

Educational Challenges Posed by Migration to Poland

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Legal basis of admission of persons with non-Polish citizenship who are subject to compulsory schooling (7-16 years¹) to public and non-public schools

The Polish system of education of all levels, below the level of higher education, is based on the following legislation:

- The Act on the Education System of 7 September 1991 (with further amendments)
- The Act of 8 January 1999 on the Implementation of the Education System of the Education System Reform (with further amendments)
- The Act of 26 January 1982 Teachers' Charter (with further amendments of 1996)

Children who are not Polish citizens² can benefit from the education and care in public pre-schools. Those who are subject to compulsory schooling (7-16 years) can benefit from the education and care in public primary schools, gymnasias (lower secondary schools) and public artistic schools on the same terms as Polish citizens. Access to education is based on territorial basis - registration as an inhabitant of the local commune - regardless the parents' or guardians' status of stay in Poland. Public schools, mentioned above, are free of charge but parents have to cover costs of books and cultural initiatives organized by schools (i.e. trips, summer/winter schools, cinema/theatre visits and sometimes additional foreign languages or computer lessons). Although these expenses are voluntary, it is hardly possible to resign from them since they reflect child's exclusion from school society. Regarding public pre-schools, they are subsidized by the local authorities, nevertheless, there is a fee to be paid by parents/guardians.

Legal basis of admission of persons with non-Polish citizenship to public and non-public schools are as follows:

- article 93 and article 94a of the Act on the Education System of 7 September 1991
- the Regulation by the Minister of National Education and Sport of 4 October 2001 on the admission of persons with no Polish citizenship in public pre-schools, schools, teacher trainings institutions and units
- the Regulation of the Minister of National Education and Sport of 20 February 2004 on conditions and procedures of admission of pupils to public schools and on the transfer of pupils from one type of school to the other
- The Regulation of the Minister of Education and Science of 6 April 2006 on the Nostrification of School Certificates and Maturity Certificates Obtained Abroad
- The Regulation by the Minister of National Education of 1 February 2007 on the Framework Programme of the Polish Language Courses for Refugees

¹ Upper range of 16 years refers to graduating from lower secondary school. However, when the child does not complete this level school, the compulsory education is extended till 18.

² The definition of immigrant children adopted in Poland – i.e. children who are not Polish citizens - is related to the legislation implementing the Directive 77/486/EEC.

Researched Institutions – Justification and Background

In our research we conducted interviews in the following institutions:

- The Ministry of National Education (Ministerstwo Edukacji Narodowej) (I.1)
- The National In-Service Teacher Training Center – Department of Civic and European Education (Centralny Ośrodek Doskonalenia Nauczycieli)(I.2..A/B/C)
- The Foundation for the Development of the Education System (Fundacja Rozwoju Edukacji)(I.3)
- The Mazovian School-Board (Mazowieckie Kuratorium Oświaty) (I.4)
- The Warsaw Office for Education (Biuro Edukacji Urzędu Miasta Warszawy) (I.5) (I.6A/B)
- The Mazovian Local Governmental Center for Upgrading Teaching Skills (Wojewodzki Ośrodek Doskonalenia Nauczycieli)(I.7)
- The Polish Teachers' Union ZNP (Związek Nauczycielstwa Polskiego)(I.8)
- The Educational Branch of the Independent and Self-Governing Trade Union Solidarnosc (Sekcja Oświatowa NSZZ Solidarnosc)(I.9)
- The refugees' and asylum seekers' centers in Warsaw (I.10) (I.11A/B)
- NGO – Vox Humana (I.12)
- NGO –Polskie Forum Migracyjne (Polish Migration Forum) (I.13)

From the economic perspective, public schools and other educational institutions (with few exceptions) are supervised and financed by the local authorities. Regarding educational perspective, they are inspected by the school-boards, which are regional supervisory bodies controlled by the Ministry of Education. Not only school-boards control the quality of education but also support schools in case of problems.

The National In-Service Teacher Training Center is a state-funded agency of the Ministry of National Education and Sport, which supports the development of a national system of teacher training in line with state educational policies.

The Mazovian Local Governmental Center for Upgrading Teaching Skills is run by the Mazovian Local Government. It consists of local centers situated in Ciechanow, Plock, Radom, Siedlce, Ostroleka and Warsaw.

The Foundation for the Development of the Education System implements a range of initiatives to support educational reform and development in Poland. This key priority has been achieved by coordinating European Union programmes. It works under The Ministry of National Education and Sport supervision.

The Vox Humana is an NGO supporting antidiscrimination policy and contracting social exclusion. It aims to reinforce tolerant attitudes towards racial, ethnic, religious and confessional diversity. The Vox Humana runs projects focused on intercultural education.

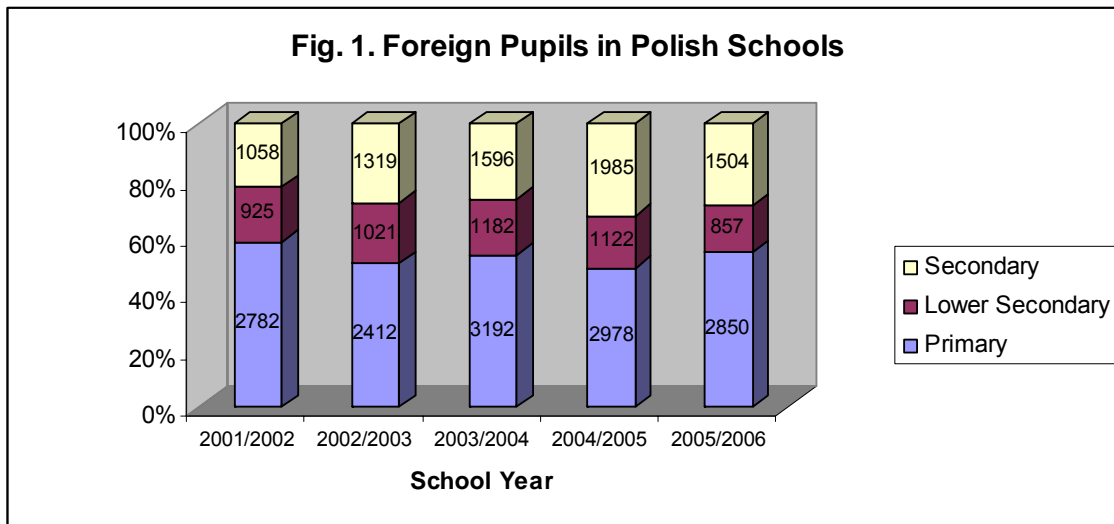
Polish Migration Forum is an NGO enhancing dialog between refugees, immigrants and Polish society, which aims at building a common understanding despite of cultural differences, stereotypes and fears.

The integral part of the Polish report is also devoted to the revision of magazines issued by two teachers' trade unions – we inquired articles and notes devoted to immigrants' children presence in Polish schools.

Statistics on the Immigrants' Children Presence in Polish Schools

On the basis of the data provided by the Ministry of National Education, it could be stated that the number of immigrants' children in Polish Schools during the last years oscillates between 4 000 -6 000. This numbers are extremely low in comparison to the number of pupils in general. E.g., in the school year 2005/2006 there was 6.6 million pupils (aged 7-21³) covered by national system of education (primary, lower-secondary, secondary schools)⁴ - see tables below. However, in the nineties foreign pupils were almost not present in Polish schools, their numbers were negligible.

