

SŁAWOMIR WILK

### THREE DIMENSIONS OF PATRIOTISM: HEROIC, HEROIC-CIVIC, AND CIVIC

**Abstract.** The aim of the study was to identify factors influencing the diversity of patriotic attitudes among: adult Poles aged 20+, secondary school students, and teachers. Types of patriotism (heroic, heroic-civic, and civic) and their relationships with various variables were analyzed. A nationwide representative survey was conducted in 2022. Data were collected using CAPI interviews (for teachers,  $N = 1,115$ , and adults aged 20+,  $N = 1,068$ ) and CAWI surveys (for students,  $N = 3,718$ ). The sampling procedure was based on a random selection from the Educational Information System database (for students and teachers) and the PESEL population register (for adults aged 20+), ensuring representativeness with respect to, among other factors, province, type of school, and selected socio-demographic characteristics. Heroic patriotism dominates among students, while adult Poles and teachers prefer a more diverse approach combining civic aspects. Higher levels of civic engagement, right-wing views, and positive attitudes towards faith correlate with patriotism.

**Keywords:** patriotism; civic attitudes; heroism; research

#### INTRODUCTION

The concept of patriotism is ambiguous, encompassing both emotional attachment to one's homeland and civic attitudes or practices. The interpretation of this term varies widely in public discourse, complicating its precise definition and study. Patriotism is sometimes equated with fascism or nationalism, so it is worth considering it as a complex attitude expressed through declarations and practices.

The paper presents the results of nationwide research conducted in 2022 as part of the project "Education for Remembrance. 'The Transmission of Historical Knowledge in the Context of Poles' Attitudes toward the Past", initiated by

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the Institute of National Remembrance in cooperation with sociologists from the University of Rzeszów (Malicki, Wilk, and Żuk, 2023). Quantitative and qualitative techniques (not discussed in the article) were used, covering secondary school students, history teachers, and adult Poles aged 20 plus. The analysis focuses on patriotic attitudes and how they are understood in the three social groups studied, which are the “attitude carriers”. We aim to demonstrate the diversity of these attitudes and identify patterns of co-occurrence between declared patriotic attitudes and respondents’ levels of civic engagement. Two research questions were formulated in this regard: What type of patriotism dominates among the analyzed groups? Can regularities be observed between patriotic attitudes and the level of civic engagement?

## 1. CONCEPTUALIZATION OF PATRIOTISM

Patriotism is generally defined as a sense of attachment to one’s homeland, its culture and values (Abbott, 2007; Ariely, 2018, pp. 462-481; Kurczewska, 1997, pp. 419-445; Kurczewska, 2002; Marzęcki, 2019, pp. 7-26; Zieliński et al., 2024). Dictionaries emphasize the emotional aspect as well as the socio-political involvement. For example, the Dictionary of the Polish Language (*Słownik Języka Polskiego*) defines patriotism (Pol. *patriotyzm*) as “a strong attachment to or love for one’s homeland, a sense of social bond, and a willingness to sacrifice for one’s nation while respecting the rights and cultures of other nations”.<sup>1</sup> The PWN Encyclopedia (*Encyklopedia PWN*) offers a similar definition, characterizing it as “love for one’s homeland as a place of origin and/or residence”. The etymology of the term emphasizes its universality: the Greek *patria* (ancestry) and the Latin *pater* (father) combine love for the nation with family ties (Doroszewski, 1965; Skorupka et al., 1969). The concept of patriotism has been explored in historical reflections dating back to the works of Aristotle, who in *Nicomachean Ethics* connected the virtue of loving one’s homeland with the duties towards one’s ancestors and deities (Aristotle, 1982).

