

Polish Educational System Response Towards Immigrant Children's Presence at Public Schools

KATARZYNA GMAJ¹

ORCID: [0000-0001-6860-1927](https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6860-1927)

Lazarski University

Since 2001, when the Ministry of Education started to collect data on foreigners attending Polish public primary and secondary schools, their number has increased by tenfold, reaching 42 000 in the school year 2019/2020. The article demonstrates how the Polish educational system has responded to immigrant children's presence. First, it presents instruments targeted at children with migration experience, which Polish authorities have over the years implemented into law regulating schooling. The second part of the article provides an overview of research on the situation of children with migrant experience learning in public schools. The conclusion is not optimistic: Poland did not have and still does not have a strategic vision of national educational policy encompassing such pupils.

Key words: integration, migrant children, educational system

Introduction

Access to education for children with migration experience is crucial. On the one hand, the educational system can reinforce the existing social order (Bourdieu 1970). On the other hand, it can define chances for social upward/downward mobility, easing migrant adaptation to destination countries' realities (Portes and Zou 1993).

The base for this article is provided by desk research, consisting of scholarly literature, reports (including the one prepared by the Supreme Audit Office – Najwyższa Izba Kontroli: NIK) and legal acts. The inquiry aims to demonstrate how the Polish educational system has responded to immigrant children's presence during the last two decades since the Ministry of Education started to collect data.

¹ Contact: k.gmaj@lazarski.edu.pl

An overview of the literature on the integration of students with migration experience shows that research has concentrated mainly on social and legal challenges stemming from the sudden cultural diversity and the implementation of EU directives and other international regulations into the Polish legal framework (Bąbka, Nowicka 2017; Błęszyńska 2017; Bulandra, Kościółek 2019; Butarewicz-Głowacka 2015; Czerniejewska 2013; Gmaj 2011; Januszewska 2017; Kosowicz 2007; Kościółek 2020, Łukasiewicz, Grzymała-Moszczyńska 2014, Markowska-Manista Młynarczyk-2017, Sokołowska, Szostak-Król 2017, Stepaniuk 2017, Pogorzała 2011, Śmiechowska-Petrovskij 2017). The insight into immigrants' functioning in Polish schools has concentrated most extensively on students of Vietnamese origin (Głowacka-Grajper 2006; Halik, Nowicka and Połec 2006) and refugee children (Gmaj et al. 2013, Januszewska 2017, Kosowicz 2007, Łukasiewicz, Grzymała-Moszczyńska 2014; Pawlak 2013, Stepaniuk 2017, Zalewska 2017). Immigrants from the former Soviet Union countries have also gained attention especially after 2014 (Konieczna and Świdrowska 2008, Stepaniuk 2017, Syrnyk 2017; Zapolska, Pająk-Bener 2019). Similarly, the situation of children returning to Poland after years spent abroad has not escaped consideration (Grzymała-Moszczyńska et al., 2018).

Educational system responses towards immigrant children's presence

In the 1990s, there were practically no non-Polish citizens in public primary and secondary schools. The Ministry of Education ordered data on foreigners in 2001 for the first time. However, at that time, official statistics did not include their nationality. Since the school year 2007/2008, the System of Educational Information (System Informacji Oświatowej – SIO) started gathering information on citizenship. In the first decade of the 20th century, the number of foreign children in Polish primary and secondary schools oscillated between 4,000 and 6,000 (Ministry of National Education data). Between 2015 and 2019, their number increased rapidly from 9,944 to 41,724. As a result, in 2019, non-Polish students learnt in approximately 1/3 of Polish schools (see NIK² 2020: 8). Such a tremendous increase reflects the massive inflow of Ukrainian immigrants experienced by Poland after 2014 due to a military conflict between Russia and Ukraine and its economic hardships. This situation shaped the structure of students without Polish citizenship. On 30 September 2019, almost thirty thousand eight hundred of them were Ukrainian nationals. In other words, they constituted nearly 75% of all foreigners learning in public primary and secondary schools (see NIK 2020: 5).

² An audit released recently by the Supreme Audit Office (Najwyższa Izba Kontroli – NIK) covering the school years 2017/2018-2019/2020

National regulations targeted at support for children with poor language skills have developed gradually. Firstly, in 2001³ supplementary classes of Polish language for non-Polish citizens were introduced. In 2010 this right embraced Polish citizens (children of Polish returned migrants) as well⁴. What is more, to offset the differences in curricula or fill the gaps in education, since 2010, schools offer compensatory classes⁵. To organise these classes, headteachers must apply to the local authorities that run a particular educational institution. It is noteworthy that funds allocated for these activities depend on the local councils' decision. In short, one can state that the solutions described above have replaced unpaid efforts undertaken by devoted teachers.

