



# Research on Montessori education and the learning methods in VET in our country

**Materials, numbers and needs**

**The Polish National Report**

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## 1) History of Montessori in our country

The Montessori method has had great influence in shaping the system of preschool education in Poland during the interwar period. This was the period between 11-11-1918 (restoration of independence) and 01-09-1939 (beginning of the II World War).

Despite the wide spread of the Montessori system, no institution was based solely on this approach. Introducing it was difficult mainly due to lack of funds for appropriate equipment of rooms and teaching aids. However, kindergartens used many clues and guidance of Italian doctor on facilities and methods of work with children.

The most important were:

- ◆ equipping kindergartens' with furniture and equipment, adjusted for age and growth of the child (they replaced typical benches in Polish kindergartens)
- ◆ paying bigger attention to cleanliness and proper sanitation
- ◆ enriching the content of lessons and activities, as well as forms of work for the benefit of those that activated spontaneous creativity and inspire the child
- ◆ disseminating of teaching aids, primarily intended for development of the various senses in children
- ◆ drawing attention to keep everything tidy and to be systematic (all the activities both of educators and learners)
- ◆ promoting cooperation of educator with doctor and parents
- ◆ greater than ever care for the physical development of children
- ◆ transition from care and educational functions of kindergartens to the educational function with greater importance of the development of children's senses and mind

After restoration of independence in 1918, Polish authorities have worked on controlling the organizational chaos in education system which remained after many years of time of annexation. There was not one common school system in the country. Authorities prepared reforms accepted by the Parliament on 11-03-1932 with Act called "education reform of Jędrzejewicz". Janusz Jędrzejewicz was the Minister of Religion and Public Education and he developed the reform. It was a reform of the Polish system of primary and secondary education. Its principles lasted till 1948. Entry into force of the Act has changed the goals and the task of preschool education. Kindergartens became a teaching and nurturing places, dealing with physical, moral and intellectual growing up of children. A consequence of this of the Montessori system was rejected.

From the beginning of the twentieth century, educational system developed by Maria Montessori is present in kindergartens and schools in many countries, not only in Europe but also in America and Asia. The experience of the Montessori method work for a number of educational institutions in the world. Therefore it is sufficient to evaluate the value of this method and to achieve many graduates of Montessori schools. It also allows to develop optimal conditions for the functioning of such schools, in particular, to respect and improve following aspects of the process of organizing teaching and learning of children - material, structural, dynamic and personal. Polish kindergartens and schools which have taken trouble implementing Montessori system in Poland are in a slightly different situation.

In the late 80s and early 90s of the twentieth century theory and practice of the Montessori educational system began to settle on a map of alternative education in Poland. Montessori pedagogy is currently present at the lectures of academic general pedagogy, pedagogical contemporary trends, the methodology of teaching. More and more books and articles is published in scientific journals and popular science is devoted to Montessori pedagogy. You can say that after many years of forgetfulness of Maria Montessori's theory, it experiences a renaissance today. It is re-interpreted by the teachers again. Teachers attempt to work according to Montessori principles. Not only kindergarten, but also Montessorian schools are created. University of Maria Curie-Skłodowska in Lublin may be very good example of interest in the Montessori method. In May 1992 the University signed a multi-year agreement with Hogeschool Gelderland Nijmegen in the Netherlands on the Montessori system of adaptation to Polish conditions.

Most of the teachers currently working in the Polish Montessorian places, use during their everyday work, theoretical and methodological knowledge and skills obtained during different courses, specialized training sessions or workshops. They feel the need for confirming the validity of the Montessori' methods through direct contact with other teachers using the same methods and walk the same path just behind the needs of children and their individual capabilities. They also need the belief that they are not alone in their actions, that, despite a large geographical distance, there are other places similar to those in which they operate. It is difficult for adults to give up teaching style learned before and even more difficult to change the philosophy of life. It is easier to learn something new and expand the variety of activities. Learning how to look at each child from the perspective of his achievements is not in relation to curriculum requirements and seeing at the individual capabilities requires time and continuous work on themselves.

## **2) Today's Statistics**

In 2008/9 there were 14 067 primary schools and 7 204 lower secondary schools (gymnasium), attended by 2 294.4 thousand and 1 381.4 thousand pupils respectively in Poland. In 2008/9 there were 2 386 general upper secondary schools with 686.4 thousand pupils, 3 146 technical and specialized upper secondary schools with 622.4 thousand pupils and 1 784 basic vocational schools with 239.1 thousand pupils. In the same school year there were 3 369 postsecondary schools attended by 344.1 thousand students.

### **◆ How many Montessori School are there in your country?**

There is no official statistics about how many Montessori Schools exists in Poland. In fact, there are only available information about existing over a dozen institutions of this type. To fill this gap there were several attempts on few NGOs or schools websites or on-line forums where researchers could add information about existing Montessori school in their area and parents could share their opinion about the Montessori school of their children.