In 2001 the Ministry in charge of education has ordered collecting data on non-Polish citizens in schools for the first time. The nationality of foreigners is not included in these statistics. Since the school year 2007/2008 data on foreigners in Polish schools will be collected by the System of Educational Information (System Informacji Oswiatowej), which is a part of the Ministry of National Education. Although, nationality of foreigners has not been distinguished in data collection till now, we found out at the Ministry that it considers its introduction next year.



Source: Ministry of National Education Data. On the Basis of Central Statistical Office Data, at 30 of September

³ Statistics contain pupils attending primary schools, lower-secondary schools, secondary schools: vocational schools, technical colleges, profiled lyceums, comprehensive lyceums, post-lyceum schools. For that reason they refer to the category 7-21.

⁴ *Oswiata i wychowanie w roku szkolnym 2005/2006* (Education in the School Year 2005/2006), p 32 http://www.stat.gov.pl/cps/rde/xbcr/gus/PUBL_analiza_osw2006.pdf

Tab. 1. Foreign Pupils in Primary Schools in Poland

Status of foreigner	2001/2002	2002/2003	2003/2004	2004/2005	2005/2006
foreigners	2122	1540	2028	1797	1810
Foreigners with residence permit	660	799	973	954	730
From EU ⁵	0	73	191	227	310
Total	2782	2412	3192	2978	2850

Source: Ministry of National Education Data. On the Basis of Central Statistical Office Data, at 30 of September.

Tab. 2. Foreign Pupils in Gymnasia (lower secondary schools) in Poland

Status of foreigner	2001/2002	2002/2003	2003/2004	2004/2005	2005/2006
foreigners	659	595	714	663	94
Foreigners with residence permit	266	375	378	375	669
From EU	0	51	90	84	94
Total	925	1021	1182	1122	857

Source: Ministry of National Education Data. On the Basis of Central Statistical Office Data, at 30 of September.

Tab. 3. Foreign Pupils in Secondary Schools in Poland

Status of foreigner	2001/2002	2002/2003	2003/2004	2004/2005	2005/2006
foreigners	752	785	985	1164	876
Foreigners with residence permit	346	498	539	517	486
From EU	0	36	62	304	142
Total	1058	1319	1596	1985	1504

Source: Ministry of National Education Data. On the Basis of Central Statistical Office Data, at 30 of September.

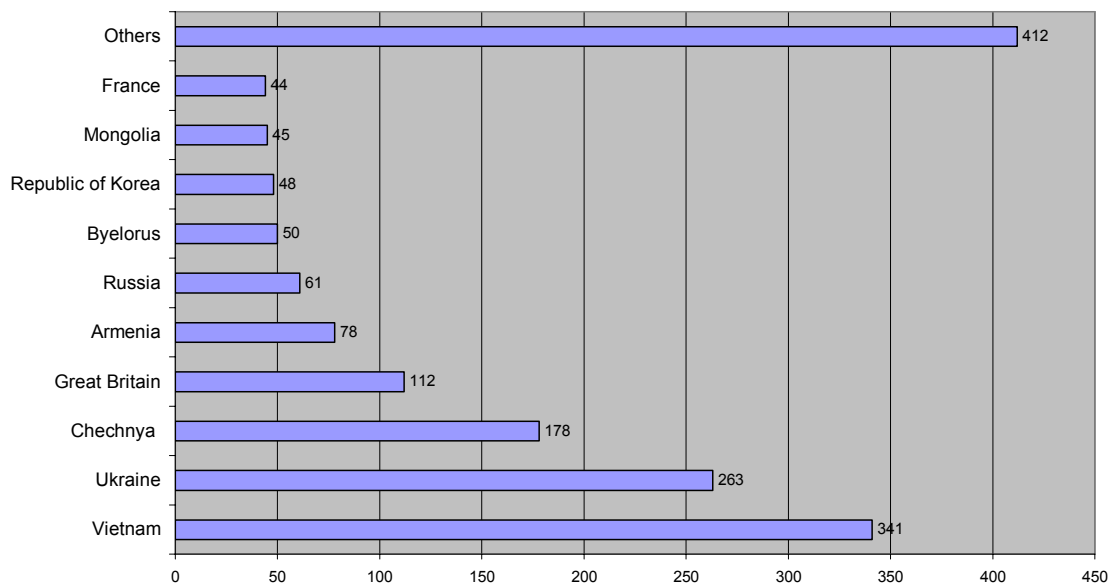
The Head of the Warsaw Office for Education estimates that in Warsaw schools there are about 2 000 pupils who are immigrants' children. He stressed that it is not necessary to know the exact numbers - knowing the scale of the phenomenon allows undertaking proper steps. He believes that strict inquiry might threaten parents with unregulated status of stay in Poland, and encourage them to take their children school.

According to data gathered by the Educational Information System, children of immigrants from Vietnam (341) and Ukraine (263) constitute predominating group of foreign pupils in

⁵ These category has been introduced since 2002/2003

Warsaw schools.⁶ These pupils, similarly like Russians and Armenians, adapt easily to Polish realities and they do not cause any serious educational problems, especially in comparison to the refugees' and asylum seekers' children. In 2005/2006 there were 134 pupils of the latter category, i.e. asylum seekers' children they attended four primary schools and two gymnasia. The vast majority of them are Russian citizens of Chechen origin. It is impossible to collect precise data on number of immigrants' children in Warsaw. However, we can indicate, the number of schools which, with financial support of the city authorities, in the school year 2005/2006, offered additional Polish language lessons. There were 23 of such schools.

Fig. 2. Foreigners in School and Educational Establishments in Warsaw Agglomeration, 2005/2006



Source: School-Board in Warsaw Agglomeration

There is also another group of immigrants' children present in Warsaw- children of migrating employees, who are EU or EFTA citizens (330 pupils -2005/2006). However, since they mainly attend non-public schools we are not focusing on them in our report.

Field Study Findings

In the Polish case, in general, there are no obstacles in providing education to refugees' and immigrants' children. However, it seems that the issue of immigrants' children presence in mainstream schools is still considered as a future challenge.

a. Individual Strategy towards an Immigrant Pupil

Suddenness of immigrants' children appearance in school results in another significant consequence – neither Polish pupils (and their parents) nor the teachers are prepared in advance to deal with immigrants' children.⁷ Thus many schools do not have a long-term strategy concerning immigrants' children presence in their premises. Generally speaking in

⁶ Data from the beginning of the school year 2005/2006

⁷ It is mentioned in our interviews with representatives of teachers' trade unions, Mazovian School-Board and NGO, and social workers in refugee centers,

Polish schools a teacher, who deals with immigrants in his/her classroom, is the one who creates his/her individual strategy towards an immigrant pupil.

