic of Poland of April 2, 1997 as well as some provisions of the Act of December 14, 2016 Educational Law and rules of implementation of the Law.

International documents also play an important role in determining the legal basis of education, in particular Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms of September 3, 1953 as well as the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights of December 10, 1948. Equally important are documents relating to civic education, lifelong education and the development of key competences of the European Union.

## **5. General objectives of education**

„I saw life, real human life, as it is lived in this world, and saw at once that to be enlightened, to live a useful and enjoyable human life, most people did not need books at all, but only a genuinely kind heart, sound common sense, a kind good ear, a kind good mouth, and then liveliness to talk with really enlightened people, who would be able to arouse their interest and show them how human life appears when the light shines upon it.” (Grundtvig 1856 quoted in Z. Heuer).

Learning from experience based on direct personal contact with teachers and close to their own reality are essential aspects of education in folk high

school. Students from diverse backgrounds meet to exchange views on neutral ground. The goal is to achieve academic and human excellence through dialogue which is accompanied by pedagogical support, mutual respect and safe learning conditions. Central to this kind of individual learning and learning together is the zero principle.

The Folk High School is a special place for learning which creates a unique opportunity to implement the teaching-learning process. It leads not only to the development and education of individual participants, but it also serves to benefit society at large.

This was observed in a German study relating to long courses in folk high school. Not only did they have positive impact on personal development of participants, but also influenced greater interest in further education and more frequent involvement in various forms of volunteering. As a result, the courses contribute to the empowerment of the middle class, raise awareness of political and social participation and encourage responsibility. In addition, during long courses, the importance of communication is discussed, as well as maintaining a balance between private and professional life and applying them in practice. Thanks to this, participants can solve problems constructively and learn the skills of a successful life (Lieven 2017).

Folk High Schools are governed differently in different countries. For instance, there are national differences in teaching which stems from different historical events as well as social conditions. Consequently, different institutions have their own priorities and specializations.

Nevertheless, the activity of all folk high schools is based on the pedagogical principles of Nicolaj Frederik Severin Grundtvig, who significantly influenced the functioning of Danish folk high school. The main aims of Danish folk high schools are: life enlightenment, public education and democratic education. This means that they do not promote theoretical book knowledge, but show ways of creating one's own life, strengthen the involvement of the local community and encourage them to take responsibility towards a democratic society.

The German Association of Educational Centers in Rural Areas (Deutscher Verband der Bildungszentren im ländlichen Raum) together with the Arge Bildungshäuser Österreich und Arbeitsgemeinschaft Bildungshäuser Südtirols formulated eight main assumptions. Some of them are presented below. According to these statements, education is an essential part of the self-reflection and self-consciousness. It is only through education that everyone can understand what home means and learn to feel at home in other regions.

The one constant thing in our lives is change. Man needs to adapt to new environments. It cannot be avoided, but, through certain activities, for example in the creative, craft and artistic fields, participants discover a sense of

their own effectiveness. Moreover, it helps participants in folk high schools to become familiar with different aspects of life. They reflect on their daily life in dialogue with the other participants. Through reflection and an educational housing offer, the participant has the opportunity to create a successful life (Bildungshäuser Bildungszentren 2019).

Education is important at every stage of life, in every environment and in every society. However, lifelong learning is not only necessary to keep up with constant changes but also involves acquiring new skills and training in the professional and private sphere.

The idea of lifelong learning is nothing new. Some ancient philosophers considered it to be an integral part of life. Nicolaj Frederik Severin Grundtvig was also convinced that democracy was only possible when his society was sufficiently educated. Therefore, he made adult education offers accessible to all people. For this reason, folk high schools are based on the understanding that every human should get the opportunity to develop and strengthen his cultural, social and professional skills throughout life (FFD 2019).

People with a low level of basic education find it important to learn new skills while continuing their education. The designed courses fit into the concept of lifelong learning, which is of particular importance for people who show low professional competences. However, it is important that primary education is not taught in isolation from the person's daily activities. For this reason, it is necessary to teach and practice directly on the appropriate division (BMBF 2017). In the workplace, it is relatively easy to reach and organize all of the affected people. However, the challenges of low education levels are not limited to working life, but persist in everyday life. In addition, around 40% of people with basic education are not in employment (Grotlüschen et al. 2019). That is why it is essential to create learning opportunities not only in the workplace. Folk High Schools offer an ideal learning environment. Thanks to the concept of living and learning "under one roof" the learning environment in folk high schools takes place in daily lives of the participants. This allows to acquire new skills that can be used in everyday life. Moreover, participants can take an active part in social life and take responsibility as well as develop competences and skills in new areas.

## **6. Information about „profession”**

What do participants achieve with the course?

There are no exams in the classical sense of the word in folk high schools, hence the question about their achievements and to what extent it will affect their lives is justified.

In general, the aim of folk high schools is to educate the participants in such way that they can actively take part in co-creating active and engaged society.

According to this description, participants should strengthen their basic skills so that they can make the most of their participation in society. The course can bring benefits in many areas, which include not only professional life or hobbies, but also social competences (including interpersonal ones). This is particularly important for people who, due to their age, place of residence or general socio-economic situation, are at risk of social and professional exclusion.

Consequently, participants will practice skills such as reading, writing, arithmetic, new digital technology and the associated information overload. They will learn how to deal with problems and find solutions, as well as work in a team.

Furthermore, the concept of folk high schools promotes dialogue among participants to appreciate communication. Dialogue leads them to reflect on their own reality of life and to see their lives from a different perspective.

Through handicraft and artistic activities, participants learn that they can create something that has an effect. Thanks to the sense of their own effectiveness, they feel that they can create situations and make changes.

All these skills should enable the participants to lead a successful life. This includes practising basic skills such as arithmetic, reading, and writing. However, education is not confined to the classroom but flows through community life.

Above all, participants should be intrigued/ inspired. They should be strengthened in their curiosity to learn and experience new things. Therefore, it is vital that the course introduces practical issues related to a healthy lifestyle, rather than the classic content of a typical school. In this way, the content is not “crammed” in isolation, but integrated into everyday life.

Not only does it give the participants the opportunity to live a better life, but also strengthens their personality which gives them the sense of security.

Thanks to this experience, they can perform more rewarding tasks, which leads to greater involvement in shaping the countryside and enriching the environment.

