What’s the story?
Poland’s policies, research and practices in education and training

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Poland’s improvement in competencies assessments
The outline of the presentation

- Early childhood education
- Primary school (school age)
- Lower secondary school (Gymnasium)
- Vocational education and the qualification framework
- Transition from school to the labour market
- Monitoring:
  - Education information system
  - Educational value added
Early childhood education

- Participation in early childhood education and care is low in Poland, although still increasing

- Children from disadvantaged backgrounds, who would benefit most from the pre-school education, are less likely to participate in it

- Since 1991 each 6-year old child has the participate in one-year preschool programme (the so called „zero-grade”)

- Preschool act of 2013: changes in preschool financing, less costly for parents, less institutional and bureaucratic barriers,

  -> each 4-year old child should be provided a place to gain the preschool education in 2015 (responsability of the local governments)

  -> 90% of children aged 3-5 years should attend the preschool in 2020
Preschool or school?

- Since 2009 parents have been encouraged to let their child start the school when 6 years old

- Children born between January and June 2008 will start the first grade in the primary school in September 2014 (with age of 6 years). All children born in 2009 will start their primary education in 2015

- Why parents are not willing to let their children start education earlier (from TUNSS):
  - The child is not mature enough to start the regular education
  - School would deprive the child of her childhood
  - The school duties will be a too big burden for the child.
Assessing the skills of 6- and 7-year-old children

- TUNSS conducted in Autumn 2012 and Spring 2013
- Five groups assessed:
  - Children aged 6 in the „zero grade” in the kindergarten
  - Children aged 6 in the „zero grade” at school
  - Children aged 6 in the first grade
  - Children aged 7 in the first grade
  - Children aged 7 in the second grade
- The assessment in reading, writing and mathematic skills conducted on tablets; adaptive testing

http://eduentuzjasci.pl/wydarzenia/852-wyniki-badania-6-i-7-latkow-na-starcie-szkolnym.html
Assessing the skills of 6- and 7-year-old children

- All children progress independently on where they are placed. The level of mathematical skills of 6-year-old and 7-year-old children in the first grade is the same. The greatest progress in reading and mathematics is made by 6-year-old children in the first grade.
The structural reform of 1999

- Raise the level of education in society by increasing the number of people with secondary and higher education qualifications
- Ensure equal opportunities of education
- Support improvements in the quality of education
- The reform was envisaged to cover:
  - The structure of the education system
  - The curriculum
  - An independent assessment and examination system
  - School finance
  - Teacher qualifications (promotion paths and the renumeration system)
  - Administration and supervision methods
1999 reform

Previous structure of school system (PISA 2000)

New structure of school system (since PISA 2003)
Why Gymnasium?

- The network of primary schools is not rational (many schools with small numbers of pupils)

The average number of pupils in primary schools in 2007/2008

% of primary schools with less than 71 pupils in 2007/2008

Gymnasium

- The period of general education based on a common core curriculum and equal standards was extended by one year
- Schools are larger, better equipped and employ teachers with adequate qualifications
- The school network is rational and gymnasia are not closed down despite the falling number of students (demographic fluctuations)
- The between-school variation in PISA decreased substantially
Gymnasium

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Problems:

- Difficult age of adolescence.

- Students less likely to feel they belong to school, hold positive attitudes towards school.

- The process of schools differentiation in the cities may question the idea of equal opportunities.
Variance decomposition of the results in lower secondary school exam

Dolata R., Jasińska A., Modzelewski M., Wykorzystanie krajowych egzaminów jako instrumentu polityki oświatowej na przykładzie procesu różnicowania się gimnazjów w dużych miastach, Polityka Społeczna 1/2012
Foreign languages at school

- European Commission research project (comparable data on the language proficiency of secondary school students + information about good practices in language learning and teaching)
- Student assessment in listening, reading and writing
- A representative sample of students in their final year of lower secondary or secondary schools (3300 in PL, 54 thous. in Europe)
- Main study took place between February and March 2011
- Additional questionnaires for language teachers, school principals and National Research Coordinators

https://crell.jrc.ec.europa.eu/?q=article/eslc-database
Foreign languages at school

First target language: ESLC results in reading

- Pre-A1
- A1
- A2
- B1
- B2

Country and Language:  
- SE (EN)  
- NL (EN)  
- MT (EN)  
- EE (EN)  
- BE de (FR)  
- BE fr (EN)  
- SI (EN)  
- BE nl (FR)  
- EL (EN)  
- HR (EN)  
- ES (EN)  
- PT (EN)  
- UK-ENG (FR)  
- BG (EN)  
- PL (EN)  
- FR (EN)  

%
Vocational education

- Vocational education is often associated with negative stereotypes and negative selection (compare PISA 2009)
- School report difficulties in finding and retaining good teachers; the possibilities to employ instructors for practical vocational training are often not exploited
- Concerns about the school buildings, equipment, facilities

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Vocational education

- Not much involvement of employers in the process of developing study programmes and in the education process itself

- Changes in legislation: the exams will better suit the new core curriculum and the employers expectations (changes in the vocational education core curriculum implemented since 2012)

- Till now the network of basic vocational, technical schools and supplementary technical schools for adults

- In 2011 the decision made to dissolve the basic vocational and technical schools for adults

- National qualification framework will facilitate gaining qualifications through participation in courses offered by schools and other institutions

- 200 occupations, for which 252 qualifications are identified
National qualification framework

- Change approaches to learning and investing in human capital
- Clear competencies behind the diploma and certificates
- Confirmation of competencies gained outside the school system
- Specific learning outcomes required at each level of QF (knowledge, skills and social competencies)

https://www.youtube.com/user/IbeKrk
National qualification framework

- The Polish Qualification Framework will be referenced to the European Qualification Framework
- This will facilitate freedom of movement within the European labour market
Higher Education Graduate Tracer Study

- Evaluation of the educational and career paths of graduates of a selected higher education institution based on existing data received from the Social Security Institution (ZUS) and the higher education institution

- Data supplemented with information collected from the qualitative study on the expectations of employers, students and graduates, and the panel research concerning evaluation of the situation of graduates entering the labour market

- Similar project on VET graduates
Education Information System

- Collect data for the development of policy and rationalising education expenditure
- New structure should ensure reliable data
- Important for the policy at the central, regional and local levels
- Old system gathered aggregated data, the new system enriched also by individual data (on students, teachers)
Educational Value Added

- The 1999 reform introduced the independent system of exams and assessment.
- Three-year and one-year indicators; the models control for sex and dyslexia

http://ewd.edu.pl/start/
Thank you for your attention!

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"Quality and effectiveness of education - strengthening of institutional research capabilities"

Project co-financed by the European Union under the European Social Fund

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