On the basis of both interviews with representatives of the Warsaw Office for Education, teachers' trade unions and social workers in refugee centers, and teachers' remarks made during the conference organized by the Warsaw Office for Education⁸, it could be said that foreign pupils are treated more less as children with special needs, who, in any case, have to follow the requirements of the Polish syllabus. We figured out that teachers are divided into two groups. It seems that for some teachers it is difficult to distinguish between integration and assimilation. For some of them "the final conversion of an immigrants' child to a Pole" is an indicator of their pedagogical success.⁹ Others try to invent their own way to address cultural diversity in the classroom - they presume that Polish children can benefit from the close presence of different culture and religion in their own environment. Such teachers use specially prepared scenarios for lessons, which are useful in classes with children from distinct cultural environments/backgrounds. These instructions are not limited to one subject and can be used by teachers of different specialization in basic and secondary level education as well. Scenarios are included in the book issued by the National In-Service Teacher Training Center (Centralny Ośrodek Doskonalenia Nauczycieli) in 2004.¹⁰ As other researchers noticed, in the sense of taking pupil's cultural conditioning into consideration, immigrants' children presence in Polish schools still does not imply multi or intercultural education itself.¹¹

The intercultural education aims in reduction of fear towards "others". Thus to achieve it school should enable pupils to experience different cultures, including language and direct contact with representatives of diverse cultures. It should also support immigrants' children in social advancement. Teachers should be trained to acquire intercultural abilities and knowledge of foreign pupils' origin country and culture. Racist lining should be excluded from school textbooks. Simultaneously respect for cultural diversity should be introduced. An important element of state policy is enabling minorities to learn their mother tongue.¹²

b. Ministry of National Education

The Ministry interests concentrate on legal basis of admission of persons with non-Polish citizenship to public and non-public schools and supporting foreigners in learning Polish language. Regarding legal issues, there are no obstacles in providing education to refugees' and immigrants' children. Regarding Polish language, since 2004 the Ministry has charged the Polish Studies Center in Lublin (Polonijne Centrum w Lublinie) with training for teachers who teach Polish as a foreign language. Since 2005 the Center has trained coordinators of additional Polish language teaching for foreign pupils. These coordinators are situated in

⁸ The conference was devoted to the presence of foreign pupils at school, in particular Muslims ("Islam – trudne pytania, edukacyjne odpowiedzi" 14, June 2007).

⁹ To similar conclusion came authors of *Dziecko wietnamskie w polskiej szkole* (Vietnamese Child in Polish School), Warszawa 2006: Halik T., Nowicka E., Połec W. They did not find basis for the statement that in Polish secondary schools teachers accept Vietnamese pupils' cultural distinctiveness or treat it as a desirable and precious value. They rather tend to diminish differences between Polish and Vietnamese youth, stressing that there are no crucial dissimilarities, except of appearance, between them. p.103

¹⁰ Klimowicz A. (ed.), *EDUKACJA MIĘDZYKULTUROWA [Poradnik dla nauczyciela]* (Intercultural Education. Teacher's Guidebook), CODN, Warszawa 2004. Book is still available in the bookshop (including mail-order option) run by CODN.

¹¹ Halik T., Nowicka E., Połec W., *Dziecko wietnamskie w polskiej szkole* (Vietnamese Child in Polish School), Warszawa 2006

¹² Lalak D., „Swoi” i „obcy” w perspektywie antropologiczno-społecznej, in Lalak D. (ed.) „Migracja, Uchodźstwo, wielokulturowość. Zderzenie kultur we współczesnym świecie” (Migration, exile, multiculturalism. Clash of cultures in contemporary world), Warszawa, 2007, pp.89-122

school-boards (kuratorium oswiaty). Till that moment about 150 teachers attended these courses. Many of them work in schools which are close to centers for asylum seekers.

The framework of the training for Polish as a foreign language teachers includes a component devoted to problems which can occur in work with foreign pupil. It also contains advises and suggestions on introducing an immigrants' children to school community. Additionally, the Ministry prepared a program of Polish language courses for refugees.

c. Educational Policy

All of the interviewed respondents agreed that educational policy should be created on the local, even the school, level. The legal framework for providing education to refugees' and immigrants' children on the basic school level is satisfying. However, the main obstacle is financing – the Polish system of education permanently lacks money and faces serious problems on a national level such as permanent reform of educational system and its consequences on one hand and violence among pupils, drugs on the other. Therefore a very limited in numbers immigrants' presence in mainstream schools is still considered as a future challenge.

In the National In-Service Teacher Training Center¹³ we learnt again that cultural diversity is not a priority. The most favorable circumstances for this topic occurred in the pre-accession period. At that time Poland had to fulfill EU requirements for the future EU member states concerning preparations for refugees' and human rights protection. However, during interview our interlocutors remarked that the change of priorities on the state/ministerial level did not influence teachers directly due to the results of the earlier activities: people who were trained, now can train others on the local level. Many teachers are involved in conducting lessons on human rights. Department of Civic and European Education of the Center focuses on *preparing Polish children to openness for the others for learning other traditions and religions*. (I.2A) The Center activities are more concentrated on history and old national minorities than presence of immigrants' children in Polish schools, which are still insignificant in numbers. *That is a task of particular school. When these children (immigrants' children) are present at school, it should created own pedagogical program. (...) This is a Headmaster's duty to find someone who conducts training for a pedagogical body*. (I.2A) However, since education is one of the tasks of the local authorities that depend on councilmen's (radny) decisions on the budget, headmasters' activities are limited. *If they (councilmen) do not feel the spirit of education, nothing can be done. And no upper level regulations can change it*. (I.2C)

We also found out that in 2006 foreigners' issues in Warsaw schools were delegated to the representative of the Mazovian School-Board (Mazowieckie Kuratorium Oświaty - local branch of the Ministry of Education) who up to that moment had only dealt with national and ethnic minorities.¹⁴ It seems that these issues meet the Mazovian superintendent's interest. Before the beginning of the forthcoming 2007/2008 school year, all headmasters in the

¹³ To explain the broader context of that interview: Roman Giertych, the president of the nationalists party Liga Polskich Rodzin (League of Polish Families), who was a Minister of National Education between 2005 and August 2006 forbidden to disseminate "COMPASS"- a manual on human rights education with young people - prepared by the Council of Europe. The authors of the manual were accused by the Minister of „promoting basis for cooperation between pupils' and homosexuals' communities". The Minister also dismissed the Head of the National In-Service Teacher Training Center, responsible for the translating of that book, and did not retreat his decision despite of numerous protests. The dismissed Head of the Center now is the Head of the Warsaw Office of Education.

¹⁴ regarding definition of the national and ethnic minorities Act, new immigrants and refugees are not contained in that category.

voivodship¹⁵ should receive materials pertaining to the presence of immigrants' children in Polish school. These materials cover legal aspects as well as basic information on cultural diversity and methods of work in a multicultural environment.

It is important to note at this point that cultural and ethnic diversity is still treated rather in terms of old ethnic/national and religious minorities in Poland. It is related to the fact that majority of immigrants in our country do not treat Poland as a place of settlement. Immigrants who settled in Poland are not numerous and they concentrate in particular regions.¹⁶ Poland is a country of final destination predominantly for migrants coming from former USSR countries, especially Ukraine¹⁷ and, Ukrainians are also one of the most numerous minorities in Poland.

As far as education of ethnic/national minorities residing in Poland is concerned legal regulations¹⁸ enable them to study their native language and to be instructed in these languages. There are four possible types of schooling for national minorities in Poland: 1.schools with instruction in a language other than Polish, with extended hours of native language learning where subject instruction is given in the native language of a minority and information about the country and culture of the minority is included in the history and geography curricula.; 2.bilingual schools (or kindergartens), providing instruction in two equivalent languages; 3.schools with 'additional study of the native language of a minority', where the native language is obligatory for those pupils who have declared their membership of a minority group;4.'inter-school groups' composed of pupils from different schools for whom additional native language study is organised.