In 2010, legislators brought in the next innovation — a child whose skills in the Polish language are not sufficient may benefit from a teacher's assistant who speaks the child's mother tongue. The school headteacher employs such an aide for no longer than twelve months. The already existing Roma assistant inspired this solution⁶. A person performing this function does not have to be a teacher or a pedagogue. Intriguingly, such assistants were present in schools already before this regulation came into force. Their presence was the result of cooperation between particular schools and non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

Finally, the introduction of so-called preliminary units addresses insufficient proficiency in Polish to follow mainstream teaching (2017)⁷. To organise such a unit, the headteacher first applies to local authorities running a given school. When an application meets with a positive response, the headteacher appoints a team (two teachers and a pedagogue or a psychologist) qualifying pupils for such a preparatory unit. The unit should work following the core curriculum of general education. However, methods of teaching should adjust to the pupil's abilities. Pupils can benefit from this option for a limited time – no more than two years. In the case of satisfactory progress, a child can join a regular class with Polish peers quicker.

An expectation that students shall immediately join a standard unit even without proper language skills in many cases did not bring positive results. The support in the form of additional Polish language classes and compensatory classes from different subjects offered for no more than 12 months has turned out to be ineffective in

³ Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 4 October 2001.

⁴ The NIK report shows that headteachers provided unreliable statistics on students participating in additional Polish language classes. It resulted in under or overestimated subsidies received by these public schools (15 out of 24 audited institutions). It also impedes estimation of the actual number of students benefiting from this support.

⁵ Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 1 April 2010

⁶ An amendment has introduced the teacher's assistant to the School Education Act of 7 September 1991 (Article 94a paragraph 4a). Due to changes in legal acts, currently, the right to having a teacher's assistant is pointed in Article 165 of the Law on School Education of 14 December 2016. The same article confirms the right to supplementary classes for children with insufficient Polish language skills (foreigners and Polish citizens).

⁷ The Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 23 August 2017.

many cases. Although it is difficult to estimate the level of inefficiency on the national level, it seems justified to claim that such a policy was disadvantageous, mainly for teenagers. Preliminary units appear to suit their condition best.

Implementation of preliminary units indicates a partial departure from the still dominating education model characterised by complete integration into mainstream education right from the start. This newly employed form is still rare in Poland. Although it is not a rule, it is offered to relatively older pupils (higher primary and secondary) by schools characterised by a significant proportion of immigrants. In the case of younger kids, Polish supplementary classes as a second language might be sufficient, especially when one considers the results of studies from other countries (e.g. Nilsson & Bunar, 2016). They show that too strong focus on acquiring the language of instruction may delay migrant children's educational progress in other curriculum subjects. What is more, separating migrant pupils from their native-born peers hinders integration.

The main limitation of the instruments described above consists of the lack of automaticity. They are not put into operation simultaneously with a child's arrival at a school. They require children's guardians and headteachers to apply first. What is even more noteworthy is that they need goodwill from the local council and authorities when allocating financial resources for different tasks. The support is a right which means that parents/guardians or students (when older than 18) should express the need for such assistance. In other words, they need to be aware of the instruments available to them. Importantly, participation in such classes is not obligatory. The most fundamental and unmet need refers to teaching materials used daily when Polish proficiency is low. That implies subjects like mathematics, biology, etc.⁸

Over the years, Polish authorities simplified the rules for admitting children with migration experience to schools. Usually, the years of study and certificates decide on admission. If one cannot present any documents, entry depends on the guardians' declaration and the interview assessing students' skills and knowledge. Territorial principle regulates enrolment to a specific school. The actual place of residence and not the child's parents or guardians' legal status governs this issue. It means that even irregular migrants' children have the right to study in public schools for free. It is noteworthy that every child between the ages of 7 and 18 must attend school. Therefore education is not just a right but also an obligation.

At present, issues related to foreign children, regarding their admission to school and forms of support in their educational endeavours, are regulated by the Law on School Education of 14 December 2016 and the Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 23 August 2017. Starting from 2009, a universal constitutional right to education⁹ has embraced immigrants regardless of their citizenship or legal

⁸ See Grzymała-Moszczyńska et al. (2018) and the recent NIK audit (2020).

