

Cross-Party Group on Poland at the Scottish Parliament
Education Subcommittee

Polish Language Learning in Scotland

Key facts and opportunities

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The central recommendation of this document is that classes in Polish Language should be available within the Scottish school system and that qualifications in the Polish Language should be introduced into Scottish schools at National 4 & 5 and Higher Levels.

Forecast Demand

- 61 000 Poles currently live in Scotland, comprising 1.2% of the population. Research by this committee (pp 7-8) has shown that some 12000 are currently educated in Scottish schools and nurseries. There are high concentrations in Aberdeen (820) Edinburgh (3300), Glasgow (890) and Perth & Kinross (500). The overwhelming majority are presently in nursery or P1-P4. Polish is the language young Scots are most likely to hear in school, other than English.
- The Scottish provision of no formal teaching or school qualifications contrasts with England where the AQA offers Polish to GCSE and A level. Between 2005 and 2010 the numbers taking Polish GCSE increased from 500 to over 4000 (p. 12). In 2013 110 Scottish students took the AQA GCSE in Polish, despite having to pay examination fees and travel to AQA-approved examination centres.
- These figures demonstrate the demand for Polish among the children of Polish migrants, but also suggest an opportunity for non- Polish speakers to learn the language in a supportive environment.

Practical Benefits

- Poland is the UK's 9th largest export market. The UK is the 3rd largest investor in Poland (p.3). It has been identified as a major potential export market for Scotland not least because of cultural links between the two countries. Knowledge of foreign languages, even if basic, has been shown to enhance personal relationships in business.
- The introduction of Polish to the suite of modern languages in Scottish schools would progress the attainment of the ambitious goals set out in the Government's "1 + 2 Approach" to language learning. Schoolchildren whose first language is English will encounter speakers of the Polish language at every level of proficiency from beginner upwards.
- Polish is the *heritage language* of many Polish migrants in Scotland. The recognition and encouragement to maintain and develop the language would comply with EU legislation (pp 5-6) and show a tangible commitment to the open, tolerant and welcoming nature of Scottish society.

Resource Implications

- The benefits of teaching and examining Polish could be achieved with comparatively little investment. There are a number of qualified Polish language teachers available in Scotland, some of whom have experience in teaching Polish as heritage or foreign language in the Polish complementary or "Saturday schools".
- Additional training for the teachers may be required for registration with the GTCS and steps should be taken to establishing this in conjunction with higher education institutions and Education Scotland.

INTRODUCTION

The 21st century is writing yet another chapter in the long history of Scottish-Polish connections that reaches back to the Middle Ages.

In the 15 and 1600s Poland was a land of opportunity for Scots: one estimate in 1617 put the number in the kingdom at 30 000 families.¹ They were attracted by its wealth, the trade links across the North Sea and its religious tolerance. In the Industrial Revolution Scots' engineering, manufacturing and agricultural expertise were greatly valued. Polish landowners and entrepreneurs visited Scotland and encouraged a new wave of migrants to Poland in the aftermath of the Napoleonic War.² This was a smaller, but no less influential group who remained distinct until the First World War.

The immigration of Polish people to Scotland also had two phases: the first one of the 10 000 soldiers who stayed on in Scotland after the Second World War and have contributed to the culture and economy of their new country; and the second one – after Poland joined the EU in 2004. The latter one is often talked about as an influx of strangers, but given the thousands of Scots who migrated there over the centuries, it may be more truthful to think of it as a population coming home.

According to the 2011 Scotland's Census, Polish has become the largest community language in Scotland. It is spoken as the main language by 61 000 speakers (1.2% of the population). According to the 2013 "Growing up in Scotland" report, Polish is being spoken as the only language in 3% of all households and in 31% of those where any other language is spoken in addition to English.³

Economic links between Poland and Scotland have strengthened significantly within the last 10 years, with the Polish Business Chamber in Scotland, Polish Business Link and the British-Polish Chamber of Commerce as well as numerous private entrepreneurs organizing meetings, events and initiating economic exchange. According to unpublished research by the British-Polish Chamber of Commerce⁴, exports from Poland to Scotland are worth £8bn and Scottish producers have targeted Poland as a highly desirable export market. The situation is unlikely to change as Poland is, according to the 2014 "Guidance. Exporting to Poland" report prepared by UK Trade and Investment, the ninth most-important export market for the UK and the sixth fastest-growing market for UK exporters in 2013, up 12.7% against 2012. The UK was the third largest investor in Poland in 2012 after Germany and France⁵. UK investment in Poland was worth more than \$1bn⁶. Within the last three years Poland was ranked the 20th most attractive market globally for retail

¹ While the number may be exaggerated, Scots were numerous enough to form guilds or 'Brotherhoods' in twelve towns in Poland and were appointed purveyors to the Polish royal court in 1583, a position they held for over a century. Robert Gordon founder of Robert Gordon University made his fortune in Gdańsk and Warsaw elected a Scottish mayor, Alexander Chalmers (Czamer) four times in the late seventeenth century.

² Interesting anecdotal evidence abounds of the shared history permeating through the fabric of time: one trustee of a Polish complementary school in the Borders is a Macleod; originally from the Isle of Skye, his ancestors emigrated to Poland in the 18th century, changed their name, were successful in business in the north of Poland and Warsaw. Then, generations later, they fought in the Polish Army during the Second World War and fetched up in London like so many Poles after the war. The trustee was born to a Polish (Scottish) father and the family changed their name back to Macleod. Now, being retired, the trustee learns Polish and visits his cousins (lawyers) in Warsaw.