As compared to previous regulations¹⁹, new provisions substantially broaden the scope of educational opportunities for minorities by extending education for children in kindergartens and vocational schools. They reduced the minimum number of pupils in classes for mother tongue/history and geography of the country of origin lessons (3 hours per week).²⁰ Bilingual certificates were introduced.

¹⁵ According to the administrative reform held in 1999 Poland has been divided into 17 voivodships. Voivodship is the biggest administrative unit in Poland.

¹⁶ After Poland accession to the EU massive outflow of Polish citizens to these countries which opened their labour markets was observed. Thus Poland is still rather a sending country. Due to economic factors its transition to receiving country is postponed.

¹⁷ According to the data of the Office for Repatriation and Aliens in September 2004 there were 16.5 thousands Ukrainian citizens legally residing in Poland (residing on the basis of temporary residence permits and settlement permits). In 2004-2006, the settlement permits were granted to 4 613 of Ukrainian citizens, which constituted 41 % of all granted permits. Temporary residence permits were granted to 8 518 (2004), 8 304 (2005) and 7 733 (2006) which constituted respectively 34%, 37% and 35% of all granted permits. Similarly, Polish citizenship in last years was granted primarily to the nationals of Ukraine (e.g. in 2003 – 426 Ukrainians and the total number of foreigners granted in 2003 with the Polish citizenship was 1471). Iglicka K., *The Impact of the EU Enlargement on Migratory Movements in Poland*, p.17 http://www.csm.org.pl/en/files/raports/2005/rap_i_an_1205a.pdf; <http://www.udsc.gov.pl/Zestawienia,roczne,233.html>

¹⁸ Constitution Republic of Poland (1997, art35,70); the Regulation of the Minister of National Education and Sport of 3 December 2002 on conditions and procedures of duties enabling support for national, ethnic, linguistic and religious identity of pupils belonging to national and ethnic minorities in public schools and units.(Dz.U. Nr 220, poz. 1853); Act on National and Ethnic Minorities and on Regional Language (art.8.4) Dz.U. z 2005 r. Nr 17, poz. 141; The Act on the Education System of 7 September 1991 (art. 94a) .

¹⁹ The Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 24 March 1992 on system of education enabling support for national, ethnic, linguistic and religious identity of pupils belonging to national and ethnic minorities (Dz. U. Nr 34, poz. 150).

²⁰ It refers to points 3. and 4. in a previous paragraph. It is respectively: class group - primary school and lower-secondary: 7, secondary 14; inter-class group the same grade - primary school and lower-secondary: 7, secondary 14; inter-class group different grades - 3-14; and inter-school groups – 3-20.

Jasinski (2006) analysed materials of committee for national and ethnic minorities in Polish parliamentary lower house (Komisja Mniejszości Narodowych i Etnicznych Sejmu Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej). He came to the conclusion that Polish policy refers to two models of education policy proposed by R. Meighan: moral and socio-political.²¹ The first one regards school's functioning. According to it introducing new multicultural vision of world is indispensable. Understanding for different cultures, tolerance and, disapproval of racial behaviours and stereotypes are necessary. The socio-political model accepts pluralistic vision of the society stressing changes outside school. However, Jasiński remarked that respecting of principals of multicultural education depends on central and local authorities being in charge of education.²²

In general political transformation starting since 1989 has resulted in increase of national/ethnic minorities' activity. Impetuous growth of minorities' schools number was observed in the nineties. And in years 1990-2004 their number (including 'inter-school groups') raised 6 times – from 127 in 1990 to 774 in 2004. Consequently, in 1990 6,200 pupils learnt their minority mother tongue while in 2005 their number reached 48,800 (in primary, lower secondary and secondary schools).²³

d. Additional Financial Support for Polish Language Lessons for Immigrant Pupils

On the basis of interviews conducted in our research²⁴ and teachers' statements made during the conference organized by the Warsaw Office for Education,²⁵ we found out that even the teachers who deal with immigrants in their classes do not know that their schools are entitled to receive additional financial support from local authorities in order to provide e.g. Polish language lessons for immigrant pupils. This proves that access to information is a problematic issue. It refers both to teachers and to headmasters - some of them are rather passive, the others are not used to looking for - and finding information by themselves. On the other hand, immigrants' children often start their attendance at school, unexpectedly, during ongoing school year when the school budget is already accepted. In this situation it is too late to apply for additional financial support mentioned above.²⁶

e. Warsaw agglomeration – “immigration laboratory”

All of interviewed persons agreed that immigrants' presence in schools concerns only certain regions in Poland. Therefore local authorities decided to respond to immigrant pupils' presence on the local level, especially since education is one of the tasks of the local authorities in Poland. Warsaw agglomeration, constitute a region which has already been

²¹ R. Meighan specified also a third model –technical. In that approach current education model is believed to be perfect. Special programs should be offered to pupils belonging to minorities in order to contract their poorer results. Meighan R. *Socjologia edukacji* (Sociology of Educating), Torun, 1993p. 365.

²² Jasinski Z., *Przemiany w polityce oświatowej i społecznej w kontekście edukacji międzykulturowej*, w:Lewowicki T., Grodzka-Mazur E. (eds.) „Z teorii i praktyki edukacji międzykulturowej” (Intercultural Education - Theory and Practice), Cieszyn-Warszawa, 2006, pp.29-41.

²³ Awramiuk A., *Szkolnictwo dla mniejszości narodowych i grup etnicznych w roku szkolnym 2004/2005. Dynamika przemian* (National/Ethnic Minorities Education 2004/2005. Dynamics of Transition), CODN, Warszawa, 2005, <http://bc.codn.edu.pl/dlibra/doccontent?id=6&dirids=1>

²⁴ interviews with representatives of the Warsaw Office for Education

²⁵ The conference was devoted to the presence of foreign pupils at schools, in particular Muslims (14, June 2007).

²⁶ interview with a representative of the Mazovian Center for Teaching Skills Upgrading and an NGO's representative.

faced with the biggest immigrants' inflow and, its further intensification is expected. Consequently, immigrants' children are highly visible there as well.

Warsaw is an example of an area where local authorities treat immigrants' children presence in schools in broader social context. *It is an educational problem to be solved for our common benefit. It is not just solving problems of these people, but solving social problems of the city. Any group should not be excluded from the society. Education is the best mean of inclusion. (...) If these children do not attend school, they are somewhere in the street. In future when they grow up, they will have limited chances for gaining education and finding a job. It is disadvantageous for all of us.* (I.5) An appointment of a new position: methodic advisor/counselor on foreigners' education proves an actual concern on immigrants' children expressed by Warsaw authorities.²⁷

Warsaw Office for Education runs a project that is devoted to diversity in Warsaw. One of its goals is creating and implementing the system of tools (e.g. special programs and tutors) for the teachers that will be helpful during the work with children from distinct cultural environments. Adopting experiences with Roma assistants at schools²⁸ in schools attended by immigrants' children is also considered.

