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**Olga M. Piaskowska, Piotr F. Piesiewicz****RETHINKING OF LAW SCHOOLS IN TIMES  
OF SYSTEMIC CHANGE. HOW TO BRING  
LAW SCHOOL INTO TWENTY-FIRST  
CENTURY? POLISH PERSPECTIVE****Ольга М. П'ясковська, Пьотр Ф. П'єсєвіч****ПЕРЕОСМИСЛЕННЯ ПРАВНИЧИХ  
ШКІЛ У ЧАСИ СИСТЕМНИХ ЗМІН.  
ЯК АДАПТУВАТИ ПРАВНИЧУ ШКОЛУ  
ДО ДВАДЦЯТЬ ПЕРШОГО СТОРІЧЧЯ?  
ПОЛЬСЬКА ПЕРСПЕКТИВА**

**Abstract.** To prepare law students to be efficient lawyers, European law schools need to reinvent themselves. This article presents the reform proposal we created for our university in 2016-2017. It is based on our experience as students, academics and practitioners. According to us, law schools while reinventing curricula should focus on interdisciplinarity and cooperation. The law schools should create a platform for cooperation with the business community, whose objective will be to work together on the substantive content of particular classes (especially in higher years of study) so students will become familiar with current problems during their studies. Law schools should also take into account the path students can choose after graduation. The fact is the Polish law schools treat every single student in the same way under the assumption that after graduation student will become a lawyer, and choose the classic path to become for example a judge or an advocate (attorney at law). The reality is however completely different. We see the law as a living instrument, so we have found new methods of teaching. We believe only all these changes put together, combined with the development of an integrated system of teaching and methods, will allow creating a law school of the future.

**Key words:** reform, legal education, lawyering skills, faculty of law, Poland, curricula.

**Анотація.** Щоб підготувати студентів-правників до ефективної діяльності в майбутньому, європейські правничі школи повинні переосмислити себе. У цій статті представлено бачення реформи, яку ми розробили для нашого університету у 2016-2017 роках. Вона ґрунтується на досвіді наших студентів, викладачів та практиків. Ми вважаємо, що, оновлюючи свої навчальні плани, правничі школи повинні фокусувати увагу на міждисциплінарності та співпраці. Юридичні школи повинні створити платформу для співпраці з бізнес спільнотою, яка дасть змогу разом працювати над змістом конкретних

курсів та занять (особливо, під час старших років навчання) – щоб студенти ще під час навчання мали змогу ознайомитися із поточними проблемами. Правничі школи також повинні враховувати шлях, який студент може обрати після закінчення навчання. Справа в тому, що польські правничі школи застосовують однаковий підхід до кожного студента, вважаючи, що після навчання він або вона стануть правником, який обере класичний шлях, наприклад – стане суддею чи адвокатом. Однак, реальність зовсім інша. Ми бачимо право як живий інструмент і тому винайшли нові методи навчання. Ми віримо, що лише всі ці зміни, поєднані в сукупності з розвитком інтегрованої системи навчання та методів, дозволять створити правничу школу майбутнього.

**Ключові слова:** реформа, юридична освіта, навички юридичної роботи, юридичний факультет, Польща, навчальні програми.

### **Introduction**

It is a truism to say the world has been changing rapidly. Changes in society lead to changes in the law as well as the legal services market. Looking at those changes from the Polish perspective, we can say there are many reasons for this process. Some of them result from the fact Poland is a member of The European Union, some of them have political background, and others are simply a result of the changing world. Polish law schools, and also many law schools in Europe, do not offer a model of education desired in the labor market, and it is not adapted to the future legal practice of graduates. There is no doubt that a traditional dogmatic approach to legal education is no longer sufficient [1]. It hardly prepares students to become effective twenty-first-century lawyers [2]. At the outset, we would like to emphasize we are not advocating the removal of legal theory from the curriculum, as well as teaching the theory within specific courses. We believe every graduate of law should know the basics of the theory.