³By comparison, The South-Asian languages of Urdu and Punjabi are spoken in around 1% of all households and 10% of the households where any other language is used. See: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/0041/00414641.pdf>

⁴ Presentation at the meeting of the Cross-Party Group on Poland, 26th March 2014, Scottish Parliament

⁵Numbers quoted from the "Guidance. Exporting to Poland" 2014 document, issued by UK Trade and Investment See: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/exporting-to-poland>.

⁶ Ibidem.

brands in a CBRE report⁷ and Warsaw was ranked 12th among top business locations across the world.⁸ When it comes to the entrepreneurship of migrants in the UK, it is worth emphasizing that, according to the data of The Centre for Entrepreneurs (“The Contribution of New Migrant Entrepreneurs in the UK”), despite their short presence in the UK, Polish immigrants are the sixth most numerous group of all migrant entrepreneurs (founders or co-founders) of active UK companies and that 15% of self-employed in the UK are Polish nationals.⁹

Polish cultural and creative industries in Scotland are also thriving through more than 20 registered Polish cultural associations, a number of Polish magazines, web portals and radio stations.

In the light of the facts and numbers quoted above, it is surprising therefore, that the Polish language remains completely unrecognized as a resource in Scotland and no provision is available for it within the Scottish school system. The present report calls for urgent steps to rectify the situation.

The introduction of Polish language to the Scottish school system and to the suite of modern languages for which examination is offered at National 4, National 5 and Higher level, is highly desirable. It will ensure that:

- Scotland is strategically prepared to make the most of the business and cultural links with Poland now and in the years to come.
- Children of Polish origin, and Polish immigrants in general, feel accepted and supported by the government and the people of Scotland, not only for their present and future contribution to the economy, but also for their heritage and language.
- The education system gets it right for every of the 12 000 schoolchildren of Polish origin by supporting their bilingual language development.
- All children across Scotland are aware that their country supports cross-border movement; the education system nourishes the atmosphere of inclusion and tolerance in line with the Scottish and European vision.
- All children in Scotland are given additional flexibility of choice when it comes to learning a modern language and, in line with the recommendations of the “Language Learning in Scotland. A 1 + 2 Approach”, the best use is made of the available language resources.
- The Scottish community’s vision of Europe is broadened to demonstrate that French, Spanish, German and Italian are not the only languages that count in t

⁷ See: <http://www.cbi.org.uk/media-centre/case-studies/2012/08/global-focus-five-growth-sectors-in-poland/>

⁸ See: http://www.cbre.pl/pl_en/news_events/news_detail?p_id=8074

⁹The 10 nationalities with the highest number of migrant entrepreneurs (founders or co-founder – first directors of active UK companies) are:

- Irish 48,854
- Indian 32,593
- German 30,755
- American 29,933
- Chinese 24,972
- **Polish 21,757**
- French 20,839
- Italian 20,531
- Pakistani 16,617
- Nigerian 15,893

Source: <http://www.centreforentrepreneurs.org/Media/Default/Campaigns/Migrant%20Entrepreneurs/Release%204-13-14%20Migrant%20entrepreneurs.pdf>

1. SCOTTISH EDUCATION AND FOREIGN LANGUAGES IN THE LIGHT OF POLICIES, RECOMMENDATIONS AND REGULATIONS

Scottish education enjoys the reputation of being committed to flexibility and improvement.

In its strategic goals, Education Scotland states that:

learners in Scotland will progress in one of the most effective education systems in the world, renowned for the ability of national and local partners to work flexibly together to achieve high-quality and equitable outcomes for all.

The Curriculum for Excellence programme aspires “to enable all children to develop their capacities as successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors to society” and “to help prepare all young people in Scotland to take their place in a modern society and economy.”

Even the 2007 OECD review was “impressed by the breadth of vision and commitment to both high standards and social inclusiveness in the concept documents of a Curriculum for Excellence (CfE).”

In terms of language teaching the CfE “Modern Languages Principles and Practice Paper” indicates:

It is important for the nation’s prosperity that young people are attracted to learning a modern language and that they become confident users of a modern language, well equipped with the skills needed in the new Europe and in the global marketplace. This framework of experiences and outcomes is intended to help to address this national need.

Recognizing this need, ministers of the Scottish Government have set an ambitious agenda:

We will introduce a norm for language learning in schools based on the European Union 1 + 2 model - that is we will create the conditions in which every child will learn two languages in addition to their own mother tongue. This will be rolled out over two Parliaments, and will create a new model for language acquisition in Scotland.¹⁰

In the 2012 “Language Learning in Scotland. A 1+2 Approach” paper, the Languages Working Group has presented a number of recommendations to provide clear steps to encourage acquisition of foreign languages in Scotland. This also includes the so called *community languages*:

schools should celebrate the variety of languages that children bring with them and, as far as possible, seek to encourage them to maintain and develop their mother tongue. The development of a local authority languages strategy should consider how schools can encourage continuation of mother tongue learning and how this might be resourced.

The recommendations of the Languages Working Group can also be seen as incorporating the stated aims of such organizations as the United Nations, UNESCO, the Council of Europe and the

¹⁰ SNP 2011 manifesto quoted in “Language Learning in Scotland. A 1+2 approach” report by Scottish Government Languages Working Group (2012) <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/0039/00393435.pdf>

European Union, all of which emphasize the right of individuals to maintain their heritage language and culture.