Warsaw is an example of fruitful cooperation between local authorities and non-governmental organization focused on educational challenges caused by the presence of immigrants' children at school. Favorable conditions prevail also in the Mazovian voivodship: *Local Governmental Center for Upgrading Teaching Skills got involved. They sent books to their counselors/advisors.*²⁹ *In our voivodship this topic meets interests and understanding.* (I.12)

f. Refugees/'Tolerated Stay'

A special interest in our research was devoted to refugees/'tolerated stay' children. Peculiarity of the Polish situation is constituted by the nationality of asylum seekers. Since 2000 Russian citizens of Chechen origins have dominated in the flow since they were constituted approximately 90% of applicants for refugee status. Majority is granted with tolerated stay which is a form of international protection. Although not all of them represent the same level of religiosity, some of them express their need to participate in religious activities. For that purpose refugee centers are facilitated with rooms, where they can pray. Lessons of Arabic language and religion (Islamic) for boys are organized as well.

It has to be stressed that population of asylum seekers in Poland is very young – about half of it constitute individuals under 18, each fifth asylum seeker is under 4 years of age. The same pertains to the population of recognized refugees: each fourth refugee is under 4 years and more than half is under 18.³⁰

²⁷ The competition for this position was conducted on 3 of September, 2007.

²⁸ Roma assistants at schools were introduced by the governmental programme in 2004. It was an attempt to improve the level of education of Roma in Poland. Due to traditional reluctance of Roma groups to send children to school and inability of many Roma children to speak Polish at a sufficient level, teaching assistants were recruited to support Roma children at class. Those assistants originated from Roma community act as intermediaries between Roma and Polish pupils.

²⁹ NGO representative means a manual for teachers (suitable also for Polish parents) presenting basic information on Islam. Counselors support teachers in the voivodship in terms of training, provided knowledge on particular topics or subjects.

³⁰ Office for Repatriation and Aliens data, 2005. Since July, 2007 the Office for Foreigners is the central authority competent with respect to repatriation, entry of aliens in the territory of the Republic of Poland, the transit of aliens through that territory, the residence in and leaving it, granting to aliens the refugee status, asylum, tolerated stay and temporary protection as well

Temporal /“interim” status of the family that treats Poland as a transition country negatively influence children’s situation. Even financial incentives work only in the short-term and gradually lose their attractiveness. Many schools do not have any long-term strategy concerning immigrants’ children presence in their classes. In Poland access to education is based on territorial division - registration as an inhabitant of the local community. As a consequence some schools were “over flooded” by residents’ of refugee centers’ children. For teachers it meant an incredible pedagogical effort, for which they were usually not prepared. For Chechen children it meant creating ethnic enclaves inside schools and for Polish pupils far less teachers’ attention. There were even cases that Polish parents decided to transfer their children to other schools since they were concerned with deteriorating level of education provided to their children. As a response to these worrying effects refugees’ children started to be sent to schools, which were not assigned to the area of the refugee center but were located not too far away from the center.

Westward orientation of Chechen asylum seekers and of those under international protection in Poland results in lack of parents’ interest in children’s education in Poland. In order to change this situation, families were encouraged by cash equivalents paid only to those parents whose children attend school. As a result, in school year 2005/2006 more than half of refugees’ children attended Polish schools, which is still low but in comparison to the previous years it constituted a higher rate. In September 2006 more than 80% of school aged asylum-seeking children were enrolled into schools. This tool, however, was not effective in terms of increasing parents’ and children’s motivation to learn. A social worker inquired in one of Warsaw refugee centers estimated that only one of five families staying in the center is seriously involved in their children educational progress. In other center, also in Warsaw, a social worker emphasized that only half of the children registered in schools in the school year 2006/2007 were promoted to the next class. Such a low rate of promotion was caused mainly by low pupils’ frequency at classes during the school year.

According to the Office’s for Repatriation and Aliens opinion there are certain reasons which caused that not all school aged asylum-seeking children were enrolled to schools in the first semester of the school year 2006/2007. A numerous group of children learnt Polish at centers in order to attend school next semester. It was difficult to find a proper school for youth (16-17 years) who had not attended school in previous years. Some parents did not express any interest in sending their children to Polish schools. There were also a few children with cerebral palsy.

According to information provided by the Office for Repatriation and Aliens, till 2001, when the Regulation by the Minister of National Education and Sport of 4 October 2001³¹ was implemented, school headmasters did not accept children waiting for a decision granting refuge status, when they did not have any certificates proving attending or graduating school abroad. Thus, in years 1994-2001 school was attended mainly by children living in the Central Refuge Center in Debak. In remaining centers children were offered Polish language lessons conducted in centers. Teachers running these lessons were required to provide the office with reports. On this basis the average number of pupils participating at these lessons is as following:

as to the matters related to Polish citizenship following from the scope of functions of governmental administration with reservation for the competencies of other authorities as provided for in the laws. It replaced the Office for Repatriation and Aliens.

³¹ on the admission of persons with non-Polish citizenship in public pre-schools, schools, teacher trainings institutions and units

Tab.4. Children Participating at Polish Language Lessons Run in the Refugees' Centers

The school year	Number of pupils
2001/2002	43
2002/2003	82
2003/2004	115
2004/2005	122
2005/2006	372
2006/2007	646

Source: Office for Repatriation and Aliens data

Schools differ in practices of accepting new alien pupils. Some schools accept them only in September, others twice a year, at the beginning of each semester, others even every month. Below there is a table quoting numbers of children accepted at the beginning of the school year 2006/2007.

Tab.5. Enrolment of School Age Asylum-Seeking Children Residing in Refugees' Centers

Center	Primary school Oct., 2005	Lower-secondary school Oct., 2005	School age asylum-seeking children Oct., 2005	Primary school Sept.,2006	Lower-secondary school Sept.,2006	School age asylum-seeking children Sept.,2006
Bialystok -Iga	36	1	58	59	-	71
Bialystok - Budowlani	38	11	52	34	11	45
Czerwony Bór	14	4	53	42	-	44
Dębak	2	-	2	9	2	16
Jadwisin 26	32	-	41			
Legionowo	13	-	24	31	4	35
Linin	21	-	51	92	2	105
Lublin	18	3	45	16	-	19
Lomza	18	3	51	41	10	51
Lukow	21	4	45	35	4	46
Moszna	27	-	49	30	-	30
Radom	8	-	39	8	3	39
Smoszewo ³²				36	10	46
Warszawa - Bielany	37	5	114	68	11	109
Warszawa - Ciolka	6	-	24	30	3	37
Warszawa - Siekierki	6	10	24	4	7	11
Wolomin	26	1	41	24	1	37
Orphanage no 9 26	-	-	4			
Orphanage no 11 26	2	5	8			
Razem	325	47	725	559	68	741

Source: Office for Repatriation and Aliens data

³² There is no info on Smoszewo for 2005 and on orphanages and Jadwisin for 2006

Tab.6. Children who are subject to compulsory schooling in the first semester of the school year 2006/2007

Center	Children who are subject to compulsory schooling residing in the center	No. of children attending school	No of children not attending school
Debak	32	23	9
Bialstok – IGA	68	56	12
Bialystok - BUDOWLANI	35	32	3
Linin	80	60	20
Wołomin	30	30	-
Warszawa-CIOLKA	33	20	13
Warszawa-BIELANY	109	63	46
Warszawa-SIEKIERKI	9	9	-
Smoszewo	35	30	5
Puste Laki	41	23	18
Lomza	42	34	8
Lukow	51	38	13
Lublin	43	29	14
Czerwony Bór	58	32	26
Radom	49	6	43
Niemce	46	16	30
Moszna	46	35	11
RAZEM	807	536	271

Source: Office for Repatriation and Aliens data

The temporary status of stay is not the only factor affecting motivation for education. Cultural conditioning is crucial. In Chechen family the role of husband and father is very strong. Consequently, children progressing in schools and women integrating faster than men undermine male position in the family structure. That can even lead to inner family conflict, especially, when the man is not successful in providing family maintenance. In that sense, children are not motivated but hampered by their parents. Therefore Polish teachers cannot count on support of Chechen parents while dealing with kids' school progress or lack of it.