### **◆ What about the variety of Montessori Schools (kindergarten, primary, secondary).**

- ◆ Kindergartens: there are about 30 Montessori kindergartens in Poland
- ◆ Primary school: lack of accurate data on the number but there are several
- ◆ Lower secondary general (gymnasium): 1
- ◆ Upper secondary schools: there is no information available about existing such ones

There is one "exemplary" Montessori school in Poland in Warsaw. In the 1999/2000 school year the first school group (grade 1) for children aged 6-9 years was launched. The school "grows" along with the children so far. As they grow, the next stages are formed for older children. Currently, in 2011 the school established the second stage of school education for pupils aged under 15. Classes began in September 2011.

## **3) National and Local contacts for Montessori**

- ◆ Name and location of well recognised Montessori School in Poland:

Private Montessori School, Dorota i Tomasz Rotowscy,  
1 Bohaterów Warszawy street, 02-495 Warszawa  
tel. (0-22) 662-74-75, fax (022) 867-68-35, sekretariat@montessori.dag.pl

In March 200 they started first school in Poland for babies at the age of 18 months – 3 year old.

### ◆ How do they apply the method in 2011?

This Montessori school is intimate, providing a true individualization - **in line with Montessori's principles** (see also the next point - *How is it changed and what they are still using?*). Montessori system is implemented in the model facilities in Warsaw school for 11 years already. Every student in this school operates according to its own program, good for the capabilities and interests - accompanied by a teacher-tutor. Authorised curriculum puts emphasis on a comprehensive education integrating different subject. The school guarantees the achievement of the objectives of the curriculum and possibility of learning several foreign languages. The main objective of the school is to help every student to experience not only the fact that learning can be a real pleasure and give a lot of satisfaction, but also help to see its purpose and practical relations with what is happening around us. Therefore, the school provides cooperation with external research institutes, centers and specialists. The school assumes that every student has a talent/gift, and the task is to discover and help it to grow. The school wants to help students discover and nurture passions, discover their abilities and capabilities and specify the needs, which will help decide in the future choice of school and then profile the profession and field of study. Educational program is based on the knowledge of this stage of development of young people. The school puts on carefully selected team of teachers to help learners to build the independence and autonomy, while ensuring not only intellectual development.

### ◆ How is it changed and what they are still using?

Gymnasium School Program is built around nine areas of activities and are based on copyright curricula for individual subjects. Curricula are constructed in such way that activities during practical work taken by the students and their contacts with various institutions should give references to the acquired in the school knowledge and skills. There are following areas:

- ◆ activities in the environment,
- ◆ artistic activities
- ◆ sports, competitions and professions,
- ◆ social activities,
- ◆ tourism,
- ◆ ecology and nature,
- ◆ science projects,
- ◆ economic activity and entrepreneurship,
- ◆ communication and information.

Therefore, the teaching methods are directed to those students who find joy in developing his passion - even those beyond the school subjects.

### ◆ Could the Montessori method be applied to adult training? How?

Yes, it would be possible but not easy. During usual school lessons it could be difficult because of the limited number of hours in the curricula in comparison to the requirements for the amount of teaching material. The next difficulties would be caused because of the way of thinking of teachers who usually are more focused on the completing the programme than learners progress and abilities. The second reason is the consequence of the first one.

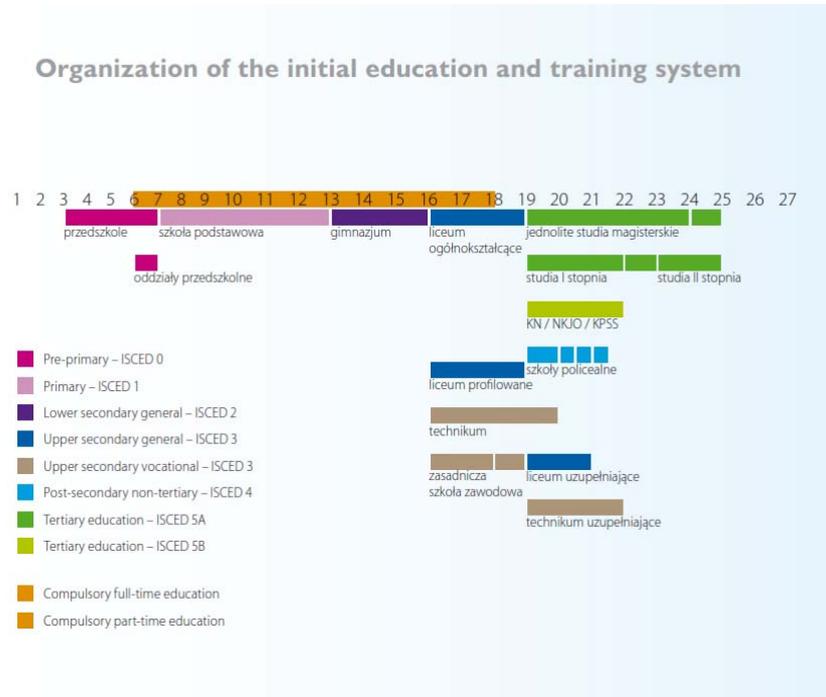
However it could be used especially during the practical placement during workshops in the schools and ideally also at the workplace during internship and practice placement.