For the subject of the Polish language the above mentioned recommendations are especially relevant in the light of Article 3 of the 1977 EEC Council Directive on the education of the children of migrant workers:

Member States shall, in accordance with their national circumstances and legal systems, and in cooperation with States of origin, take appropriate measures to promote, in coordination with normal education, teaching of the mother tongue and culture of the country of origin for the children referred to in Article 1 [children of migrant workers].¹¹

Furthermore, in its 1995 “White Paper on Education and Training”, the European Commission set the objective of all EU citizens being proficient in three European languages:

Proficiency in several Community Languages has become a precondition if citizens of the European Union are to benefit from occupational and personal opportunities open to them in the border-free single market. This language proficiency must be backed up by the ability to adapt to working environment characterised by different cultures.¹²

2. POLISH LANGUAGE IN SCOTTISH SCHOOLS

Polish is now, after English, the most commonly spoken language in Scottish schools¹³. Polish speakers make up 25% of the entire population of students whose main home language is other than English¹⁴ and there are twice as many children speaking Polish at home than there are speakers of Urdu (see Fig.1.). There are regions where Polish children make up over 7% of the entire population of pupils (see Fig.2.), and there are schools such as St Augustine’s RC High School in Edinburgh where 30% of students (112 in 2013/2014 school year) were born to Polish parents.

¹¹ See: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:31977L0486>

¹² See: http://europa.eu/documents/comm/white_papers/pdf/com95_590_en.pdf

¹³ In 30 out of 32 local authorities Polish is one of the top three main home languages. In 19 of these it is a foreign language with the highest number of speakers and in 8 cases it is the second most numerous languages (preceded only by Scots). See: Summary Statistics for Schools in Scotland 2013.

¹⁴ Since the data refer to “main home language” children speaking Polish at home to a lesser extent (eg. in families of mixed ethnic origin) are not included.

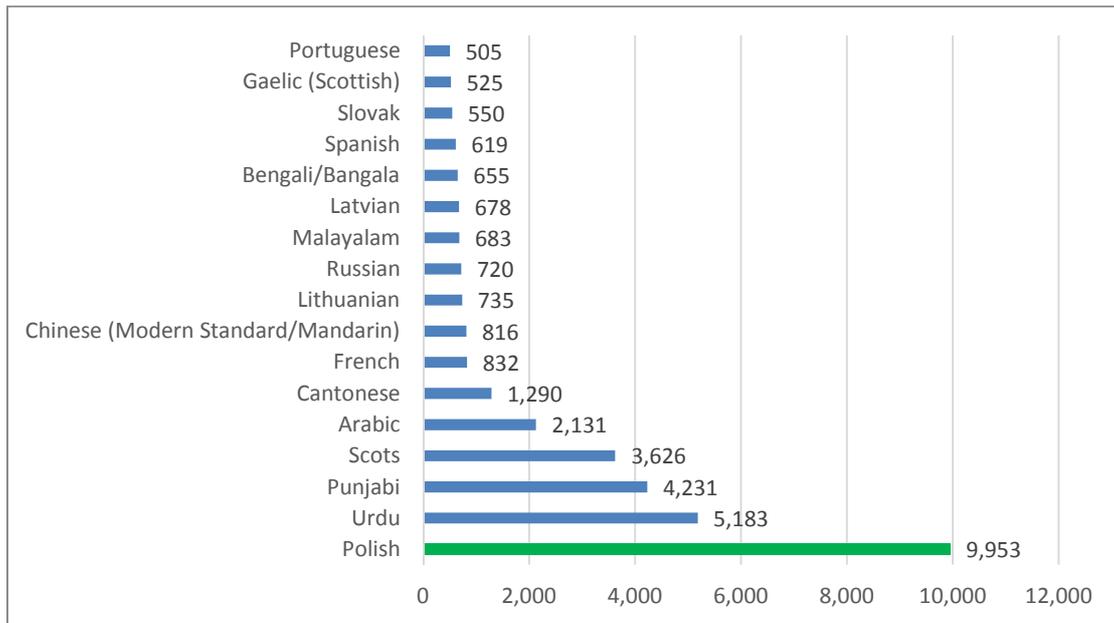


Fig.1. Main home language in publicly funded schools in Scotland (primary and secondary).

Source: Data supplementary to the new Summary Statistics for Schools in Scotland compendium (release date: 11th December 2013).

LOCAL AUTHORITY	NURSERY	PRIMARY	SECONDARY	SPECIAL	TOTAL	COUNCIL POP.	% POP.
Aberdeen	151	515	148	5	819	21665	3.78
Aberdeenshire	79	363	182	0	624	34428	1.81
Angus	57	167	67	0	291	15065	1.93
Argyll and Bute	18	52	17	0	87	10675	0.81
Clackmannanshire/Stirling	7	40	16	0	63	18283	0.34
Dumfries and Galloway	65	256	96	0	417	18931	2.20
Dundee	69	238	122	0	429	17553	2.44
East Ayrshire		25			25	16002	0.16
East Dunbartonshire	0	30	25	0	55	16056	0.34
East Lothian	46	96	43	0	185	13658	1.35
East Renfrewshire	20	36	34	0	90	16226	0.55
Edinburgh	162	2154	959	21	3296	45961	7.17
Falkirk	28	103	36	0	167	21084	0.79
Fife		559			559	48215	1.16
Glasgow		671	207	8	886	65238	1.36
Highland		404	192	4	600	30910	1.94
Inverclyde	1	11	1	0	13	10092	0.13
Midlothian	44	85	44	0	173	11830	1.46
Moray		167			167	12009	1.39
North Ayrshire		55			55	18277	0.30
North Lanarkshire	130	411	241	7	789	48830	1.62
Orkney	3	12	6	0	21	2643	0.79
Perth and Kinross	95	267	133	0	495	17578	2.82
Renfrewshire	0	140	40	0	180	23339	0.77
Scottish Borders	40	156	80	0	276	14572	1.89
Shetland	3	19	9	0	31	3237	0.96

South Ayrshire	12	41	8		61	14163	0.43
South Lanarkshire	112	122	65	0	299	43171	0.69
West Dunbartonshire	15	72	36	0	123	12371	0.99
West Lothian	0	398	170	2	570	26144	2.18
Western Isles	4	11	2	0	17	3434	0.50
TOTAL					11863	672240	1.76

Fig.2. Number of children of Polish origin in publically funded Scottish nurseries, primary, secondary and special schools.