The need for reform of legal education is recognized all over the world [3]. Many law schools are struggling with a decline in the first-year enrolment which is true not only for US legal education [4] but EU law school too. In Poland, reform of law studies has been in the interest of universities for a long time. The decrease in the number of students (with the simultaneous increase in the number of higher education institutions) makes the competition on the education market extremely high [5]. As a consequence, the universities make attempts to change the legal education system, so it would be more attractive to students. However, changes to the curricula are not structural. Currently, changes in the curriculum of the law schools consist only in adding some new courses. We strongly believe the real changes should begin with rethinking the curriculum and making some new teaching assumptions. We consider the current approach to be wrong. At this point, it is worth noting the law schools are in a relatively good position. Despite the decline in the total number of students (a population-wide decline), law studies are still very popular. According to statistical data collected by the Central Statistical Office in Poland in the last ten years, the number of students systematically decreased from 1,937.4 thousand students in the academic year 2007/2008 to 1 291.9 thousand

today. We can observe the drop in the number of graduates from the academic year 2011/2012. According to these data, in the academic year 2016/2017, over 387.5 thousand people graduated from higher education institutions; 222.7 thousand persons completed a uniform Master's degree and first-cycle studies, while the others (42.5%) were graduates of the second-cycle studies [6].

The crisis in legal education means law schools are looking for new solutions and are introducing reforms or at least they try. It has to be noticed that also in the US there is a consensus legal education is in crisis and academic teachers seeking a new form of education [7]. Some of the law faculties or law schools working on new methods of teaching. Some of the newly developed methods of teaching even are adopted by the American Bar Association [8]. We fully agree students and graduates shall be equipped with lawyering skills, professional judgments, and ethical values. Those three objectives need to be integrated throughout the curriculum and not only confined to legal clinics and externships [9]. Consequently, some courses needed to be 'designed to emphasize the following professional skills: fact gathering, interviewing and counseling clients, identifying objectives, brainstorming alternatives, assessing risks, communicating options, developing strategic plans, and negotiating with others' [10]. In the US, academics often turn to the need to move away from teaching methods [11], because the law is more than a doctrinal study [12].

Common problems are also recognized in the European law schools, where the traditional (doctrinal) system of education is dominating. It has to be noticed the European law schools are under growing criticism 'for their formalist approach to law; their lack of interdisciplinarity; their parochial, narrowly-domestic perspective on courts and legislation; their emphasis on abstract doctrines and their failure to engage the law in action; their failure to impart students practical skills such as teamwork, negotiation, communication and management; and, more generally, their inability to keep pace with a rapidly changing profession and legal world' [13]. Moreover some of the debaters emphasizing the importance of practical skills and legal clinics [14]. According to the view presented by Arthur Dyevre, European law school shall function as a hybrid organization. It means that on one hand law school should function as a professional school and on the other hand as an academic department. In other words, law schools while educating, should keep the balance between provision of legal knowledge and skills. He argues only this approach to education will allow graduates to become 'equipping students with skills that help them become successful advocacy experts, effective legal risk analysts, and creative legal problem-solvers. This vision of legal education is predicated on a thoroughly interdisciplinary curriculum emphasizing the acquisition of rhetorical skills and social-scientific tools enabling students to apprehend legal rules as the product of social dynamics as well as an instrument of social organization' [15].

We believe differences in approach to changes should be taken to bring law schools into the future have its source in the historical development of the education system in The US and Europe. Having the above in mind, we should state, in Europe

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postulates of changes often focus on the need to equip students with the appropriate practical skills [16]. From a European perspective in The US, special attention has been paid to the development of teaching methods. For about twenty-five years, much attention has been also devoted to the teaching of lawyering skills [17], while lawyering skills have not been taught in Europe. Therefore, almost no attention was paid to teaching methods that were supposed to develop skills. The professor's task was to present a specific part of the material to the student, and the student's task was to memorize it. However, it does not mean changes in the European educational model should only consist of adding lawyering skills classes to the curriculum or introducing new teaching methods.