## **7. Justification of the importance of education**

The level of basic skills of adults in Poland is lower than in other countries. This is in particular true for those inactive, both professionally or socially. Low professional and social activity increases with age and it is an addi-

tional and strong factor of low skills of older people. Education of people with low basic skills must go hand in hand with support in personal development, gaining self-confidence, cultural activity as well as activity in local communities. Newly acquired skills help them to adjust to changes, and thus – function on the labour market, be active in personal life and in the local community.

The dynamically changing environment means that our interests, workplace or family situation change, and the need to learn new skills changes with them. We need these new skills not only at work, but also in everyday life to improve its quality. The program offers the possibility to acquire new skills so that people can live independently and with dignity in their own environment.

In the modern world, a healthy lifestyle is the basis of human functioning. Knowledge and practice of healthy lifestyle, physical activity or going back to nature are unquestionably good for us. Many people find it difficult to balance their private and professional life, which has a negative impact on both their physical and mental health. The fast pace of life results in the fact that we do not always take good care of our health. In fact, we do not always know how to take care of it. Our competences in the area of digital technologies, household management and reading comprehension are low. Hence the need to implement the „Healthy Lifestyle” course for adults.

## **8. Specific objectives of education**

### **Healthy cuisine**

The participant of the course:

- knows the principles of healthy eating,
- knows and applies the pyramid of healthy eating,
- appreciates the importance of local production of agri-food products,
- knows the differences between BIO certified products,
- chooses and uses BIO articles in his life,
- does not use highly processed products,
- knows the concept and uses the term „conscious consumer”.

### **Home garden (eco-cultivation and processing)**

Participant of the course:

- knows how and when to set up a home garden and what works before sowing seeds are needed to have a high harvest,
- knows how to prepare the soil for growing plants,
- knows what plants match the local environmental conditions,
- knows how to run a garden to grow organic and healthy vegetables and fruits,

- knows what vegetable plants can be grown in home garden,
- knows the calendar of sowing seeds and planting vegetable seedlings,
- knows how to cultivate vegetable crops in the garden,
- knows when to harvest from the garden,
- knows recipes for home-made preserves using harvest from home garden,
- knows how and when to make jam or salad for the home pantry,
- knows how to store the harvested vegetables so that they last as long as possible in the home supply.

## **Sport**

The participant of the course:

- knows the importance of movement to maintain a good condition of the body and spirit,
- knows and applies the principles of safe training (warming up, stretching, hydration),
- knows the rules of safe training to reduce the risk of injury,
- can choose the type of physical activity appropriate for age and physical limitations,
- knows how to select the right intensity and repetition of exercise that can be performed.

## **Household management**

The participant of the course:

- knows what a home budget is,
- is able to plan expenses and properly manage money,
- knows and understands the need to rationally manage the available material and financial resources, and understands the need to save,
- is able to plan activities during the day or week so that there is enough time for work and rest,
- makes shopping lists and buys what is needed ignoring advertisements and promotions – a conscious consumer.

## **The use of the Internet**

The participant of the course:

- knows how to use the Internet on a computer, tablet or phone,
- knows how to handle secure internet payments,

- knows and applies the rules of safe behaviour on the Internet,
- knows how to book a house call,
- knows how to handle official matters via the Internet,
- knows the trusted profile,
- will be able to do online shopping choosing the cheapest offers,
- knows how to obtain information from the Internet, use the on-line library.

## Cosmetics and natural chemicals

The participant of the course:

- knows what cosmetics and natural chemicals are,
- knows how to make basic home-made cosmetics and cleaning products,
- knows the importance of using natural products for the environment,
- knows the costs of producing home-made cosmetics and cleaning products.

## 9. Syllabus

Module	Program	Number of hours
Healthy cuisine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- local products</li> <li>- processing</li> <li>- bio products</li> <li>- conscious consumer</li> </ul>	40
Home garden	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ecological food</li> <li>- processing</li> </ul>	30
Sport / fitness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- selection of appropriate exercise</li> <li>- bodily awareness</li> </ul>	30
Household management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- home budget</li> <li>- managing household chores</li> </ul>	50
The use of the Internet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- registration of home visits</li> <li>- official matters</li> <li>- online shopping</li> <li>- obtaining information</li> </ul>	60
Cosmetics and natural chemicals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- elimination of chemicals</li> <li>- making cosmetics</li> </ul>	30

## 10. Syllabus for individual modules

### 10.1. MODULE I – Healthy cuisine

Healthy cuisine (local products, processing, organic products) – 40 h

The course is intended for those who are interested in healthy and conscious eating.

#### General objectives:

- familiarization with the principles of healthy eating;
- familiarization with the concept of bio products;
- familiarization with the concept of a conscious consumer.

#### Specific objectives:

- the participant knows and follows the food preparation rules;
- the participant buys and uses local products;
- the participant understands the benefits of healthy eating;
- the participant understands the importance of choosing the right products;
- the participant is able to identify bio products and knows their nutritional impact;
- the participant is a conscious consumer.

No.	Topics	The aim of the course	Physical requirement of the module
1.	Healthy cuisine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– familiarization with the principles of healthy eating and the nutritional values of consumed foods</li><li>– familiarization with the pyramid of healthy eating</li><li>– identifying ornamental plants that are also edible</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– base with kitchen facilities</li><li>– lecture room with a multimedia display</li></ul>
2.	Bio and local products	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– familiarization with the concept of bio products</li><li>– familiarization with the concept of vegan, vegetarian, gluten-free cuisine</li><li>– familiarization with the concept of local products and their role in the modern world</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– base with kitchen facilities</li><li>– lecture room with a multimedia display</li><li>– the neighbourhood of an ecological farm</li><li>– a garden</li></ul>



3.	Conscious consumer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- familiarization of the concept of a conscious consumer</li> <li>- Analysis of the composition of food</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- lecture room with a multimedia display</li> <li>- the neighbourhood of a supermarket</li> </ul>
4.	Highly processed products	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- defining food processing methods and the concept of highly processed products</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- lecture room with a multimedia display</li> <li>- the neighbourhood of an ecological farm</li> </ul>

## Methodology

Throughout the course, the Grundtvigian approach will play a fundamental role. The following basic principles, necessary in folk high schools, will also form the didactic framework for this module:

- learning together (participants learn together, the module lasts for several days and the activities emphasize group work)
- freedom of examination (this guarantees the freedom to learn without coercion)
- openness of schools (as the basis of the community spirit)
- time and space for dialogue (both with teachers and with each other);
- professionalism (focused on the real life of the participants).