The lexical richness of the definitions of patriotism alone indicates that it is not a unidimensional concept. As Jerzy Szacki aptly notes, “When we say ‘patriotism’, we tacitly accept dozens of premises that we often wouldn’t even be able to formulate. Hence, the multiplicity of patriotisms” (Szacki, 2002, p. 107). At the beginning of Poland’s political transformation, Andrzej Walicki (1991) distinguished three concepts of patriotism. The first is loyalty to the national

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<sup>1</sup> Translations are the Author’s.

will, understood as the pursuit of external and internal independence; the second is loyalty to the national idea, or passing on established values to future generations; and the third is defense of the national interest, or protecting the real needs of the community, which are not necessarily in line with the will of the elites. As Walicki wrote, “Each of these concepts of patriotism in Poland is burdened with its own historical tradition. Each has its own internal logic and history, introducing additional elements into the analysis that require our attention not because of the logic of a given concept, but because of the strength and vitality of historical associations” (1991, p. 8). An extensive historical typology is proposed by Zaleski (2007), ranging from early medieval patriotism, through romantic and messianic patriotism, to solidarity patriotism. Patriotism is a complex and multidimensional phenomenon, with definitions that vary depending on various factors. Therefore, different types/models are distinguished, e.g., non-political and political (Burgoński, 2008), communal and individualistic (Menz, 2014), affective or active (Gruchała, 2024), economic (Łon, 2018), homeland and family (Dyczewski, 2013).

There are two types of patriotism: healthy patriotism, based on positive identification and loyalty to the homeland, and destructive nationalism, promoting the superiority of one’s own country over others (Huddy and Khatib, 2007; Blank and Schmidt, 2003; Nikotorowicz, 2013). Patriotism is sometimes perceived mainly in terms of emotional attachment to one’s homeland (Schatz, Staub, and Lavine, 1999; Theiss-Morse, 2009; Bar-Tal, 1993), while in other meanings, the aspect of action, i.e., the practical expression of concern for the community, is emphasized (Gangl, Torgler, and Kirchler, 2016; Ariely, 2018). Krzysztof Michalski wrote aptly about these differences and tensions:

Patriotism can be defined, I believe, by the tension inherent in it. On the one hand, patriotism is an emotional bond, an attachment to certain values, institutions, and the history from which these values and institutions derive. Naturally, these values are not consistent or morally unambiguous; good is mixed with evil in them [...]. On the other hand, patriotism is a set of duties, collected, like the corresponding rights, under the concept of ‘citizen’. Feelings, senses, and images are irrelevant in this context [...]. It is not weeping willows, pierogi, or St. Mary’s Church that define it, but statutes, laws, and constitutions.” (2013, p. 9)

This tendency is especially noticeable in socio-political debates and disputes, where the concept of patriotism is sometimes claimed exclusively by certain groups, while others are denied the right to express it. Reinhard Koselleck emphasizes: “Being a patriot or professing patriotism has always required taking sides, although the concept itself does not indicate which side” (1998, p. 236).

In practice, this means that different social groups “appropriate” the concept of patriotism, using it both as a tool for integration and exclusion (Olbracht-Prondużyński and Kulikowska, 2016).

Sociologists regard patriotism as a multifaceted social phenomenon closely connected to collective identity and national culture. Stanisław Ossowski (1984) distinguished patriotism from nationalism, highlighting its role in uniting people through their shared connection to a particular geographic region, culture, and language. National culture is understood as a system of meanings and symbolic codes shared by a given community (Chałasiński, 1968; Kłoskowska, 1990, 1996). Changes and reinterpretations are possible for this culture, according to Jerzy Smolicz (1992), as long as its core values are maintained. Contemporary approaches (Kurczewska, 1997) highlight a shift in the interpretation of patriotism towards the individual experience, defined as “a record of an individual’s experience of community with other people” (Kłoskowska, 1996, p. 331). On this reading, patriotism is not solely based on historical myths but also functions as a component of everyday identity and social participation.

Despite its widespread use, the insufficient study of the concept of patriotism makes it difficult to formulate conclusions based on empirical data. Zdzisław Krasnodębski draws attention to the aspect of action, emphasizing that “there is no such thing as asymptomatic patriotism” (Zdort, 2012, p. 13). Consequently, research on patriotism needs to extend beyond mere verbal expressions, covering concrete practices such as active engagement in national events and participation in local initiatives. Thus, this paper presents the results of an empirical study that describes three types of patriotism: heroic, heroic-civic, and civic. This typology is analytical and was created based on the determinants of patriotism that the respondents declared. Emotional attachment to one’s homeland, respect for national symbols, and a willingness to make sacrifices for the sake of the community are the primary components of heroic patriotism. The heroic-civic model combines symbolic and historical elements with active participation in social and public life. Civic patriotism emphasizes everyday civic practices, such as obeying the law, participating in elections, and engaging in local community activities. The classification that has been adopted allows for the systematization of different ways of understanding patriotism and provides an interpretative framework for further analysis.