We express the opinion that a one-off reform of education in law schools is insufficient. The system of teaching the law should be designed flexibly that it would naturally react to the changing reality. In our opinion the law school of the future cannot change once, it must constantly change. Consequently, we agree with Arthurs that 'the future of law school depends on many developments that are largely beyond anyone's control – developments in political economy, technology, demography and society that are reconfiguring the legal system, the market for professional services and the structure of higher education' [18]. The fact that certain circumstances are beyond the control does not mean the law schools cannot adapt to the changing reality. So far, some changes in the curriculum were made when reality forced them. However, as mentioned, it was reduced to adding new courses. In our opinion, there is another way to adapt the curriculum to ongoing changes, which is to create a platform for cooperation with external entities. Despite changes that include lawyering skills, new teaching methods, and new curriculum, this is one of the pieces of the puzzles allowing the creation of a new law school.

We believe both systems of legal education (US and EU) should use each other's experiences while reforming their law schools. It is worth noting the reform of the law educational model in the US is a little bit easier because of The ABA Standards and Rules of Procedure for Approval of Law Schools [19]. There is a reference point for introducing changes because there are the learning outcomes law schools can adopt. From a European perspective, the decision of the American Bar Association is very interesting and could be a source of inspiration as one of the most significant changes in law school accreditation standards in decades. Even though a former president of Association of American Law Schools described changes in the aforementioned document as «revolutionary» [20], the ABA Standards contain sixteen standards related to a «Program of Legal Education». From the European point of view, it is extremely important to realize the importance of this document because according to the standard 301 of the program of legal education shall prepare its students, upon graduation, for admission to the bar and effective, ethical, and responsible participation as members of the legal profession.

Moreover, it is stated that learning outcomes designed to achieve the above-mentioned objectives shall be established and published. The document refers

to four areas in which the student should obtain the necessary competency such as (a) knowledge and understanding of substantive and procedural law; (b) legal analysis and reasoning, legal research, problem-solving, and written and oral communication in the legal context; (c) exercise of proper professional and ethical responsibilities to clients and the legal system; and (d) other professional skills needed for competent and ethical participation as a member of the legal profession. Other professional skills mentioned in point (d) may be determined by the law school. Courses related to these professional skills may refer in particular to: «interviewing, counseling, negotiation, fact development and analysis, trial practice, document drafting, conflict resolution, organization and management of legal work, collaboration, cultural competency, and self-evaluation» [21].

We realize the path that led to the adoption of ABA Standards is not easy [22]. In Poland, however, none of the professional associations (or the Advocates Association or Legal Advisors Association) have even developed assumptions for lawyering skills, which are the subject of education during the professional training run by these entities. So far, the only standards relating to legal education have been developed are standards for legal clinics. The standards were established by the Legal Clinics Foundation in Poland.

If a legal clinic at the university wants to belong to this foundation, it must meet these standards. However, the standards are not linked to student's learning outcomes, but to how to provide a legal service as part of the provision of legal aid. Therefore, it can be argued work on the reform of legal education in Poland is quite a challenge because there is no point of reference.

The above considerations have become a reason for us to rethink the law teaching system in Poland. In this article, we would like to present our reform proposal for a law school. In our opinion, this program will allow to increase its attractiveness and its further development. We wrote the new idea of school of law and its program in 2017. From the academic year 2017/2018, it has been gradually implemented at the School of Law of the University of Social Sciences and Humanities. We believe our proposal, created to cater for the needs of the continental system and the Polish reality, may also be interesting for other law schools, both in the EU and US.

This article proceeds as follows: Part I describes the Polish system of law and the way it works. The proposal for reform cannot be detached from the reality it concerns. Part II draws out the Polish system of study and the track students have to follow to become a professional lawyer (barrister, judge). One of the tasks of the law school is to prepare graduates for future legal practice. Part III identifies the reasons why the current education system is insufficient. Determining the disadvantages of the current system will allow finding a way to improve them. Part IV includes the proposal for reform and our idea of a new school of law. In our opinion, this proposal allows for fixing the defects found in the current legal education system and for bringing law school into the future.

