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EDUCATION IN POLAND: A SYSTEM IN TRANSITION

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It seems that Poland had a smoother political transition than other Eastern European countries in the return to democracy from their former totalitarian regime. How did Polish education adapt itself to the unavoidable social changes during the transition? Was there any power which emerged as the controlling agent of the national education, or was education divided, fragmented? By reviewing Polish education from its highly academic past in the 13th century, and the struggle it must face to preserve its national identity, the author tries to follow the hesitant but eagerly forward steps taken by the population in its march towards a more liberal and humanistic education.

Il semble que la Pologne a bénéficié d'une transition politique plus douce que les autres pays de l'Europe orientale dans son retour à la démocratie de son ancien régime totalitaire. Comment le système d'éducation de la Pologne s'adapte-t-il aux changements sociaux qui sont inévitables pendant la transition? Y-a-t-il une autre puissance qui s'émerge comme le nouvel agent de contrôle de l'éducation nationale? Ou est-ce que l'éducation est devenue divisée, fragmentée? En retraçant l'éducation polonaise depuis son illustre période académique du 13^e siècle, et des luttes ardentes qu'elle a dû mener pour garder son identité nationale, l'auteur cherche à suivre les étapes prises par le peuple polonais dans leur marche vers une éducation plus libérale et plus humaniste.

In 1990, the Republic of Poland replaced the Polish People's Republic formerly known as Poland. Like other Eastern European countries, the Republic of Poland renounced its socialist past to embrace a more democratic ideology. A new era has since unfolded for the Polish people with all the exciting changes involved in coping with an open market economy and a free

enterprise. If today, Poland fares better than most socialist countries in transition, in its march towards economic freedom, this is due mainly to the fact that its government has made overnight a 180-degree turn in economic policy, accelerating the transformation of its economy from a centrally controlled system to a democratic open-market system¹. In turn, the education system has also undergone drastic changes although it has not broken out of the centrally controlled agency, the Ministry of Education.

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Situated in the heartland of Eastern Europe, Poland, during the past 200 years, suffered enormously from the expansion and imperialism of its neighbours: Austria, Prussia and Russia. At the end of the 18th century, Poland was occupied by these three neighbouring powers. After 120 years of partition and oppression, Poland enjoyed a short period of nationhood during the years separating the two World Wars. The country then endured a short bi-partition between the Nazi and the Russian occupying armies, which resulted in Poland becoming a satellite in the Soviet empire. This lasted until 1990, when the Solidarity Movement liberated Poland again and reinstated it among the pro-democratic nations of the free world.

Education in the kingdom of Poland

The former Polish state was established at the end of the 10th century. Christianity was introduced to Poland at about the same time. As churches and cathedrals were being built, collegiate schools to train local priests were also founded. During the 12th and 13th centuries, monks from Western Europe were invited to Poland to teach architectural design and agricultural techniques. The learners soon became the learned and institutions of higher education were established. Among them was the Cracow Academy which was founded in 1364 and became an internationally renowned centre for studies in astronomy in the 15th century. As more foreigners came to attend Poland's institutions of higher education, a tolerant and open atmosphere gradually developed in the field. This in turn attracted many other scholars who were being persecuted in their European countries. They came to Poland seeking refuge and offering, in return, their knowledge and philosophies. Some of these scholars opened new schools such as the Ariens Gymnesia in Lubartów and Raków, the Gymnasium of the Bohemian Brethen at Leszno, the Gymnesia of the Lutherans at Torún and Gdańsk, the reformed Piarist schools and the Collegium Nobilium (Tomiak, 1988, p. 1006). The Catholic Church continued to maintain a very strong influence in education, especially in the rural districts where churches and schools commonly operated in tandem.