## 4) National VET situation in Poland, a short introduction

### ◆ VET, an introduction

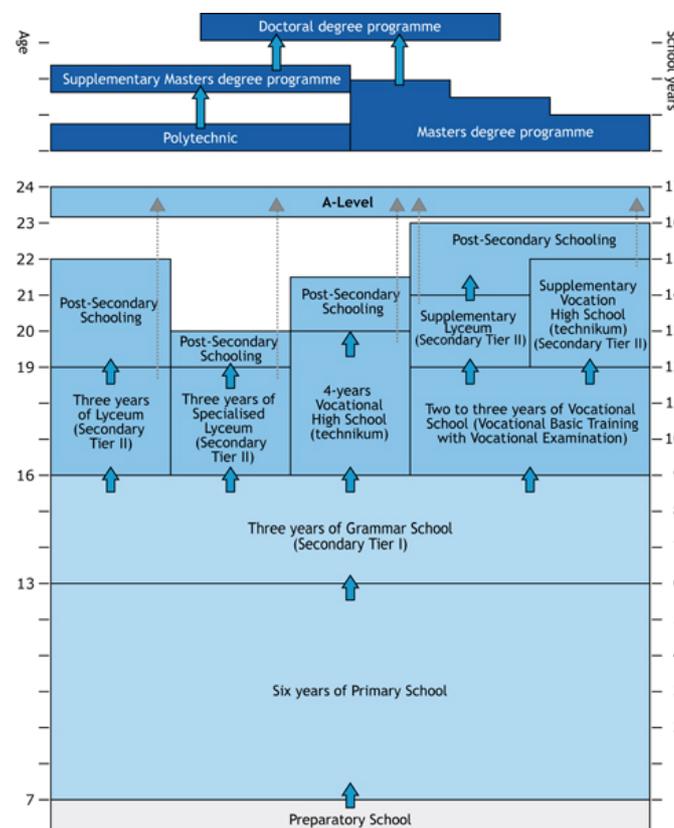
Compulsory part-time education in the school or out-of-school forms lasts from 6 until 18 years of age. The status of compulsory schools have only a primary school and gymnasium.

**Chart 1. The School System in Poland after the Education Reforms of 1999**



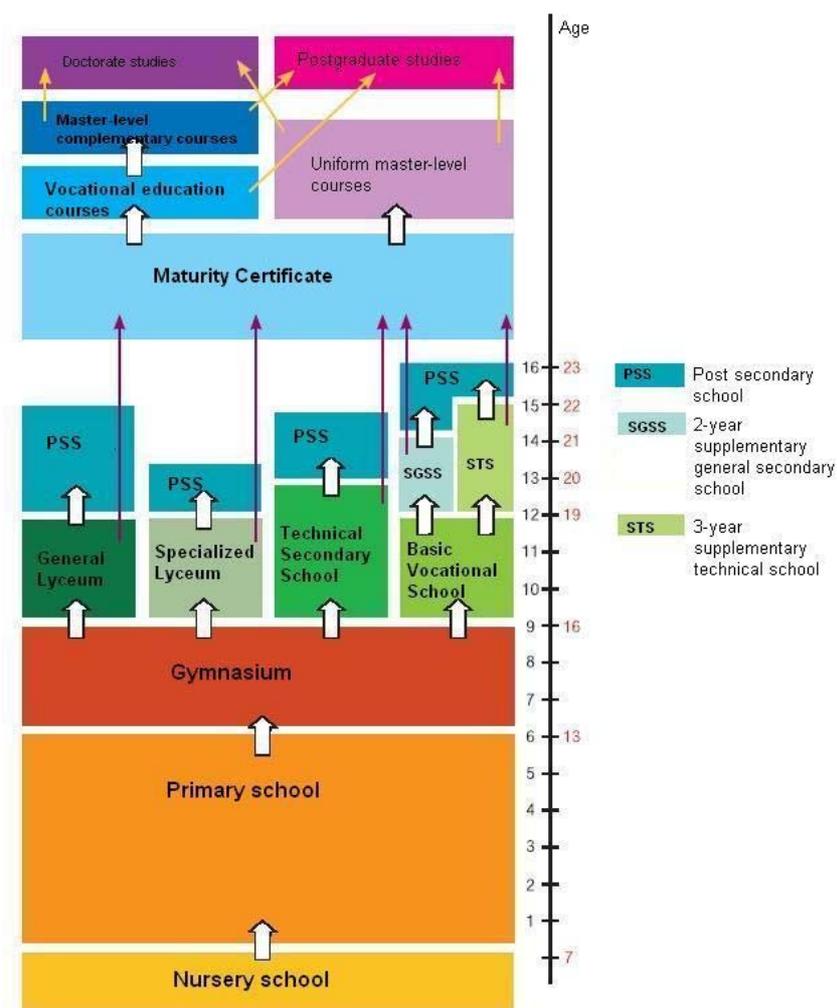
Source: Eurydice. *The system of education in Poland, FRSE. Warsaw 2010, ISBN 978-83-60058-85-5, page 8*