Source: Data provided by local authorities between April and June 2014 in response to the Freedom of Information Request sent on behalf of the Cross-Party Group on Poland.

The numbers of pupils of Polish ethnic origin entering Scottish school system are rising significantly year by year as more children are being born in Scotland to Polish parents (see Fig. 2.).

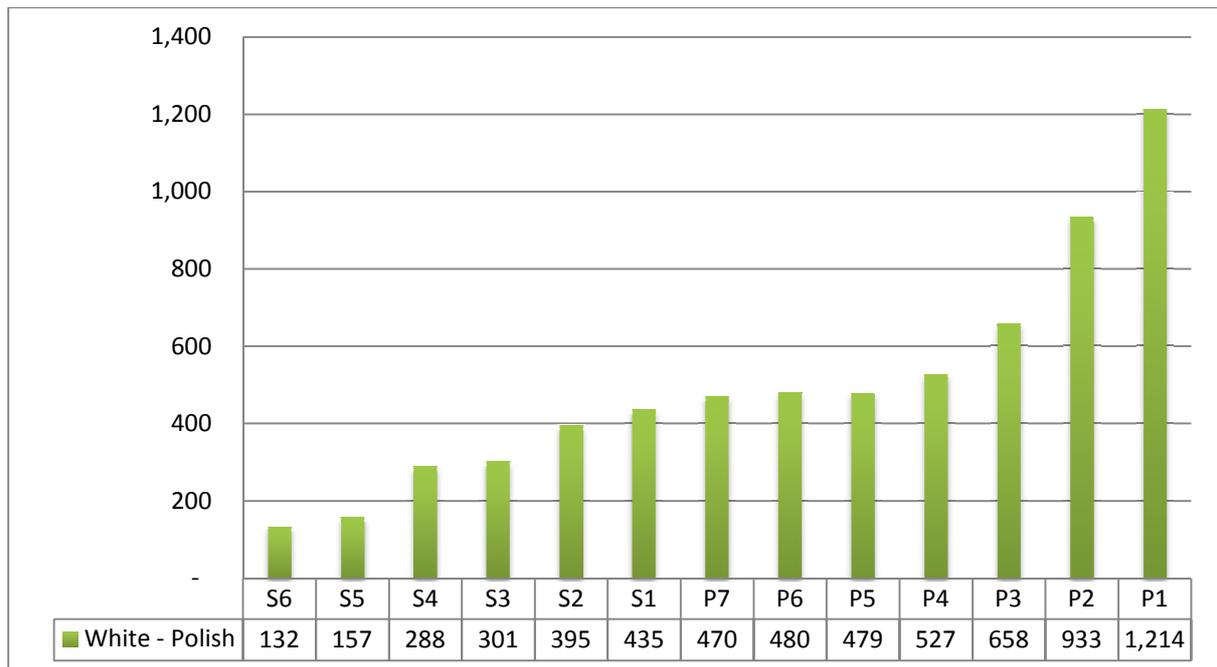


Fig.3. Pupils of Polish ethnic origin in Scottish schools (secondary and primary).

Source: Data supplementary to the new Summary Statistics for Schools in Scotland compendium (release date: 11th December 2013).

This data shows also that **Polish, the sixth largest language of the EU, is the modern language which other students in Scottish schools will hear most often.** If they are encouraged to learn it, they will be supported by their Polish friends and develop a natural competence in a relatively short time, simultaneously supporting the integration process, and developing cultural awareness and respect for other cultures.

3. POLISH AS A HERITAGE LANGUAGE

It should not be assumed that all young Scots¹⁵ who were born to Polish parents or speak Polish language at home have the degree of competence in the language which is usually associated with native speakers. This is true only of those who arrived (and are still arriving) in their teens with a fully developed knowledge of the Polish language.¹⁶ Their number has been, however, dwarfed by the number of children born in Scotland for whom Polish is their *heritage language*.

A *heritage language* is defined in literature as a language acquired at home (i.e. it is a native language of a parent or carer) in a country where it is not spoken as an official language. There is a considerable body of research on the subject of heritage language acquisition and competence and it is now a well known fact that speakers of heritage languages do not display the same competence as mother tongue speakers. Their listening and speaking skills are usually far better developed than their reading and writing skills (see Fig.4.)