⁹ Constitution of the Republic of Poland, Article 70 paragraph 1 and 2.

status of stay¹⁰. Therefore, there are no obstacles to providing education to refugee and immigrant children from a legal perspective.

Moreover, national regulations allow recognising a foreign child as a pupil with special educational needs who requires support. They point principles for providing and organising various psychological and pedagogical assistance in public preschools, schools and other educational institutions. Children with migration experience can have psychological and pedagogical help at school. The same refers to other forms of therapeutic activities, compensatory and logopaedics classes, physiotherapy, etc. (Młynarczuk-Sokołowska, Szostak-Król 2017). In short, schools should provide psychological and pedagogical assistance to children with a migratory experience. They should do this even without an opinion from the psychological and pedagogical counselling centre. However, they do not do it or do not have the necessary skills to do it well (Grzymała-Moszczyńska, 2018; NIK 2020).

Research on the education of children with migration experience

Research on foreigners in Polish schools started when their presence was scarce. A study conducted in the 1900s shows teachers' declarations according to which most Polish peers accept pupils of different nationalities and races. However, only a few teachers provided examples of activities undertaken by their school to shape the attitude of understanding and respect for representatives of different cultures (Nasalska 1999). Konieczna and Świdrowska (2008) argue that relying on declarations could be misleading. Teachers are somewhat reluctant to express openly intolerant attitudes or recall facts indicating a lack of tolerance in their schools, since it negatively affects their workplace and reputation. In studies on the attitudes presented by Polish peers towards children originating from the former USSR, the authors concluded that the tolerance demonstrated by teachers and headteachers often took the form of ignoring students' origin. They also observed a division between the "better" and "worse" parts of the world among Polish pupils. Western peers were more often met with positive deference than Ukrainians, Belarusians, Mongols or black people of different nationalities.

Chechen pupils' parents mentioned cases of tensions and intolerance experienced at school related to their children's origin (Gmaj et al., 2013). The policy of access to education for particularly vulnerable children in refugee centres and detention centres resulted in indirect and direct discrimination of migrant children. Polish authorities poorly recognised and addressed their particular problems, even

¹⁰ An amendment of the Act on the Education System exceeded the right to free of charge education for all foreigners till 18 years or till completing a secondary school.

though researchers and representatives of NGOs assisting refugees reported them (Łukasiewicz, Grzymała-Moszczyńska, 2014). It is worth mentioning that Polish return migrants are not free from discrimination in school due to their migration experiences. Those living in smaller localities and those whose parents are less able to react against disturbing situations are significantly affected (Grzymała-Moszczyńska et al., 2018).

It is difficult to estimate the accurate scale of this unacceptable behaviour. At this point, one can recall results that unfortunately are not representative in a statistical sense. Nevertheless, they put some light on the issue. According to 23% of foreign parents surveyed by the NIK, their children experience intolerant behaviour at school sporadically (once / twice a year). A further 4% indicated frequent (once-twice per quarter/half-year) cases (NIK 2020: 10). Unfortunately, systematic research aimed at identifying discrimination or violence in educational contexts is missing. In particular, the perspective of pupils/students directly experiencing intolerance or aggression related to their ethnicity, nationality, race, and immigrant/refugee status is not a subject of interest (Gawlicz et al., 2015).

As mentioned before, in the nineties, foreign pupils and students constituted exceptional cases in Polish schools. Their presence started to be more visible at the beginning of the 20th century, however, they were not evenly spread. The Mazovian Province took a leading position as a destination for immigrants. Consequently, the Warsaw agglomeration experienced the inflow of non-Polish students/pupils even when they were hardly present in other localities, except for communes that Polish Central Administration appointed for locations for refugee centres.

One could distinguish two main categories of foreign children learning in public schools (Gmaj 2011). First were the children of refugees and persons under international legal protection, mostly Chechens¹¹. The second category of students consisted of children who were motivated more by their parents. It included people originating from countries with little cultural distance (e.g. neighbouring countries: Ukraine, Russia and Belarus) or countries where education has a high position in the hierarchy of values (e.g. Vietnam¹²).

¹¹ Since 1992 Poland started to grant refugee status under the 1951 Geneva Convention. Over the years, the nationalities of foreigners seeking protection in Poland have changed considerably, depending on the situation in other countries. However, after the outbreak of war in Chechnya (1999), the leading country of origin of asylum seekers in Poland became the Russian Federation (Chechnya and other republics and countries of the Caucasus). Between 2003 and 2005, the proportion of children and adolescents among asylum seekers increased significantly from previous years. This group represented 40.9% of the asylum seeker population in 2003, 43.7% in 2004, and 45.9% in 2005 (Kosowicz, Matejko 2007, p. 23).