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### **The Polish system of law and the way it works**

While changing the model and content of future lawyers' education, the legal system for which it is created should be taken into account. The functioning of the law system is related to the knowledge a future legal practitioner should acquire, and, therefore, the reform of legal education must be closely related to the system of law. So, the system affects the scope of knowledge students should receive during their law studies, as well as required skills.

It is common knowledge that there are two main categories of legal systems in western civilization: common law system and civil law system (the continental legal system). The Polish legal system is based on the continental system (Roman law tradition). The main difference between those two systems is the role of judges in developing rules. In the common law system, this role is more active. Judges create common law by drawing on customs across the country. In the Roman law system, this role is significantly different. Judges do not develop the rules, they apply and interpret the rules written in the law.

What does it look like in Poland? Generally, we can divide Polish sources of national (domestic) law into two main categories: universally binding law and internal law. It is a classic division which does not take into account EU law. When we are writing these words, thankfully, Poland is still a member of the European Union, and therefore EU law applies in its territory. Due to the primacy of European Union law, whenever there is a conflict between EU law and national law – European law prevails. So, we can divide Polish sources of law into two different categories: national law and European law. The universally binding law (at the national level), according to the Polish Constitution (the current one was adopted on 2 April 1997), is the Constitution itself, statutes, ratified international agreements and regulations.

At the national level, the Constitution is considered the primary source of Polish law. The Constitution contains information about the Polish law system, institutional organization, the judicial system, and local authorities. All statutes have to be compliant with the Constitution, and the most important are the codes. In Poland, codes are the backbone of the Polish system of law such as civil law, civil procedure, as well as criminal law and criminal procedure, labor law or family law. At European level, the universally binding law consists of regulations, decisions, and directives. EU countries must incorporate directives into their national legislation to become binding law.

Practicing the law in Poland requires a perfect knowledge of all rules that are considered essential in the Polish system – all codes of proceedings and all codes of substantive law. It also requires a basic knowledge of European law, as well as international law. Why? In Poland, there is no specialization for lawyers (practitioners). It is related to the legal aid system offered by the state. It was assumed that every lawyer (practitioner) has the opportunity to run in court or a hearing any case,

no matter what legal issue it concerns. Of course, by rights granted to particular legal professions. In practice, this assumption is not fully implemented. Large law corporations create appropriate departments where they employ lawyers specializing in specific issues. Specific cases are addressed by the relevant departments. Small, often one-person law firms do not have such possibilities. Also, any lawyer who wishes to provide legal assistance from a state-funded (as part of the enforcement of the right to access to justice) legal aid he or she might receive any kind of case for pleading. In practice, therefore, there is an assumption that each lawyer can deal with every case.

The fact the Polish legal system is a continental one does not mean judicial decisions are deprived of fundamental importance in them. On the contrary, court decisions determine the direction of interpretation of individual provisions and rules. We cannot say judges create the rules, but there is no doubt they have a significant influence on legal practice. Knowledge of the jurisprudence and practice of individual courts allows a professional lawyer to perform his work more effectively.

In conclusion, it should be stated the Polish law schools must offer students legal knowledge (theoretical), as well as knowledge of judicial decisions (we can say it is practical knowledge). This knowledge is necessary for the proper performance of legal professions in Poland. At the same time, knowledge of those regulations and judiciary practice concerning these codes allows for smooth functioning in society and business. This is the reason why so many students make a decision and choose a law school, even if they are not going to practice law afterward. This legal knowledge is beneficial almost in every profession a student can choose. It is the reason we can state knowledge of legal regulations and practice is universal in Poland. After graduation, students can choose another profession (not connected to law practice), and they can succeed.

### **The Polish system of study and how to become a legal practitioner**

When we were rethinking an idea of law study in Poland, we had to cope with two main factors that we must take under consideration. The first factor, it is the Polish system of law study as a long-cycle program. The second one, there are professional trainships. Graduating from law school in Poland does not allow the graduate to start professional legal practice or work in another legal profession such as a judge or prosecutor. In Poland, it takes much effort (and several more years) for a young person to become an advocate, legal advisor, civil law notary, prosecutor or a judge.