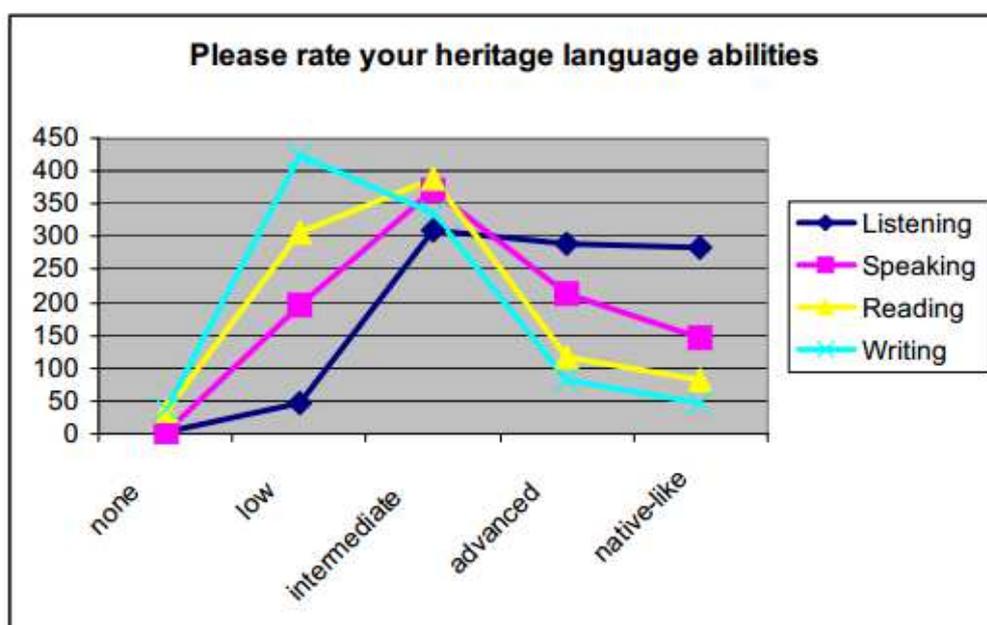


Fig. 4. Self-reporting of language ability in heritage language (data from an ongoing study conducted at UCLA. Source: Polinsky, Kagan (2007)

Polish, the heritage language for almost 12 000 children in Scottish schools (see Fig.2.), is no exception – only some acquire it to an almost native competence. Many will grow up to be only partially fluent. Others will not speak it at all as, despite all that is known about the benefits of bilingualism, far too often parents choose to drop their own mother tongue and switch to English. The Polish language proficiency of children of Polish origin in Scottish schools varies significantly from native through semi-competence to lack of competence.

¹⁵ Inclusive term used in the “Language Learning in Scotland. A 1+2 Approach” also with reference to the children living in Scotland who use language other than English at home.

¹⁶ Their skills in the English language are, however, often underdeveloped, hence they need to rely on the help of EAL departments to cope with the demands of the curriculum.

As research studies all over the world show, the support and encouragement from the education system is a very significant factor in the maintenance of heritage languages. In other words, to reap the full benefits of bilingualism, including economic and cultural benefits, the Scottish education and examination system must foster and develop language skills of the biggest group of migrants alongside their English speaking counterparts.

4. PROVISION FOR POLISH LANGUAGE IN SCOTLAND

Since the need to support learning of languages other than English has been emphasized in numerous policies, recommendations and regulations mentioned in part 1 of this report, and since the benefits of bilingualism and the opportunities that learning of foreign language brings about are well recognized, the natural progression should be to make the most out of available resources. The main and the most readily available language resource for Scotland is, undoubtedly, Polish.

However, at present:

1. There is no provision for Polish language within the curriculum of any publicly funded primary or secondary school in Scotland.
2. Teachers with teaching qualifications to teach Polish, who graduated from the HEIs in Poland, cannot register with the GTCS.
3. Polish is not part of the suite of modern languages available at National 4, 5 or Highers level. At present the suite includes: French, Gaelic (Learners), German, Italian, Mandarin (Simplified), Mandarin (Traditional), Spanish and Urdu.¹⁷

For some time now parents and children (not only of Polish ethnic origin), principal teachers of many Scottish schools, English as an Additional Language [EAL] professionals, teachers of Polish language and HE educators have been expressing interest in the provision of Polish language within the Scottish education system. The Consulate General of the Republic of Poland in Edinburgh has also received enquiries from local authorities in Scotland related to the introduction of the Polish language to the Scottish education system.

Surprisingly, in the whole of Scotland there are only two publicly funded schools – Drummond Community High School and Dalry Primary School in Edinburgh – which offer afternoon classes in Polish for a total of 37 children and, quite unsurprisingly, both schools have had a long waiting list since the inception of their Polish language classes.¹⁸

There are 17 community-run classes of Polish language and culture across Scotland (called Polish Saturday Schools, see below), which are, however, not accessible to all pupils. Nonetheless, some of the classes are attended also by indigenous Scottish children for whom Polish is a foreign language.

Interest in the Polish language has also recently been expressed by the private sector. From the 2014/2015 academic year Merchiston Castle School in Edinburgh will offer Polish alongside French,

¹⁷ It is worth noting here that Urdu, also considered a *community language* (*home language, heritage language*) in Scotland, with half the number of speakers of Polish, is an examination subject at National 4 and 5 as well as Higher level.

¹⁸ Some parents apply for places in the schools before their child turns 1 to ensure availability.

German, Russian, Mandarin and Dutch within its “Cocktail of Languages” courses. The school expressed interest in the language despite the fact that it is not a heritage language or mother tongue for any of the students. There is clearly potential uptake for Polish qualifications from outside the Polish community itself.

Scottish Education System and SQA

At present, the only examinations that SQA offers in Polish are some National Units within the Modern Languages for Work Purposes suite.

It is recommended by the “Language Learning in Scotland. A 1+2 Approach” that:

Over the period of 1+2 implementation, SQA should keep under review the suite of languages offered at certificate level with a view to extending this, if required. This process should be undertaken in collaboration with Scottish Government, local authorities and any implementation group set up to take forward the recommendations of this Report.

We believe that it is in the best interest of children – both heritage speakers of Polish (of various levels of competence) and children for whom Polish is a foreign language, and in the interest of the Scottish nation, to offer training and examinations in the Polish language at National 4,5 and Higher level. Polish is at present, regrettably, an untapped, underappreciated resource.

English Education System and AQA

Unlike in Scotland, children in England have the opportunity to choose Polish as one of the modern languages at GCSE and A-level. They are given the chance to develop confident, effective reading and writing skills in Polish in a variety of contexts and build a broad understanding of the contemporary society, cultural background and heritage of Poland.