In 1773, Sejm, the Polish national parliament, created the Commission on National Education. This was the first Ministry of Education in Europe.² The Commission tried to reform the education system by placing it under state control and by creating a new integrated curriculum which encompassed mathematics, natural sciences and the Polish language. Education at the primary level was to be geared toward preparing students for real life by introducing agricultural techniques, handicrafts and trade into the syllabus. The Commission also introduced textbook production by a central organization. The Commission's efforts were short-lived because the Polish state was overtaken and divided between Austria, Prussia and Russia in 1795.

Education during the partition of Poland

Poland ceased to exist. Its territory was partitioned into three sectors. Each sector came under the administration of either Russia, Prussia or Austria. Teaching of the Polish language was abolished in all but the Austrian sector.

Education in the Russian sector was designed for the elite and was not accessible to peasant children. The main purpose of education in this sector was the russification of Polish society. Only at the beginning of the 20th century was teaching of the Polish language made possible in elementary schools.

In the Prussian sector, the situation was no better. However, schools were extended to include the attendance of country youth together with children of the nobility. The reason for this freer access was that the Prussian authority believed that education was the main vehicle for Germanization. But Polish educators resisted this Germanization by organizing private schooling in churches. In order to obtain some skilled labour, the occupying authority also began vocational training. This was started with the Mining Academy in Kielce, the Forestry School in Warsaw and the Agronomic Institute in Marymount (K.R. Wulff, 1992, p. 9).

In the Austrian sector, the educational situation was slightly better. The Polish language was taught, not only in primary and secondary schools but also in two universities of the sector.

Despite many difficulties and much oppression, the entrenched influence of the Catholic church in education and the strong Polish nationalism successfully resisted the abolition of Polish education, keeping it well protected and ready to bloom at the first sight of national rebirth.

Education in Poland from 1918 to 1945

The independent state of Poland emerged at the end of the First World War and, while it enjoyed a new renaissance in national education, it needed

to address important issues such as the redrawing of its borders and the new composition of its population. Poland also had to contend with the high rate of illiteracy resulting from the century long partition. In areas of the former Russian sector, the illiteracy rate ran as high as 65% in the countryside. In addition, Poland also had to accommodate the education of the important ethnic minorities who comprised over 30 percent of the population. These were mainly Ukrainians, Germans, Jews, and Byelorussians.

In 1918, only 47 percent of the age cohort attended primary schools. The task of providing education to the children was enormous, as many teachers had only an elementary education and less than 33 percent of the teachers were actually graduates of a teachers' college. The Catholic church continued to have a strong influence in education as Polish schools remained a part of the church (Rust, V.D., 1992, p.389). During twenty years of the interwar period, educational development was steady but slow.

Only about one-third of primary school leavers continued their education in secondary schools, including vocational schools (Komorowska, H. & A. Janowski, 1994, p. 4543).

The outbreak of World War II halted all these efforts as Poland was invaded from the west by Germany and from the east by the Soviet Union. These two invading powers immediately began the destruction of the Polish intelligentsia through deportation of the Poland elite to the concentration camps on the German side, and to Siberia, on the Russian side. Only elementary education was allowed to Polish children. Secondary and higher educational institutes were officially closed for the duration of the war, as Poles could not enter higher schools. Education in the German-occupied territory had only one aim: to provide German industry with skilled workers and forced labour. Education then was intended to train a work force in which "No Pole shall rise above the rank of foreman . . ." (Świecki 1977, 331) and in which every Pole would be trained for this dual obligation: to work and to obey.

On the Russian side, the people did not fare any better. Training was provided only to those who espoused the communist ideology and were deemed to fit in with the proletarian struggle. All those suspected of strong nationalist loyalty were suppressed³.

To counter the destruction of Polish entity and culture, an underground education system was established. Secret teaching of the Polish language and of forbidden subjects such as Polish literature, history and geography were organized locally and spread throughout the country despite the fact that teachers and pupils had to work a compulsory 12-hour day and that there were

no suitable classrooms. This underground education made it possible for over 10,000 students to receive a university level instruction in the Polish language, and over 100,000 students to receive instruction at the secondary level. But above all, this teaching facilitated the preservation of Polish national unity and cultural heritage.

