

## METHODS OF ADULT TRAINING IN CIVIL PROTECTION AND CIVIL DEFENSE IN LIGHT OF THE 2025 REGULATION OF THE MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR AND ADMINISTRATION

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**Purpose:** the aim of this article is comprehensive analysis of adult training methods applied and recommended within the Polish system of civil protection and civil defense, as defined by the law regulation. The article aims to what extent the teaching methods recommended by regulations correspond to the theoretical framework of adult training and to the practical needs of public administration and other entities of civil defense and protection system in Poland. This article also indicates basis of civil protection background implemented in training programmes.

**Design/methodology/approach:** the study adopts qualitative and analytical methodology elements of content analysis and systemic interpretation.

**Findings:** the findings suggest that the regulation tries to integrate adult learning theory with the strategic objectives of national resilience policy referring to arising civil protection by implementing practical training methods as a legal recommendation.

**Research limitations/implications:** the article is a conceptual and normative nature. It does not include empirical data on the effectiveness of the training programs, as the regulation was enacted in 2025 and has yet to be comprehensively evaluated. Future research should involve longitudinal studies assessing how these methods affect abilities and knowledge of future training attendees.

**Practical implications:** the results directs value for training providers, public administration and policy-makers which methods correspond to training which really introduce enhancing of skills valuable in civil protection and defense.

**Social implications:** introducing valuable methods of training has a measurable effect on community preparedness and institutional resilience. In his sense, the regulation's implementation contributes directly to the enhancement of national safety culture.

**Originality/value:** this paper is the first academic studies to interpret the 2025 Regulation from a didactic and andragogical point of view, fulfilling the gap between legal prescription and training in use. Additionally it allows to start wider scope of research referring to training system in civil protection.

**Keywords:** civil defence, adult trainings, security.

**Category of the paper:** action reaserch, view point.

## 1. Introduction

In the face of expanding spectrum of international threats to the state safety the Polish government has undertaken an intensive revision of its system of civil protection and civil defense. The transformation is evident both in normative dimension and the executive dimension, reflected in lower-level legal act regulating the training and preparation of personnel responsible for protective and rescue tasks. One of the key element of this reform is the Regulation of the Minister of the Interior and Administration on training programs in the field of civil protection and civil defense and on requirements for entities conducting such training. This regulation is significant for a few reasons.

First, it standardizes the scope of training for various categories of personnel responsible for civil protection at all levels of public administration. All indicated positions are connected with Polish crisis management and the Regulation covers all the levels with training program.

Second, it distinguishes between initial and updating training, thereby formalizing the necessity of maintaining competency readiness over time, rather than treating training as one-time event.

Third, the Regulation defines the training methods recommended to be applied within each training module which includes lectures, conversational lectures, problem-based study, case study, instruction and decision-making role-play decision game.

Fourth, it establishes requirements for training institutions, including organizational, personnel and technical conditions necessary to ensure nationwide consistency and quality of training.

The main purpose of this article is to provide a review and analysis of the adult training methods given in the Regulation in relation to recognized paradigms of adult learning and safety didactics, and to assess how well these methods address the actual expectations of adult training. The paper takes a synthetic and interpretative approach — it is not legal commentary on the regulation itself, but an attempt to place its provisions within the boarder context of adult training theory and the practical realities of providing training.

In doing so, the article seeks to answer three key questions:

1. to what extent do the prescribed methods align with the approach of introducing the most sufficient training, including the level of improving practical capabilities,
2. what kind o methods are should be implemented widely during training in order to enhance skills of attendees?
3. what are the strengths and limitations of the regulatory model in ensuring long-term resilience?

By combining legal, organisational and didactic perspectives, the study situates the Regulation as both a policy instrument and a training framework aimed at professionalizing the civil protection training providers system in Poland.

## 2. Theoretical and legal framework

### The legal reform – from civil protection to societal resilience

The new Act on Civil Protection and Civil Defense replaced the previous, outdated regulation on civil defense. The Act defines what civil protection and civil defense are.

According to the statutory definitions, civil protection is a system composed of public administration bodies performing tasks aimed at ensuring the safety of the population through the protection of human life and health, property (including animals) critical infrastructure, cultural assets, and the environment in situations of threat. These entities are referred to as civil protection authorities, and the entities performing these tasks are referred to as civil protection entities, together with the civil protection resources they utilize.

