Akademia WSB

WSB University

SDG 16
Tracker Report

2025

16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS



Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions: WSB University's SDG 16 Report 2025

WSB University (Akademia WSB), Dąbrowa Górnicza · Reporting year 2025

Executive summary

WSB University contributes to peace, justice and strong institutions in two ways: through the integrity of its own governance, and as an educational and research partner of the institutions that administer justice and security in Poland. Its programmes in National Security, Law, Pedagogy and Psychology give it close working relationships with courts, the Prison Service, the police and youth educational centers.

Key results for the reporting year:

- **External assessment:** the THE Sustainability Impact Ratings 2026 placed WSBU in the 201–300 band worldwide for SDG 16.
- **Human rights:** on 14 May 2025 the University hosted the 1st Silesian Symposium "Human Rights in Public Service", organized with the Katowice district of the Prison Service, the regional representative of the Ombudsman and the Silesian Police. The Director General of the Prison Service attended.
- **Institutional partnerships:** agreements were concluded or continued with the Katowice Detention Center, the Regional Youth Educational Center in Pszczyna-Łąka, and, in the 2025/26 academic year, the District Court and Court of Appeal in Katowice and the Prison Service Central Training Centre.
- **Academic integrity:** SINCERE, an Erasmus+ capacity-building project launched in October 2025, develops an Academic Integrity Framework for universities in Albania and Kosovo, with WSBU co-leading institutional integrity assessments.
- **Governance of AI:** Rector's Order No. 140/2024/2025 established principles for the use of artificial intelligence in teaching and learning.
- **Recognition:** the National Security programme was ranked third in Poland in the Perspektywy 2025 ranking.

Context

SDG 16 aims to promote peaceful and inclusive societies, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions. Its targets of particular relevance to universities are:

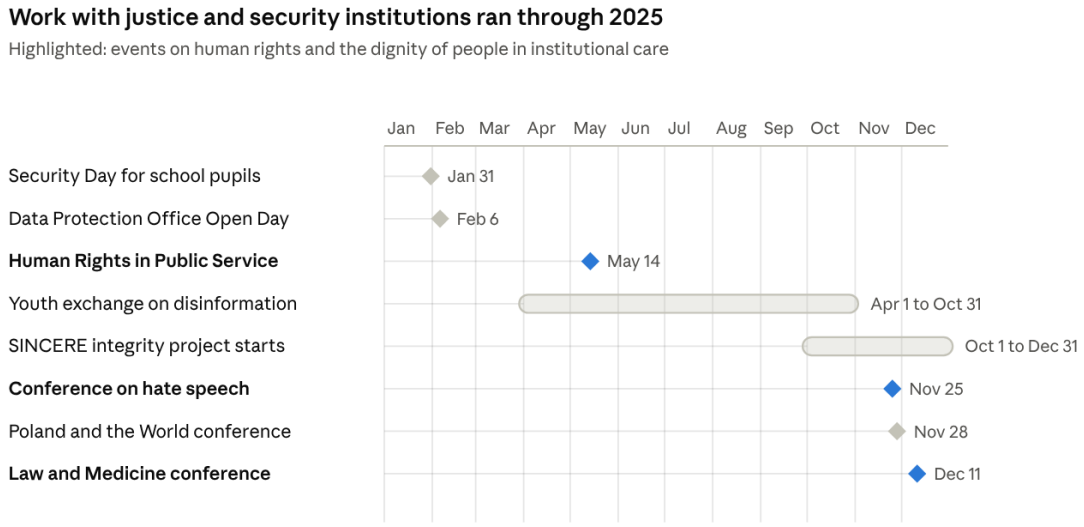
- the promotion of the rule of law and equal access to justice (16.3);
- a substantial reduction of corruption and bribery (16.5);
- effective, accountable and transparent institutions (16.6);
- responsive, inclusive and participatory decision-making (16.7);
- public access to information and the protection of fundamental freedoms (16.10).

The Times Higher Education Impact Rankings assess universities through research on peace and justice, participation in government policy-making, and the university's own governance, including the publication of its finances, its ethics policies and the involvement of staff and students in its decisions.

SDG 16 is not among the seven priority goals named in WSBU's Sustainable Development Strategy to 2030. The Strategy addresses it through the SDG 4 commitment to educate for human rights, a culture of peace and non-violence, and global citizenship. In practice, the University's activity in this area is substantial, because its academic profile places it close to the institutions of justice and public safety.

WSBU's work under SDG 16 is presented under the heading "Law, Societies and Justice" on its Engaged University pages.