The Polish system of study is completely different than in the US, but it is also provided by public and private schools (colleges) and universities which comply with relevant requirements, including bachelor's degree or master's degree programs.

The costs of academic education are not as high as in most European countries or the US. Most students who do not have financial support from their parents

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can often cover their tuition costs from their earnings. Of course, there is also a support system in the form of scholarships provided by the state or universities themselves.

We need to point out the public universities in Poland enjoy greater popularity and are better funded by the state. Private universities and colleges in Poland are relatively young institutions and are still developing. The first non-state college was established at the beginning of 1991.

Meanwhile, in the US professional degrees such as law, are offered as graduate study after earning at least three years of undergraduate schooling or after earning a bachelor's degree; in Poland, the student starts his or her law degree just after upper-secondary school. So, students start law school at the age of 19.

In Poland, graduates of upper-secondary school who hold the matriculation certificate have the following educational possibilities at the level of tertiary education, a.o. degree programs. Degree programs provided by universities (or equivalent schools) include first-cycle programs, second-cycle programs and/ or long-cycle programs. First-cycle programs last a minimum of six semesters and lead to a bachelor's degree (in Poland, the exact degree depends on the field of study). Holders of a bachelor's degree can enrol in second-cycle (master's degree) programs that last three or four semesters and lead to a master's degree or equivalent, depending on the field of study. Long-cycle programs last nine to twelve semesters and lead to a master's degree or equivalent. They are, however, provided only in selected fields of study [23]. We need to point out in Poland there are only a few faculties that require long cycle programs such as law (five years) and medicine (six years). Holders of a master's degree or equivalent may apply to third-cycle programs, i.e., doctoral studies that provide advanced knowledge in a specific academic area or discipline, prepare for independent and creative research and the award of a doctoral degree [24]. Holders of bachelor's or master's degrees may also follow non-degree post-graduate programs that typically last one, or two years [25].

Law study is a type of long cycle programs lasting for five years, and finished with a master's degree. It means, therefore, that in order to pursue any legal profession, the master's degree has to be obtained first. However, it is possible to shorten the duration of the study. Many law schools offer the possibility of implementing an individual course of study. However, due to the vastness of the material, the master's studies in law last no less than three – three and a half years.

While discussing the issue related to the higher education system in Poland, attention should also be paid to the Polish Qualifications Framework (PQF). PQF is a central part of the formal recognition of all types of learning outcomes by the state. The Polish system of qualifications follows the principles underpinning the common policy agreed by the Member States of the European Union. The PQF can be adopted by the university to fit their particular special needs better [26]. What is also

important it is a profile of particular study - theoretical or practical. The differences in the program are mainly focused on the number of courses that are of a workshop nature. We need to point out the PQF changes almost every year. Work on their improvement takes place both at the ministerial level (with the involvement of individual academic centers - grant competitions), but also at the level of individual universities. It is worth noting the qualification framework relates to the social skills that a student should acquire during a specific course. In the practice of law schools, the qualification framework is not implemented correctly. They do not correspond with lawyering skills. They are related only to the social skills and the form of presentation of specific knowledge.

Graduation is only the first step to become a professional lawyer. A graduate who wants to practice a legal profession (advocate, legal advisor, judge, prosecutor or civil law notary) must undergo a professional training dedicated to this profession. To start a professional training, the graduate must pass the entrance examination. This exam does not check any lawyering skills; it is merely a single-choice test, checking not the knowledge but the memory of a candidate. So, in other words, the only skill that this exam tests is efficient memory. It cannot be denied that this skill is needed in legal practice but legal practice cannot solely depend on memory. During professional training, a trainee is educated by the patron and works under his supervision. On the other hand, a trainee participates in the theoretical courses organized by a professional association or National School of Judiciary and Public Prosecution. During the training, a trainee also passes a number of exams dedicated to specific areas of law (some of them are practical).