Civil defense, on the other hand, refers to the implementation of tasks defined in Article 61(a) of the Additional Protocol to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949 relating to the protection of victims of international armed conflicts (Protocol I), signed in Geneva on 8 June 1977 (Journal of Laws 1992, item 175; 2015, item 1056). This document—hereinafter referred to as the *First Additional Protocol to the Geneva Conventions*—aims to protect the civilian population from dangers arising from acts of war and their consequences.

Upon the introduction of martial law and during wartime:

1. civil protection becomes civil defense,
2. civil protection authorities become civil defense authorities,
3. civil protection entities become civil defense entities,
4. civil protection resources become civil defense resources.

The objective of the new Act was to create a comprehensive system of civil protection for times of peace, crisis, and war, integrating public administration, emergency services, social organizations, and citizens. The Act abandons the reactive approach of previous decades - its core lies in prevention, education, and societal resilience, meaning the preparation of people and institutions to function under conditions of threat.

The legislator emphasized the necessity of continuity of action between peace and wartime: in the event of armed conflict, civil protection automatically transforms into civil defense, and all institutions, entities, and resources operating in peacetime shift to a wartime framework. This implies that training and personnel preparation form the very foundation of the entire system—they cannot begin only when a crisis arises. The organization of an effective civil protection system is therefore a crucial element in building the state's overall defense capacity.

The tasks of civil defense extend beyond creating forces and resources to counter non-military threats; they also involve preparing civilians to act under wartime conditions should armed conflict occur (Szydłowski, 2025). The Act defines:

1. the tasks of civil protection and civil defense,
2. the authorities and entities responsible for carrying out civil protection and civil defence tasks,
3. the principles of planning in the field of civil protection and civil defence,
4. the functioning of systems for threat detection, warning, and alerting the population,
5. the rules for the use, registration, and technical conditions of collective protection facilities,
6. the organisation and operation of civil defense, as well as the procedure for appointing civil defense personnel,
7. the financing of civil protection and civil defense (Żurawska-Ochyra, 2025; Marcinek, 2025).

An analysis of the provisions of the Act indicates that the tasks of civil protection and civil defense focus primarily on preparing public administration bodies to perform their statutory duties in this field, including measures aimed at ensuring the continuity of public administration operations, with due regard for the need to maintain coherence between military and non-military actions in the defense of the state (Wróblewski, 2025).

Focusing on the construction of the Act, it may be concluded that it is grounded in the logic of emergency management - its main objective is not only to establish formal bases for responding to threats but also to enhance knowledge, skills, and especially preparedness for handling extraordinary situations. It promotes the reduction of their effects through proactive preparation, culminating in the most essential component of response - civil protection training.

Importantly, the legislator did not confine training obligations solely to formal members of the public security system but extended them to cooperating and potentially co-responsible entities, including private and NGOs sector. This approach aligns with the concept of societal resilience, in which responsibilities related to survival and the restoration of local community functioning after an extraordinary event are distributed among multiple actors, including those outside the sphere of governmental and local administration.

### **The regulation's training system – standardiaation and professionalisation**

The Regulation of the Minister of the Interior and Administration of 6 February 2025 on training programmes in the field of civil protection and civil defense, and on the requirements for entities authorised to conduct such training (Journal of Laws 2025, item 162), constitutes one of the key executive acts to the Act of 5 December 2024 on Civil Protection and Civil Defense.

From the perspective of security studies, this regulation fills a significant gap in the national system of civil security - for the first time, it introduces a standardised educational model encompassing public administration, uniformed services, social organisations, and the general population.

The regulation, issued under statutory authorisation (Article 51 of the Act on Civil Protection and Civil Defense), serves as a crucial bridge between the normative framework of civil protection and civil defense and the actual capacity of public institutions, local government administration, emergency services, businesses, and society at large to act effectively in situations of peace-time, crisis, or wartime threats. The regulation's main objectives are as follows:

- to define uniform training programmes in the field of civil protection and civil defense for clearly delineated groups of addressees,
- to specify organisational, staffing, and technical requirements for the entities authorised to conduct training, thereby ensuring qualitative consistency and comparable standards of preparedness nationwide.

In other words, the regulation functions as an instrument of professionalisation and standardisation in the field of competence-based training for civil protection and civil defense. It establishes not only what must be known, but also who is entitled to teach it, under what conditions, and through which didactic methods.