## 2. RESEARCH ASSUMPTIONS AND SAMPLE STRUCTURE

The article aims to identify differences in how people understand and express patriotism in relation to their social roles. Additionally, it seeks to explore the connection between the respondents' stated attitudes and their civic engagement, or the lack thereof. The research started with the conceptualization of key issues enabling the formulation of research objectives and the designing of research tools. Three questionnaires were developed, each tailored to the specific characteristics of a particular group while ensuring the comparability of the questions. A pilot study (150 students, 50 teachers, 50 adults) was conducted to assess the accuracy and clarity of the questionnaires. In 2022, a nationwide quantitative study was carried out using two different methods of data collection: CAPI (Computer Assisted Personal Interview) for history teachers and Polish adults aged 20 and older, and CAWI (Computer Assisted Web Interview) for students. The student sample ( $N = 3,718$ ) was randomly selected from the Education Information System (SIO) database and covered 160 schools, different types of schools, and grades in 16 provinces. One class was surveyed in each school with a maximum error of 2%. The sample of teachers ( $N = 1,115$ ) came from the SIO, with provinces, school types, and promotion levels taken into account (3% error). A maximum of three interviews were conducted in each school. The adult sample ( $N = 1,068$ ) was drawn from the PESEL database, taking into account the sociodemographic characteristics presented by the Central Statistical Office (3% margin of error).

## 3. DIFFERENCES IN DECLARATIONS OF PATRIOTISM BETWEEN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS, TEACHERS, AND ADULTS AGED 20+

As previously mentioned, patriotism is a multidimensional concept. Nowadays, it is emphasized more than ever that patriotism is not limited to heroic sacrifices; it also includes everyday civic activities (Marchlewska et al., 2023). Perception and understanding of patriotism differ between generations due to the influence of education, life experiences, and sociocultural changes. When analyzing attitudes toward patriotism, it is important to consider the factors that shape this significant value and how it can be cultivated to meet the needs of contemporary society.

Table 1 shows how three groups of respondents define patriotism. The results obtained allow to capture the differences between them in terms of both the level of declared attachment to their homeland and the percentage of people

expressing difficulties with self-identification. Notably, the proportion of responses to the statement “I definitely consider myself a patriot” varies among the groups. Educators revealed the highest level of conviction about their own patriotism (75.6%). This indicates that one in four respondents in this group reserves some leeway in their assessment (by choosing other answers). The vast majority of teachers perceive themselves as patriots with complete certainty. This can be linked to their profession and a greater sense of civic responsibility. These percentages are significantly lower among adults aged 20+ (29.5%) and school students (21.4%). The results suggest that respondents’ attitudes towards their own patriotic identification vary depending on their stage of life or professional experience. Teachers’ strong belief in their patriotic attitude can be explained by the role they play in the process of education and upbringing. However, young people are more uncertain, which should prompt more educational and upbringing activities that promote a conscious understanding of patriotism.

Statistical analyses indicate that place of residence and financial situation correlate very weakly with patriotism, meaning that this attitude is independent of geographical location and economic status. The level of education among Poles aged 20+ does not show a significant correlation either, which suggests that the phenomenon occurs evenly across different groups. A sense of patriotism is not associated with the type of school students attend. These findings suggest that patriotism is not related to these variables, but rather, results from other, more universal factors.

Table 1. Declarations of patriotism among adult Poles ( $N = 1068$ ), high school students ( $N = 3,781$ ), and high school history teachers ( $N = 1,115$ )

Do you consider yourself a patriot?	Respondent type			Total
	Adult 20+ (A)	Student (B)	Teacher (C)	
Definitely yes	29.5% <sup>B</sup>	21.4%	75.6% <sup>AB</sup>	33.0
Rather yes	53.4% <sup>BC</sup>	43.0% <sup>C</sup>	22.0	40.9
It's hard to say	12.5% <sup>C</sup>	20.6% <sup>AC</sup>	1.6	15.6
Probably not	3.9% <sup>C</sup>	9.6% <sup>AC</sup>	0.5	6.9
Definitely not	0.7	5.5% <sup>AC</sup>	0.3	3.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

*Note.* Letters A, B, and C next to the percentages indicate that the given value differs statistically significantly ( $p < .05$ ) from the value in the indicated column (A, B, or C). The results are based on two-tailed tests, assuming equal variance. For each significant pair, the key of the smaller category appears in the category with the higher mean. The tests are corrected for all pairwise comparisons within each internal sub-table using the Bonferroni correction.

