Education Reforms in Poland: what lessons for other countries?

Maciej Jakubowski
Evidence Institute

November 2015
Outline

• Polish reforms and their outcomes
  – The 1999 reform
  – 2007/2008 Curriculum reform
  – 2009 School evaluation reform
  – Early education reform
• Further challenges
School reforms and PISA outcomes

![Graph showing PISA score points over years with markers for 1999 reform and 2007/2008 reforms.](image)

- Reading
- Mathematics
- Science

PISA score points (1SD=100 points)

PISA edition
The 1999 reform major components

- Change of the school structure
- Further decentralization
- New financing scheme
- School and teacher autonomy
- National exams
- New professional scheme for teachers
2007/2008 Curriculum Reform

• The reform began in 2007 with consultations
• The new curriculum was introduced gradually since 2008
• It describes the expected learning outcomes for each stage of education
• The new curriculum had two major effects:
  – It strengthened teachers’ autonomy — and responsibility
  – It further shifted the emphasis from knowledge acquisition to critical and analytical thinking
School evaluation system in Poland

- External evaluation
- Internal evaluation
- Requirements
- Reports
Trends in performance across subjects and groups of students

- Progress in reading: from 2000 to 2009
- Progress in mathematics: from 2003 to 2012
Early Education Reform

• The reform made preschool education compulsory at the age of five beginning in the school year 2011/12.
• Since 2015, primary education has become compulsory for all 6-year-olds.
• In 2013, the government introduced a new law that secured places for all 3- and 4-year-olds in preschool education and made very affordable.
15 years of reforms

• It is a continuum of changes despite all the usual politics
• Main characteristic: expansion of comprehensive education
• But also:
  – school autonomy + soft accountability
  – teacher professionalization + responsibility
  – student-centred and outcomes oriented
3 key steps to system-wide reforms

1. Carefully analyze your starting point.
2. Balance accountability and autonomy
3. Make it ‘with teachers and for teachers.’
Further Challenges

• Adults education
• Use of technology in schools and ICT skills of teachers and students
• Teacher professionalization
• Social skills
• Equity
Problem-solving in a technology rich environment

Adults with tertiary education (PIAAC, 2012)
Building technology with teachers and students

The Evidence Institute develops with teachers and students a platform that is teacher- and student-oriented and facilitates collaborative analyses and reflection on the data.
Establishing and validating teaching standards

Australia and Saudi Arabia

- Broad consultations to give ownership of teacher standards.
- Survey of teachers to validate and rank standards.
- Professional development aligned with teacher-established professional standards.
Bermuda triangle of education reforms

- Autonomy
- Quality
- Accountability
- Professionalism
www.evidenceinstitute.eu
mj@evidenceinstitute.eu
@MaciejEvidence