The duration of professional training depends on the profession that has been chosen. For example, to become an advocate, the graduate has to complete three years of professional training conducted by a District Bar Association. Before the implementation of the training program, the trainee must find a patron (an advocate who practice law). The training ends with an advocate' exam. After a positive result of having passed the final exam (in the US, a bar exam), a lawyer can be accepted by the bar.

Choosing the professional career path is therefore not only difficult (each professional training includes both theoretical classes and work under the patron's supervision), but also time-consuming and expensive. For this reason, many young people do not decide immediately after graduation to choose this path - mainly because there is another way to become a professional lawyer. Each statute that regulates the performance of a particular legal profession provides for the possibility of performing it without prior professional training. Such a possibility is foreseen primarily for persons who can prove their professional practice for several years. Such persons are usually entitled (as a rule after five years of practice) to take a final examination (such as a bar exam).

Therefore, proposing a change in the legal education system, one should take into account the higher education system and the requirements for persons wishing to

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pursue legal professions in the future. We need to take under consideration one more thing. In Poland, the student starts to study at university at the age of 19, and studying at university is different from studying at upper-secondary school. This is the reason why it is tough for young people to cope with the transition, and most of all, because of their young age, most students are not sure they have chosen the right faculty. Young people are not prepared for such a sudden change, so the transition should be implemented smoothly and gradually.

We also need to point out the quality of education in upper-secondary school is not high compared to the standards expected at the university. However, generally, the quality of education in Polish schools is not so low. According to a report issued by Pearson and developed by the British research center The Economist Intelligence Unit, Poland ranks 10<sup>th</sup> [27]. Teaching in upper-secondary school is dogmatic, it requires the student to memorize only a certain part of the material. High school does not shape or develop any skills.

All these factors should also have been taken into account while rethinking of Polish law schools. On the one hand, the creation of a new curriculum requires for a young person the change from upper-secondary school to university shall be smooth and natural. On the other hand, the study model should take into account the way of attaining to the lawyer's profession (entrance examinations and professional training).

### **Why is the current education system insufficient?**

Work on a new concept of law teaching in Poland should have been started by defining the weaknesses of the curricula and the experience of its authors of student time. We both remember perfectly what the law studies looked like at the time we graduated, despite the fact we graduated from two different universities. If we were to describe it in one word, we would have to say: «not interesting». Lectures consisted of presenting specific information, often in such a way that most students stopped listening after 10 minutes, sometimes even less. The same pattern was repeated at the workshop. Our experience as former students shows us in a clear way that the workshops that by definition are practical classes were a duplicate the pattern implemented during the lecture. For that reason, when we started work at the university, we both changed the way of presentation of the knowledge that it would be more attractive for students. While lecturing, we tried to involve and stimulate them to initiate interaction by asking the questions and present the cases from our professional experiences. During the workshops, we have worked with students on particular cases and focused on solving the problems described in these cases and the method of argumentation.

Based on many years of experience in teaching law, we identified a number of deficiencies both in the way of teaching and the approach of academic staff to students. In our opinion, the deficiencies of the «traditional» Polish education system at law schools are as follows: (A) education of law is based on old methods and

principle; (B) education does not take into account the path (track) a law student wants to choose and third, (C) student does not receive adequate help from the academic staff. The functioning of the traditional system of legal education also has negative consequences (D).

### *Old methods and principles*

Referring to the above, it is first necessary to explain what the old methods and principles of the Polish education system are, and why it is a disadvantage. On the one hand, law studies in Poland are purely theoretical and dogmatic. On the other hand, we strongly believe that new, modern and effective teaching methods should be implemented.