Another discouraging factor in educational motivation is the young age of couples starting their own family. Paradoxically, girls are in more privileged situation than boys. Those last are supposed to achieve vocational training and start earning money. Girls are more often allowed to continue learning in secondary schools, unless they have younger siblings and need to support their mothers in housekeeping and looking after children.

Polish education system is based on cooperation with parents. In case of Chechens this cooperation is not an easy task to achieve and, as it was demonstrated above, language is not the biggest obstacle. School headmasters and social workers elaborate channels for communication, most often involving Russian language teachers. Polish schools are not prepared in advance to deal with foreigners, especially refugees' children. Although, in general, there are no obstacles in providing education to refugees' and asylum seekers' children.

As it was mentioned before, Chechen children often start their attendance at school unexpectedly during ongoing school year. That results in another significant consequence – neither Polish pupils (and their parents) nor the teachers and headmasters are prepared in advance to deal with immigrants' children, who often have very particular needs.³³ Unfortunately, sometimes it leads to unnecessary misunderstandings and conflicts³⁴. Furthermore, as a result of their life history that involved war and persecutions, these children very often have gaps in education. They do not speak Polish, their culture and behaviors differ from Polish colleagues' lifestyle. All of these lead unintentionally to certain exclusion of Chechen children.

According to information provided by NGO's representative, who interviewed teachers working with asylum seekers' and refugees' "tolerated stay" children, in some schools, Polish as a foreign language lessons were fiction. Some teachers were not able to put a group of pupils together, some others had problems with keeping a discipline. They were not trained to teach Polish as a second language and to work in multicultural environment.

g. Learning by Experience

The aim of the paper is to tackle problematic issues. However, it is important to note in my opinion, that it is also possible to find positive cases of progress of both Chechen pupils and Polish teachers in Polish schools. Some of the children pass final exams in lower secondary school and attend secondary school. Among Chechen refugees there are also university students. Teachers, who were completely not prepared at the beginning for multicultural factor, were able to learn and understand strangers' culture and customs. They managed to elaborate tools to involve Chechen pupils to school activities. Chechen girls are allowed to exercise in long trousers or skirts during sport classes. They were allowed to attend swimming lessons separately – without boys. Children are released from physical exercises during Ramadan, they are not eating lunch in school canteen during this period. They are sent home or participate in other activities offered by school during religion (Catholic) lessons.³⁵

It should be stressed, however, that Poland still cannot offer important factors leading to immigrants' full participation in the society. Due to it, Poland is not perceived as a destination country by majority of asylum seekers. They face the same problems as Polish citizens:

- lack of social housing
- scarce financial resources for social benefits
- difficulties accessing specialized medical service
- low salaries in comparison to costs of maintenance

These are some factors which discourage from undertaking integration effort. Especially, for those who suffer from health and psychological disorders caused by their experience. Those, who do not know the rules of Western liberal democracy and economy, who do not posses

³³ It is mentioned in interviews with representatives of teachers' trade unions, Mazovian School-Board and NGO, and social workers in refugee centers.

³⁴ NGO representative recalled an example of misunderstanding appeared during Ramadan that is a period of Islamic fast. Local authorities provided additional funds for lunches served to asylum seekers' children in a school canteen. Teachers felt obligated to supervise that children benefit from that form of support – they took children to the canteen, which by parents was interpreted as a form of oppression.

³⁵ In Poland pupils attend religion lessons at school. It was decided lately, that the grade from this subject is to be included in mean value of all subjects, which is considered when pupils transfer to next level of education lower-secondary school, secondary school, university.

interpersonal skills so important in contemporary world. Thus, as long as Poland does not reach this level of social support for asylum seekers and refugees which is offered in the old EU countries, any incentives targeted to parents and children in order to undertake educational effort lead to limited results. Educational policy is inferior in its character to broader social policy. The last mentioned should considerate Polish society's attitude towards refugees and asylum seekers. It is favorable now – 2/3 of Poles believe that we should accept their settlement or long stay in Poland - but these humanitarian declaration is not followed by genuine readiness to support them in their searching for work (16 percents of respondents) and to providing Polish language teaching to them (8 percents).³⁶ Therefore policy should support refugees/asylum seekers in a way, which does not result in social tensions, especially on the local community level. Actions focused on asylum seekers should be proceeded by educational activities targeted into Polish society.

h. The Case of Armenian Girl from Stalowa Wola

Access to education is children's right regardless of the parents' or guardians' status of stay in Poland. Thus in the case when children are brought up in Poland and related to Polish culture, they should not be punished with deportation that is caused by illegal stay of parents. This is a position presented by the Head of the Warsaw Office of Education, NGOs and by many teachers who works with these children. However, dilemma of family separation emerges while decision of deportation is undertaken in regard to parents or guardians.

Before the end of the school year 2005/2006 Polish mass media presented a case of 13 years old Armenian girl (Anrietta), living in Poland for 10 years. She arrived with her mother and both of them did not regulate their legal status in Poland. They were illegal immigrants. The girl attended the local school. She was very well adopted, a very good pupil, she had many friends and participated in additional activities offered by the school. She does not speak Armenian.

Due to the decision of the Office for Repatriation and Aliens the girl and her mother were deported to Armenia, in March 2007. The Office's position was based on a presumption that mother and the daughter should not be separated. It happened three months before the final exam finishing primary education, which is an obligatory condition of continuing education in lower-secondary schools (gymnasiums).

Anrietta could rely on support of her Armenian relatives residing in the same town legally. The fact that family expressed intention to supervise and to look after the girl was not considered and did not stop deportation. Reaction of school and local community was immediate. They stood up for Anrietta, for whom Armenia is a completely strange country. Letters to state authorities were sent spontaneously by Anrietta's friends. The headmistress of the school attended by Anrietta wrote letters to Advocate for Rights of the Child (Rzecznik Praw Dziecka), voivode of Subcarpathian Voivodship (Wojewoda Podkarpacki) Speaker of Subcarpathian Voivodship (Marszałek Województwa Podkarpackiego), The Head of the Office for Repatriation and Aliens (Prezes Urzędu do spraw Repatriantów i Cudzoziemców). In mass media an appeal was made to inhabitants of Stalowa Wola. It encouraged them to sign a petition. It was supposed to allow Anrietta to return to Poland without a need of waiting for 5 years after her deportation. Local priests were also involved – they read the appeal during their service. The response was broad. The headmistress and pupils from schools in

³⁶ According to opinion poll ordered by United Nation High Commissioner for Refugees conducted on the beginning of July, 2006 (representative probe of 1000 Poles).

