Assessment in Poland

READ Global Conference:
Developing a Vision for Assessment Systems
Jerzy Wiśniewski, Ministry of Education
POLAND
The point of departure

- 8-year primary, compulsory education
- 4-year secondary general education
- 5-year secondary vocational education
- 3-year basic vocational schools

Exams:
- Entrance exams at secondary schools
- Final secondary school exam – Matura
- Entrance exams at universities
Preschool Education

"Zero" class

Primary School

Entrance exams to secondary schools organised internally by schools. Used for Selection. Not used for evaluation of primary schools.

Matura secondary school leaving exam. Not used for selection for tertiary institutions.

General secondary

Vocational secondary

Basic vocational
Weak points

• First test – external assessment at the age of 15, less than 50% of the age group
• No feedback to the primary schools
• Matura: items for the written part decided by regional authorities (different), oral – internal school decision. Assessment by school teachers
• Entrance exams to universities in addition to matura
Weak points

• Lack of research on evaluation and assessment
• Inspection focused on rules and procedures and not on learning outcomes
The reform

- 6-year primary school
- 3-year lower secondary
- 3-year upper secondary
  - General
  - Technical
  - Vocational
- Test or exam at the end of each level of education
- Matura serving as an entrance exam to tertiary education
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<tr>
<th>Preschool Education</th>
<th>&quot;Zero&quot; class</th>
<th>Primary School</th>
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Preschool Education

"Zero" class (prep. year)

Primary School

Lower Secondary Gymnasium

General secondary

Vocational secondary

Basic vocational

Test
IV grade of primary school
Common and compulsory

Gymnasium exams
Completion of gymnasium education
Common and compulsory

Matura
Secondary school leaving exam.
Replacing entrance exams at tertiary institutions

Vocational qualification exam
External examinations

Common compulsory tests
• at the end of the primary school
• at the end of the lower-secondary school;
• the maturity examination upon completion of education in the upper-secondary school.

Central examination board and regional examination boards
Examination system

Central and regional Examination Boards

• Design, organise and assess
  – Test after 6th grade
  – Exam at the end of lower-secondary education
  – Matura – final upper-secondary exam.
PISA Reading

- 2000 – 480 (below OECD average)
- 2003 – 497 (OECD average)
- 2006 – 508 (above OECD average)
Impressive improvement in Poland

OECD average

PISA Mean Score

2000 2003 2006
Progress in reading

percentiles

points

How have we done that?

• Who were „PISA-students“?
Reform timeline
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How have we done that?

• What experience (training) do they have in solving tests?
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Other effects

- Selection, aspirations, progression
- Evidence-informed school policy
- Educational value added
<table>
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<th>type of school</th>
<th>mean score</th>
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</table>
Distribution among the levels

<1  1  2  3  4  5

<1  1  2  3  4  5

<1  1  2  3  4  5

<1  1  2  3  4  5
PISA 2000

- Percentage of the students with the score below 400
- Percentage of the students the score beyond 600
- Average student score (points)

Legend:
- General secondary
- Secondary vocational
- Basic vocational
- POLAND

Points (500 - OECD average)
Difficulties

- Change of the government = policy change
- Postponing the introduction of the new Matura 2002 → 2005
- „Amnesty” 2007
- No compulsory mathematics in Matura until 2010
Conclusions

• Three interlinked systems:
  – Internal school assessment
  – External examinations
  – International surveys
  – (national evaluation and monitoring)

• Sources of information and (potential) evidence

• Evidence-informed policy
Conclusions

• Students might be accustomed to test taking, but there is not enough evidence to proof that that is a reason for improvement
• Delayed specialisation led to change
• Increase number of hours of instruction – why not better achievements in maths?
• Future
  • Vocational examinations, qualifications
  • Recognition, validation of informal and non-formal learning