¹² Vietnamese migration to Poland is an example of settlement migration. The educational and technological exchange between Poland and Vietnam within the socialist block was a starting point for the chain migration observed in the nineties (Halik, Nowicka 2002). A significant part of the first arrivals went through the naturalisation process, and consequently, their children will be absent in official statistics for foreign pupils or students. Nevertheless, citizens of Vietnam are the fourth most numerous foreign nationality among students in Polish primary and secondary schools (761 in 2019 - NIK 2020: 6)

Teachers had to adjust to the existing educational policy: immigrants were made to immediately attend regular classes with Polish students. For some teachers, “the final conversion of an immigrant child to a Pole” was an indicator of their pedagogical success (Halik, Nowicka, Połec 2006). Others tried to invent their own way to address cultural diversity in their classroom, presuming that Polish children can benefit from pupils’ direct presence with a different cultural and religious background. Such teachers used specially prepared scenarios for lessons, which were not limited to one school subject¹³. They also tried to address immigrant children’s needs based on intuition and experience.

Regarding refugees, until September 2006, they very rarely attended Polish schools. Then schools began to accept them in higher numbers. For a particular school, such children usually meant a substantial educational and pedagogical challenge – an effort for which it was often not prepared. Neither Polish pupils nor their parents were ready for an encounter with cultural diversity. The vast majority of vulnerable children resided in refugee centres, usually located in peripheral sites. Children learnt in the closest schools, which created ethnic enclaves (Kosowicz 2007). In some units, teachers were suddenly exposed to an extreme teaching task when 1/3 of unexpectedly arriving and as abruptly disappearing children did not speak Polish. Refugee children’s behaviours were affected by their previous traumas. Moreover, cultural differences and specific cultural conditions made cooperation with their parents difficult or impossible.

Due to traditions and lifestyle, teachers compared this group of pupils to the Roma minority, which was relatively uninterested in the school education of its children (Gmaj 2011). Further migration plans were not motivating kids and their parents to be more involved in Poland, which they did not consider a final destination. In such circumstances, teachers and headteachers were offering activities often in collaboration with non-governmental organisations. Academics and teaching practitioners presented examples of good practices¹⁴ (e.g. Chrzanowska 2009, Klorek, Kubin 2012, Gmaj et al. 2013, Zalewska 2017). Research results indicate that the openness of headteachers and their acceptance for innovative ideas encourages teachers to undertake creative actions (Nowicka, Halik, Połec 2006; Błeszyńska 2010; Januszewska 2010; Stepaniuk 2017).

It is worth mentioning that the educational situation of refugee children depends not only on access to schooling and psychological support but also on the specific atmosphere in the Refugee Centre. Residing in the centre harms their daily life. They

¹³ At first, the National In-Service Teacher Training Center distributed a book containing instructions for such classes. Teachers could also find them on websites run by non-governmental organisations. A range of this kind of materials is steadily growing.

¹⁴ To recall one of them: so-called “Chechen 0-unit”. The school organised it before the introduction of preliminary units to Polish law. It involved a collaboration between Polish and Chechen teachers and prepared children to start their education with Polish pupils in one classroom. In the school running this “0-unit”, the headteacher employed a Chechen teacher’s assistant. It was possible thanks to the support of the local authorities.

are isolated from their Polish peers. They do not have a carefree childhood since they are overwhelmed by the weight of adult issues, even though they are not fully aware of them (Zalewska 2017).

The second category of immigrant children usually adapted more quickly to the conditions of a Polish school. At least in the perception of teachers. Since their presence did not disturb, teaching staff underestimated psychological costs borne by pupils. Scholars pointed to an idealised picture of Vietnamese children, not fully reflecting the difficulties they faced (Czerniejewska 2008; Głowacka-Grajper 2006). In their case, teachers did not see any threats to the organisation of the school. They noticed just a technical problem – how to teach the Polish language to a child as soon as possible. Vietnamese pupils were valuable because they gave other pupils a good example – diligence. An immigrant from Vietnam is a *good guest* (Głowacka-Grajper 2006: 180) who respects everything, does not infringe on the hosts' life with his norms, and, above all, tries to adapt. Moreover, such a student is a confirmation of a job well done by the teacher. Teachers overlooked psychological problems resting on children who try to meet their parents' expectations.