The regulation is founded on the assumption that the state's capacity for civil protection is not merely a function of specialised formations, but rather depends on the decision-making and operational competencies of a wide range of public and non-public entities. Accordingly, nine distinct training programmes were established and attached as annexes to the regulation. Each programme corresponds to a specific category of public function or operational role. Thus, the regulation encompasses the following training groups (as numbered in the Regulation):

1. senior state executives – ministers, secretaries and undersecretaries of state, and heads of central offices,
2. regional executive staff – voivodes and marshals of voivodships,
3. county-level staff – starosts,
4. municipal-level staff – mayors, town and city presidents,
5. administrative staff employed in units supporting civil protection authorities and other local government organisational entities, as well as in auxiliary units of municipalities,
6. persons holding civil defense mobilisation assignments,
7. personnel of civil protection entities (i.e., entities executing civil protection and civil defense tasks under statutory mandate),
8. members of associations and entrepreneurs performing civil protection-related functions,
9. the general population (training directed at civil society).

Each of the nine programmes annexed to the regulation includes, in a manner typical of training documentation, elements such as: training objectives, thematic scope, minimum instructional hours, forms of teaching (lectures, decision-making seminars, practical exercises), and desired learning outcomes.

Nevertheless, these programmes are formulated at a general level. Given the increasing number of training providers and diverse local conditions, this generality creates a cognitive and methodological gap that opens avenues for further research - particularly concerning the refinement, contextualisation, and adaptation of training content to specific operational environments.

It is, however, an undeniable fact that the regulation not only prescribes what should be taught but also establishes the didactic architecture for conducting such training. The regulation reflects a broader paradigmatic shift initiated by the Act on Civil Protection and Civil Defense: internal security is no longer understood merely as the state's ability to react after a threat occurs, but as its readiness to maintain critical functions and essential services during a crisis. In practice, this means that training no longer focuses solely on emergency response tasks in the narrow sense (e.g., evacuation, first aid), but also on:

- maintaining the continuity of institutional and administrative functions,
- securing supply chains of essential goods and services,
- protecting critical infrastructure and energy resources,
- communicating effectively with the population and counteracting panic,
- safeguarding cultural heritage and the environment under threat conditions.

The Regulation's second pillar, alongside its substantive content, lies in establishing quality assurance frameworks for the institutions conducting training. It specifies the minimum organisational, infrastructural, and personnel requirements that a training entity must meet to be authorised under the regulation. These include:

1. possession of infrastructure and organisational conditions necessary for conducting training in accordance with the prescribed programme, including lawful access to training premises,
2. documented experience within the last five years in delivering education or training in the fields of national security, internal security, crisis management, civil protection, civil defense, or critical infrastructure protection,
3. employment (under contract or civil agreement) of at least two instructors who meet one of the following criteria:
  - hold a doctoral degree in security sciences, defense sciences, military sciences, or safety engineering, with documented scientific and teaching experience relevant to the subject area within the last five years,
  - hold a Master's degree in Fire Engineering and at least five years of service or employment in fire protection or public administration units related to civil protection, civil defense, or crisis management, with documented teaching experience,

- hold a Master's degree in a field related to security and at least five years of relevant professional or service experience in public administration, with documented teaching experience,
- possess documented teaching experience and at least ten years of professional or service experience in public administration units related to civil protection, civil defense, or crisis management.

A crucial research gap, however, concerns the evaluation of training implementation and the assessment of learning outcomes. Future studies should investigate not only the delivery of training content but also participants' acquisition of practical response skills and their cognitive-behavioural adaptation to stress. Such research would open an important interdisciplinary debate within the field of security education.

### **Andragogy and resilience building – a didactic framework for adult training**

Adult education employs a wide range of teaching methods, from traditional lectures to advanced simulation games. The classification of training models can be described as twofold. The first is the traditional education model, which includes teaching methods such as storytelling, description, lecture, discussion, conversation, and group or individual work based on written materials (Makuch et al., 2022). The second is an innovative experiential model, based on active learning methods, which encompasses techniques such as brainstorming, educational games and situational methods (Makuch et al., 2022). According to the literature, activating methods tend to have a stronger impact on learning effectiveness (Makuch et al., 2022).

The choice of method depends on the educational goals, subject matter, and participants' preferences. Research indicates that adults value methods that engage their experience and enable them to solve real-world problems. In a survey among Polish employees aged 50+, the most preferred approaches were problem-based methods (30.6% of responses) and activating methods (25.8%), while traditional, transmission-based methods (e.g., lecture, description) were chosen by only about 20% (Pawłowska-Cyprysiak, Hildt-Ciupinska, 2022). This suggests that methods emphasizing participant activity and problem discussion are dominant. This aligns with the principles of andragogy—adults learn more effectively when they can use their own experiences and relate new knowledge to practical applications.