Stalowa Wola gathered a few thousands of signatures. The desperate Arietta was advised to write a letter to the President's wife – Maria Kaczynska – asking for her support.³⁷

After her arrival to Armenia the girl was granted with a three months visa. It was issued by the Polish Consul in Erevan. On this basis she returned to Poland in June to take the exam and she was admitted to gymnasium. Her relative, obtaining a permanent stay in Poland, initiated procedure setting a substitute family for Anrietta. According to information provided by the school headmistress, the girl is entitled to stay in Poland legally till final decision on setting a substitute family. However, in the Town Office we found out that she was registered as a town inhabitant just till 22 of August. Our further inquiry did not allow us to make a definite statement on her current legal status of stay in Poland – but we know that at the beginning of the school year 2006/2007 she joined her friends in a lower-secondary school in Stalowa Wola. Unfortunately, Anrietta is deprived of her mother's presence, who for 5 years is recognized as an unwanted person in Poland.

i. Teachers' Trade Unions

There are two teachers' unions in Poland: The Polish Teachers' Union ZNP and the Educational Branch of the Independent and Self-Governing Trade Union Solidarnosc. We found out that similarly to the Ministry of National Education opinion, in both cases educational opportunities for immigrants' and refugees' children are not regarded as a fundamental issue for the unions as well. During interviews numbers of immigrants' children in Polish schools were compared do the numbers of Polish pupils who migrated to Great Britain and Ireland after the EU enlargement. The cases of Polish pupils, who left Poland, seem to be more important for the unions. Such position is obviously justified since the recent outflow, combined with the demographic crises deteriorate teachers' position on labor market, which was already weak.³⁸

Conducting research is a kind of social intervention. As a result of our interview representative of the Independent and Self-Governing Trade Union Solidarność came to the conclusion: *Assuming that necessary financial resources for such an assistant (for a foreign pupil) will be provided, we can expect that there are teachers interested in upgrading teaching skills. (...) such an assistant for a foreign pupil is like a two-subject teacher. – I've found the way to put it on the agenda as a trade union. We can request for a presence of someone skilled (an assistant for a foreign pupil) and treat these skills like his/her second subject.* (I.9)

Although immigrants' and refugees' children presence is not regarded as a fundamental issue, both our interviewers appreciated efforts undertaken by teachers working with these children.³⁹ Both of them stressed a need of educational efforts focused to learn Polish children and youths how to live in multicultural society. Majority of parents do not care to teach their children tolerant attitudes and openness for other nations, religions, customs and otherness in general. *Barrier created by parents is the most difficult to overcome (...)*

³⁷ Matusz. J *Po pomoc do pani prezydentowej*, „Rzeczpospolita”, 10.04.2007; Arciszewski, A. *Wypędzona jak przestępca*, „Przegląd” No 37 (398) <http://www.przegladygodnik.pl/index.php?site=reportaz&name=186>

³⁸ Emigration of Polish pupils was also a concern of the employee of the Ministry of National Education. She referred to possible gaps in education and formal obstacles, which might cause problems with continuing education within Polish system after children's return. The Head of the Warsaw Office for Education pointed out that it had already been observed that children possessing Polish citizenship living out of Poland for several years (returned migrants' and repatriates' children) had difficulties in using Polish language and learning.

³⁹ The Educational Branch of the Independent and Self-Governing Trade Union Solidarność announced a candidate of a teacher working with refugees' children to the Award of Committee of National Education, which is a great honor.

Parents, just in case, are reluctant. There is yet no reason, no accident, and no knowledge but there is wariness... Also teachers should be trained to be sensitive, to be mentally and psychologically open for reception of a different child with all of problems that he/she brings to school (...)We should be honest, problems appear. However, we do not have to consider them negatively but rather as a challenge. To create an accepting environment in a class, to prevent reluctance towards these children.

j. Summing up -Asylum Seekers' Children and "the Rest"

On the basis of the collected materials some recommendations concerning immigrants' children presence in Polish schools appear. There are two categories of foreign pupils. The first one pertains to refugees' and asylum seekers' children. They, usually, cause enormous educational and pedagogical challenges - an effort for which teachers are often not prepared. This category can be compared with Roma minority, which due to its tradition and life style is reluctant to attend school and to learn. In the case, of Chechen children due to cultural context and cultural distance between Poland and Chechnya, assistance for a foreign pupil seems to be a reasonable solution.

However, there is another category where motivations of children and parents are visible. It refers to children of immigrants, who usually, thanks to small cultural distance (Ukrainians, Russians), or high position of education in the system of values (Vietnamese) adapt easily to Polish school's realities. Vietnamese are even presented to Polish pupils as an example to follow since they work hard and, in many cases are gifted, especially, in mathematics and natural sciences. They also take very good position in spelling competitions organized by schools. In that case, assistance for a foreign pupil does not seem to be justified since both parents and children seem to be sufficiently motivated.

For both categories, especially in case of older children, some kind of preparatory "zero class program" should be considered. It is expected that this kind of tool could help immigrants' children to join their Polish peers at school with a proper level of language skills. It is supposed to facilitate them to learn other subjects. As it was mentioned before, Chechen children often start their attendance at school unexpectedly during ongoing school year. According to the information provided by the Warsaw Office of Education, an average period of Chechen child presence in Warsaw school oscillates between 4-6 months. These sudden appearance and disappearance of pupil, who is not deeply motivated to learn, disorganize work done with the whole class. It results in far less teachers' attention devoted to Polish pupils. Thus one of the headmasters suggested considering the idea of separated classes for Chechen children only. An interviewed employee of the Warsaw Office of Education emphasized that it is definitely not manifestation of discriminatory practices. Children promising in terms of continuity of education, whose parents are interested in prolonging their stay in Poland, would join normal classes. Therefore, it is supposed to be beneficiary for those Chechens who wish to stay in Poland and are motivated to learn, and Polish pupils and teachers as well.

Almost all of interviewed persons claimed that we should undertake proper steps to prepare Polish schools, including teachers, pupils and their parents for much bigger number of immigrants in the future. We should benefit from a present situation, characterized by insignificant number of foreign pupils in Polish schools, which gives us time for preparation in advance. It is recommended to study situation in other EU countries and to consider implementation of certain tools in Poland in order to avoid social tensions and conflicts already being faced in that countries. It is also recommended to collect and distribute good

practices elaborated by Polish teachers⁴⁰. Thus, a website devoted to cultural diversity brought about by foreign pupils in Polish schools is desirable.

They also agreed that all solutions and undertaken activities should be flexible and individually elaborated - depending on the school and immigrants' child's needs and abilities.⁴¹ However, it is advisable to create a financial framework that would allow distant and poor communities (gmina, powiat) to have immigrant children and to deal with challenges they bring as well. So far only rich communities as Warsaw can afford it.

In Polish system each level of education is finalized with the exam that entitles to start another level. The procedure of exam does not provide any special terms for foreigners. Such provisions, including longer time or teacher's assistance are recommended.⁴²

Our respondents stressed that education in schools should focus more on challenges of cultural diversity. Polish children and youths should be thought tolerance and openness since family environment not always can provide values of tolerance and equality. Sometimes family is a source of pathologies of different kinds.⁴³

k. The Review of Teachers' Union's Magazines

Since cultural diversity in Polish schools is created by both pupils belonging to national and ethnic minorities residing in Poland and immigrants' children we decided to include, in our research, articles devoted to old minorities and new immigrants as well.