The AQA, which is the provider of the examinations, has seen a significant increase in uptake in recent years (see Fig. 5).

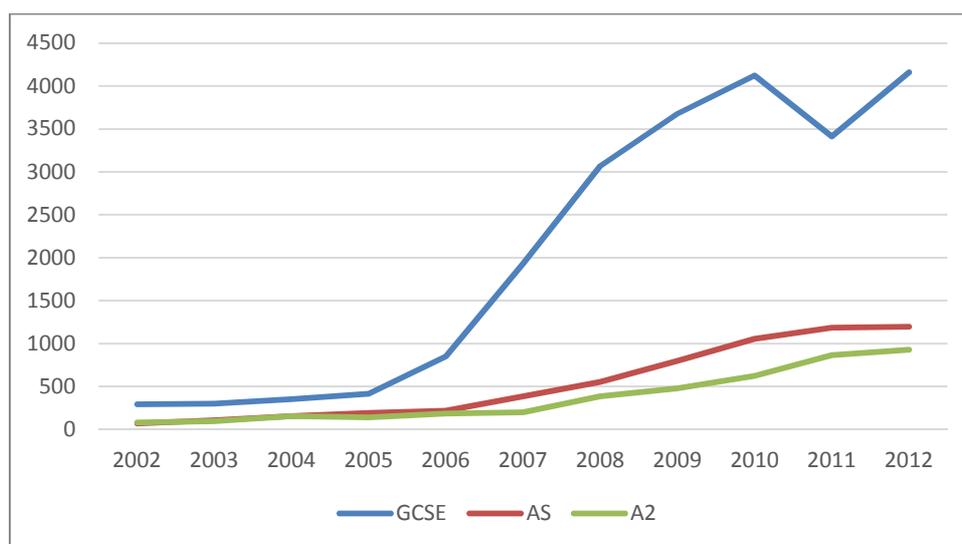


Fig. 5. Statistics for GCSE, AS and A2 examinations in the Polish language, 2002-2012.

Source: Response received from AQA Modern Foreign Languages on 20th December 2013 [Case: CAS-864149-T4Q8]

This very encouraging trend has not gone unnoticed by officials of both UK and Polish governments. The statistics have been welcomed with great enthusiasm by the Joint British-Polish Committee for Cultural, Educational and Scientific Cooperation at its 11th session on 18th June 2013. The Polish side has emphasized its commitment to support the English education system in promoting the examinations.

Community-run Polish Saturday Schools

The Polish Community is unique among other minority language communities in Scotland in that, over the years, it has established a network of 17 Saturday schools, where qualified teachers of Polish language, history (and sometimes also geography) provide children with 2-4 hours of classes of language, culture and history of Poland a week. This micro-structure of Polish complementary schools has been built out of the need and desire of a Polish community proud of its roots and language.

As community-run enterprises, the schools have to overcome difficulties – related to finding location, securing funding, maintaining quality and gaining recognition from parents despite the unregulated nature of the system. At the moment, nearly 1300 young Scots of Polish origin aged 5-16 are enrolled for these classes. There is also a small number of Scottish children with no prior knowledge of the language who attend the Polish Saturday schools.

The teachers of Polish language working in these schools obtained their qualifications from Polish HEIs and are trained to teach the Polish language to Polish primary and secondary schoolchildren. They have completed teaching practice at all levels of school education as prescribed by their programme of study and many of them were employed by schools in Poland.

Over the years of teaching Polish to children who live in Scotland, the teachers have gained experience in teaching Polish as a heritage language and, in some cases, also as a foreign language; they have developed their own methods of work and learned how to adapt the teaching materials to the needs of their students. Some schools have even designed and developed their own teaching aids. Many teachers have completed additional courses organized by the Ministry of Education in Poland for teachers of Polish complementary schools all over the world.

Some of the Polish community-run Saturday schools in Scotland have been preparing students to sit GCSE and A-level examinations in Polish. In 2013, as many as 110 Scottish children of Polish origin sat GCS and 13 sat A-level AQA examinations in Polish Language (cf. numbers of secondary pupils in Fig.3).¹⁹ Organizing AQA exams in Scotland is, however, problematic: the fees are high and pupils also frequently have to add travel costs because there are few AQA approved examination centres in Scotland. So far only four of the Polish Saturday Schools have managed to overcome these difficulties and prepared groups of students for the examination (which the students passed with very good results in all cases).

We believe that these teachers, with their qualifications, experience and enthusiasm, should also be viewed as a valuable resource for the Scottish education system. However, because Polish is not a subject taught in Scottish schools, the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS) does not have a registration category for the teachers of Polish language who have obtained their qualifications to

¹⁹ Response received from AQA Modern Foreign Languages on 20th September 2013 [Case: CAS-783211-L5B9]

teach the language in Poland. Needless to say, the teachers would be willing to undertake some further training to enter the Scottish education system should this be considered necessary.²⁰

5. OPPORTUNITIES

The introduction of Polish as a school subject in the Scottish Education System and examination subject at National 4 and 5 and Higher level is a unique opportunity for many reasons:

- It will **nourish the atmosphere of integration of children of Polish origin** to Scottish society, sending a **positive, welcoming message of inclusion** to all the 12 000 pupils (and their families), who speak it as their heritage language. It will boost **self-esteem, identity formation and empowerment**.
- It will **encourage respect and a welcoming attitude to other cultures in young Scots in general**.
- It will give the Polish language in Scotland the status it deserves, **encouraging parents of Polish origin to maintain their native language, pass it on to their children and encourage them to develop it**. The benefits of bilingualism, as is now widely recognized, are of various kinds: cognitive benefits (more flexible and more creative thinking), broader enculturation, sense of security and empowerment, additional employment and professional development opportunities and even delayed onset of dementia.
- **EAL departments** will welcome the cooperation with Polish parents and the support from teachers of Polish language in providing the **best start for young Polish-English bilinguals** (be they simultaneous or successive bilinguals). Solid foundation in the home language is vital for **curriculum achievement** as clearly stated in the influential book on teaching bilingual children by Cline and Frederickson (1996, 57):

For bilingual learners the opportunity to use their first language is a way of confirming language and meaning and the conceptualisation of complex issues will be enhanced. Pupils may be encouraged to use their first language in the classroom but they will be more prepared to support their learning and understanding in this way if their community language has a high status at school. For this reason pupils' home languages and experiences must be not only valued and recognised but developed and utilised.

- Teaching of the language within the Scottish school system will ensure that the children for whom Polish is their heritage language are also equipped with **writing and reading skills** in the language. Such competence across all language skills at age-appropriate level is a

²⁰ This would not be without precedent in the history of presence of Polish immigrants in Scotland. In 1942 a course was organized by the Moray House Teacher's Training College at the University of Edinburgh to acquaint the qualified Polish teachers, members of the Polish Forces, with the organization of the Scottish and English systems of education. In the spring of 1943 a second scheme aimed at the Polish teachers, called "Pedagogic Study", started at the university (Tomaszewski 1969, 59-60).

condition for the appearance of the **positive cognitive advantages of bilingualism** (cf. Baker 2001, 168).

- Once the language is recognised on par with other modern languages within the suite of modern languages taught in schools and available as examination subjects, **students for whom it is a foreign language would feel encouraged to learn it.**²¹ They can already hear the language in their schools more often than any other foreign language; they have Polish friends who will be willing to support them in acquiring the language (most non-Polish children in Scottish schools have learned at least some Polish words). Moreover, as the economic data quoted in Part 1. of this Summary indicate, there are and will be considerable employment and business opportunities for those who know the language and culture of Poland.
- It will **fulfil the directives of European Council and Scottish Government's own recommendations and regulations**, ensuring that the **cultural and economic links between Poland and Scotland**, which have strengthened in recent years, **continue in the future and that integration and cultural enrichment are promoted.**

As Graham Donaldson, HM Senior Chief Inspector said in his Commentary on the HMIE report "Improving Scottish Education", 2009:

*Scotland's future economic prosperity requires an education system within which the population as a whole will develop the kind of knowledge, skills and attributes which will equip them personally, socially and economically to thrive in the 21st century. It also demands standards of attainment and achievement which match these needs and strengthen Scotland's position internationally.*²²

- Students with National Qualifications in Polish will be encouraged to work further on their **language skills at university level**, notably at the University of Glasgow which offers Polish language and culture to degree level (cf. also recommendation 19 of the "1+2 Approach" document: "The Working Group recommends that there be further engagement with the FE and HE sectors with a view to the development of the experience of language learning for students").
- There will be an **opportunity for developing separate, efficient university courses in Polish as a Heritage Language** – such courses, assuming solid language foundation, ensure **fast preparation for highly professional use of the language**. As concluded in the insightful study of Kagan (2005): the proficiency of students who are heritage language speakers with incompletely acquired language system after eight weeks of instruction is comparable to or higher than, the proficiency of non heritage language learners after three or more years of language study.

Courses for heritage language speaker are gaining popularity in the USA, and in England the University of Sheffield offers separate BA course structures in Polish Studies for beginners and heritage speakers.

²¹ The CfE "Modern languages. Principles and Practice" document rightly recognizes that learning foreign languages creates opportunities for: making connections with different people and their cultures, playing a fuller part as global citizens, developing a better understanding of how language works (including knowledge of one's own language), **and** exercising intellectual curiosity by questioning and developing the understanding and synthesis of ideas and arguments.

See: http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/images/modern_languages_principles_practice_tcm4-539990.pdf

²² See: http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/Images/ise09_tcm4-712882.pdf

6. THE POLISH LANGUAGE IN SCOTTISH EDUCATION SYSTEM – VOICES OF EDUCATORS, PARENTS AND CHILDREN

The voices of support for introduction of the Polish language into Scottish schools and Scottish examination system come from children, parents, educators and members of the public alike. These authentic voices from classrooms and families could exemplify the Scottish government’s policy of inclusion and the aims of the “1 + 2 Approach” in particular. In the following pages we summarize the main points and present excerpts from the letters we received and the discussions we held.

The teachers point out the opportunities that the introduction of the Polish language would create for all Scottish children – be they of Polish origin or not.

With the right approach, it [Polish] can also be the easiest foreign language to learn (and teach) within the 1 + 2 programme, considering that Scottish children are exposed to Polish in each Primary and Secondary school and with the network of Saturday Polish Schools running additional classes in this language. It seems a great opportunity to support the appeal to the Scottish Government to have Polish recognised as a Modern Foreign Language rather than merely a vocational option, which is offered so far.

Kevin McClory
Headteacher of Hawick High School

The preference for a National Qualification in Polish as a Modern Language over other types of qualifications is strongly emphasized.

Although we have looked at the SQA Polish as a Language for Work and Life awards, it would appear to have a more vocational than academic context and sounds, to a potential employer, more like a series of units than a full course. We have therefore, somewhat reluctantly, looked out with the Scottish Education system to find courses which would give pupils more academic recognition and are currently hoping to run an AQA GCSE course next year.