## Teaching methods

- practical- production and subject exercises;
- exposing- demonstration combined with an experience
- presenting- lectures, talks
- problem solving- activating, problem method, situational cases.

## 10.2. MODULE II – home/garden

Home garden (eco-cultivation and processing) – 30 h

This course is intended for those who want to increase their knowledge of home garden cultivation, eco-cultivation and processing.

### General objectives:

- familiarization with the basic principles of starting a garden;
- enhancement of knowledge of popular plants and vegetables;
- familiarization with different processing methods;
- familiarization with methods of food storage.

**Specific objectives:**

- the participant will find out about the benefits of cultivating a home garden;
- the participant will gain knowledge of what, how and when to cultivate;
- the participant will learn to process food using his own harvest;
- the participant will learn to store harvested vegetables.

No.	Topics	The aim of the course	Physical requirement of the module
1.	Starting a home garden	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- starting a home garden (how and when)</li><li>- preparing the right place (soil, sunlight, humidity)</li><li>- familiarization with the principles of the composter and its benefits</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- lecture room with a multimedia display</li><li>- a garden with a composter</li><li>- gardening tools</li></ul>
2.	Growing plants and vegetables	<p>Knowledge of basic vegetables and fruits and their needs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- familiarization with the nutrients for plants</li><li>- familiarization with the sowing calendar</li><li>- learning how to take care of vegetable crops</li><li>- learning about the harvest of vegetables and fruits</li><li>- familiarization with the advantages and disadvantages of greenhouse crops</li><li>- familiarization with the operation of irrigation systems</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- lecture room with a multimedia display</li><li>- a garden</li><li>- the neighbourhood of a plantation/forest nursery/crops with access to a greenhouse</li><li>- gardening tools</li></ul>

3.	Food processing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- knowledge of food processing methods</li> <li>- knowledge of the basic recipes for preserves or salads</li> <li>- knowledge of the concepts of pasteurization, pickling, freezing, blanching</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- lecture room with a multimedia display</li> <li>- a base with access to a kitchen</li> </ul>
4.	Storage of food	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- knowledge of the rules of food storage</li> <li>- knowledge of the advantages and disadvantages of such methods as vacuum storage or freezing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- lecture room with a multimedia display</li> <li>- base with access to a kitchen</li> </ul>

## Methodology

Throughout the course, the Grundtvigian approach will play a fundamental role.

The following basic principles, necessary in folk high schools, will also form the didactic framework for this module:

- learning together (participants learn together, the module lasts for several days and the activities emphasize group work);
- freedom of examination (this guarantees the freedom to learn without coercion);
- openness of schools (as the basis of the community spirit);
- time and space for dialogue (both with teachers and with each other);
- professionalism (focused on the real life of the participants).

## Teaching methods:

- practical – demonstration, production and laboratory exercises;
- exposing – demonstration combined with an experience;
- programmed with the use of a computer, manual of programming.

### 10.3. MODULE III – sport/fitness

Sport/fitness – 30 h

This course is intended for adults who want to increase their physical fitness by participating in various forms of sports activities.

#### General objectives:

- improving physical condition;
- improving motor coordination;
- shaping good habits;
- improving exercise tolerance.

#### Specific objectives:

- increasing the motivation to spend free time in an active way;
- the participant will be able to create conditions for physical development;
- the participant will overcome his aversion to physical activity;
- the participant will fight his complexes;
- the participant will implement measures to improve his physical condition;
- the participant will develop his interests;
- the participant will develop a sense of aesthetics towards his own body.

No.	Topics	The aim of the course	Physical requirement of the module
1.	General purpose exercises without equipment	Extending the range of movements of the limbs and spine joints. Sense of rhythm.	Exercise mattress or mat
2.	Exercise with the use of gymnastic sticks	Exercises developing coordination, muscle strength and joint stability.	Gymnastic sticks, mattress or mat
3.	Fitball – workout with a ball for beginners	Increasing coordination, improving balance, relaxing muscles and spine	Fitball, exercise mattress or mat
4.	May the force be with you	Increasing the strength of the muscle	Fitness bands, exercise mattress or mat

5.	Body building	Building muscles and shaping a slimmer silhouette	Dumbbells 0.5 kg or 1 kg, medicine ball, exercise mattress or mat
6.	Exercise for burning belly fat	Flat stomach	Exercise mattress or mat, skipping rope, Fitball
7.	Firm buttocks	Shaping gluteal muscles	Exercise mattress or mat, Fitball
8.	Cardio step	Boosting cardiovascular health, overall fitness, leg strength	Steps
9.	Healthy spine	Relaxation, realigning, strengthening	Exercise mattress or mat

Each workout ends with 5-7 minutes stretching exercises.

## Methodology

Throughout the course, the Grundtvigian approach will play a fundamental role.

The following basic principles, necessary in folk high schools, will also form the didactic framework for this module:

- learning together (participants learn together; the module lasts for several days and the activities emphasize group work);
- freedom of examination (this guarantees the freedom to learn without coercion);
- openness of schools (as the basis of the community spirit);
- time and space for dialogue (both with teachers and with each other);
- professionalism (focused on the real life of the participants).

### Teaching methods:

- expository - lectures, talks, explanations;
- practical - demonstration, subject exercises.

## 10.4. MODULE IV - Household management

Home budget and time management - 50 h

This course is intended for those who want to increase their knowledge of money management and to delve into the essence of planning in relation to their own homes.

**General objectives:**

- home budget management;
- planning of expenses;
- skilful time management;
- conscious shopping;
- ergonomic interior design.

**Specific objectives:**

- the participant will learn to manage his own home budget;
- the participant will plan expenses and make conscious decisions;
- the participant will learn to manage time effectively;
- the participant will become a conscious consumer;
- the participant will create ergonomically correct home.