**Chart 2. The School System in Poland after the Education Reforms of 1999**



Source: <http://www.ioeb.de/en/bildungssystem-0>

**Chart 3.** The School System in Poland after the Education Reforms of 1999



Źródło: [www.menis.gov.pl](http://www.menis.gov.pl)

Source: <http://menis.gov.pl>

**Table 1.** Schools and age of pupils

<i>Oddział przedszkolny</i> (pre-school class)	6 years of age
<i>Szkoła podstawowa</i> (6-year primary school)	7-13 years of age Stage 1 – integrated teaching, 7-10 years of age Stage 2 – teaching based on separate subjects, 10-13 years of age
<i>Gimnazjum</i> (3-year lower secondary school)	13-16 years of age Stage 3 – teaching based on separate subjects

Source: Eurydice. National summary sheets on education systems in Europe and ongoing reforms, Poland, June 2010, page 2

**Vocational education** or *vocational education and training* (VET) is an education that prepares trainees for jobs that are based on manual or practical activities, traditionally non-academic, and totally related to a specific trade, occupation, or *vocation*. It is sometimes referred to as *technical education* as the trainee directly develops expertise in a particular group of techniques.

### Vocational education - the current system in Poland

The purpose of vocational education is to prepare to perform a specific job. Vocational education in Poland is carried out in the school system in basic vocational schools, techniques, complementary techniques and post-secondary schools. Occupations in which they vocational schools can educate students are defined in the classification of vocational education. The current classification of vocational education is proclaimed in the Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 26 June 2007 on the classification of vocational education (Journal of Laws No. 124, item. 860, as amended) and contains 199 professions.

Vocational education in Poland is also provided by employers who are craftsmen. Learners can be educated in 103 professions, of which 53 are recognized in the classification of professions taught in schools.

Vocational training, involving theoretical and practical vocational subjects teaching profession, shall follow the approved curriculum in accordance with the core curriculum of training in the profession.

**Table 2.** Schools and age of pupils

<i>Liceum ogólnokształcące</i> (general upper secondary school)	16-19 years of age
<i>Liceum profilowane</i> (specialised upper secondary school)	16-19 years of age
<i>Technikum</i> (technical upper secondary school)	16-20 years of age
<i>Zasadnicza szkoła zawodowa</i> (basic vocational school)	16-18/19 years of age
<i>Uzupełniające liceum ogólnokształcące</i> (supplementary general upper secondary school)	18/19-20/21 years of age
<i>Technikum uzupełniające</i> (supplementary technical upper secondary school)	18/19-21/22 years of age
<i>Szkoła policealna</i> (post-secondary non-tertiary school)	19-21 years of age (very rarely 20)

Source: Eurydice. *National summary sheets on education systems in Europe and ongoing reforms, Poland, June 2010, page 5*

The Ministry of National Education is responsible for nearly the whole system of education, with the exception of higher education which is under the supervision of the Minister of Science and Higher Education. Vocational schools, which in the past were supervised by other ministries, are now the responsibility of the Ministry of National Education. At present only a few schools (artistic – only with respect to artistic subjects, as well as correctional institutions) are under the supervision of the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Justice, respectively.

### Upper secondary schools after the Reform in Poland

On the 21st of November 2001 changes at the upper level of secondary education were introduced by the force of the following acts - the amended Teachers' Charter, the amended School Education Act and amended Act on the Implementation of the Education System Reform. **The reform is still ongoing<sup>1</sup>**.