According to the Yalta and Potsdam⁴ treaties, Poland became a satellite state of the Soviet empire. Its boundaries were redrawn. On the eastern front, one third of the Polish territory was annexed and became an integral part of the Soviet Union. On the western and northern side, a large area formerly belonging to Germany was given to Poland. Mass migration occurred across the nation and was reflected in the shaping of the new educational system.

EDUCATION IN THE POLISH PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC

Administration and finance

When the Polish People's Republic came into being, only 55 percent of the age cohort attended primary schools in the rural districts. The illiteracy rate ran as high as 18 percent of the entire population. The education system which was linked to communist ideology and transformed into an instrument to promote socialist changes, was imposed upon the nation.

The education system was tightly and centrally controlled. Its personnel were obligated to show loyalty to the ruling party. Education became secular, free, and compulsory for all children up to fourteen years of age. The importance of education was over-shadowed during the years of the Cold War and education expenditures never rose higher than five per cent of the gross national product. Table 1 provides the total educational expenditure between 1964 and 1990 and its percentage over the gross national product. During this period, education was not seen as an integral right, but as a privilege handed out by the authority. However, the government's effort to eliminate illiteracy -- although a necessary step for indoctrination -- should not be underestimated (see Overview of Poland's education system until 1990, Appendix 1).

Table 1 - Public expenditures on education

Year	Billion of zloty	% of GNP
1958	7,444	n/a
1968	29,073	n/a
1985	497,497	4.9
1988	1,010,655	3.6
1989	4,342,528	3.8
1990	28,249,871	4.9

Sources: 1958, 1968: corresponding International Yearbook of Education 1985 to 1990: corresponding Statistical Yearbook (UNESCO).

The education system was centrally administered and controlled by the Minister of Education. Some vocational schools were also jointly controlled by another Ministry due to their technical nature. For example medical academies were administered by the Ministry of Health.

The country was divided into 49 *voivodships* (states). In each *voivodship* there was one *kurator*⁵ (superintendent) who represented the Minister of Education and supervised all educational matters. The education body in each *voivodship* was the *kuratorium*. Kindergartens were financed by the *gminy* (county), while primary and secondary schools were financed by the *kuratorium*. Universities and other higher education institutions were financed by the Ministry of Education, although these institutions were more autonomous regarding the teaching curricula and daily activities. Enrolment in different education levels is given in appendix 2.

Until 1990, school textbooks had been produced by the two state-controlled publishing houses, the *Publishing House for School and Pedagogical Books* and *Our Bookshop*. The Minister of Education sanctioned all curricula and teaching programmes. The educational philosophy of this period showed the strong influence of French educational philosophies of the 1930s. Education aimed to produce good socialist citizens who were ready to join the work force, loyal to the ruling party, and who never questioned the established

hierarchy of power. The authorities ensured that textbooks closely reflected this policy.

Determined efforts were made to make the pupils identify with the model of a socialist man [*sic*] committed to building a socialist society, acting in conformity with the principles of socialist morality, manifesting his respect for and love of work and anxious to master the basic tenets of Marxism-Leninism (Tomiak, 1988, p. 1008).

During this period, teachers were expected to represent the interests of the state and the party's powerful organization rather than address the interests and needs of schoolchildren. Officially, the Catholic church's influence in education was sidelined and replaced by the Communist Party's ideology. Religious studies were abolished. The education system became secular, an instrument of the state to expand totalitarianism based on the Soviet model. Indoctrination in most courses and a submissive attitude toward the *authority* were the norm. Promotion to higher positions and even to higher education was firmly linked to party allegiance and hierarchy.