No.	Topics	The aim of the course	Physical requirement of the module
1.	Home budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- setting priorities in terms of economic resources on a weekly, monthly, annual basis...</li> </ul>	- lecture room with a multimedia display
2.	Skilful time management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- family financial responsibility</li> <li>- work- life balance</li> <li>- presentation of issues concerning the family communication.</li> </ul>	- lecture room with a multimedia display
3.	A conscious consumer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- understanding advertisement and goods presentation in stores.</li> <li>- clarification of the terms used by banks and insurance companies</li> <li>- purchasing new items for home</li> <li>- need to possess</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- lecture room with a multimedia display</li> <li>- the neighbourhood of a supermarket</li> </ul>
4.	Ergonomics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the concept of ergonomics and optimal use of space</li> <li>- designing ergonomic kitchen and bathroom</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- lecture room with a multimedia display</li> <li>- the neighbourhood of a supermarket</li> </ul>

## Methodology

Throughout the course, the Grundtvigian approach will play a fundamental role.

The following basic principles, necessary in folk high schools, will also form the didactic framework for this module:

- learning together (participants learn together; the module lasts for several days and the activities emphasize group work);
- freedom of examination (this guarantees the freedom to learn without coercion);
- openness of schools (as the basis of the community spirit);
- time and space for dialogue (both with teachers and with each other);
- professionalism (focused on the real life of the participants).

### Teaching methods:

- expository – lectures, talks, explanations;
- problematic – problem method, activating method, cases method, didactic discussion;
- exposing – demonstration combined with an experience;
- programmed with the use of a computer, programming manual.

## 10.5. MODULE V – The use of the Internet

Practical Internet – 60 h

The course is intended for those who want to use the Internet in a conscious and safe way. The aim of the course is, among other things, to learn how to navigate within Web forms, to be able to use e-mail software, communication tools and electronic banking.

### General objectives:

- mastering the rules of using the Internet;
- ability to use tools such as e-mail or instant messaging;
- ability to use electronic banking.

### Specific objectives:

- the participant will learn to search for information on the Internet;
- the participant will learn to send and receive e-mails;
- the participant will learn to use social networks;
- the participant will learn to watch favourite series and movies on the Internet;

- the participant will learn to make calls using Skype;
- the participant will learn to shop online;
- the student will learn to use electronic banking.

No.	Topics	The aim of the course	Physical requirement of the module
1.	Websites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- introduction to the Internet and its possibilities</li> <li>- introduction to websites</li> <li>- Web Browsing concepts, popular internet browsers</li> <li>- using the Web Browser</li> <li>- Internet search engines, the most popular Internet search engines</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- lecture room with a multimedia display</li> <li>- access to electronic devices such as laptops or smartphones</li> <li>- access to the Internet</li> </ul>
2.	Electronic mail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- creating an e-mail account (wp.pl, gmail.pl)</li> <li>- structure of an e-mail account</li> <li>- sending and receiving e-mail</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- lecture room with a multimedia display</li> <li>- access to electronic devices such as laptops or smartphones</li> <li>- access to the Internet</li> </ul>
3.	Instant messaging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- popular instant messaging services</li> <li>- setting up a Skype account, configuration</li> <li>- communication via Skype</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- lecture room with a multimedia display</li> <li>- access to electronic devices such as laptops or smartphones</li> <li>- access to the Internet</li> </ul>
4.	Social networks, discussion forums	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Nasza klasa;</li> <li>- Facebook;</li> <li>- discussion forums</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- lecture room with a multimedia display</li> <li>- access to electronic devices such as laptops or smartphones</li> <li>- access to the Internet</li> </ul>



5.	Secure Internet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- installation of an antivirus program</li> <li>- secure e-mail</li> <li>- secure web browsing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- lecture room with a multimedia display</li> <li>- access to electronic devices such as laptops or smartphones</li> <li>- access to the Internet- lecture room with a multimedia display</li> <li>- access to electronic devices such as laptops or smartphones</li> <li>- access to the Internet</li> </ul>
6.	Online Banking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- why it is worth to use online banking</li> <li>- navigating through a sample bank account</li> <li>- safe money transfer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- lecture room with a multimedia display</li> <li>- access to electronic devices such as laptops or smartphones</li> <li>- access to the Internet</li> </ul>
7.	Online shopping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- is online shopping safe?</li> <li>- online stores</li> <li>- auction sites</li> <li>- cheap online shopping</li> <li>- price comparison websites</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- lecture room with a multimedia display</li> <li>- access to electronic devices such as laptops or smartphones</li> <li>- access to the Internet</li> </ul>
8.	Video and Music on the Internet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- YouTube, Vimeo, VOD, CDA, Zalukaj, etc.</li> <li>- music services</li> <li>- Internet radios</li> <li>- Internet TV</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- lecture room with a multimedia display</li> <li>- access to electronic devices such as laptops or smartphones</li> </ul>
9.	What is cloud and its uses?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- introduction</li> <li>- why use the cloud?</li> <li>- why Google toolkit?</li> <li>- a brief overview of other popular applications and tools</li> <li>- creating a Google account</li> <li>- securing a Google account</li> <li>- interface, i.e. how to navigate the content of a Google account</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- lecture room with a multimedia display</li> <li>- access to electronic devices such as laptops or smartphones</li> <li>- access to the Internet</li> </ul>

## **Methodology**

Throughout the course, the Grundtvigian approach will play a fundamental role.

The following basic principles, necessary in folk high schools, will also form the didactic framework for this module:

- learning together (participants learn together, the module lasts for several days and the activities emphasize group work);
- freedom of examination (this guarantees the freedom to learn without coercion);
- openness of schools (as the basis of the community spirit);
- time and space for dialogue (both with teachers and with each other);
- professionalism (focused on the real life of the participants).

### **Teaching methods:**

- expository – lectures, talks, explanations;
- problematic – problem method, activating method, cases method, didactic discussion;
- exposing – demonstration combined with an experience;
- programmed with the use of a computer, programming manual;
- practical – presentation.

## **10.6. MODULE VI – Cosmetics and natural chemicals**

Natural cosmetics “How to draw from the treasures of nature” – 30 h

The workshops are aimed at learning how to eliminate harmful ingredients and unnecessary chemicals from our lives. They are designed for those who want to live in harmony with nature, who care not only about their health, but also the health of their loved ones. These are excellent classes for people who are looking for an alternative to commercial cosmetics and want to discover the secrets of creating their own cosmetics and recipes.

### **General objectives:**

- increasing knowledge about natural cosmetics;
- elimination of chemicals from everyday life;
- learning about the history of natural cosmetics and their effects.

### **Specific objectives:**

- the participant will learn to create his own compositions of cosmetics and cleaning products;

- the participant will learn the basics of natural body, face and hair care as well as the properties of natural ingredients used in cosmetics;
- the participant will find out how and where to obtain raw materials for the production of cosmetics and cleaning products;
- the participant will be able to prepare an infusion, tonic, mask, etc.;
- the participant will be able to prepare household cleaning products.