<sup>1</sup> Current reforms and priorities - Poland ( June 2010) *Changes in vocational and continuous training and special needs education. Since 18 January till the end of April 2010 the Ministry of National Education organized a wide public consultation on the project for changes in vocational and continuous education and changes in special needs education - a special website for posting questions and remarks was opened and a series of regional conferences presenting the planned changes were organized. Main aims of the changes in vocational training are to make the training more current and practical in cooperation with employers to match the labor market needs. (ET 2020 strategic objective 2: improving the quality and efficiency of education and training; New Skills for New Jobs ) Special needs in education are not only those of students with learning difficulties but also those of the particularly gifted students. The changes the Ministry has outlined entail special individualized provision at schools for students with special needs. (ET 2020 strategic objective 3: promoting equity, social cohesion and active citizenship- learners with special needs)*

At present the following post-gimnazjum schools are operational:

- ◆ 2-3-year **basic vocational school** (zasadnicza szkoła zawodowa)\* (pupils aged 16 to 18/19) which enables pupils to obtain a diploma confirming vocational qualifications upon passing of an exam, it is possible to continue education in a 2-year supplementary general upper secondary school (uzupełniająca liceum ogólnokształcące) or in a 3-year technikum uzupełniająca.
- ◆ 3-year general upper secondary school (liceum ogólnokształcące) (pupils aged 16 to 19) which enable pupils to take mature exams (*egzamin maturalny*) and obtain secondary school certificate (*świadectwo maturalne*)
- ◆ 3-year specialised upper secondary school (liceum profilowane) (pupils aged 16 to 19) - teaching is carried out in the general profiles of vocational training, it enables the pupils to take mature exams (*egzamin maturalny*) and obtain secondary school certificate (*świadectwo maturalne*)
- ◆ 4-year technical upper secondary school (technikum) (pupils aged 16 to 20) which enable pupils to obtain a vocational qualifications diploma upon passing of an exam, and to take mature exams (*egzamin maturalny*) and obtain secondary school certificate (*świadectwo maturalne*)
- ◆ 2-year supplementary general upper secondary school (uzupełniająca liceum ogólnokształcące) (pupils aged 18/19 to 20/21) for the leavers of basic vocational school (zasadnicza szkoła zawodowa) which enable pupils to take mature exams (*egzamin maturalny*) and obtain secondary school certificate (*świadectwo maturalne*) (operational since 1 September 2004).
- ◆ 3-year supplementary technical upper secondary school (technikum uzupełniająca) (pupils aged 18/19 to 21/22) for graduates of basic vocational school (zasadnicza szkoła zawodowa) which enables pupils to take take mature exams (*egzamin maturalny*) and obtain secondary school certificate (*świadectwo maturalne*), as well as to obtain a vocational qualifications diploma upon passing of an exam (operational since 1 September 2004).

\* **Vocational schools** with a study period of not less than 2 years and not more than 3 years. Vocational training is done at the level of journeyman, according to the profile of the institution. Vocational schools give a certificate of completion, or a diploma certifying professional qualifications, if the student will decide to pass the optional exam training before the Regional Examination Commission. As written above after graduating from vocational school to continue learning in schools:

- two-year supplementary general secondary schools, which allows for the completion of high school diploma after passing the matriculation examination;
- three complementary technique which allows for the completion of a diploma confirming vocational qualifications upon passing the exam, as well as to obtain the maturity certificate after passing the mature

#### Post-secondary school

The type of education classified as post-secondary non-tertiary under ISCED (Revised Version), is considered to be a part of secondary education in Poland.

Post secondary non tertiary school (szkoła policealna) is organised on the basis of general post-gimnazjum school. It enables their students to acquire vocational qualifications at the level of secondary technical education or their equivalents. This school prepares graduates of general upper secondary school (liceum ogólnokształcące) and specialised upper secondary school (liceum profilowane) for employment in worker or non-worker occupations. Training in such schools takes no longer than 2.5 years (in kolegium nauczycielskie and nauczycielskie kolegium języków obcych – 3 years). Graduates receive a diploma which defines vocational qualifications at the level of technik or qualified worker (robotnik wykwalifikowany). Post secondary non tertiary school (szkoła policealna) includes post-secondary vocational schools, kolegium pracowników służb społecznych and teacher training institutions: kolegium nauczycielskie and nauczycielskie kolegium języków obcych. This post-secondary school is organized for youth, adults and SEN pupils.

There are 3337 (public or non-public) post-secondary schools with 301 563 pupils enrolled (school year 2007/2008). These schools are managed by the central administration units, local self-government units, nongovernmental organizations and associations.

### Admissions criteria

The number of points indicated on the gymnasium leaving certificate (based on the results achieved in specific subjects and other achievements) including the points received at the gymnasium examination decides about the pupils' admission to an upper secondary school. The detailed admission rules are defined by each post-gymnasium school which opens admissions to new pupils.