For this reason, adult trainers often use case studies, brainstorming sessions, simulations, and training games, supplementing them with a minimal amount of theoretical mini-lectures (Dębska, 2012). The use of gamification—game mechanisms such as points, competition, and badges—has also become increasingly popular to boost participant engagement in both e-learning courses and in-person training sessions (Kupidura, Sułkowski, 2024). Modern technologies further enable the use of virtual simulations and live online training, expanding the array of methods available in adult education.

A key question is which methods yield the best results in adult learning. The literature highlights the superiority of activating methods over purely expository ones in maintaining attention, motivation, and long-term learning outcomes. Adult learners learn more effectively through practical action and problem-solving than through passive listening. Therefore, even in vocational training, it is recommended to reduce one-way lectures in favor of interaction and exercises (Mikołajczyk, 2011).

Empirical findings confirm this relationship. Łaczyński (2011) demonstrated that simulation games, as an example of active methods, can increase knowledge acquisition efficiency by several to several dozen percentage points compared with traditional lectures or even case studies. Participants trained through games tend to remember material better and apply it more effectively in practice - an effect attributed to their higher emotional engagement and the ability to make mistakes safely during simulations. Similarly, the application of gamification elements and interactive educational technologies contributes to better knowledge retention, the development of practical skills, and higher participant motivation (Kupidura, Sułkowski, 2024).

It is worth emphasizing that the effectiveness of adult learning depends not only on the form of instruction but also on the adaptation of methods to learners' needs and learning styles. Adults achieve better outcomes when they see the direct usefulness of acquired knowledge; therefore, effective training should reflect participants' professional realities and include practical examples and exercises based on real work situations (Mikołajczyk, 2011). The motivational factor also plays a significant role - adults are primarily driven by intrinsic motivation. Thus, methods that stimulate curiosity, foster a sense of personal development, and allow participants to co-determine the course of training (e.g., selecting case studies or questions for experts) enhance learning outcomes (Mikołajczyk, 2011).

In summary, the most effective approaches are active methods—those that engage participants cognitively and emotionally-supported by an appropriate amount of theoretical knowledge and constructive feedback that allows for error correction. A variety of forms (e.g., combining mini-lectures, discussions, group exercises, and simulations) also accommodates different adult learning styles and increases overall training effectiveness (Pawłowska-Cyprysiak, Hildt-Ciupinska, 2022).

The andragogical theory draws attention to the complexity of the adult teaching-learning process. The dependence of this process on multiple factors usually leads to the occurrence of various difficulties during its course. Generalized difficulties in adult learning can be divided - similarly to the approach used in general didactics - into the following categories:

- those related to the learner,
- those related to the teacher,
- those related to the organization and course of the teaching-learning process (Dam-Knap, 2023).

Effective learning depends on many factors. Zbigniew Pietrasiński identified the factors determining the complexity and specificity of the learning process:

- the individual's diverse life experience,
- the interests, needs, and motivation of learners,
- mastery of learning techniques,
- the course of one's school career and post-school educational activity,
- the social roles performed,
- the amount and structure of free time (Dam-Knap, 2023).

It should be emphasized at this point that the best results in adult education will be achieved by individuals whose approach to the training process, particularly regarding the pedagogical aspects of the instructional process, is characterized by a specific mindset (Pisarczyk, 2023).

To achieve this, instructor should:

- focus the attention of the participants,
- reinforce their sense of self-worth (self-concept),
- build upon their prior experiences and life events,
- refrain from criticizing contributions (even if erroneous), but rather skillfully utilize them to guide participants toward the correct answer or problem resolution,
- employ collaborative working methods (e.g., group work) to facilitate the development of shared conclusions,
- emphasize the participants' co-responsibility for the teaching/learning process,
- create an appropriate learning climate (mutual respect, cooperation, trust) in the educational process (Grzyb, 2015).

To ensure high efficacy in the adult education process, the following principles should be observed:

- adults must understand why they need to learn before they commit to the learning process (need to know/goal orientation),
- the level of self-knowledge is dependent on the readiness for self-directed learning,
- the prior experience of adults constitutes a valuable resource for learning,
- adults typically demonstrate a readiness to learn when they encounter a problematic situation (problem orientation),
- education, for adults, is a process of developing and enhancing competencies that facilitate the achievement of personal and professional growth,
- educational motivation is primarily intrinsic rather than extrinsic (Grzyb, 2015).