No.	Topics	The aim of the course	Physical requirement of the module
1.	The Power of Herbs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- introduction to herbal medicine</li> <li>- herbal plants in Poland and around the world</li> <li>- adverse effects of herbal plants and herbal raw materials</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- lecture room with a multimedia display</li> <li>- the neighbourhood of meadows/herb gardens</li> </ul>
2.	The treasure of nature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- recognizing plants in the field, knowledge how and where to collect plants</li> <li>- preparation of macerates, infusion, decoction</li> <li>- preparation of comfrey ointment, beeswax ointment, calendula tonic, chamomile tonic, tonic for dry and normal skin at choice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- lecture room with a multimedia display</li> <li>- the neighbourhood of meadows/ herb gardens</li> <li>- base with access to a kitchen</li> </ul>
3.	Herbal beauty parlour – part I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- practical use of plants in body and beauty care</li> <li>- use of herbs in the care of various skin types</li> <li>- preparation of sand-thorn cream – fat base, water base, mixing</li> <li>- preparation of cream for normal, dry, oily and combination skin</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- lecture room with a multimedia display</li> <li>- base with access to a kitchen</li> </ul>

4.	Herbal beauty parlour – part II	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– preparation of masks, peeling and antiperspirant</li> <li>– hair care – preparation of conditioning rinses for hair</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– lecture room with a multimedia display</li> <li>– base with access to a kitchen</li> </ul>
5.	Eco-friendly housewife	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– natural cleaning agents</li> <li>– preparation of: washing-up liquid, natural air freshener, washing powder</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– lecture room with a multimedia display</li> <li>– base with access to a kitchen</li> </ul>

Each participant will take with him the prepared cosmetics and lots of advice, recipes and methods of care with natural preparations.

## Methodology

Throughout the course, the Grundtvigian approach will play a fundamental role.

The following basic principles, necessary in folk high schools, will also form the didactic framework for this module:

- learning together (participants learn together, the module lasts for several days and the activities emphasize group work);
- freedom of examination (this guarantees the freedom to learn without coercion);
- openness of schools (as the basis of the community spirit);
- time and space for dialogue (both with teachers and with each other);
- professionalism (focused on the real life of the participants).

## Teaching methods:

- expository – lectures, talks, explanations;
- problematic – activating method, problem method, cases method;
- exposing – demonstration combined with an experience;
- programmed with the use of a computer, programming manual;
- practical – presentation, production and laboratory exercises.

## **11. SYLLABUS EVALUATION PROJECT**

### **STAGE I. SYLLABUS EVALUATION PROJECT**

The requirements for all activities undertaken by the West Pomeranian Folk High School are very high. The ZUL community knows perfectly well that a good opinion in the local community is a good ground for attracting new listeners. Our image is created not only by the staff, but also – and perhaps most of all – by the way we operate and the quality of the projects we undertake.

Evaluation is therefore an opportunity to improve the functioning and further development of our foundation. In order to conduct it effectively, the process of collecting and analysing information must be properly planned. Evaluation brings the expected results only when both, the instructors and participants of the project, as well as UL staff and volunteers consciously engage in it.

#### **11.1. Determination of the subject-matter of evaluation**

We strive to assess the effectiveness of our own actions and the adequacy of the assumptions adopted in the project. However, since we are a folk high school, evaluation should go beyond knowledge and skills acquired during the course. They can be at most one of the aspects taken into account. The evaluation carried out at UL should cover such areas as: cooperation, empathy, respect for other views or interpersonal skills acquired during the course.

A very important aspect in the current approach to the teaching process in terms of the effect of information exchange and the place where it takes place is cooperation. Undoubtedly, its greatest advantage is the ability to thoroughly analyse complex problems using the combined intelligence and experience of the entire group without having to submit to the opinion of one person. The Group has the opportunity to develop new solutions and implement them in cooperation with all its members, who are also responsible for the success of the jointly implemented task. Teamwork is characterized by high creativity and readiness to make changes and adopt new views. Cooperation significantly increases the guarantee of the success of the actions taken. It also corresponds very well with the idea of folk high schools and the assumptions of lifelong learning. It refers to the assumption of readiness to acquire new knowledge using various sources of information. Working in a team is closely linked to interpersonal skills, which relate to relationships between people and allow you to benefit from these relationships. The point is to act in such a way that the method of communication chosen by the team

is satisfactory for everyone. What is more, respect for other people with all their different characteristics, relating to nationality, ethnicity, culture, religion or politics, is very important – if not the most important aspect of teamwork and coexistence in society in general. It is the support and development of these elements among the participants of the project that we particularly care about.

Bearing in mind the above mentioned purposes, we believe that the following issues will be the subject of evaluation:

- activity of project participants (implementation of activities for their own development);
- cooperation of project participants;
- development of interpersonal skills;
- implementation of the project in terms of all its objectives;
- determining the impact of the project on its direct recipients;
- evaluation of activities undertaken in the project in the context of the implementation of the statutory tasks of ZUL.

## **11.2. Determining and defining the purpose of evaluation**

It is important to determine the level of satisfaction, and to indicate by the participants of the course elements that should be improved in the future (both methods and forms of work – i.e. the potential of the place of the course and the quality of lecturers work, as well as the program content). The purpose of evaluation is to improve the effectiveness of the foundation's work. We are especially interested in checking whether and how the activities of ZUL are conducive to shaping and achieving the desired attitudes and which of the perceived problems require immediate solution. We would like to check whether the project is implemented in accordance with the participants' needs and whether the project is carried out using appropriate methods of its implementation and creates optimal conditions for the participants. The results of the research conducted during the evaluation work will be analysed, and the conclusions from these analyses will be implemented.

## **11.3. Setting of evaluation indicators**

Definition of indicators: measurable features, behaviours, attitudes allowing to check the effectiveness of the program, act as evidence of the changes that have taken place; sometimes are referred to as "success indicators". An indicator is a quantitative (percent, percentage, degree), qualita-

tive (opinion) factor, or a variable that can be used to measure achievement of goals.