Categorising pupils on the basis of 'smooth' or 'rough' adaptation is still valid in teaching practitioners' perceptions. For children originating from Ukraine, Belarus and Russia, the language barrier is a big problem. *However, after intensive Polish language learning, they start to acquire knowledge fairly quickly and integrate easily. They do not have substantial cultural differences to overcome, making it easier for them to adapt to an environment dominated by Polish children. While children originating from Muslim countries experience a real clash with a different culture, which gives rise to problems and misunderstandings; moreover, their mother tongue is usually genetically very distant from Polish. These children encounter many life situations that are incomprehensible for them* (Szulgan 2019).

Underestimation of psychological costs borne by pupils originating from neighbouring countries is still an issue, at least for some children. *Problems related to adaptation to a new place, new school, new peers, different rules of functioning and social coexistence, loneliness in emigration, personal issues and sometimes discrimination on various levels make the support of a psychologist with a native Ukrainian language very much needed, both for pupils and their families* (Zapolska, Pająk-Bener 2019: 13). In an especially vulnerable position are youths living in boarding schools without permanent parental care¹⁵.

After almost two decades since European Union enlargement (2004), Polish schools have started to experience a comeback of ethnically Polish children, whose skills are not good enough to join regular classes with Polish as a language of instruction. What is more, for these kids, Poland is a foreign country to which they need to adapt. It turns out that schools are not prepared for their arrival (Grzymała-Moszczyńska, 2018).

¹⁵ Basing on their survey, Zapolska and Pająk-Bener (2019) claim that more than 40% of pupils living in such premises in Kraków need psychological support.

The last-mentioned category of immigrant children shows just one of many arguments indicating the importance of keeping some forms of schooling in a mother tongue abroad. The Polish state recognises non-Polish children's right to learn their language and culture. With regard to immigrants¹⁶, the school can provide classrooms and teaching aids free of charge. But teaching is to be organised by diplomatic or consular posts or cultural and educational associations. It requires an agreement with the headmaster and the consent of the local authorities. Nevertheless, cases of running such classes are sporadic¹⁷ (Czerniejewska 2008, Gmaj 2011).

In conclusion, it is noteworthy that immigrant pupils, regardless of the kind of migration experience, are children with special needs who have to follow the requirements of the syllabus. The teacher part entails a sense of responsibility for teaching those who do not demonstrate challenges and those who have particular needs. Teaching staff should adjust their work according to children's abilities and their conditions (Śmiechowska-Petrovskij 2017).

Yet even before legislation regulating national educational policy came into effect, the Warsaw Office for Education took into account cultural diversity in public schools steaming from migration. In these terms, one might claim that the Polish capital authorities were pioneers (Gmaj 2011)¹⁸. Nowadays, activities targeted at students

¹⁶ There is a distinction between new and old ethnic and national minorities in Poland. Without going into details, the Constitution of the Republic of Poland (1997, Art. 35,70) ensures the rights of members of old minorities to maintain their national, ethnic and linguistic identity. The Act on National and Ethnic Minorities and Regional Language (6 January 2005; Art. 8, point 4) also enshrines education in the majority language or the minority language. Relevant provisions are a part of educational law. There are four forms of education for minority members: schools with a language of instruction other than Polish, bilingual schools (or preschools) providing instruction in two equivalent languages, schools with additional education in the minority's native language and inter-school teams of pupils from different schools.

¹⁷ Warsaw attracts not only international migrants but also internal ones, who are members of old minorities. At the beginning of the 21st century immigrant children informally learnt Ukrainian in an inter-school team together with national minorities. An attempt to formalise this situation terminated learning opportunities for immigrants since different legal acts regulate immigrants' rights and the rights of Polish citizens belonging to minorities. The paths of financing activities aimed at their realisation are also different. However, Ukrainian immigrants can study in public schools with the Ukrainian language of instruction. Such cases occurred ten years ago (Gmaj 2011) and, more recently, even more intensively (Syrnyk 2017). Unfortunately, such schools are located in relatively peripheral parts of Poland, where the old Ukrainian minority resides.