Referring to training process in civil protection, there is a need to lead more research concerning the quality and andragogical point of view during lasting trainings.

### 3. Research methodology

This article is conceptual and normative in nature, and its main objective is to analyze the training methods contained in the new legal act and relate them to the theory of andragogy and the practical needs of the civil protection system. Due to this objective and the fact that the regulation came into force in 2025, with no empirical data yet available on its application, a qualitative approach was deemed most appropriate. The research methodology employed was based on three pillars, responding to the reviewers' comments regarding the operationalisation of the process:

- 1) content analysis - the primary method was the content analysis of source documents, primarily the Regulation of the Minister of the Interior and Administration of 2025 and the superior Act on Civil Protection and Civil Defense. The interpretation criteria included identifying recommended didactic methods (e.g., lecture, case study, decision-making game), defined target groups for training (from management to the general public), requirements for organisers and staff (professionalisation);
- 2) systemic interpretation - the analyzed provisions of the regulation were placed within the broader context of the state's strategic goals arising from the Act. This method allowed for linking specific didactic requirements with the overarching goals of the system, such as building societal resilience and ensuring the continuity of administration;
- 3) comparative analysis - the training methods identified in the regulation were adjacent with established theories of adult learning (andragogy) and modern models of resilience-building training. This allowed for an assessment of the extent to which the legislator integrated didactic theory with legal requirements.

### 4. Results

#### Structure of the training system and its didactic philosophy

The training programmes specified in the regulation are organised into a logical hierarchy reflecting the structure of the civil protection system — from the strategic (central) level, through regional and local levels, to the societal level. Knowledge and procedures are disseminated top-down, yet response capability must be built bottom-up, grounded in local experience and capacity. Each programme includes five essential didactic components:

1. a general objective defining the training's function within the civil protection system,
2. the target group of participants,
3. the organisational format, emphasising the practical nature of instruction and indicating the duration of training,
4. the thematic scope, outlining subject areas to be covered without imposing rigid content,
5. the method of evaluation, defining the desired level of competence attainment.

From an andragogical standpoint, the training design is rooted in the paradigm of resilience-building training. Its assumptions correspond to five key theoretical models:

1. preparedness training,
2. stress inoculation training,
3. personal efficacy training,
4. resilience engineering training, and
5. team resilience training (Ketelaars et al., 2024).

This means that training cannot rely on passive knowledge transmission but must function as an active learning process - one that engages participants through simulation, scenario-based exercises, and practical experience, thereby fostering resilience and adaptability. The thematic structure of civil protection training aligns closely with the principles of learning by doing, a pedagogical approach long recognised in emergency management education. Relation between assumption of resilience-building training and training programmes is presented below (Table 1).

**Table 1.**

*Relation between resilience-building training and civil protection programmes*

<b>Resilience training type</b>	<b>Polish civil defense training programs</b>	<b>Justification for corelation</b>
Preparedness training	Preparation and planning (e.g., business continuity planning, personnel mobilization)	Covers preparation for foreseeable events, including learning protocols and procedures. The key element is operationalizing and planning the response
	System of threat detection, notification, warning, and alerting	Relates to the early recognition of threats and the application of planned systems (warning/alerting)
	Evacuation of people, animals, and property	Involves a set of planned procedures and actions in case of a threat, aimed at protection (preparation)
	Individual and collective protection measures and shelter locations	An element of preventive preparation and protection
Resilience engineering training	Organization and functioning of (role, functions, tasks, place within the system)	Focuses on developing an understanding of how the system works to effectively contribute to it (understanding the system and one's role)
	Cooperation, support, and coordination	System resilience is a function of cooperation and regulation within the system (many elements: humans, technologies, organizations)
	Risk management and response	Focuses on managing and regulating the variability of system performance
	Security steering/direction in various states of national functioning	The ability to adjust the system's functioning to changing conditions and states

Cont. table 1.

Personal efficacy training	Strategic/situational leadership in civil protection	Develops the personal skills of professionals in demanding roles to perform their duties effectively
	Psychological aspects in security management	Elements developing personal coping skills related to role demands (e.g., stress management)
	Increasing one's own resilience to threats (only for the general population, facultative)	Direct reference to strengthening personal coping capabilities
Stress inoculation training	(No direct thematic blocks, but elements present in the form of) Decisional training method and exercises/decisional games	Although not explicitly named, these methods involve exposing decision-makers to stressors (decisional problems) in a simulated environment to increase stress resistance and improve performance in a critical situation
Team resilience training	Cooperation in a team (only for the general population, facultative)	Concerns the team's ability to maintain performance when faced with interferences. This is the only direct reference to team resilience

Source: own preparedness.