Taking into account the fact that the program of the presented project is planned to be implemented mainly in folk high schools, we encounter certain difficulties in terms of determining the so-called “hard evaluation indicators”. This is due to the fact that folk high school is not subject to the typical rules of hard evaluation in the same way as an institution of formal adult education, school or university. Thus, the developed evaluation indicators will be primarily of a qualitative nature (mainly opinions of course participants).

#### **11.4. Setting key questions**

- To what extent have the program objectives been achieved?
- What factors influenced the achievement of the goals?
- What factors made it difficult to achieve the goals?
- Which of the methods and forms of work designed in the curriculum and applied by the teacher, and what means and teaching aids made the students most active in the classroom?
- What factors were decisive in increasing the students’ motivation to learn and why?

#### **11.5. Identifying information sources**

The source of information will be both the participants of the course who will be observed and given evaluation questionnaire, and the documentation collected in the evaluation process.

- PEOPLE: observation during the course by both UL employees and teachers.
- DOCUMENTATION: recruitment questionnaires and questionnaires filled in by both teachers and participants of the “Budgeting essentials” course.

#### **11.6. Establishing research methods and tools**

- SURVEY RESEARCH – A questionnaire developed for the purpose of the study. The questionnaire will be developed in the institution responsible for the implementation of the course.
- OBSERVATION – The observation sheet will be developed for the evaluation study in the “Budgeting Essentials” project.

- DOCUMENTATION ANALYSIS will be carried out mainly by analysing the application questionnaires of participants of the course. This will help to define the type of people involved in the implementation of this project.

### 11.7. Establishing a timetable for evaluation

Establishing a timetable (time frame) for evaluation studies:

- time-frame for evaluation of the project;
- dates of the next planned activities;
- determination of the time needed for both data collection and analysis;
- persons responsible for their execution.

	Starting date	Closing date	Persons responsible
Collecting empirical material (surveying, keeping observation sheets, collecting documentation)	14.11.2020	19.09.2021	Angelika Felska, Anna Kryszkiewicz
Data analysis	01.09.2021	15.10.2021	Angelika Felska, Anna Kryszkiewicz
Development of evaluation report	16.10.2021	15.11.2021	Angelika Felska, Anna Kryszkiewicz

## STAGE II - COLLECTION AND MONITORING OF DATA

Determining the method of obtaining:

- documenting,
- development,
- archiving.



## STAGE III – DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

- Comparison of research results with planned objectives; identification of goals that: have been achieved; have been partially achieved; have not been achieved;
- Interpretation (explanation), what contributed to obtaining such results;
- Comments, conclusions, recommendations.

## STAGE IV – EVALUATION REPORT

- I. Introduction
- II. Evaluation Objectives
- III. Description of the methods and tools used
- IV. Characteristics of the research sample (population selection) and a list of other sources from which information was obtained
- V. Interpretation of results
- VI. Conclusions and recommendations for the future
- VII. Attachments

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## Work evaluation in folk high schools



The concept of evaluation has been functioning in the USA and Europe for several decades. The definition of this term has changed due to the fact that the way it is understood has changed.

Evaluation is applicable in every sector – private, public administration, and non-government organizations – most often associated with projects co-financed by European Union programs. The greatest number of evaluation experiences has been gathered on their basis in recent years<sup>26</sup>.

Different definitions of the concept of evaluation are available in the literature, emphasizing different perspectives of the evaluation process itself. It takes into account disparate objectives and distinct conditions of the assessment. Broadly speaking, evaluation is a systematic socio-economic study that assesses the quality and value of public programs<sup>27</sup>.

1. Three elements in the evaluation process are of particular importance:
2. The analytical and systematic/systemic nature of the process (systematic inquiry) is emphasized on. It refers to the scientific approach, which is based on data, compliance with the rigorous research resulting from the rules of social science research (regardless of the quali-

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<sup>26</sup> B. Ciężka, Agnieszka Rybińska (ed.), *Introduction* [in:], *Evaluation in educational activities*, B Jedraszko (ed.), Warsaw 2020, p. 4.

<sup>27</sup> K. Olejniczak, *Theoretical foundations of ex-post evaluation* [in:] *Ex-post evaluation. Research theory and practice*, A. Haber (ed.), Warsaw 2007, p. 16.

tative or quantitative orientation of the research or the combination of research methods).

3. It is indicated that evaluation examines the quality of a given investment (merit-quality), as well as its value in financial and economic terms (worth-value).

The evaluation definitions emphasize that the evaluation study included an assessment of both the program/project operation processes and its effects<sup>28</sup>.

1. What distinguishes evaluation from other research and discipline tools of the public sector are four areas:
2. Combining empirics (the study of the program and phenomena emerging as consequences of said program) with a normative characteristic (assessing the structure of activities, their logic, their value).
3. Utilitarianism – evaluation is meant to support specific recipients in a specific situation, induce positive changes and improve the quality in the present as well as the future analogous interventions.
4. Interactivity and a negotiation approach to the research process and simultaneously the learning process.

Limited influence – depending on the willingness of the institutions commissioning the study to acquire knowledge and their readiness to change, reform (unlike audit, the results of evaluation do not have any legal disciplinary power)<sup>29</sup>.

The definition that exists for EU projects and programs is more technical. According to the European Commission, evaluation is “an assessment of public intervention in terms of its results, impact and needs to meet, was intended to meet”<sup>30</sup>.

At the same time, evaluation activities have been used for many years, not just in projects supported by the EU. This concept has also found its use also in education, among others, in cultural education projects.

Evaluation means literally “estimation of value”. Evaluation research has its origin in the first decades of the twentieth century, more precisely in the twenties in the United States. First attempts at documented assessment of educational outcomes were made in the USA by Joseph M. Rice (1857 – 1934), a physician who worked as education inspector. His area of interest was mainly the increase the effectiveness of teaching skills. The theoretical basis of

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<sup>28</sup> Ibidem, p. 16.

<sup>29</sup> Ibidem, p. 17.

<sup>30</sup> Ibidem, p. 17.



**Photo 1. Folk High School in Radawnica – Evaluation (photo: Katarzyna Sypniewska)**

the evaluation was first outlined in 1949 by Ralph @. Tyler. The current concepts of formative evaluation and summative evaluation were developed by Michael Scriven in 1967 and used in his book *The methodology of Evaluation* (Scriven 1967). In the 60s, evaluation became an independent discipline of social research<sup>31</sup>.