### ◆ **Educational system and place of VET, who is responsible for the design of the qualifications/curricula in VET, e.g. (is the working field involved?)**

#### Curricula control and content

At the level of upper secondary education there are curricula for separate subjects and crosscurricular themes. The Ministry of Education defines core curricula for general education for each subject and cross-curricular theme in all types of school. Teachers can choose the textbooks from a list approved by the ministry. They are free to decide the teaching and assessment methods, introduce innovative teaching methods and choose curricula which are approved by the school head. They can also develop their own curricula based on core curricula and submit them to their school head for approval.

#### Core subjects (included in outline timetables):

General upper secondary school: Polish language, 2 foreign languages, History, Civic education, Culture studies, Mathematics, Physics and Astronomy, Chemistry, Biology, Geography, Introduction to entrepreneurship, Information technology, Physical Education, Defence Training, lessons for class tutor, lessons for additional subject teaching envisaged in the curriculum, additionally non-compulsory Religion or Ethics.

Specialised upper secondary school: Polish language, 2 foreign languages, History, Civic Education, Culture studies, Mathematics, Physics and Astronomy, Chemistry, Biology, Geography, Introduction to entrepreneurship, Information technology, Physical education, Defence training, lessons for class tutor, lessons for specialisation related teaching, additionally non-compulsory Religion or Ethics.

Technical upper secondary school (technikum): Polish language, 2 modern foreign languages, History, Civic education, Cultural studies, Mathematics, Physics and astronomy, Chemistry, Biology, Geography, Introduction to entrepreneurship, Information technology, Physical education, Defence training, lessons for class tutor, lessons for vocational training according to vocational curriculum for a given profession, additionally non-compulsory Religion or Ethics.

**Basic vocational school:** Polish language, modern foreign languages, History and civic education, Mathematics, Physics and astronomy, Geography with environmental protection, Introduction to entrepreneurship, Physical education, Defence training, lessons for class tutor, vocational training according to relevant curriculum, additionally non-compulsory Religion or Ethics.

General school curriculum, curriculum for a particular vocation and curriculum for a general vocational profile training can be:

- ◆ Prepared by a teacher individually or in cooperation with other teachers;
- ◆ Chosen from the set of curricula prepared by other author(s) e.g. from among those available on the market, approved for the use at school by the Minister of National Education;
- ◆ Prepared by other author(s) and modified by the teacher – the curriculum is presented by the teacher with the scope and rationale for the proposed changes.

The curriculum proposed by the teacher should be adjusted to the needs and abilities of the pupils. School curricula for general education, vocational curricula and curricula for general vocational profile training are approved for the use at school by a school head of the given school upon teacher(s) request upon consultation with the school pedagogical council.

In vocational schools there are following types of curricula:

- ◆ general subjects
- ◆ general vocational subjects
- ◆ specialist subjects
- ◆ practical courses and apprenticeships.

The curriculum for each subject usually has the following components:

- ◆ objectives and tasks of teaching - the subject of education
- ◆ distribution of teaching material on the thematic sections, with the number of hours devoted to their realization
- ◆ teaching material included in the form of thematic areas (establishing individual topics and subtopics, and lists of exercises and demonstrations)
- ◆ a set of basic teaching aids related to the implementation of the program teaching
- ◆ guidance on the implementation of teaching material.

The vocational training is an important issue of professional qualification standards, which include:

- ◆ the level of qualifications
- ◆ the content of teaching
- ◆ teaching time
- ◆ control system
- ◆ educational materials
- ◆ educational base
- ◆ the level of technical education.

## 5) Learning system

### ◆ Is competence based learning common in VET in your country? If not, what is the learning system that VET uses?

**Professional qualifications** in Poland are understood as a set of knowledge and skills required to implement components of professional tasks (in the chosen specialty). Result of certain documents (certificates, diplomas, certificates) and create a presumption that the person who hold them have adequate competence.

In the Polish Classification of Occupations, distinguishes two aspects of the qualification:

- ◆ level - which is the function of the complexity and range of skills (ability to treat complexity as a factor more important), arising from the complexity and scope of tasks and responsibilities.
- ◆ specialization - the type of required knowledge or ability to use specific devices and tools, or by the type of materials or products manufactured or the type of service.

Taken into account there four broad levels of qualifications, which are defined in relation to levels of education as defined in the International Classification for Standards in Education (ISCED 97), adopted at the 29th session of UNESCO in 1997.