¹⁸ The Office has a long history of cooperation with non-governmental organisations and universities located in the capital. Their efforts aim at developing and implementing tools for teachers who work with children from different cultural backgrounds. In 2008, a methodological advisor for learning Polish as a second language was appointed in Warsaw. "Development of proper educational conditions for foreigners, refugees, national minorities and repatriates" was a part of the Educational Policy in Warsaw for 2008–2012. Teachers of early school education and Polish, and foreign languages working in Warsaw public schools could undertake Postgraduate Studies in Teaching Polish as a Foreign Language at the Warsaw University and the City Hall covered the fee. Yet before the teacher's assistant top-down introduction, the City Hall financially supported such a position in one of the schools attended by refugee children (Chrzanowska 2009). The first preliminary units in Warsaw were organised in the school year 2017/2018. Warsaw Centre for Education and Social Innovations and Trainings (a public centre for in-service training of teachers and social assistance staff) runs a contact point for teaching foreign children. It is targeted not only at professional but also parents, including Polish returnees.

with migration experience are part of educational policies in other large cities that currently encounter an influx of such students, both foreigners and Polish citizens (like Kraków, Poznań, Wrocław). Visiting official websites run by local public in-service teacher training centres, one can find seminars and programmes for teachers working in multicultural classes. Nevertheless, such an offer is just a non-obligatory option available for teachers who are interested in it.

Psychological and pedagogical counsellors report that teachers lack knowledge about behaviours and difficulties typical for children with migration experience. They are not able to adjust the educational requirements to the needs and developmental abilities of children. They do not take into account cultural differences. Without proper skills, even those devoted to their work "are walking in the darkness" (Grzymała-Moszczyńska et al., 2018). Błeszyńska (2017) presents similar conclusions, basing on the results of two surveys conducted among teachers (Błeszyńska 2009, Badowska 2017). Although the studies recalled above are not representative in a statistical sense, they show a part of the educational reality¹⁹.

Why is it not brighter? The analysis of the educational offer preparing for work in culturally diverse environments and additional training for teachers in preschool and early school education, and supporting students with adaptation difficulties (cultural differences, change of educational environment) led Śmiechowska-Petrovskij (2017) to a profound conclusion. It is teacher training at the general and vocational level that is responsible for this state of affairs. The mono-specialist approach in academic education and in-service training for teachers leads to a situation where candidates undertaking them are working in a multicultural environment and are personally motivated to launch them. In contrast, the development of pedagogical competencies in working with culturally diverse children should be a compulsory component of all educational programmes, particularly those of a methodological nature. It cannot be just a single general pedagogical subject. The crucial issue is to make a future teacher aware that teaching children with special needs, including ethnic or cultural minorities, is not something additive and optional. The teacher's task is to educate all students, not just the majority that does not demonstrate any challenges.

Conclusions

Let us recall Pawlak (2013) and his study on the organisational response of schools and aid institutions towards refugees in Poland after 2004. Referring to the assumptions of new institutionalism, he notes that the appearance of immigrant pupils at

¹⁹ More recently the NIK audit revealed similar findings. Only in 3 (out of 24 analysed) schools did teachers adjust curricula and methods to respond to students' needs and abilities. And they did it in the last school year covered by the audit (NIK 2020:52). 37% of teachers surveyed declared that they did not receive professional training appropriate to their needs related to work with foreigners (NIK 2020:86).

the level of the educational system was not defined as a problem and did not cause a shock within the educational system. The shocks for the educational system were the school reform (1999), the changes in the students' educational aspirations and demographic shifts. For these reasons, the issue of migrant children was not high on the national agenda. The few schools attended by refugee pupils have, however, experienced a shock.

Indisputably, governments – regardless of their political affiliation – had not taken advantage of the time before the numbers of children with insufficient Polish language skills increased tenfold. Encouraging labour migration, they underestimated the fact that families might accompany workers. Policymakers overlooked that it increases the number of children who need teachers prepared for work in units where pupils demonstrate different challenges, including those related to migration experience.

Legal acts regulating immigrant pupils' presence in public primary and secondary schools either implemented international obligations or responded with a delay to already accumulated problems. Alarming, during the three school years covered by the NIK report (2020), data on children with migration experience obtained by the SIO has not been analysed on the ministerial level. The minister in charge of education has not monitored children's situations, has not carried out appropriate analyses, has practically no knowledge about the issue. Needs related to teachers' professional development and methodological support escaped ministerial examination too. Though how is it possible to define precise policy goals and actions leading to them?

Based on how national regulations developed and on the literature review, it seems justified to state that Poland did not have and still does not have a strategic vision of national educational policy encompassing children with migration experience. Since Pawlak's publication (2013), the education system in Poland has experienced a shock twice: the school reform (2017) and the transition to an almost year-long online teaching mode due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The difference between the period analysed in his book and the present day is that pupils without Polish citizenship learn in 1/3 of Polish schools.