The training approach identifiable in the training programmes may lead to increases in perceived resilience and confidence (reported in 35% of the 20 studies reporting outcomes), improved stress control (reported in 20% of the included studies), improved physical, behavioural, and/or cognitive performance (reported in 25% of the included studies), and other descriptive outcomes (reported in 20% of the included studies) (Ketelaars et al., 2024).

### **Analysis of training programmes assumptions**

Training programmes constitute the core of the Regulation of 6 February 2025. Functionally, they translate the statutory objectives of the Civil Protection and Civil Defense Act into concrete educational activities, practical exercises, and competence-building processes. Contained in nine annexes, these programmes provide a standardised instructional model encompassing both the public and private sectors as well as the general population.

While the Act defines what must be done and who is responsible, the Regulation defines how individuals and institutions must be prepared to fulfill these tasks.

The training programmes addressed to ministers, state secretaries, and heads of central offices are designed to develop strategic awareness. They do not focus on technical procedures, but rather on a systemic understanding of security mechanisms - relationships among national response structures, international competencies, and the principles of crisis communication at the state level.

The central premise of these programmes is that a strategic decision-maker must understand how their decisions affect citizens' safety and the functioning of critical infrastructure. The main didactic assumptions of these programmes include:

- information management under pressure and uncertainty,
- decision-making in complex crisis conditions,
- coordination with lower-level administrative bodies,
- public communication and strategic accountability for decisions.

The intended outcome is to prepare senior government leaders not merely as officials executing orders, but as coordinators of the civil protection system, capable of integrating strategic decisions with operational realities.

At the regional and county levels, training assumes an operational–planning character. Its purpose is not theoretical knowledge of the law, but the development of practical competencies in directing activities under real threat conditions. Key training assumptions at this level include:

- developing evacuation and population-relocation plans,
- ensuring the continuity of public institutions,
- coordinating cooperation among local governments and emergency services,
- strengthening crisis communication capabilities.

The training programmes aimed at mayors, commune heads, and city presidents are intended to prepare them to act as local leaders of safety. The legislator assumes that, in the first hours of a crisis, responsibility for protecting the population rests primarily with local - not central - authorities. The main didactic assumptions include:

- developing local civil protection plans,
- cooperation with residents and non-governmental organizations,
- logistics of shelter and evacuation,
- fundamentals of first aid and crisis psychology,
- leadership under stress conditions.

These programmes are designed to cultivate the ability to act autonomously when higher administrative structures are incapacitated, which constitutes a fundamental element of the local resilience concept.

The primary goal of training at the administrative level is to prepare civil servants to fulfill decision-support and logistical functions. While managerial staff are expected to make strategic decisions, administrative employees must ensure that offices can continue to function despite disruptions - such as power outages, loss of communication, or the need for temporary evacuation. The main didactic assumptions of this training include:

- maintaining institutional continuity,
- documenting crisis response activities,
- communicating with citizens and the media,
- operating warning and alert systems,
- providing basic psychological support.

The training programmes addressed to persons with civil defense mobilisation assignments and to personnel of civil protection entities aim to develop operational readiness within the structures of civil defense. The objective is not merely technical proficiency (e.g., operating protective equipment) but the enhancement of abilities to lead small teams and make independent decisions under threat conditions. Key assumptions include:

- psychophysical preparation for operations under wartime conditions,
- cooperation with uniformed and rescue services,
- principles of decontamination and evacuation of casualties,
- organisation of medical and shelter facilities.

Training for the staff of civil protection entities (e.g., municipal companies, infrastructure operators) focuses on continuity of operations. Its goal is to ensure that enterprises and institutions responsible for essential supplies—water, energy, food, transport, and communications—can function despite disruptions. Thus, the emphasis is placed not only on the protection of people, but also on the protection of processes that sustain the functioning of society.

The training programme for entrepreneurs and social organisations aims to integrate the private and social sectors into the civil protection system. This approach is based on the premise that security is not solely a responsibility of the state, but a shared public good. Training for entrepreneurs focuses on business continuity planning, organisational crisis management, employee protection, and cooperation with public administration. In the case of social organisations, emphasis is placed on humanitarian logistics, psychological support, and coordination of volunteer activities.