## 4. PATRIOTISM INDICATORS

The results demonstrate both significant differences and similarities in how adults, students, and teachers perceive the most important factors of patriotism. Data analysis (Table 2) confirms that respect for national symbols is important to all groups. Students indicated this aspect significantly more often than Polish adults and teachers did. Students (58.6%) and teachers (56.1%) are much more likely than adults aged 20+ (24.2%) to claim that knowing history is important. Teachers emphasize instilling a love of their homeland (54.6%) and respect for the law (46.6%) in children, which distinguishes them from students and adults aged 20 and older. The latter group is more likely to emphasize participating in elections (44.9%) than the former (33.5%). Students stand out with the highest percentage indicating readiness to fight and sacrifice their lives for their homeland (58.6%), distinguishing them from teachers (29.6%) and Polish adults (31%). Young people tend to focus more on heroic values, while teachers and Polish adults appreciate the civic dimensions of patriotism more. Elements such as paying taxes or buying Polish products are especially important to educators (23.9% and 12.6%, respectively), but much less so to the youngest respondents (8.8% and 10.5%, respectively). Adults aged 20+ also give low priority to these behaviors. A similar trend can be observed in the case of raising children in the Catholic faith. This is less common among teachers (8.2%) than among adult respondents (16.6%) and students (10.6%). In summary, students emphasize heroic patriotism, teachers focus on education and citizenship, and adults aged 20 plus oscillate between electoral activity and moderate consideration of tradition and law.

Table 2. Various dimensions of patriotism among adult Poles ( $N = 1,068$ ), high school students ( $N = 3,781$ ), and high school history teachers ( $N = 1,115$ )

In your opinion, which behaviors are the most accurate indicators of patriotism / being a patriot?	Type of respondent		
	Adult 20+ (A)	Student (B)	Teacher (C)
Teaching children to love and respect their homeland	35.5	41.9% <sup>A</sup>	54.6% <sup>AB</sup>
Knowledge of their country's history	24.2	58.6% <sup>A</sup>	56.1% <sup>A</sup>
Showing respect for the national emblem, flag, and anthem	52.7	72.5% <sup>AC</sup>	58.8%
Respecting and obeying the law	33.8% <sup>B</sup>	26.6	46.6% <sup>AB</sup>
Participation in elections	44.9% <sup>B</sup>	33.5	43.2% <sup>B</sup>
Willingness to fight and sacrificing one's life for the homeland	31.0	58.6% <sup>AC</sup>	29.6

Taking action for the benefit of one's local community, the area in which one lives	18.5	23.5% <sup>A</sup>	39.4% <sup>AB</sup>
Paying taxes	17.6% <sup>B</sup>	8.8	23.9% <sup>AB</sup>
Raising children in the Catholic faith	16.6% <sup>BC</sup>	10.6	8.2
Buying primarily Polish products	24.3% <sup>BC</sup>	10.5	12.6
Other	1.5	2.2	2.2

*Note.* The letters A, B, and C next to the percentages indicate that the given value differs statistically significantly ( $p < 0.05$ ) from the value in the indicated column (A, B, C). Multiple choice, maximum four answers; the results are based on two-tailed tests, assuming equal variance. For each significant pair, the key of the smaller category appears in the category with the higher mean. The tests are corrected for all pairwise comparisons within each internal sub-table using the Bonferroni correction.

Levels of historical knowledge also correlate with patriotic attitudes. The analysis used the results of a historical knowledge test that included 28 questions about dates, figures, and events ranging from the baptism of Poland in 966 to its accession to NATO in 1999. On average, adult Poles who definitely consider themselves patriots scored higher on the knowledge test (63%) than those who definitely rejected this declaration (48%). Among students, these percentages are 44% and 33%, respectively. As historical knowledge increases, so does the percentage of people who consider themselves patriots. Poles aged 20 and older show this correlation more strongly than students do: Spearman's  $\rho = 0.235$ ,  $p < 0.001$  for the former and Spearman's  $\rho = 0.187$ ,  $p < 0.001$  for the latter.