Firstly, it shall be stated that old methods and principles came from the time where access to knowledge was quite limited. So, the only source of the knowledge was a lecturer and eventually a book. During the class, lectures were explaining the contents of the books academically. The way of conducting the lecture largely depended on the skills of the lecturer. If someone did not have communication skills, the participation of students in lectures was mostly limited to the physical presence. There are also lecturers who present knowledge in such an exciting way that due to the lack of seats in the lecture hall, students have been sitting on the floor. Unfortunately, such situations are relatively rare. So, the first and the last principle of the classes were to memorize all the information of applicable regulations and essential judicial decisions given by lecturers. During the class, students were playing a passive role. However, we have to admit that some of the lectures given in the past or even today sometimes are extremely interesting and valuable, in particular, when the lecturer presents the results of his research or thoughts that have not yet been published. In other words, we do not reject the lecture as an acceptable teaching method, but we do believe that the concept of such a lecture shall be something more than presenting information from the books. Now the information is widely available, and students have no longer any problems obtaining it. Secondly, a method that is still used in law school in Poland is a classroom discussion. This kind of method is used during the classes called workshops. According to the assumptions, the workshops should be complementary to lectures. In practice, the instructor repeats some knowledge provided during the lecture and asks the students questions, making sure they understand the information they have been given. In the worst case, the instructor conducting the workshops repeats the same knowledge to the students which was presented during the lecture.

Summarizing the above considerations, we should note that the Polish education system in law schools is a system solely focused on the student memorizing of the presented information as much as possible.

Consequently, it should be argued that the teaching methods that are used do not take into account the fact that the student should acquire not only knowledge but

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also skills. However, such an assumption requires not only changing the teaching methods from passive to active, but it also requires a new approach of lecturers to the teaching system and changing the curriculum as well. By the way, it should be noted that there have been many attempts to change the education system in law schools in Poland. However, the attempts to change teaching at law faculties were limited to adding new courses to existing ones. So far, no one has attempted to introduce a comprehensive change in the teaching system. Therefore, the old methods and principles remained the same for years. Wanting to make a real change, we must take into account the fact that knowledge is widely available, including legal knowledge (e.g., in the form of books or access to online databases such as Lex). We also cannot forget about the development of new technologies. These are factors that have a significant impact on the perception of the current system of legal education. However, the traditional system of legal education does not seem to notice these factors.

### *The path (track) of a law student*

The law schools in Poland do not take into account the path (track) a law student wants to choose after graduation. We need to point out that some law students after graduation do not choose a classic lawyer's path (such as advocates' training, legal advisor's training or judge training). Research published by the Ministry of Justice in Poland shows that the number of graduates interested in participating in legal professional training is decreasing. In 2008, a total of 62.22% of graduates took the entry exam to their traineeship, while only 44.18% did in 2016 [28]. These numbers show that interest in the career path as a professional lawyer decreases year by year.

Students are choosing a different career path. They are starting their own companies, work as managers or in many other professions. There is no doubt that many students make this choice, although there are different reasons. For some, a career path of a law practitioner is not tempting, and they need legal knowledge only for other types of professional activity. It is evident that the traditional law school does not cater for their needs. We must, of course, stipulate that the needs of these students cannot mean that the law school should stop preparing for the legal professions. This purpose must come first. It does not mean, however, that we should treat these students in the same way as students who want to choose a classic path.

During their studies in the traditional law school, students do not obtain business or economic knowledge or related skills. Traditional legal education focusses only on law. It is not interdisciplinary, while there is no doubt that the basic level of interdisciplinary knowledge is necessary also in legal practice, such as basic knowledge of economics.

Nonetheless, most of all, if we know that students can choose between two main professional paths (tracks), and they do, we should be able to respond to their

needs, too. Especially that as we have already stated, law study in Poland is universal and this is one of the reasons why this faculty is still so popular.

### *Providing help for all law students by the academic staff*

The third and the last thing we discovered during our professional work as academics, and also during our studies is that the student does not receive adequate help from the academic staff. By adequate help, we understand tutoring or mentoring, or any other form of individual support, the possibility of an individual meeting with a lecturer.