References

- Badowska M. (2017), *Ku integracji społecznej. Studium pedagogiczne*. Pułtusk–Warszawa: Akademia Humanistyczna im. Aleksandra Gieysztora w Pułtusku, Oficyna Wydawnicza Aspra-JR.
- Bąbka J., Nowicka M. (2017), *Educational Policy towards Children of Immigrants in Poland*, "Zeszyty Naukowe Uczelni Jana Wyżykowskiego. Studia z Nauk Społecznych", nr 10, pp. 119–139.
- Bulandra A., Kościółek J. (2019): Poland, in: "MiCreate, Reception Community. State of Art Report", Available at: <http://www.micreate.eu/index.php/reports/?lang=pl>
- Bleszyńska K., (2017), *Educating Migrant Students in Poland*. „Kultura i Edukacja”, nr 4, pp. 153–167
- Bleszyńska K. (2009), *Sytuacja uczniów cudzoziemskich w polskich szkołach* (n.p. report for the Polish National Ministry of Education). Warszawa.

- Chrzanowska A. (2009), *Asystent kulturowy – innowacyjny model pracy w szkołach przyjmujących dzieci cudzoziemskie*, Stowarzyszenie Interwencji Prawnej Analizy, Raporty, Ekspertyzy 5/2009, <http://www.interwencjaprawna.pl/docs/ARE-509-asystent-miedzykulturowy.pdf>
- Czerniejewska I. (2013), *Edukacja wielokulturowa. Działania podejmowane w Polsce*. Poznań: Wydawnictwo Naukowe UMK.
- Gawlicz K., Rudnicki P., Starnawskiego M. (2015), *Dyskryminacja w szkole – obecność nieusprawiedliwiona. O budowaniu edukacji antydyskryminacyjnej w systemie edukacji formalnej w Polsce. Raport z badań*. Warszawa: Towarzystwo Edukacji Antydyskryminacyjnej.
- Gmaj K., Iglicka K., Walczak, B. (2013), *Dzieci uchodźcze w polskiej szkole. Wyzwania systemu edukacji dla integracji i rynku pracy*. Warszawa: Scholar.
- Gmaj K. (2011), *Europejskie podejście do kwestii obywatelstwa wielokulturowego. Prawne, polityczne i edukacyjne wyzwania. Przypadek Polski* (n.p. doctoral thesis)
- Grzymała-Moszczyńska, H., Grzymała-Moszczyńska, J., Durlik-Marcinowska, J., and Szydłowska, P. (2015), *(Nie)łatwe powroty do domu? Funkcjonowanie dzieci i młodzieży powracających z emigracji*. Fundacja Centrum im. prof. Bronisława Geremka. http://geremek.pl/assets/files/Powroty/nielatwe_powroty_raport_koncowy.pdf
- Halik T., Nowicka E., Połec W. (2006), *Dziecko wietnamskie w polskiej szkole*, Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Prolog
- Januszewska E., (2017), *Uczniowie cudzoziemscy w polskiej szkole – między integracją a marginalizacją*. „Studia Edukacyjne”, nr 43, pp. 129–152
- Kłorek N., Kubin K. (Eds.) (2012), *Innowacyjne rozwiązania w pracy z dziećmi cudzoziemskimi w systemie edukacji. Przykłady praktyczne*, Warszawa: Fundacja na rzecz Różnorodności Społecznej
- Konieczna J., Świdrowska E. (2008), *Młodzież, imigracja, tolerancja. Raport z badań terenowych w szkołach*, Warszawa: Towarzystwo Demokratyczne Wschód.
- Kosowicz A. (2007), *Access to Quality Education By Asylum-Seeking and Refugee Children. Poland Country Report*. Warsaw: UNHCR
- Kościótek J. (2020), *Children with Migration Backgrounds in Polish Schools – Problems and Challenges*, „Annales. Annals for Istrian and Mediterranean Studies, Series Historia et Sociologia”, nr 30 (4), pp. 601–612.
- Łukasiewicz K., Grzymała-Moszczyńska J. (2014), *Discriminatory migration policy? An access to education system for migrant children in Poland*, „Przegląd Polonijny – Studia Migracyjne” nr 3 (153), pp. 375–390.
- Markowska-Manista U. (2016), *Praca z uczniem z trudnościami adaptacyjnymi – specyfika różnic kulturowych i zmiany środowiska edukacyjnego*, in: E. Śmiechowska-Petrovskij (ed.), *Dzieci z trudnościami adaptacyjnymi w młodszym wieku*, Warszawa: Wyd. UKSW.
- Młynarczuk-Sokołowska, A., Szostak-Król, K. (2017), *Wspieranie uczniów cudzoziemskich ze specjalnymi potrzebami edukacyjnymi w kontekście indywidualizacji pracy i wymagań szkolnych*, in: E. Śmiechowska-Petrovskij (Ed.), *Dzieci z trudnościami rozwojowymi w młodszym wieku. Indywidualne programy edukacyjno-terapeutyczne w procesie wspierania dzieci*, Warszawa: Wyd. UKSW.
- Młynarczuk-Sokołowska A., Szostak-Król K., (2016), *Uczniowie cudzoziemscy w polskiej szkole – problemy, wyzwania i egemplifikacje działań metodycznych*, in: E. Śmiechowska-Petrovskij (Ed.), *Dzieci z trudnościami adaptacyjnymi w młodszym wieku*, Warszawa: Wyd. UKSW