Pre-primary and primary education

Children from 3 to 6 years old had the option of attending kindergarten schools or kindergarten classes in primary schools. Kindergarten schools operated almost year round and stayed open between 7 to 11 hours a day depending on their location. In rural areas kindergarten schools were usually seasonal depending upon the peasants' needs as well as depending on the kind of agricultural work that they were involved in. Kindergarten classes were part of the primary schools and were staffed by teachers receiving special training programmes. All 6 year old children attended grade 0, a preparatory year class, which was compulsory. Only 51 percent of pre-school age children attended kindergarten in Poland. In Hungary, for example, the percentage may have been higher in other Eastern countries where there was 100% attendance.

In 1962⁶, education was compulsory for the primary level, from grades 1 to 8 (an innovation of the 1961 law on the education system - which required 8 years of compulsory education instead of 7)⁷. More than 98 percent of the age cohort attended school. The school year ran from September to June and there were 6 to 7 periods per day. Each period consisted of 45 minutes. Curricula and course syllabuses were determined by the Ministry of Education, although in some cases, the *kurator* might authorize a school to follow its own individual curriculum. Students were graded throughout the school year on a scale of "2" to "5", with 5 being the highest mark. Students were promoted

from one class to the next according to their final average mark. All but those who had only "2" marks were promoted to the next grade. Students whose mark was only "2" in a certain subject needed to write an examination before the school year began. If they did not receive a passing mark in this examination they would have to repeat one year.

Many schools offered *Świetlica*, an after-school programme. This programme permitted children of young ages (grades 1 to 3) to come to school early, at about 7:00 a.m. before class started, and they stayed in school after class, up to 5:00 p.m. when their parents or a member of the family arrived to pick them up. Children attending *Świetlica* spent their extra time doing homework, reading books, playing games inside or outside, weather permitting, under the supervision of special teachers. Teachers who operated *Świetlica* received special training and had a workload of 26 hours per week, compared to the 18 hours per week workload of the full time teaching staff. Older students (grade 4 and above) were not part of this programme and often chose to fend for themselves.

Computers were still a rarity at the primary level and were only available in some schools in urban areas. High costs and language problems, as most computer software was written for the English-speaking market, were the deterrents in the use of computers in public schools. As new software was introduced in both Polish and Russian, some private schools focused on this market by offering courses in computer science as well as classes in computer literacy. In urban areas, computer clubs had regular meetings and saw their memberships growing. However, until 1990, computers were considered and actually were a luxury more than a learning aid or a necessity.

Secondary education

About 96⁸ percent of students completing primary schools went on to post-primary schools. There were three main types of secondary schools.⁹ First there were the *lycea* or general secondary school with a 4-year curriculum, with classes in science immersion, arts immersion and physical education. Then there were the *technikums* for *techniczna*, or technical school, with a 4-year or 5-year curriculum which specialized as secondary medical schools and economics schools. Finally there were the *zawodowky*, or basic vocational schools with a 3-year curriculum in which students learned a trade.

In the 1960s, students completing primary school had to compete for a place in a *lyceum* or a *technikum* through an examination based on the Polish language and Mathematics. This examination was abolished in the 1970s but was reinstated again in 1986.

During the 1970s and part of the 1980s, the selection of students entering these secondary schools was based primarily on the students' marks in the

last year of primary school. Students with the highest marks usually went on to the *lycea* to follow an academic track. Students with 3 to 4 marks went to the *technikums* and followed the secondary technical track. The rest of the students enrolled in a Basic Vocational School.

In May of the last school year, students in the *lycea* and *technikums* had to write the *matura* or school leaving examination. Until 1982, the first part of this examination consisted of two compulsory written tests, one in Polish and the other in Mathematics. Since 1983, students still have had to write the compulsory Polish test, but could choose Mathematics, History or Biology for the second written test. Those who received a passing grade went on to participate in the second part of the examination, taking two oral tests, one in Polish and the other in either Mathematics, History, Biology or Geography. Those students who failed would have to repeat the last year and write the examination again in May, although, each student could only take this examination twice.