The general training programme for the population, directed at citizens, represents the most innovative element of the regulation. It can be described as a form of civic education in security, encompassing:

- the ability to recognise hazards and respond to warning signals,
- fundamentals of first aid and community self-organisation,
- household preparedness for functioning without access to infrastructure,
- information awareness, including verification of information and prevention of panic.

The aim of this programme is to restore basic societal knowledge on behaviour in emergencies - a knowledge base that has significantly eroded over the past decades. Simultaneously, the training has a strong social and cultural dimension: it fosters attitudes of collective responsibility, solidarity, and mutual trust - values that constitute the foundation of societal resilience.

### **Civil protection and civil defense training methods**

An analysis of the regulation's annexes reveals a clear departure from passive forms of knowledge transfer in favor of activating and practical methods. A key element common to almost all training groups (except for the general public, where the form is flexible) is the organization of classes in a mixed formula, comprising theoretical and practical sessions, with a clearly marked predominance of practical classes.

Even in the theoretical part, a tendency to engage participants is visible. While the traditional classical lecture is permitted only in programs for the highest levels, the dominant method in other groups is the conversational lecture. This form, which presupposes dialogue and discussion, is much closer to the andragogical learning model, which views the adult as a partner in the didactic process, not a passive recipient.

Crucially, the regulation widely permits the implementation of theoretical classes using distance learning forms and methods. This includes guided self-study and blended learning. From an andragogical perspective, this is a key provision, respecting the adult learner's principle of autonomy and self-direction, as well as considering the time constraints of professionally active individuals, especially those in high-ranking positions.

The most interesting aspect of the analyzed methodology is the precise differentiation of practical methods depending on the target group and training goals.

In the case of the highest-level management cadres, who are expected to think strategically and manage in crisis situations, the range of methods is the broadest. It includes analytical and creative tools such as case study, expert debate, decision-making training, and design thinking. These methods build on the participants' professional experience and focus on solving complex, ambiguous problems.

At the municipal level, which is closer to the direct operationalisation of tasks, the methodology focuses on the problem-based method, case study, and decision-making training. Expert debate and design thinking are omitted here, suggesting a shift in emphasis from strategy to effective management in specific, defined scenarios.

For groups whose main task is the practical implementation of procedures, the key practical method becomes instruction. It is supported by the problem-based method and case study, which ensures the acquisition of specific, procedural skills necessary for action.

In the program for the general public (Annex 9), the regulation rightly refrains from rigidly defining methods, stating only that the duration of the training is adapted to the specifics of the audience, as well as to the forms and methods of education used. This is the essence of the andragogical approach, placing the learner's needs and capabilities at the center of the didactic planning process.

## **5. Discussion**

The key finding of this analysis is that the 2025 Regulation represents the first attempt in the Polish legal system to consciously integrate the principles of andragogy with the state's strategic goals in the field of security.

For years, the literature on the subject has indicated the higher effectiveness of active teaching methods for adults (as confirmed by, among others, Pawłowska-Cyprysiak and Hildt-Ciupinska or Mikołajczyk), as well as the effectiveness of simulation games in knowledge retention (Łączyński). Similarly, literature on crisis management (e.g., Ketelaars et al.) has emphasized the importance of scenario-based training in building resilience. What was known that was the theory and best practices during processing adult trainings. What this new research contributes is demonstrating that the Polish legislator has transformed these best practices into a legal requirement.

The key finding of this analysis is that the Regulation represents the first attempt in the Polish legal system to consciously integrate the principles of andragogy with the state's strategic goals in the field of security.

The Regulation directly recommends methods preferred by adults, such as case study, problem-based method, or decision-making role-play. As reviewer aptly noted, this requires a stronger link to theory:

- the introduction of case study is a direct response to the andragogical principle of adult learning through problem-solving (problem orientation) and the need to relate to existing life experiences,
- allowing for distance learning respects the key andragogical principle of learner autonomy and self-direction, and considers the time constraints of professionally active individuals, especially for theoretical part of the course,
- differentiating methodology based on the group (different methods for strategic cadres versus executive staff) confirms the thesis that tools must be adapted to roles and goals, a key aspect of effective adult education.

The similarities and differences compared to previous research are clear. The similarity lies in the content of the methods themselves - the regulation recommends exactly what researchers have deemed effective. The fundamental difference, however, is the scale and formalization. This article shows that we are no longer dealing with fragmented training but with a comprehensive, unified system covering all levels of administration and society.

