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**REPORT ON THE 7TH CONGRESS OF THE POLISH
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The 7th Congress of the Polish Communication Association was held in Katowice on 22–24 September 2025, under the theme “Human At The Centre of Contemporary Media Transformation”. The event, co-organized by the Institute of Journalism and Media Communication at the University of Silesia and the Polish Communication Association, was the most significant forum for exchanging ideas among Polish media scholars, social communication researchers, and media practitioners. The Congress had an interdisciplinary character and focused on the transformations in communication during the era of rapid digital development, with particular emphasis on the role of humans in media processes. The Congresses of the Polish Communication Association take place every three years, and this year’s edition brought together nearly 400 researchers from media field, both from Poland and abroad.

The official opening ceremony of the Congress took place on 22 September at the Silesian Museum and was preceded by a training session led by Dr. Jakob-Moritz Eberl from the University of Vienna, held as part of the MEDem project. The official opening followed, inaugurated by the host of the 7th Congress, Dr. hab. Mariusz Kolczyński, Prof. UŚ, Director of the Institute of Journalism and Media Communication, together with the President of the Polish Communication Association, Prof. Dr hab. Iwona Hofman. Guests were also welcomed by the Deputy Mayor of Katowice, Maciej Stachura, and the Rector of the University of Silesia in Katowice, Prof. Ryszard Koziółek.

During the opening ceremony, honorary memberships of the Association were conferred upon Prof. Jadwiga Woźniak-Kasperek, Prof. Maria Wojtak, and Basil Kerski, Director of the European Solidarity Centre in Gdańsk. The Polish Communication Association Awards were also presented. In the Doctoral Dissertation Competition, first place was awarded to Dr. Roksana Gloc (Jagiellonian University) for her dissertation, “Digitalized First-Time Voters: Political Use of Social Media and Political Attitudes of Generation Z in Poland”. Second prizes were awarded to Dr. Jakub Kubasik (University of Silesia in Katowice) and Dr. Beata Użarowska (Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań).

The Dr. Karol Jakubowicz Award for an outstanding monograph in media studies was granted to Dr. Marius Dragomir for his book “The Media Capture Monitoring Report”. A special award was presented to Basil Kerski for his book “Europeans from the Canton of Poland”. The Prof. Walery Pisarek Scientific Award, established by the Association in 2024, was given to Prof. Stanisław Jędrzejewski for his monograph, „Public Media in the Post-Television Era”, and to Dr. hab. Katarzyna Kopiecka-Piech, Prof. UMCS, for the “Contemporary Challenges in Mediatisation Research”, collective volume edited with Prof. Göran Bolin.

The opening ceremony concluded with the presentation of the book “Foundations of Social Communication and Media Studies”, introduced by its scientific editors, Prof. Jadwiga Woźniak-Kasperek and Prof. Janusz W. Adamowski.

Two plenary sessions followed on the first day of the Congress. Prof. Rachel Gibson from the University of Manchester delivered a keynote lecture entitled “One, Two, or Three Steps to Mobilization?: Emergent and Divergent Trends in Digital Campaigning” and next Prof. Claes de Vreese from the University of Amsterdam addressed the question “Does AI Upend Democracy?”.

The second day of proceedings took place on 23rd of September at the University of Silesia campus. The programme included numerous thematic sessions and discussion panels devoted to communication in the age of artificial intelligence, the transformation of media professions, democracy in the digital age, and the ethics of new media. A key event was the continuation of discussions inspired by Prof. de Vreese’s lecture, which became a significant point of reference for debates about the relationship between technology and society. Participants emphasized that in an era dominated by algorithms and digital platforms, the human being should remain the central subject of communication—not only as a recipient of content but also as its co-creator and interpreter.

The third and final day of the Congress was devoted to summaries and further sectional sessions. Discussions focused on the future of media research, media education, communication in technology-dominated environments, and the role of ethics and responsibility in communication practices. During the closing session, participants emphasized the need for a new, more humanistic approach to media studies that combines scientific reflection with the practical aspects of social communication.

As part of the Congress, the General Assembly of the Polish Communication Association was also held. Prof. Iwona Hofman was re-elected President for the next term. The new Board includes Dr. Bartłomiej Łódzki, Dr. hab. Małgorzata Adamik-Szysiak, Dr. hab. Mariusz Kolczyński, Dr. hab. Agnieszka Walecka-Rynduch, Dr. hab. Tomasz Gackowski, and Dr. hab. Monika Przybysz. The Audit Committee is composed of Dr. hab. Szymon Ossowski, Dr. hab. Mirosława Wielopolska-Szymura, Dr. hab. Łukasz Szurmiński, Dr. hab. Konrad Knoch, and Rev. Dr. hab. Krzysztof Marcyński. Dr. hab. Agnieszka Stępińska was appointed Editor-in-Chief of the Central European Journal of Communication.

The Congress theme, “Human At The Centre of Contemporary Media Transformation,” was clearly reflected in the lectures and discussions. On the one hand, participants discussed technological challenges such as digitalization, algorithmization, and the increasing role of artificial intelligence in the media; on the other, they emphasized the need to protect humanistic values, freedom of speech, journalistic responsibility, and media education. A recurring concern was that the ongoing transformation of the media should

not lead to the loss of the human perspective, including empathy, responsibility, and subjectivity in communication.

From an organizational perspective, the Congress was meticulously prepared. The sessions were held in the modern spaces of the Silesian Museum and SPINPLACE. In addition to the plenary sessions, 47 thematic panels and networking meetings took place, fostering exchange between scholars and practitioners.

The 7th Congress of the Polish Communication Association was a significant academic event that not only addressed current issues related to the transformation of contemporary communication but also highlighted the need to maintain a balance between technological progress and the humanistic dimension of the media. Participants agreed that the human being, as a communicating, creative, and reflective individual, should remain at the centre of all analyses and activities in the field of social communication. The conclusions drawn in Katowice suggest that the future of media studies and communication practice necessitates interdisciplinarity, ethical reflection, and openness to the new challenges presented by the advancement of information technologies.