A hundred days before the first examination, students of the graduating class make a presentation, then celebrate until dawn, commonly with a ball, supervised by their teachers. This celebration is known as *studniówka*. In another celebration, *po maturze*, called *absolutorium*, students of the younger classes offer flowers and red ribbons to the graduating class. These two celebrations stress the importance of the *matura* in the Polish student's life.

Students in basic vocational schools did not write the *matura*. They were trained to become craftpersons, tailors, hairdressers and often joined the work force upon completion of their secondary education. There was little for them in non-formal or continuing education. There were also two-year job schools which accepted students having completed grade 6 in a primary school. The job school did not grant certification. This programme consisted partly of apprenticeship and partly of *on the job training*.

There were almost no private schools until 1989. Once established, these schools became more popular because of their teaching programmes which were unconventional according to Polish standards. In these schools, foreign languages and computer science courses were emphasized more than in state-run schools. The tuition fees were high, ranging from 1,000,000 to 1,500,000 Zł a month, while the average monthly income was less than 2,000,000 Zł.

Tertiary education

Until 1990, post-secondary institutions, universities, academies and colleges in Poland, determined the number of students to be admitted to the first year of each institution. A student-holder of the *matura*, selected an institution then competed against the other candidates for a place in this institution through an entry examination organized and processed by that

institution. This examination could be written or oral, or both. An oral examination lasted approximately 15 minutes for each candidate. Then the students would study for three months, from July to September to complete the entry requirements. The evaluation committee of each institution was made up of two professors. The maximum mark was 50 and those who scored above 27 would likely get a place. Some institutions provided students with the questions to be asked at their entry examinations so they could prepare themselves.

Higher education was free. The Ministry of Education supervised universities, higher technical schools, agricultural schools and teacher-training institutes. Other ministries supervised 11 medical academies with a total learner population of 36,000, two merchant marine schools with 2,000 midshipmen, and six physical education schools enrolling a total of 9,500 students.

There was also a private university, the Catholic Lublin University and two theological academies. Besides these academic institutions, 900 post-matura technical schools with 2-year and 3-year curricula enrolled 111,000 students. These schools can be considered as post-secondary vocational colleges in Western Europe. In all, Poland counted about 400,000 students in tertiary education, a mere 10% of the children entering grade 1 in any year of the 1970s.

Table 2. Institutions under the Ministry of Education supervision

Number	Institutes	Enrolment
10	Universities	96,900
18	Higher technical schools	64,100
9	Agricultural schools	27,700
5	Economic institutes	18,000
10	Teacher-training school	28,100

At the present time, approximately 10% of the Polish work force hold a tertiary education degree or equivalent, mostly in technical and scientific disciplines. Women account for more than half of that group.

Teacher education

After World War II, Poland had to face its largest shortage in teachers, as thousands of them were killed during the war. To cope with this problem the state had to accept a variation in educational standards for teachers. Table 3 presents the requirements a person must satisfy in order to teach in a division. These requirements have been in effect since 1990.

There has always been a shortage of teachers, especially at the primary level. According to the 1988 census, the population increased by 700,000 annually. This means that in the late 1980s, over 600,000 children joined the education system. As there were about 450,000 students graduating from high schools (from a total of less than 1,800,000 enrolled in 4-year secondary education in 1980s), the number of newly graduated teachers could barely meet the increase in enrolment.

Retired teachers were encouraged to stay on without losing their retirement benefits. However, salary and job satisfaction were the main problem areas. According to Bartz and Kullas, (1991), a teacher in Poland earned less than an industrial worker (Table 4).