Of critical importance here is also the requirement for the professionalisation of didactic staff. By setting high substantive requirements for instructors, the legislator attempts to ensure that activating methods are applied in practice, not just declared, addressing a common gap between prescribed and actual training delivery.

## 6. Conclusions

### Summary of findings

The main finding of this article is that the 2025 Regulation constitutes a conscious paradigm shift in the approach to training within Polish public administration. This signifies a transition toward a proactive, competency-based model of resilience-building. The article demonstrates that this is a creation of conscious integration of andragogical principles with the state's strategic goals amid adult trainings established in Poland.

This integration is evident on several levels:

- 1) the legislator explicitly recommends the use of methods preferred by adults and recognized as most effective, such as case studies, the problem-based method, and decision-making games or simulations. This is a radical departure from traditional, ineffective training based on transmission lectures, which adult learners do not accept and which fails to build practical competencies. It can be named methodology level;
- 2) the system is based on a differentiated didactic philosophy, precisely tailored to the recipient's role. Different methods (strategic, creative, like expert debates) are intended for management cadres (ministers, voivodes), while others (operational, procedural, like instruction) are for executive staff. This demonstrates a deep understanding that training is not a monolith but a process dependent on its objective. It can be named as structural level;
- 3) the reform's assumption is based on two pillars - programmatic unification (nine coherent programs for the entire country) and the professionalisation of didactic staff. Setting high substantive and experience requirements for instructors is a systemic attempt to guarantee quality and curb market pathologies where security training was conducted by entities lacking appropriate competencies. It can be named as professionalisation level.

In this context, the aim of the training system is no longer merely reacting to a crisis, but above all, ensuring the business continuity of the administration, economic entities, and society under disruptive conditions.

### Limitations of the analysis, practical and theoretical implications

It must be strongly emphasized that this article, the first scholarly attempts to describe the new system, is conceptual and normative in nature. The analysis focused on the law as it is written, not as it is functioning. This is a fundamental limitation that gives rise to numerous research questions, but also allows for the formulation of specific implications.

The primary limitation is the complete lack of evaluative research. We do not know, and at this stage cannot know, what the actual effectiveness of the implemented training will be. The article identifies a fundamental implementation gap problem here:

1. high formal requirements for instructors (e.g., a doctoral degree in security sciences) do not automatically guarantee high didactic (andragogical) competencies. There is a risk that academic lecturers will transfer passive university methods to administration training rooms;
2. the recommendation to use decision-making games is simple to write down but complicated to implement. We do not know if instructors are capable of designing and moderating them, or if a simple discussion will be labeled a game. Verifying whether methods are genuinely applied or merely declared in documentation is a key challenge;
3. the framework programs are formulated at a high level of generality, which is an advantage (flexibility) but also a disadvantage (risk of content trivialization).

The article's findings have direct implications for three stakeholder groups:

1. training provider must radically revise their staff and programs. This forces investment in instructor development, not only in substance but primarily in modern andragogical methods. Merely "having" a PhD on staff will not be enough to win a tender - demonstrating real didactic competencies will be necessary;
2. there must be a shift in the philosophy of procurement proceedings, especially in public administration. The lowest price criterion must be replaced by the quality and effectiveness criterion. The client should demand the presentation of specific game scenarios, case studies, and methods for evaluating training outcomes;
3. introducing the Regulation does not end, but begins the reform process. It is necessary to create central or regional mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating the quality of these trainings to ensure that standardization does not become fictitious.

Taking into consideration a theoretical implications the article opens a new research field at the intersection of security sciences, legal sciences, and pedagogy (andragogy). It demonstrates that the analysis of security systems cannot overlook the human factor and the methods of shaping it.

## 7. Future research directions

To move beyond the normative limitations of this paper, a robust, multi-track research agenda is required to evaluate the *de facto* impact of the reform.

First, evaluative research is urgently needed to measure training effectiveness and identify the implementation gap. This requires longitudinal (long-term) studies using a mixed-methods model. The quantitative component should employ a pre-test/post-test design, with delayed follow-ups, to measure not only declarative knowledge but also procedural skills and perceived resilience. This must be complemented by a qualitative component, primarily participant observation during training sessions, to verify if advanced andragogical methods are genuinely

applied or merely declared. This data should be triangulated with in-depth interviews with participants and focus groups with instructors to understand the barriers to effective implementation.

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