- Nasalska E. (1999) *Edukacja międzykulturowa w polskiej szkole*, „Kwartalnik Pedagogiczny”, nr 4, pp. 73–86
- NIK (Najwyższa Izba Kontroli) (2020), *Informacja o wynikach kontroli: Kształcenie dzieci rodziców powracających do kraju oraz dzieci cudzoziemców*, Nr ewid. 42/2020/P/19/028/KNO, <https://www.nik.gov.pl/najnowsze-informacje-o-wynikach-kontroli/ksztalcenie-dzieci-cudzoziemcow-i-powracajacych-do-kraju.html>
- Nilsson J., Bunar N. (2016), *Educational responses to newly-arrived students to Sweeden: understanding the structure and influence of post-migration ecology*, “Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research”, 60(40), pp. 399–416.
- Pawlak, M. (2013), *Organizacyjna reakcja na nowe zjawisko: Szkoły i instytucje pomocowe wobec uchodźców w Polsce po 2004 r.*, Warszawa: IPSiR UW.
- Pogorzała E., (2011), *Aspekty instytucjonalno-prawne edukacji dzieci imigrantów w polskim systemie oświaty*, in: Paszko A (Ed.), *Edukacja międzykulturowa w Polsce wobec nowych wyzwań*, Kraków: Stowarzyszenie Willa Decjusza.
- Stepaniuk, J. (2017), *Uczeń odmienny kulturowo w szkole – problem czy wyzwanie edukacyjne?*, in: Markowska-Manista, B. Pasamonik (Eds.), *Kryzys migracyjny. Perspektywa pedagogiczno-psychologiczna*, Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Akademii Pedagogiki Specjalnej.
- Syrnyk M, (2017), *Polityka oświatowa wobec migrantów – dzieci i uczniowie z Ukrainy w polskiej szkole*, „Acta Politica Polonica”, nr 2(40), pp. 53–72
- Szulgan A. (2019), *Praca z dziećmi cudzoziemskimi w polskiej szkole. Metody, działania i własne doświadczenia*. „Języki obce w szkole”, Nr 4, <http://jows.pl>
- Śmiechowska-Petrovskij E. (2016), *Doskonalenie zawodowe nauczycieli w zakresie edukacji przedszkolnej i wczesnoszkolnej ze wsparciem ucznia z trudnościami adaptacyjnymi, wynikającymi z różnic kulturowych i zmiany środowiska edukacyjnego*, in: Śmiechowska-Petrovskij E. (Ed.), *Dzieci z trudnościami adaptacyjnymi w młodszym wieku*, Warszawa: Wyd. UKSW.
- Zalewska E. (2017), *Sytuacja wychowawcza i edukacyjna dzieci-uchodźców w Polsce*, in: Markowska-Manista U., Pasamonik B. (Eds.), *Kryzys migracyjny. Perspektywa pedagogiczno-psychologiczna*, Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Akademii Pedagogiki Specjalnej.
- Zapolska A. Pająk-Bener D. (2019), *Analiza Przeprowadzonego ankietowania Rodziców uczniów z Ukrainy oraz kadry pedagogicznej szkół i placówek edukacyjnych w Krakowie*, Fundacja Zustricz i Fundacja Stefana Batorego, <https://zustricz.pl/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Analiza-uczniow-z-Ukrainy-w-krakowskich-szko%C5%82ach-N.pdf>

Legal acts:

- Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 4 October 2001
- Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 1 April 2010
- Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 23 August 2017
- The Act on National and Ethnic Minorities and Regional Language of 6 January 2005
- The Constitution of the Republic of Poland of 2 April 1997
- The School Education Act of 7 September 1991
- The Law on School Education of 14 December 2016.