Table 3. Requirements for teachers in effect in 1990

To Teach	Qualifications required
Kindergarten Primary (Grades 1-3)	* Initial Teaching Studies ^a (2-year) or * University or College (5-year) or * University Extramural Studies ^b (3-year).
Primary (Grades 4-8) Lycea	* University or College (5-year).
Secondary Technical - Academic subjects	* University or College ^c , MA Degree (5-year).
Secondary Technical - Vocational subjects	* Depending on subjects Some degree of higher level training or MA in Engineering.
Special Education Schools	* Post graduate programme for regular practicing school teachers.

- a Graduates from a lyceum would attend a post-grammar school for two years (31-hour/week for 37 weeks in the first year and 29 weeks in the second year for a total of approximately 2000 hours).
- b Teachers holding the Initial Teaching Studies certificate had to pass an entrance examination to enter this programme which comprised 6 semesters of study at a university, for a total of 700 hours.
- c Candidates completed a five-year programme at a University, and graduated with a thesis (MA degree).

Table 4. Compared social ranking (partial list)

Profession	Rank in 1972	Rank in 1987
Teaching profession	4th	12th
Private gardener	N/A	1st
University Professor	1st	10th

Table 4 shows the plummeting regard towards the teaching profession. According to this view, it is not surprising that the state had to devise different means with which to provide schools with new teachers. Quick correspondence and evening courses were established. For those wanting to teach preschool, there was either a six-year course in preschool education for those who already had a grade 8 education, or a two-year course for those graduating from the *lyceum*. For other levels, students could enrol in the universities as well as the teacher-training schools. Additional training became available in the 1980s to upgrade teachers' qualifications. Although the demand of teachers might have been met in terms of quantity, professional quality suffered. The greater the number of "less than qualified" teachers who entered the teaching field, the less they could expect an increase in wages. This not only discouraged prospective candidates to the profession, but also reduced the number of existing teaching staff. Teachers turned to other better-paying jobs in the private economy.

If financial incentive and prestige are not increased, the shortage of qualified teachers will never be resolved and the problem will always remain a vicious circle. Education at all levels will suffer, and the national journey

towards prosperity will be longer and tougher. One of the possible solutions is that Poland should seek to increase the number of its higher education students studying abroad. Another is to appeal to the mass of Polish immigrants who could come back to rebuild the country.

IN LIEU OF CONCLUSION: THE NEW EDUCATION SYSTEM

The changes

Since 1989, changes which were brought about by the Solidarity movement became apparent in many aspects of life in Poland. Many changes affecting the education system took place at the grass-roots level and slowly became entrenched in the regional school system. In July 1991, the Polish Parliament enacted the law reforming the education system, sanctioning the changes which were already in place.

The state monopoly on education has been abolished. Marxist ideology has been discarded from the curriculum. Private schools have been established. The range of grades in the primary education has changed from 2 to 5 to 1 to 6, with 2 becoming the passing grade. In higher education, tuition remains free but students must pay a fee for any repeated year. Thus the system seems to embark on a pluralistic course in education. The 1990 draft stipulated that good education starts from home as it attempted to encourage and empower parents to educate their children "in harmony with their respective religious or philosophical convictions" (Szebenyi, 1992, p. 21). The changes have also permitted the re-establishment of private education. There were only 2000 students in the first non-state schools, commonly known as social schools, in 1991. However, tuition was very high. In addressing the fear of elitism in education, the Ministry of Public Education declared that a system of scholarships would be established to assure everyone equal access to these schools. However, as funding reserved to education does not cover the maintenance of all existing schools, such a promise would be very difficult to keep.

One of the most controversial changes was Articles 2 and 4 of the new Law, which legalized the involvement of religious instruction in education as well as the inclusion of formal religious instruction in the public school curriculum. Opponents to this introduction voiced their fear that the Marxist ideology "the party never fails" would disappear only to be replaced by the Catholic ideology "the Pope never fails" (Gajewska, 1990).