The year in justice and security



Dated activities with justice and security institutions, 2025

The year's activity fell into three groups. Events on human rights addressed the treatment of people in the care of public institutions, from prisons to healthcare. Governance work covered data protection, academic integrity and disinformation. Educational activity connected school pupils and students with the institutions they may later serve.

Human rights and public service

The 1st Silesian Symposium

On 14 May 2025 WSBU hosted the first Silesian scientific symposium "Human Rights in Public Service. Theory and Practice". It was co-organized with:

- the Katowice district of the Prison Service;
- the regional representative of the Commissioner for Human Rights (Ombudsman);
- the Silesian Police.

The audience included judges, probation officers, prison officers, police officers and academics. The Director General of the Prison Service, Col. Renata Niziołek, took part and spoke about the obligation of officers to carry out sentences humanely and with respect for the dignity of the person.

The symposium placed the University at the meeting point of academic research and the practice of institutions that exercise coercive powers, which is where human rights protections are tested.

Hate speech and the protection of officers

On 25 November 2025 WSBU hosted a conference on hate speech and aggression directed at officers of public services, again with the participation of the Director General of the Prison Service. The conference addressed the conditions in which public officials work and the limits of acceptable public discourse.

Patient rights and medical liability

On 11 December 2025 the University held the 1st scientific conference "Law and Medicine", which brought lawyers and clinicians together on:

- the professional liability of medical staff;
- the role of expert witnesses in proceedings;
- mediation in cases of medical error;
- patient safety.

Rights in the University's own community

WSBU is a signatory of the Magna Charta Universitatum, which commits it to academic freedom and institutional autonomy. Its Awareness Days programme marks occasions devoted to human rights and the prevention of modern slavery, and its Debate Club trains students in reasoned civic argument.

Partnerships with justice and security institutions

Institution	Scope of cooperation	Status
Katowice Detention Center	Internships and research on rehabilitation and reintegration, under a pact signed in May 2024	Continued in 2025
Regional Youth Educational Center, Pszczyna-Łąka	Internships and research access for students of Pedagogy, Psychology, Law and National Security; nearly 100 students attended the opening lecture	Agreement concluded
Prison Service, Katowice district	Co-organization of the human rights symposium and the conference on hate speech	2025
Silesian Police	Co-organization of the human rights symposium; participation in Security Day	2025
Ombudsman, regional office	Co-organization of the human rights symposium	2025
District Court and Court of Appeal in Katowice	Joint curricula, conferences, research and placements for law students	2025/26

Institution	Scope of cooperation	Status
Prison Service Central Training Centre, Kule	Joint education and training activity	2025/26
Personal Data Protection Office	Host of the Office's 11th Open Day on AI and data protection (6 February 2025)	2025
Małopolska Voivode	Co-organization of national civil protection training at TAURON Arena Kraków (27 November 2025); patronage of the Małopolska Young Uniformed Staff	2025
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Project under the "Public Diplomacy 2024–2025" programme on countering disinformation	2025

These partnerships serve three purposes at once. They give students access to the institutions in which they will work, they provide researchers with field access to questions of rehabilitation and public order, and they bring academic evidence into the training of officers and officials.

Academic integrity and institutional governance

SINCERE: integrity across the Western Balkans

SINCERE is an Erasmus+ capacity-building project (EUR 348,681) that started in October 2025 and runs to September 2028. It develops academic integrity at universities in Albania and Kosovo. WSBU co-leads institutional integrity assessments and the drafting of an Academic Integrity Framework, and the partners intend to establish a lasting Regional Academic Integrity Network. Preparatory work included a WSBU delegation at Aleksandër Xhuvani University in Elbasan from 30 June to 4 July 2025.

The project addresses target 16.6 on effective, accountable and transparent institutions in a sector where integrity determines the credibility of qualifications.

Ethics at WSBU

The University's own integrity framework comprises:

- **Codes of ethics** for employees and students, with the Student Code of Ethics updated in 2025;
- **A complaints procedure** based on a register and supervised by the Rector;
- **An Anti-Mobbing and Anti-Discrimination Committee**, a standing body examining reported cases;
- **A Rector's Plenipotentiary for Equality**, an independent role established by the Diversity Policy, with provision for anonymous reporting of violence.

Governance of artificial intelligence

Rector's Order No. 140/2024/2025 sets out the principles for using artificial intelligence in teaching and learning. The University applies them in its own systems: the MAIA assistant for candidates and students

is designed for transparency in line with Article 50 of the EU AI Act, answers only from verified University sources and refers individual cases to staff.

Open science and access to information

WSBU applies recommendations on open access to research publications. Its journal *Forum Scientiae Oeconomia* publishes in open access and was classified in the first quartile (Q1) of the SJR ranking in April 2025. The University also maintains a knowledge base of staff research achievements, introduced as part of its digital transformation.

