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The regime of schools of higher education over the years 1920–1990

Summary

The analysis presented in this paper has been limited to the period between 1920–1990 and focuses on legal acts that regulated the organisation and functioning of schools of higher education in that period. Between 1920–1939 of fundamental importance were two laws on higher education, one of 1920 and one of 1933. After 1945 the main regulations were included in a decree of the Council of Ministers of 1947 and Acts of 1951, 1958 and 1982. The solutions proposed in those Acts were not uniform and ranged from decentralisation of higher education to its state supervision. The differences concerned, in particular, the legal procedure of establishing (and liquidating) establishments of higher education and the extent to which those schools were independent in shaping their internal structure or constituting their bodies, or in their competences. This evolution of legislation on higher education from decentralisation to hierarchical subordination was visible not only in the relevant Acts but it was also, especially in the Polish People's Republic period (1945–1989), manifested in subsequent amending acts (1956, 1968 and 1985).

Although higher education in the analysed period was not uniform, it always included state and non-state (public and private) establishments of higher education of varied legal status that covered academies (schools of higher education (1920) academic and non-academic schools of higher education 1933, academic schools of higher education and vocational schools of higher education (1947) schools of higher education in which education ended with students earning the 1st or 2nd degree (Bachelor's and Master's) academic titles (1951–1956), and schools offering vocational and magister (Master's degree) courses, including Master's courses for Bachelor's degree holders (1958, 1982).

Keywords: establishments of higher education in Poland between 1920 and 1990, organisation of the internal structure of schools of higher education (universities), bodies managing public and private schools of higher education in Poland