The challenges

Textbooks, teaching materials and teacher training remain challenges for the new education system. The Ministry of Public Education still controls the

education system. The curriculum still remains centrally developed as the Ministry wishes to maintain a certain coherence and equality in education. The school structure also remains unchanged (Szebenyi, 1992). In September 7, 1991, the Ministry of National Education enacted *Ustawa - O Systemie Oświaty* a very detailed *Regulation of the Education System*, due to take effect in April 1993. The 4-year lyceum curriculum is given in appendix 3.

Poland's educators understand that if the country is to double its economic growth it has to train a skilled labour force, capable of dealing with the advanced technology of the modern world. Such a skill-level in the labour force can not be attained with Poland's basic vocational school system. The experience of developed countries proves that this is only possible through the general secondary school system. The problem is now to reduce the over 45% of the secondary age cohort in basic vocational schools and increase the enrolment in general secondary schools from 23% to 54% (see appendix 1). Qualified teaching staff, appropriate school facilities, and advanced training materials are urgently needed. Will Poland have the human and financial resources and the determination to cope with this demand?

Just as the central power is loosening its grip over education through the democratic movement, another *power* is coming onto the scene. The Catholic Church argues that its schools were nationalized in the 1940s and requests the restoration of its wealth. It appears to many Poles that they are witnessing the switching of one central power over to another¹⁰, a more humane one perhaps, but still a centrally controlling authority. To face this challenge, the Polish people may benefit from the liberation lesson of the Spanish education (Boyd-Barrett, 1991).

The transformation of the political and economical structure in Poland occurred subtly. The transition from a highly and centrally controlled education system to a more democratic one may not be that smooth. Poland hopes to be able to face the challenges with wisdom and patience, to promote an education system accessible to all and realize the equal output and equal outcome for all its students, in order to guarantee a brighter and happier future for the nation.

Endnotes

1. See for example M. Kozakiewicz's ministerial address "Poland's Return to Europe" in 1990.

2. It was commonly hailed in Polish history that the Commission was the world's first Ministry of Education, however, before the 10th century, China and other countries under Chinese influence have established the Ministry of Protocol which looked after the education system, the examination system, and thus functioned as a modern ministry of education.
3. Not until Perestroika did the Russians admit to mass killings of Polish nationalist troops especially at Katyn.
4. Yalta, a port on the southern Crimea on the Black Sea, where in February 1945, Churchill, Roosevelt and Stalin met to partition Europe. Potsdam is the capital of Brandenburg, where Roosevelt, Stalin and Churchill (then Attlee) met in July and August 1945 after the collapse of the Third Reich.
5. According to Szebenyi, the curator for a voivode was appointed directly by the Minister - after consultations with the competent voivode and the union representing teachers of this voivode.
6. The Resolution on the Development of the System of education passed by the Polish parliament in 1961 guaranteed basic (primary) education to its citizens and also stated that "the educational system aims at preparing qualified people for work in the economy and national culture. Citizens should be prepared through education, to become builders of socialism" (Tomiak, 1988, p. 1008)
7. The educational reform initiated between 1971-1973, intended to make compulsory education up to grade 10 starting in 1978. However, this plan was not carried out as it was not endorsed by the teachers' branch of Solidarity (Szebenyi, 1992).
8. In reality, this percentage was much lower. Some sources cited it as low as 51%.
9. Laws on the reform of general education system were enacted in 1948, and laws on the reform of vocational school system, 1951.
10. See Suzanne Oster's "Erziehung zu Ehe und Familie in der Polnischen Schule" [Education for Marriage and the Family in the Polish school] in *Pädagogik und Schule in Ost und West*, No 2. 1989, pp. 83-90. After 14 years of teaching sex education without a textbook, the Ministry of education published "Preparation for Life in the Family", the only available textbook on the subject. But it was viewed as promoting life style not compatible with the catholic moral. The Catholic Church was strong enough to force the withdrawal of the textbook.