Demographic factors, such as gender and age, influence patriotic attitudes to varying degrees. Among Poles aged 20 and older, there are no significant gender differences ( $\chi^2(4)$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ;  $C = 0.858$ ), while among students ( $\chi^2(8)$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ;  $C = 0.197$ ), the youngest men are more likely than young women to identify as devoted patriots (26.9% vs. 16.1%, respectively). A relationship between age and the analyzed variable was seen among Poles aged 20 and older (Spearman's  $\rho = 0.143$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). In other words, as the respondents grew older, the proportion of those who identified as "definitely a patriot" increased. The percentage of devoted patriots increases from 19.5% among 20–29-year-olds to 41.2% among those over 70.

The importance of cultural capital, as measured by the number of books at home, is evident among adults aged 20 and older (Spearman's  $\rho = 0.222$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). However, this relationship is not apparent among students. Among teachers, the relationship is visible in percentage terms but has not been statistically confirmed. Among adults aged 20 and older, owning more than 500 books is associated with strong patriotism, at a rate of 60.5%, compared to 15.6% among those without a book collection.

Another important factor is attitude toward faith. Analyses of adults aged 20 plus (Spearman's  $\rho = 0.184, p < 0.001$ ) reveal that a positive attitude toward religion engenders a stronger sense of patriotism. The association is also evident among students (Spearman's  $\rho = 0.343, p < 0.001$ ), where those with a positive attitude toward religion are more likely to identify as patriots than those who are indifferent or skeptical. The correlation is also statistically significant among teachers, albeit weaker (Spearman's  $\rho = 0.104, p < 0.001$ ). The data indicate that teachers with a positive attitude toward religion are more likely to respond "definitely yes" to the question of their patriotism than those who are less connected to religion.

The significance of political orientation for declarations of patriotism is clearly noticeable among adults aged 20 plus, students, and teachers, but its strength varies depending on the category of respondents. Among adult Poles, for instance, this relationship is statistically insignificant (Spearman's  $\rho = 0.095, p = 0.007$ ), indicating that individuals with right-wing views are more likely to respond "I am definitely a patriot." Students demonstrate an even stronger correlation between political orientation and patriotism (Spearman's  $\rho = 0.266, p < 0.001$ ), indicating a significantly higher level of attachment to the homeland among those with right-wing views. Among teachers, the correlation is weaker (Spearman's  $\rho = 0.075, p = 0.031$ ), though still significant. The highest level of "definitely yes" responses occurs in the right-wing group (82.8%). Notably, among those with left-wing views, the level of declared patriotism at the highest level of self-identification is significantly lower in each group, confirming the influence of political orientation on patriotic attitudes.

The analysis indicates that membership in organizations or associations is related to patriotism, though this relationship varies in strength across groups. Among adult survey participants, a statistically significant relationship was found between declaration of patriotism and membership in an organization ( $\chi^2(4); p < 0.001; C = 0.141$ ). Those who were affiliated with an organization were much more likely to answer "I am definitely a patriot" (60.5%) compared to those who were not members (28.2%). A similar relationship was evident among students ( $\chi^2(4); p < 0.001; C = 0.143$ ). Compared to students who were not socially involved in various types of organizations, students involved in organizations were more likely to describe themselves as patriots (34.2% vs. 19.1%). In the case of teachers, no statistically significant correlation was found between membership in an organization and the declared level of patriotism ( $\chi^2(4); p < 0.907; C = 0.03$ ). Both teachers who are members of social organizations and

those who are not describe themselves as patriots to a similar extent, answering “definitely yes” in 76.8% and 75.1% of cases, respectively.

#### 5. THREE MODELS OF PATRIOTISM IN LIGHT OF THE DATA: HEROIC, HEROIC-CIVIC, AND CIVIC

Activities considered patriotic (Table 2) were grouped together, thus showing significant differences in the way patriotism is understood among the respondents. Students are the group most likely to express heroic patriotism, which is closely tied to traditional values (67.4%). The concept of patriotism is understood by this group as a deep devotion to one’s nation, a profound respect for its symbols, and a readiness to make significant sacrifices for its benefit. For adults aged 20 plus and teachers, the results were 44.8% and 43.1%, respectively, suggesting a more balanced approach in older groups.