From discussions with other Deputy Headteachers, I am aware that we are not the only school in Edinburgh who would welcome the opportunity to present pupils with the SQA for more formal academic Polish qualifications, as we do already in the historically more “mainstream” Modern Languages: French, German and Spanish Languages as well as the ones which may be more likely to be spoken by some of our other EAL learners. Given the numbers of Polish families across Scotland, I am sure that a National Qualification in Polish would be equally, if not more, popular than Cantonese, Gaelic, Mandarin, Russian or Urdu.

Michael McGee
Head Teacher of St Augustine’s RC High School

Parents, who have made the admirable decision to raise their children bilingually (or trilingually), hope to see firm support for their choices from the education system which has often emphasized its commitment to improve language learning in Scotland.

We are a mixed family; we use three languages at home: Polish, Greek and English. Since our children were born we have put a lot of effort to teach them our native languages. The reasons for that include identity issues, the necessary contact with the family abroad and of course culture and religion.

By observation of other bi- and trilingual families, we know that when children grow English becomes the dominant language and that is why we try to encourage our children to use Polish and Greek as much as we can. We would love for both languages to be taught within the Scottish educational system. This would give them the sense/feeling of recognition of their identity (and would immensely reduce the cost of private tutoring).

We hope that at least Polish, the most common foreign language spoken in Scotland and the rest of the UK, will become an examination subject within the Scottish system. It would motivate our children to actually study the language to its higher levels and would give them the chance to use it in professional way.

Grażyna Pozarowszczyk and Dimitrios Erkekoglou
parents of Nadia (4) and Ania (1).

It is important for us that our children can speak fluently with their relatives (grandparents, uncles, aunts and cousins) in both the UK and Poland.

With two languages in the family, the wonderful opportunity to offer our children a bilingual education should not be missed. For children growing up in a single language environment, learning foreign languages is a much harder work!

Developing language skills at an early age will give our children better employment opportunities in the European job market later in life. Knowledge of languages is the key to understanding different cultures. Learning to speak Polish helps our children understand Polish culture, history and traditions. This multi-cultural understanding will allow them to develop into more open-minded and understanding adults.

Tony Dore
father of Natalia (15), Marianna (13) and Olivia (11)

And the children attending Polish language classes in Polish complementary schools know for themselves – without referring to any documents, recommendations or policies – why it is important for them to be able to learn the language and how they can benefit from it.

Learning Polish opens up new opportunities, makes you more culturally aware and well rounded person. The ability to communicate freely in a second language boosts your confidence and enables you to meet new and interesting people and discover a whole new world of film, literature and music. It's definitely worthwhile!

Natalia, age 15

It's worth learning Polish because it's a beautiful language. It is complicated but very logical.

Piotr, age 15

I want to learn Polish because it helps with spelling and reading English, as well as just expanding your general knowledge. Also because I am Polish and it helps me to communicate with my Polish friends properly (hopefully) without mistakes.

Julia, age 12

Personally I feel that learning Polish, just like any other language, is something worth doing, especially whilst being still in school, as it definitely opens up new opportunities and makes communication much easier.

Alicja, age 16,

These students also know exactly what types of qualifications in Polish language they are looking for – qualifications that certify not only their skills in listening and speaking, but also that they can read and write the language; qualifications that would be recognized by universities in the UK and other countries.

It was difficult at first, but I made myself learn 100 Polish words every week and always read with a dictionary beside me . Now I'm planning to study Polish at degree level in Poland.

Sian Lara Williams,
passed GCSE in Polish with the support
of the Polish language teachers in Inverness

I think that learning Polish is a good thing to do, because it could help you in future life, in job interviews for instance. If you do your GCSEs in Polish and you do well then you get points that then contribute to future University entry. You can also make new friends while learning it in class.

Oskar, age 13
passed GCSE in June 2014 in Edinbrugh

The GCSE has helped me already as I'm planning a career in languages. I'm also studying Spanish. As I am fluent in Polish, I may as well put it to good use, as an additional language is always helpful in getting a job or a university place. I think it would be a waste of potential if other Polish teenagers didn't get a chance to do this course.

Maja, aged 15,
sat GCSE in June 2014 at Inverness High School

All the children quoted above were given the chance to learn the language at Polish complementary schools where qualified Polish language teachers are eager to pass on their knowledge and enthusiasm for language learning to the students. These are the *select* children, whose parents regularly committed their time and money to help them learn the language.

Every year that the most common foreign language spoken in Scotland is overlooked by the Scottish education system, we all lose a very precious resource.

The GCSE has really helped me with my Polish, because I forget a lot of words as time goes on. The A-level will help me to get into university, which is one thing I consider doing in the future. I really think that other children should get the chance that I got.

Patryk, age 15,
passed GCSE in Inverness

In England the children of Polish-speaking parents have had the opportunity to sit GCSE and A-level examination in Polish for many years and, as the statistics clearly show, there has been a very steep increase in uptake in recent years. It seems only right that the children of Polish origin in Scotland are given the same opportunities as their peers in England.

Mark Lazarowicz,
MP for Edinburgh North and Leith

Final Word

In Chapter One of the 2014-2015 Scottish Government Draft Budget we read:

*In Scotland we know the value of skills, education and training. We believe that as well as setting the conditions for business to grow we also need to set the conditions for our people to flourish and achieve their potential.*²³

Those of us, who see the potential of Polish language and the complete lack of formal provision for it in Scottish schools, believe that this report demonstrates beyond doubt that the recognition and inclusion of the Polish Language within the Scottish school curriculum would help thousands of young Scots, not only of Polish origin, fulfil their potential and contribute to Scotland's economic wellbeing.

²³ See: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/0043/00433802.pdf>

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