Participation in research governance

WSBU experts, including Prof. Paulina Polko, were appointed to the Science Evaluation Committee for the national assessment of research quality in 2022–2025. Vice-Rector Prof. Marcin Lis serves on the Ministry of Science advisory team for the "Science for Society" programmes and on the Interregional Coordination Team for the Integrated Skills Strategy 2030.

Security, disinformation and institutional resilience

Protecting public institutions

The Universal CBRNE Protection System project (Internal Security Fund, EUR 3.33 million, 2025–2028) develops procedures, training and a virtual-reality educational game, THOR, to protect open university campuses against chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear and explosive threats. Study visits in nine EU countries informed the analysis.

Countering disinformation

- **Deepfake research:** a project funded by the GZM Metropolitan Science Fund, led by Dr Karol Jędrasiak, analyzed twenty of the most widely circulated deepfakes to identify the most effective detection methods.
- **Youth exchange:** a Polish-Lithuanian exchange funded by FRSE (PLN 15,569, April – October 2025) trained young people to analyze and counter fake news.
- **International conference:** "Poland and the World. Economy and Security" (28 November 2025) included work from a Ministry of Foreign Affairs project on countering disinformation.
- **Public education:** the event "From Deepfakes to First Aid" combined digital safety with practical rescue skills for residents.

Data protection and cybersecurity

On 6 February 2025 WSBU hosted the 11th Open Day of the Personal Data Protection Office, devoted to artificial intelligence and data protection. The University also organized a conference on artificial intelligence and cybersecurity, and operates an automated security architecture with patch management for its own systems. In the 2025/26 academic year Vice-Rector Prof. Katarzyna Szczepańska-Woszczyna was appointed to the supervisory board of NASK, Poland's national research institute for cybersecurity.

Civil protection

WSBU trains the staff of local authorities in crisis management and civil defense. On 27 November 2025 it co-organized, with the Małopolska Voivode, a national training in civil protection and civil defense at TAURON Arena Kraków.

Educating for justice and security professions

Programmes

WSBU educates for the institutions covered by SDG 16 through degree programmes in National Security, Law, Pedagogy with a specialization in resocialization, Psychology and Internal Security. In the Perspektywy 2025 ranking the National Security programme was placed third in Poland. In the national evaluation of research for 2022–2025 the University received category A in security studies and category B+ in safety engineering.

The EduTrend project (European Funds for Social Development, PLN 18.9 million, 2024–2029) includes National Security among the six programmes it is modernising around practical, green and digital competences.

Learning in the institutions themselves

Students gain experience inside the institutions they study:

- internships and research at the Katowice Detention Center;
- placements and research access at the Regional Youth Educational Center in Pszczyna-Łąka, where nearly 100 students attended the opening lecture;
- a study visit to the Court of Justice of the European Union, where students observed the application of EU law;
- placements with courts in Katowice under the agreements concluded in the 2025/26 academic year.

Reaching school pupils

- **Security Day** (31 January 2025) introduced secondary-school students to the work of the uniformed and rescue services.
- **The 13th National Tournament of Uniformed Classes** gathered more than 30 school teams.
- **Bringing RESEARCH to schools** (Erasmus+, EUR 250,000, from October 2025) develops a toolkit that brings research methods into humanities teaching for pupils aged 13 to 18, and prepares them for responsible participation in a democratic society.

Professional development for officers and officials

WSBU offers postgraduate programmes and training relevant to public administration and the justice system, among them labor and social insurance law, taught by labor-court judges, Social Insurance Institution managers and inspectors of the National Labor Inspectorate. Cooperation with the Prison Service Central Training Centre in Kule extends this offer to the staff of the prison system.

Continuing activities in 2026

- **SINCERE:** the project enters its first full year, carrying out institutional integrity assessments and drafting the Academic Integrity Framework for partner universities in Albania and Kosovo, with a view to establishing a Regional Academic Integrity Network.
- **Court partnerships:** the agreements with the District Court and Court of Appeal in Katowice and the Prison Service Central Training Centre open joint curricula, conferences and placements.
- **Campus security:** the CBRNE Protection System project continues until 2028, developing procedures and VR training for open institutions.
- **Responsible AI:** Dr Karol Jędrasiak represents Poland on the management committee of the COST Action AI-GUIDE, on the governance of generative AI in research and innovation.
- **Civil protection:** training for local authorities continues with regional partners, following the national exercise of November 2025.
- **Research standing:** category A in security studies supports doctoral education and research in the field.