Evaluation is a mechanism for collecting information about whether it is possible to achieve the intended goals and what factors were effective in this, and which turned out to be unreliable. A characteristic feature of evaluation is the search for cause-and-effect relationships between individual activities and the result<sup>32</sup>.

When talking about evaluation, once cannot ignore the figure of the evaluator – a researcher, who should be able to operationalize the problem and specify research questions, select tools, analyze the obtained results and suggest recommendations. On the other hand, an evaluator-expert has extensive knowledge of the subject of the research, which makes it easier for him to properly target the activities aimed at collecting information<sup>33</sup>.

Evaluation is the starting point in the pursuit of improving the functioning of the institution. It is very important that the results of the eval-

<sup>31</sup> E. Boratyńska-Karpiej, *Quality and usefulness of internal and external evaluation. When will we learn more: by commissioning an evaluation or carrying it out on your own?* [in:], *Evaluation in educational activities*, B. Jędraszko (ed.), Warsaw 2020, p. 9.

<sup>32</sup> Ibidem, p. 11.

<sup>33</sup> Ibidem, p. 13.

uation are discussed, interpreted, draw conclusions from them and plan further actions<sup>34</sup>.

The Folk High School in Radawnica has implemented and is implementing many projects under Erasmus+ (Teaching Organic Literacy in Grundtvigian Style – one of numerous projects), projects in the field of cultural education financed by the Ministry of Culture and National heritage, as well as participates in the NOWEFIO Civic Initiatives Fund Program. When evaluating the carried-out projects/activities, we used and followed the Mini Evaluation Guide for Cultural Education Project Implementers, published by the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage. The methods and specific tools used to conduct the research are presented in a very condensed and substantively accessible way.

Folk High School as an institution dealing with a broadly understood adult education, which does not use assessment or carry out exams, uses evaluation as a source of obtaining information from students/participants. Taking into account the fact that evaluation gives the opportunity to determine the level of achieved goals, as well as concepts and the level of knowledge and skills acquired by the participants. Conducting the evaluation made it possible to formulate judgement about the value of undertaken actions and provided knowledge on the basis of which conclusions can be drawn – what was done right and what needs improvement and change.

The knowledge provided by the study was evaluative of the action results. Most commonly, evaluations took the form of ex-post with the use of evaluation survey tool. The questions within the survey examined participants' level of satisfaction, the conditions in which the classes were carried out, the course program (training), how valuable and useful were the classes to the participants. An important element undergoing research was whether the participants took part in the possibility of using or applying what they learned in the future.

The evaluation study also referred to the outcomes of learning, whether the participants' knowledge level has increased ("I know this"), whether their skills have improved ("I can do this"), has the participant's approach changed, ("I believe it will be profitable and beneficial to me") attitude<sup>35</sup>.

The assessment of the level of achieved program goals, as well as the assessment of its accuracy in terms of the needs of its participants was obtained through the evaluation survey.

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<sup>34</sup> Ibidem, p. 16.

<sup>35</sup> B. Ciązek, *Evaluation in adult education. New trends, challenges, expectations* [in:] *Spaces and places of adult education in Poland*, M. Gromadzka (ed.), Warsaw 2018, p. 274.



**Photo 2. Folk High School in Radawnica – Evaluation (photo: Katarzyna Sypniewska)**

When assessing participation in the project, the respondents also referred to the atmosphere in the classroom and the competences of the teachers conducting the classes.

Sub-evaluations were also carried out during the projects e.g., after the integration classes (evaluation with the use of the so-called thermometer, closing round, answering the questions what I liked, what could be changed). They provided feedback in real time. Another tool used to evaluate activity was learning the participants' opinions on different aspects of the project using the following technique. Course of action: the participants were asked to trace and draw their own hand on a piece of paper then, they were to write one thing about the evaluated event/training on each of the fingers.

1. On the thumb – what was the best.
2. On the index finger – what I will tell my friends about.
3. On the middle finger – which was the weakest.
4. On the ring finger – what should be changed.
5. On the pinky – what did I learn, what was surprising.

Information from “individual hands” can be transferred as a summary to the “big – collective hand”. The technique is effective for making sub-evaluations.

The kind of study tool will be used to carry out the evaluation depends on the type of events and the number of participants. The evaluation survey

used in the “University of Leaders” project (NOWEFIO Civic Initiatives Fund Program) contains single-choice questions where the answers are on the scale from 1 to 5, as well as open questions in which the respondents can include their positive and negative comments. The survey was conducted after each carried-out class as part of the project. Finally, performing an analysis of the obtained information, what was good, what needs to be improved, who is worth cooperating with.

This type of evaluation has a high level of usefulness. We acquire current information, and its results will be used to develop and recommend further activity in the future.

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## Conclusion

For the end of this volume, I would like to express my hope that it will prove useful to people/communities involved in non-formal adult education – especially communities which already run or intend to run their own folk high school. Of course, the reader won't find in this book premade instructions how to be a good folk high school teacher or how to properly approach the methodological, organizational, and curriculum „matter” of such institutions. Nevertheless, I would like this guide prepared by me to become one of the inspirations for the search of one's own way to and inside FHS.

In the summary of the entire publication, I am tempted to ask at least two important questions:

- firstly – is there really a chance to create something like a methodical guide for folk high school staff?
- secondly – is there any real need to develop such methodological guides for current and future FHS teachers?

Answering either of these questions will not be easy.

Truth is that many folk high schools will conduct – often very advanced and with the participation of scientific figures – research and studies on the organization of work and forms and methods used (or applicable) in various FHS environments, whether united by a common guiding idea, or operating in a specific local community. We have at least a few examples of such an approach from the last couple of years – such as the search for a new methodological model of Polish project participants during their activities with the Polish National Folk High School Network<sup>36</sup>.

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<sup>36</sup> Compare the chapters: I. Iskra, B. Mincewicz, M. Mincewicz, *Folk High School in Radawnica* (pp. 15-42), A. Felska, M. Król, *West Pomeranian Folk High School in Mierzyn* (pp. 145-164) and E. Gontarz, *Folk High School in Adamowo* (pp. 165-182) in volume 2 of the National Folk

However, another approach is also worth noting. Many FHS „methodological purists” will claim that both the folk high school method as well as constitutive features of the teacher working there, are defined – known and unchanged(!) for over a hundred years – since the times of Grundtvig and Kold. Therefore, there is no need to reinvent the wheel, as everything is clear and defined in the Grundtvig’s and Koldon’s *school for life*<sup>37</sup>. Therefore it is sufficient to just reach for the sources.