**Table 3.** ISCED defined levels of education

Level	Description	Principal characteristics
0	Pre-primary education	initial stage of organized instruction, designed primarily to introduce very young children to a school-type environment
1	Primary education or first stage of basic education	normally starting between the ages of 5 and 7, designed to give a sound basic education in reading, writing and mathematics along with an elementary understanding of other subjects
2	Lower secondary or second stage of basic education	designed to complete basic education, usually on a more subject-oriented pattern
3	(Upper) secondary education	more specialized education typically beginning at age 15 or 16 years and/or the end of compulsory education
4	Post-secondary non-tertiary education	captures programmes that straddle the boundary between upper- and post-secondary education from an international point of view, e.g. pre-university courses or short vocational programmes
5	First stage of tertiary education	tertiary programmes having an advanced educational content, cross-classified by field (see below)
6	Second stage of tertiary education	tertiary programmes leading to the award of an advanced research qualification, e.g. Ph.D., cross-classified by field (see below)

This does not mean that the qualification can be achieved only within the school system. Qualifications can be and often are acquired during trainings and through practice.

The European Union has several levels of professional qualifications in order to provide comparable professional qualifications in different countries, **these levels are also included in the Polish system of vocational education** (as shown in the table above).

#### Assessment, progression and qualifications

Assessment at this level of education is similar to the arrangements in compulsory education. At the end of the course, all schools (except for the basic vocational school (zasadnicze szkoły zawodowe) organize final / mature exams (egzamin maturalny). The general upper secondary school (liceum ogólnokształcące), the specialized upper secondary school (liceum profilowane), the supplementary general upper secondary school (liceum uzupełniające) and the technical upper secondary school (technikum) may issue secondary school certificate (świadectwo maturalne) (a certificate for those who sat for and successfully completed the final examination, which is required for admission to higher education).

The mature exam, entitling pupils for admission to higher education is made up of two parts: external written (prepared and assessed by Regional Examination Commissions) and internal oral (assessed by school teachers). The vocational examination, called final professional exam (egzamin zawodowy) (in basic vocational schools, technical upper-secondary schools and post-secondary schools) consists of two parts: written, which examines the knowledge and abilities connected with a specific job and running a business activity, and a practical one, which examines the skills necessary to perform the job.

The basic vocational schools (zasadnicze szkoły zawodowe) issue świadectwo ukończenia zasadniczej szkoły zawodowej (a leaving certificate that gives students access to the job market). Post-secondary schools prepare their students for professional life.

All tests and examinations are organised by agencies 8 Regional Examination Boards supported and supervised by the Central Examination Board.

#### Diplomas, certificates

All public upper secondary schools, and those non-public schools that possess the rights of public schools, issue certificates in a standardized form (the form of these documents and rules of filling them in are defined in respective regulations).

A graduate of a post-gimnazjum school receives a school leaving certificate. A graduate who graduated with distinction, receives a school leaving certificate with distinction.

A graduate of a post-gimnazjum school: general, specialized and technical secondary school, supplementary general and technical secondary schools and a graduate of a post-primary school

(open to graduates of the old-type 8-year primary school) who passed the mature exams (*egzamin maturalny*) examination receives the *świadectwo maturalne* certificate. The certificate includes the results of written and oral parts of this exam. A graduate who has taken this exam again and has improved his/her results in one or more subjects, receives an annex to the certificate. The certificate and its annexes are issued by the regional examination commissions. The certificate is a document allowing the holder to apply for admission to higher education institutions.

**A graduate of a post-gimnazjum school: technical and supplementary technical secondary school and basic vocational school who passed the *egzamin zawodowy* examination, receives a diploma confirming vocational qualifications.** The diploma includes the name of vocation for which the qualifications have been confirmed, results of the exam (both written and practical parts). **Diplomas confirming vocational qualifications are issued by regional examination commissions.** The diploma confirming vocational qualifications can be accompanied, upon graduate's request, by a supplement describing the graduate's qualifications or by a description of the vocation based on the core curricula for training in a given vocation. The supplement can be issued in a foreign language.

◆ **Stage / internship (what is the percentage of internships in the complete study?)**

**How it is now:**

At the moment it is about 20-30% of the complete study eg.

- In daily schools it is twice 2x160 hours from 1400 hours of complete study
- In evening school it is 80-160 hours from 720 hours of complete study

**Table 4.** Number of teaching hours

The number of teaching hours for *zasadnicza szkoła zawodowa* (the Regulation by the Minister of National Education and Sport of 12 of February 2002 on the Outline Timetables in Public Schools) is as follows:

Compulsory subjects	Number of lessons per week in a period of 2 years, grades 1 to 2
Polish language	5
Modern foreign languages	3
History and civic education	2
Mathematics	4
Physics and astronomy	2
Geography with environmental protection	2
Introduction to management	1
Physical education	6
Defence training	2
Lessons for Class Tutor	2
Vocational training according to relevant curriculum	34
Total	63

Moreover, there are 4 non-compulsory hours of religion or ethics and 3 hours left to the school head's discretion, which gives a total of 70 hours of classes a week in a two-year cycle.

**IMPORTANT:** Since September 2012 the first class technicians and vocational schools will apply the new core curriculum of general education. At the same time, these classes will include a new core curriculum training in the professions.

