



Name of the event	Visit of the former concentration camp of Mauthausen by the International Winter Semester Students
Institution, which organised the event	Theresan Military Academy
Country of the organiser	Austria
Year of the event	2025
Date of the event (from-to)	31.10.2025
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Authors' country	Poland

On 31 October 2025, cadets participating in the International Semester at the Theresan Military Academy visited the Mauthausen Memorial, a site preserving the memory of one of the most brutal Nazi concentration camps. The guided tour provided participants with a deep and reflective understanding of the camp's history and the suffering endured by its victims during World War II.



The international semester in front of the concentration camp.
Photo: Livia Pistracher.

During the visit, cadets were guided through the most significant parts of the former camp, including the "Stairs of Death", the barracks, the gas chamber, and the Room of Names, where almost 100,000 victims are commemorated. The guide offered historical context that illustrated both the



Room of Names.
Photo: Julia Bielicka.

scale of human suffering and the mechanisms of systematic dehumanisation and cruelty.

A particularly striking aspect of the visit was the contrast between the living conditions of the prisoners and the relative comfort of the SS personnel stationed nearby. Reflecting on these differences encouraged participants to consider the consequences of hatred, prejudice, and totalitarianism.

At the Polish memorial, Polish cadets rendered honours to the victims, standing in silence as a gesture of remembrance and respect. This symbolic act represented a shared commitment among future officers of



Polish Midshipmen salute to the Polish victims.
Photo: Guiseppe Petrolo.

various nations to uphold the values of dignity, justice, and peace.

The visit to Mauthausen proved to be a deeply educational and emotional experience. It reminded all participants of the great responsibility carried by those who serve in uniform and of the importance of opposing intolerance and violence. Confronting the tragic history of Mauthausen strengthened the cadets' conviction that remembrance must remain a warning and a lesson for future generations.