The heroic-civic understanding of patriotism, which combines traditional values with social engagement, is particularly popular among teachers (33.3%), reflecting their more complex approach to this attitude. Poles aged 20 plus and students are less likely to choose this category (21.0% and 19.7%, respectively).

Civic patriotism, referring to everyday activities for the benefit of the community, is most often understood by adults aged 20 plus (34%). Among teachers, this result is 24%, while students indicate this understanding of patriotism the least often (13%). These data reveal that younger generations identify more with the traditional, heroic, symbolic aspects of patriotism, while adult respondents and teachers are more aware of its civic dimension. The findings indicate a necessity for educational initiatives that promote a balanced perspective on patriotism among young individuals.

Table 3. Understanding of patriotism among adult Poles ( $N = 1,068$ ), high school students ( $N = 3,781$ ), and high school history teachers ( $N = 1,115$ ).

Types of patriotism	Respondent type (% of $N$ in column)		
	Adults 20+ (A)	Student (B)	Teacher (C)
Heroic patriotism	44.8	67.4% <sup>A C</sup>	43.1
Heroic-civic patriotism	21.1	19.7	33.3% <sup>A B</sup>
Civic patriotism	34.1% <sup>B C</sup>	13.0	23.7% <sup>B</sup>

*Note.* Letters A, B, and C next to the percentages indicate that the given value differs statistically significantly ( $p < .05$ ) from the value in the indicated column (A, B, or C). Multiple choices, maximum of four answers.

There is a significant relationship between the level of civic engagement and the declaration of patriotism. As part of the statistical calculations, an index of civic engagement was created. This index consists of various activities undertaken by adults aged 20 and older, or the willingness of students to undertake these activities:

- voting in elections,
- social involvement in initiatives for the local community,
- organizing or coordinating charity collections for people in need,
- providing financial or material support as part of charity collections for people in need,
- participating in social protests,
- signing petitions to the authorities.

Both among adults aged 20 plus (Spearman's  $\rho = 0.224$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) and among high school students (Spearman's  $\rho = 0.164$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), a higher level of civic attitude was associated with a more frequent and unequivocal identification as a patriot. Among adult Poles, 18.4% of those with low civic attitudes strongly identify as patriots, whereas 47.9% of those with high civic attitudes do so. Among students, the difference is smaller (16.4% and 24%, respectively), yet still noticeable.

Similar trends are visible in the average civic engagement index values, indicating that higher civic engagement levels co-occur with more frequent, unequivocal self-declarations of patriotism.

Another area of analysis was the relationship between understanding patriotism and attitudes toward faith. Statistical analyses conducted among various groups of respondents revealed a significant correlation between a heroic notion of patriotism and a declared attitude toward faith ( $\chi^2(12)$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ,  $C = 0.204$ ) among adults aged 20 and older, ( $\chi^2(12)$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ,  $C = 0.181$ ) among students, and ( $\chi^2(12)$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ,  $C = 0.287$ ) among teachers. Among Poles aged 20 plus, heroic patriotism was present in 16% of non-believers and non-practitioners and 49.4% of believers and regular practitioners. Among students, the respective percentages are 56.4% and 75.3%. Among teachers, 11.1% of respondents are non-believers or non-practitioners, while 53.3% are believers or regular practitioners. These data clearly indicate that a positive attitude toward faith correlates with a greater tendency toward a heroic understanding of patriotism. Among adults aged 20 and above, there is also a correlation between level of education and preferred understanding of patriotism ( $\chi^2(6)$ ,  $p = .021$ ,  $C = .117$ ). Those with a high school education or lower are significantly more likely to prefer the heroic form of patriotism to the civic form. Higher education is more often associated with a civic interpretation of patriotism.

The results of the study reveal significant variations in preferred models of patriotism based on various factors. Heroic patriotism, which emphasizes sacrifice and attachment to national symbols, is most prevalent among students and correlates with a positive attitude toward religion and lower levels of education among adults. The heroic-civic model, which combines respect for the past with civic engagement, is most common among teachers, possibly due to their profession. Civic patriotism, focusing on everyday social engagement and participation in public life, is most often expressed by adults aged 20 and older, particularly those with higher levels of historical knowledge, civic engagement, and cultural capital. The data confirm that understanding of patriotism is not uniform and depends on an individual's age, social position, and cultural background.