We overviewed two publications: "Głos Nauczycielski"(Teacher's Voice) issued weekly by the Polish Teachers' Union ZNP (Związek Nauczycielstwa Polskiego) and "Przegląd Oświatowy" (Educational Review) issued each twice weeks by the Educational Branch of the Independent and Self-Governing Trade Union Solidarnosc (Sekcja Oświatowa NSZZ Solidarnosc). We overviewed editions starting on January 2004 and ending on May 2007.⁴⁴

⁴⁰ As an example of good practices in dealing with demanding foreign pupils, a non-public set of lower-secondary and secondary schools, one of the first established in Poland after 1989, "Bednarska" in Warsaw, was mentioned during our interviews.

⁴¹ Declaration of the head of the Warsaw Office for Education is a good exemplification of that attitude: *We (local authorities) should create the best possible bias. But the challenging situation is situated on the school level. We can only encourage, offer our support, increase available financial resources. But results depend on the headmaster and teachers. (1.5)*

⁴² In one of the articles issued by "Głos Nauczycielski", headmistress of a primary school attended by Chechens stated that her pupils did not receive grades they deserved. They were good at math but they could not overcome an linguistic barrier. Her suggestion of providing more time for foreign pupils were denied by Local Exam Commission (Okregowa Komisja Egzaminacyjna). Igielska B., *Trudna Europejskość*, "Głos Nauczycielski", no2/2006. Pupils suffering from dyslexia are provided with an extra time.

⁴³ During the debate organized within the framework of the project devoted to diversity in Warsaw, immigrants' children complained about the cases when Poles offended them and refused undertaking common activities. Of course, it does not prove that this is a predominating attitude of Polish children. However, any cases of prejudices based on ethnic diversity deserve reaction. Unfortunately, family sometimes can even create intolerant behaviors. The employee of the Ministry of National Education was the only one among our interlocutors who was satisfied with Polish pupils' attitude to diversity: *Polish pupil is rather wise. Since the time we were engaged in activities relating to our accession to EU, both teachers and pupils achieved certain experiences in international cooperation. Due to it, I believe that Polish pupil is rather open-minded towards different cultures, languages and customs. (1.1)* We shall consider, however, that she felt responsible to present official position of the Ministry. At the time when the interviewed was conducted, the Ministry was governed by Roman Giertych, the leader of the nationalists party Liga Polskich Rodzin (League of Polish Families).

⁴⁴ We thought that in a period priori to enlargement there maybe more attention devoted to researched subject.

Unfortunately, in "Przegląd Oświatowy" we did not find any article on cultural diversity in Polish schools created by pupils belonging to national and ethnic minorities residing in Poland or immigrants' children. There were a few articles on international cooperation of schools but they were not related to our research topic. Therefore the appendix below focuses on "Głos Nauczycielski" only.

In general, cultural diversity was presented as an enrichment of our society, something which is beneficial for the whole population. However, the topic of cultural diversity in Polish schools caused by national and ethnic minority pupils and immigrants' children presence appeared marginally. There were some longer articles presenting the analyzed issue. The topic of cultural diversity appeared also in short notes.

Appendix

"Głos Nauczycielski"

In 2004 the topic of cultural diversity caused by non-Polish pupils was found in four editions.

1. There was short information that the newspaper had been invited for the conference organized by the Pedagogical Faculty of Warsaw University. The conference was on education and social services as factors of immigrants' integration in multicultural society (no 11/2004, p.2: Information on events for which the magazine has been invited).
2. One short article was devoted to integration of refugees in Poland. It was stressed that in all countries school is a factor of immigrants' integration to the hosting society. The author of the article concluded that only 30% of the families were interested in their children attendance to Polish schools and that the majority of asylum seekers did not treat Poland as a place to settle (no 22/2004, p.9: Drachnal H., "Na cudzej ziemi").
3. Information on issuing Eurydice publication on integration of immigrants' children led to conclusion that in Poland multicultural approach and building European identity were applied (no 41/2004, p.2: KS, "Imigranci w ławkach"). In the same edition there was information about building the Center of Lithuanian Education in Sejny (no 41/2004, p.2: M, "Z litewskim Językiem").
4. The issue of national and ethnic minorities appeared once on the first page. It was stressed that building good relations between majority and minorities is crucial in order to avoid social tensions observed in other European countries. In the same edition there were next two pages devoted to Roma education and Tatars. The first group was presented in the light of encouraging children to undertake educational effort. The second one was viewed as supported by school authorities in order to help them to maintain its ethnic identity (49/2004, p.12: Sarzyński D., "Sam sawore"; p.13: Suchecki M., "Została ich garstka").

In 2005 editions the topic was found in five issues.

1. Reportage on Chechen children supported in the refuge center by volunteers, who wanted to prepare them to school. Once again it was said that majority of parents is not interested in sending their children to Polish school (5/2005, announced p.1, continued pp.8,9: Kulak M., "Przelotem").
2. An article on conscious education that supports kashubian/cassubian identity⁴⁵ (10/2005, p.6: Aulich M., "Jo jem statka").
3. Paper on last 50 years of Polish education system, pointed out new challenges. Preparing Poles for respecting cultural diversity is mentioned there. (11/2005, pp.13,14: prog. Bogaj A., "Dylematy przemian").

⁴⁵ Kashubians/Cassubians are a West Slavic ethnic group of north-central Poland.

4. Information on Public Library – beneficiary of Program Comenius 3 – gathering books in different languages, was served as a pretext for a statement that in schools attended by immigrants, multicultural approach should be introduced (12/2005, p.11: “Ponad granicami”).
5. An interview with a professor of psychology – Pawel Boski, who underlined a role of school educators and psychologists and a need of professional training for teachers dealing with foreign students. Professor Boski also recommended activities focused on Polish society in order to prepare it to face presence of immigrants. (31/2005, p.5: conducted by Igielska B., “Nie tylko polskie jest dobre”).

In 2006 the analyzed topic was found in four editions.

1. Teachers presented their experiences with teaching foreigners in Polish schools. Chechen children presence demanded bigger effort due to cultural distance than other immigrants’ children, who were described as well-adapted after attending Polish school for few years. Special terms for foreigners such provisions as longer time or teacher’s assistance during exams that entitle to start another level of education were recommended (2/2006, p.10: Igielska B., “Trudna europejskość”).
2. “Glos Nauczycielski” - the magazine supported (media patronage) the competition on “Youth against discrimination” organized with the British Council Poland. The winners of this competition did not refer to ethnic discrimination, although the ethnic discourse was included as one of the topics of the competition. (3/2006, p.2: “Razem przeciw dyskryminacji”).
3. Gymnasium teacher described her participation in training and seminars on multiculturalism in a letter sent to the magazine (20/2006, p.10: Koziol H., “Inny, czyli jaki?”).
4. Article protesting against dismissal of the Head of the National In-Service Teacher Training Center – Department of Civic and European Education. The dismissal was related to “**COMPASS**”- a manual on human rights education with young people - prepared by the Council of Europe (24/2006, P.3: Wojciechowska A., ”Polowanie na czarownice”). To present a broader context it should be said that the magazine was involved in protesting against nomination of the leader of the nationalists party League of Polish Families for the Minister of National Education.

There was only one article found in the first five months of 2007.

1. In the article different groups of immigrants were compared. Chechen pupils’ presence was described as demanding a bigger effort from school than presence of other immigrants’ children. Examples of immigrants children succeeded in Polish school were shown as well (22/2007, p.6: Luka W., “Europejczycy wsiakaja szybciej”).

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