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Appendix 1 Overview of Poland's education system until 1990

Age	Structure of the formal education system			
24-25	Higher education 3 to 6 years. 280,000 full time; 85,000 part time.			
23-24				
22-23				
21-22				
20-21				
19-20				
Matura, two written then two oral exams in Polish (written and oral), and in Math, Biology, History, or Geography. Pass, go on to higher education, fail, can only take this exam one more time.				
19-20	Lyceum: General secondary school, 23% of the age cohort		5-year	Technikum: Vocational secondary school, 27% of the age cohort
18-19			4-year	
17-18			Basic vocational school (3 years). 46% of the age cohort.	
16-17				
15-16				
96% of the age cohort complete primary school and pursue post-primary schools.				Periods per day <i>a</i>

14-15	98% of the age cohort. Primary school, grade 1 to grade 8. Compulsory.	30
13-14	Promote to the next class with yearly average is above or equal 3 (5 maximum).	29
12-13	Repeat if overall average is 2. Take remedial courses for subject average 2.	29
11-12	a. According to K.R. Wulff, 1992. H. Komorowska and A. Janowski, 1994, had the number a little higher. 20 periods for grade 1, 21 for grades 2 and 3, 25 for grade 4, 27 to 28 for grade 5, 28 to 29 for grade 6, 27 to 29 for grade 7 and 28 for grade 8. They pointed out however that budgetary cuts in 1990-91 might reduce these number by 4 per week.	27
10-11		24
9-10		21
8-9		20
7-8		20
46	Grade 0, preparatory year	
<6	Kindergarten - Public + private - 5 to 9 hours a day	

Appendix 2 Enrolment in different education levels

	1980	1985	1988	1990	1991
Preschool	1,349,528	1,360,044	1,383,403	1,226,101	1,098,279
Primary total	4,167,313	4,801,307	5,141,434	5,189,118	5,218,323
% female	49	48	49	49	49
Secondary total	1,673,869	1,567,641	1,751,111	1,887,667	1,965,021
% female	50	51	50	50	50
General	345,214	337,563	393,532	444,597	499,401
% female	71	73	72	73	72
Teacher training	18,703	22,703	26,460	25,886	19,399
% female	87	91	91	90	88
Vocational total	1,309,952	1,207,355	1,331,119	1,417,184	1,446,221
% female	44	44	43	42	42
Tertiary total	589,134	454,190	493,552	544,893	535,656
% female	56	56	56	56	57
Universities ¹	453,652	359,245	397,949	436,608	434,796
% female	50	50	51	51	52
Other ² total	135,482	94,945	95,603	108,285	100,860
% female	75	75	77	77	78

¹ Universities and equivalent institutions

² Other third level institutions

Remarks:

1. % of female students is very high in general secondary school (72%) and in teacher training institutions at the secondary level (90%).
2. There was a general decline in enrolment between 1980 and 1985 at the secondary and tertiary levels. Is there any explanation? (Please note that the number of students enrolled in teacher training increased during the same period).

Appendix 3 Curriculum for 4-year Lyceum

Subject	I	II	III	IV
Polish (language)	4	4	4	4
First foreign language (French, German or English)	5	5	5	3
Second foreign language or Latin				
Mathematics	3	3	2	2
Social studies	-	-	-	4
History	3	3	4	
Geography				-
Biology, hygiene and environmental studies	6	5	4	-
Physics and astronomy				-
Chemistry				-
Basic computer science	3	2	-	
Music and Arts			-	
Survival in ABC warfare	1	1	-	-
Physical education	2	2	2	2
Socialization	.5	.5	.5	.5
Optional subjects	-	2	5	8
Total per week	27.50	27.50	26.50	23.50

Source: *Ustawa - z dnia 7 września 1991 r. - O Systemie Oświaty wraz z Przepisami Wykonawczymi.* -- Kindly supplied by mgr Andrzej Mróz (Poland). Translation by Mariola Smolarek and Sophia Kicak Pelletier (London - Ontario).