#### CONCLUSIONS

The study identified three main models of patriotism: heroic, heroic-civic, and civic. Young people most often identified with the first model, which emphasizes readiness to fight and respect for national symbols. Teachers more often chose the intermediate model, which combines symbolic values with civic engagement. Adult Poles, on the other hand, most frequently identified with civic patriotism, which is expressed through participation in public life and community service. These differences demonstrate that understanding of patriotism is dynamic and contingent on respondents' social position, age, and social role.

The results of the analysis demonstrate a clear diversity of patriotic attitudes among the social groups surveyed. At the same time, significant correlations were observed between declared patriotic attitudes and the civic engagement levels of the respondents. A higher level of civic engagement was more often accompanied by an unequivocal declaration of patriotism among both adult Poles aged 20 and older and high school students. These relationships were statistical in nature.

First of all, there are clear generational differences in the understanding of this category. Teachers emphasize the educational and civic aspects of patriotism, while students tend to view it more distantly and express a stronger connection to its heroic and emotional facets. In contrast, adults demonstrate a greater variety of approaches, which highlights the diversity of meanings attributed to this category in social life.

In addition to identifying with patriotism itself, it is important to consider how this concept is interpreted. The respondents highlighted different aspects of patriotism, including respect for national symbols, knowledge of history,

voting, and involvement in community life. The specific patriotic activities chosen indicate not only the degree of attachment to national values but also a preference for a particular model of patriotism: heroic, civic, or a combination of both. Heroic patriotism is defined by willingness to make sacrifices and a strong attachment to national traditions. Civic patriotism, on the other hand, focuses on participating in everyday social activities. Finally, heroic-civic patriotism brings together symbolic values with engagement in public life. Considering the above, one must agree with sociologists who write that “Polish patriotism – or rather, Polish patriotisms – is a mosaic, a collection, a panorama, a kaleidoscope of styles, options, experiences, and emotions” (Obracht-Prondzyński and Kulikowska, 2016, p. 16).

Factors such as religious and political orientation, level of historical knowledge, and cultural resources, including the number of books owned, also play an important role in interpretations of the meaning of patriotism. Respondents who demonstrated a higher level of knowledge and more commitment to culture were more likely to identify as patriotic. This relationship is especially clear among adults, where cultural background leads to stronger feelings of patriotism, especially in its civic aspect.

Sociological analysis reveals a notable correlation between social organization membership and self-reported patriotism. Individuals who strongly identify with patriotism are more likely to be members of social organizations. Adults and students who are affiliated with organizations more often perceive themselves as patriots, according to the findings. This has a direct impact on the relationship between civic activity and patriotic declarations.

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TRZY WYMIARY PATRIOTYZMU –  
HEROICZNY, HEROICZNO-OBYWATELSKI I OBYWATELSKI

Streszczenie

Celem badania było zidentyfikowanie czynników wpływających na zróżnicowanie postaw patriotycznych wśród dorosłych Polaków w wieku 20+, uczniów szkół średnich i nauczycieli. Analizowano typy patriotyzmu (heroiczny, heroiczno-obywatelski, obywatelski) oraz ich związki z różnymi zmiennymi. Ogólnopolskie reprezentatywne badanie przeprowadzono w 2022 r., stosując wywiady CAPI (dla nauczycieli,  $N = 1115$ , i dorosłych Polaków 20+,  $N = 1068$ ) oraz CAWI (dla uczniów,  $N = 3718$ ). Dobór próby oparto na losowaniu z bazy Systemu Informacji Oświatowej (dla uczniów i nauczycieli) oraz bazy PESEL (dla Polaków 20+), z zachowaniem reprezentatywności względem m.in. województw, typu szkoły czy cech społeczno-demograficznych. Patriotyzm heroiczny dominuje wśród uczniów, podczas gdy dorośli Polacy i nauczyciele preferują bardziej zróżnicowane podejście, łączące aspekty obywatelskie. Wyższy poziom zaangażowania obywatelskiego, prawicowe poglądy oraz pozytywny stosunek do wiary korelują z patriotyzmem.

**Słowa kluczowe:** patriotyzm; postawy obywatelskie; heroiczność; badania