We, the authors of this guide – as we are at the end of a three-year project, one of its goals being to develop a methodological and didactic guide for folk high school teachers (especially those working with adults with a low level of basic skills) – we belong to the former of the two groups characterized above. We are convinced that even the best, most valuable concepts of educational work from the past, should be constantly updated, adjusting them to the given social conditions and the level of civilization development. Therefore, we do the same with the concepts of the „Great FHS Founding Fathers” – in order to prove folk high schools’ usefulness on an ongoing basis even today – to be perceived as „A CONSTANTLY REVIVING FORM OF CONTINUING EDUCATION” (a paraphrase of the title of one of the sketches I wrote a few years ago<sup>38</sup>.)

Thus, we answer positively to both of the questions on the previous page: creating such a book is not only possible, but also very necessary!

Of course, with the proviso that the hints and suggestions included in this guide should not exempt anyone from the creative search for their own organizational and methodological solutions.

Initially, we assumed that the guide would be addressed in detail especially for newly established institutions, which base their functionality on the folk high school formula. However, the design work has showed how differently the partner facilities work. It turned out that from many forms and methods of work developed in one of the institutions other project partners can successfully use – after minor modifications to adapt them to local conditions. This confirmed our belief in the possibility of further development of the FHS methodology, as well as the flexibility and welcoming this type of institutions to changes, to new methodological, organizational and curricu-

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High School Network publishing series entitled “Folk High School Method” – T. Maliszewski (ed.), *Contemporary Folk High Schools in the organizational and methodological perspective*, Adamowo-Grybowo-Mierzyn-Radawnica-Wieżyca-Wola Sękowa 2021.

<sup>37</sup> See, for example, M. Byczkowski, T. Maliszewski, E. Przybylska (ed.), *Folk High Schools – school for life*, Wieżyca 2003.

<sup>38</sup> A. Felska, *Folk High School as a constantly reviving form of continuing education*, [in:] A. Felska, B. Bugajska (ed.), *Folk High Schools – between theory and practice*, Szczecin 2017, pp. 51-58.

lum approaches, which allowed us to notice the synergy resulting from a joint learning group of twin organizations during the implementation of cooperation and learning with the use of good practices developed and used by the project partners.

The last aspect also convinced us that the development of such a guide will give teachers at other folk high schools the opportunity to use the material we have developed and, as a result to practice their occupation more professionally. We believe that the higher methodological competences of FHS teachers will then translate into an increase in the level of basic skills of adults with whom they work on a daily basis.

According to the assumption of the project, the guide consists of texts and materials prepared by representatives of all partner institutions, as well as other people invited to cooperate. The publication contains not only a description of individual issues related to the teacher's work at a folk high school, but also scenarios of classes and the curriculum developed in the course of the project. These are materials that each recipient can use at their own discretion. The lesson scenarios have been deliberately not standardized to show the reader that the teaching and methodological materials used in individual institutions differ not only in content, but also in the form of their presentation and recording. It is also possible to choose the formula for preparing own materials that seems most appropriate to the recipient.

Lastly, let us add that the publication was reviewed by post-doctoral, Navy Academy professor, Tomasz Maliszewski, who has been studying the past and contemporary activity of folk high schools for several decades. The West Pomeranian Folk High Schools, as the project leader took over the supervision of the preparation and submission of the materials and handing it over for printing in the publishing house.

## Notes about the authors



**Sabine Rudert** – is a pedagogical staff member at the folk high school in Seddiner See. In addition to seminars, she is also in charge of the “LANDaktiv” project. It is aimed at elementary school-age students and teaches them about the origins of food and contemporary production conditions. School projects and excursions to farms arouse interest in “green professions” in the agricultural sector.



**Katarzyna Iskra** – MA in Polish philology. Graduate of the Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń. From 2013 works as a teacher at the Folk High School in Radawnica. She conducts classes for marginalized children as well as classes for adults in the field of Polish and world literature.



**Peter Mogensen** – Teacher at Brenderup Folk High School. Main subjects are Sustainable Building Practices and Outdoor Activities. Great interest in how a good student/teacher relationship can enhance the learning processes. NATURE is an under-estimated guide on how to live life at the fullest!



**Elżbieta Gontarz** – born in 1964, a graduate of the Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin with specialization in Russian philology. She is a long-term primary school teacher and subsequently the headmaster of the Primary School in Zakępie. From 2011 to 2018, she was the President of the Educational Association “Kaganek” in Zakępie. From 2020 she is the President of the Folk High School

Association in Adamowo. Coordinator of the Erasmus+ projects „Teacher Organic Literacy in Grundtvigian Style” from 2017 to 2020 and „A teacher at a folk university in the face of the challenges of modern Europe” from 2019 to 2022.



**Bianca Thiel** – graduate in educational science, born in 1984, studied at the Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg from 2004 to 2013. Her studies focused on adult education, social work, and rehabilitation. From 2016 to 2018, she deepened her knowledge of methodology and didactics in the teaching through distance learning at the Goethe-Institut and taught young refugees in German language courses.

Since 2019, she has been working as an education coordinator and teacher at the Boarding Folk High School “Konrad-Martin-Haus” in Bad Kösen, Saxony-Anhalt/Germany. Her main areas of work there are environmental education, sustainability, and creative offers as well as seminars for people with special needs.



**Angelika Felska** – graduate of the Medical School Complex and Social Services Workers – Social Work. In 2011, she graduated from the University of Szczecin in the field of early-school and preschool Pedagogy. Then, in 2012, she completed postgraduate studies in Social Welfare Management and Organization. In 2015, she began doctoral studies in the field of pedagogy at the University of Szczecin. In June 2017, she established a Folk High School – the first in the West Pomeranian Voivodeship, and the sixth in the country. In 2019, she received a scholarship from the Minister of Culture of National Heritage and Sports.



„I have read with great interest the next study created in cooperation with Polish and German folk high schools. This time we have received a cognitively interesting volume devoted to FHS teachers and selected aspects of FHS methodology. It is worth emphasizing that it was prepared by a five-person team of authors engaged in the practical activities in folk high schools on both sides of the Oder River. This ‘perspective of personal immersion’ of the authors is undoubtedly an additional value of the study put into the hands of the readers.”

Tomasz Maliszewki, June 2022

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Erasmus+

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