Indicators for the future of Kuratorium Oświaty in Poland for:

- Basic vocational school - The decision about the distribution of hours of education and training, both theoretical and practical learning cycle applicable to the profession, is left to the headmaster, and the practical training school director shall allocate at least 60% of the hours

The National research on Montessori – PL, 2011 (FROJOL LdV TOI call 2011)

provided for vocational training.

- Vocational education can be organized for example as follows:
  - First class - the practical training may be made 1 day per week for an employer or in the center of industry,
  - For the second and third - the practical training may be done 2 or 3 days a week for an employer or in the center of the industry.

### **Summary:**

**From September 2012 it will be minimum 50% of the curriculum no matter of the type of the school or profession.**

- ◆ **Is this qualifying to get the diploma? (if yes, this means that you will not get your diploma if you did not succeed in your internships).**

You cannot graduate school successfully and as a consequence you cannot get diploma if you do not complete internships. There are only some cases when students do not have to complete full or part of the programme of internship/practice placement. These are students who already work or already had practice placement in the past in the required number of hours and in the firm/company/organization on the required profile.

- ◆ **What is the learning goal of the internship? (Is it an assignment, several small tasks, an integral complicated project) And can the student choose his goals?**

Each internship has required programme with number of hours, aims, learning goals, rights and duties of the student. Each person should have his/her mentor during the internship. In practice, how the internship looks like and how it is organized, usually depends of the mentor.

## **6) Research on target groups**

- ◆ **What do you think is needed to involve the target group in education? (motivation/ own choice for the learning path/ on the job learning instead of school).**
  - ◆ First of all, it is their own motivation to get new competences required on the labour market linked to willingness to get a good job.
  - ◆ Job learning after short preparation phase in the school.

## **7. Best practices in Poland**

- ◆ **How are subjects taught through specific methods?**

Subject teachers have a right to choose methods of teaching, depending on the number of pupils per class and on school equipment (e.g. the number of computers or other teaching aids). Some lessons need the division of the class into smaller groups (e.g. foreign language teaching, technology or computer science). Teachers can use special method but it is his/her choice.

◆ **Are the eventual methods used by the choice of the single teacher or are standardized by the Training center?**

Depends on the manager and teacher of the school or training centre. It is rather choice of the single teacher.

◆ **Examples for best practices concerning on the job learning for target groups in VET**

Good example of existing methods is practice company / simulation company idea. There is one simulation company in CKU Sopot and about 31 in Poland. These companies are usually in the structure of vocational schools. Students work there with one or 2 teachers-supervisors / tutors. Simulation firm is a company where everything is real except “money”.

**Pictures 1-2.** Students and employers of the simulation company selling their goods (working clothes) during national trade fairs of the simulation companies



*Source: Archive of simulation company of CKU Sopot*

Learning objectives during the practice placement in the practice company includes: strategic thinking, financial analysis, market analysis, operations, teamwork and leadership. This is very good alternative to internship in real companies where mentor is very often too busy to organize proper training for learners. In fact first simulation company was set up to meet the need of existing places for desired good places for internship. In some Polish vocational schools there is an alternative for learners – to have practice placement in simulation companies or in real firms.

**8) Conclusion and proposals**

There is a demand for new methods by teachers and trainers in Poland in times of changes which are going on nowadays and especially that teachers are always search for new ways for showing how to learn in a more efficient way. Most of VET teachers build up their own material according to existing needs / competences which have to be acquired by learners. A new methodology would be welcome even if current methods are not remote from Montessori principles. However it could lead to the aim of improving the image and attractiveness of VET in Poland. Project has a potential and can give an important contribution in VET teaching and early education abandon.

WP description	Conclusions & suggestions
WP 6: Production of draft <b>content</b> (strategy) for the <b>new learning method</b> , final version new learning method in EN, translation of new learning method	Nowadays Poland is making reform of vocational education and try to focus on good and effective practical trainings as well as competences of future employees thus all efficient methods in this field are very much welcomed to be introduced.
WP 7: organisation of <b>national teachers - trainers workshops</b> ; kick-of work; organization 2 <sup>nd</sup> workshop	As indicated in this report Polish teachers seeks new learning methods which are effective and helpful in their everyday work. They feel the need for confirming the validity of the Montessori' methods through direct contact with other teachers using the same methods and walk the same path just behind the needs of learners and their individual capabilities. It is sometimes difficult for adults to give up teaching and learning style learned before and used so far and to change it for a new one. These aspects could be mentioned during the workshops. Learning how to look at each child from the perspective of his achievements is not in relation to curriculum requirements and seeing at the individual capabilities requires time and continuous work on themselves and it should be taken into consideration also as very often teachers have no time for it during the usual lessons. Therefore new method could be recommended for practical trainings.

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