Each lecturer at the university has the office hours within a week (up to one hour) during which students can come to him or her with the problems that arise during their studies. During these hours, they lecturers are available to students, but due to the barrier and distance between students and lecturers - students very often do not dare to take advantage of individual consultations. It is also worth emphasizing that some of the students' questions regarding the choice of a career path are treated as the student's business, and lecturers are not interested in providing support or answering questions at all. Therefore, students are not able to consult their lecturers concerning their doubts, in particular as to the chosen career path. In fact, there is no one they can ask about it. Either way, adequate support is one thing that changes. Some universities are trying to organize tutoring or mentoring. They offer training for their academics, those who are interested in this kind of support and cooperation with students. However, still, not all of the students have a chance to participate in this program. Therefore, we cannot say that this support is adequate, especially that it is offered only the best students. Working with the best students is usually the easiest and requires least effort. All students should be included in the support system, although working with less talented students requires a different approach and sometimes more effort. However, the success of such a student gives you much more satisfaction.

It is also worth mentioning the fact that the lack of available support in the selection of a career path sometimes results in people without the required competences choosing this path. Without realizing what a particular legal profession looks like, we are not able to determine whether we have the necessary personal predispositions required for this profession.

### *Consequences of the traditional system of education*

The disadvantages of the current law teaching system in Poland have their consequences for students and universities themselves. From a student perspective, we can say that studies do not satisfy the individual needs of students and law graduates. The student cannot determine his or her career path during the studies at law school. Although students have classes to choose from (especially at higher

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years of study), they are still run according to old methods, and they do not develop skills. Few law schools offer the opportunity to participate in general, interdisciplinary classes.

We also need to point out that universities based on the traditional teaching model in the vast majority are not able to adapt to changing reality, to changes on the labor market, but also to the development of new technologies. The changes that are taking place in the legal services market (new forms of communication at the level of the client – service provider, increase in competitiveness on the legal market, increase in the specialization of legal services). As a result, traditional law schools do not offer a teaching model that would meet the needs of the market. That is why in our opinion the traditional model of law studies is insufficient. It does not respond to student's needs, and it does not apply to the current situation in the legal and business or labor market. Employers often indicate that graduates are not prepared for professional work. This complaint is addressed not only to law schools but universities in general. It is a legitimate complaint because universities do not shape nor develop skills. While rethinking law studies, we need to take all those issues under consideration.

It is also worth mentioning that the data provided by the Supreme Audit Office regarding the quality assessment system for schools of higher education indicate that this system is insufficient [29]. The relatively low quality of high education in Poland is evidenced by, among others, the position of Polish universities in international rankings (the Shanghai ranking, the ranking of the research institute in Leiden, the university ranking in Exeter), or the degree of internationalization (4.9% of all students), one of the lowest in the European Union and in OECD countries (24th position in 2015 with the average of 8.4%) [30]. Among others, the reason for such law ranking positions is the fact that Polish universities have not undergone a thorough reform for years.

At most universities, the directions of development are also determined by elderly professors who support the traditional model of education. Most of them do not conduct research or do not establish international cooperation. Of course, this is not a rule, but still, for young (often very talented and well-educated) academics it is tough to break through. The system is also favored by the organizational structure of the university, functioning in particular at public universities. Private schools, however, are more flexible, thus making reform much easier compared to public universities.

## **The proposal of reform and our idea of a new school of law**

### ***General assumptions for curriculum and an idea for new law school***

All the disadvantages of the traditional model of legal education mentioned above lead to a simple conclusion: the law studies should be interdisciplinary, giving

students not only knowledge from other fields necessary in their future professional work but also lawyering skills and soft skills. Also, there is no doubt the law school's curriculum should include responding to students' needs even if they choose not to follow the classic legal path (such as a judge or barrister). All these issues should be taken into account when creating a new law school. So, it is obvious what needs to be changed. This leads us to the question how?

Unlike the US, there are also no systematized requirements that law schools in Poland could adopt such as ABA Standards. That is why, working on the reform was a great challenge. Especially, as we have already pointed out, higher education has been criticized for a long time, in particular with regard to its quality.

While working on the new law school program and the new educational model, we came to the conclusion five basic assumptions for change should be adopted. They form the basis of our new program for law school. We must point out all five bases of our changes are closely related. We built a model of learning about them. In our opinion, each of them responds to a real need. We also believe this is the right way to improve the deficiencies of the legal education system in Poland. Those bases are (a) changes in curriculum; (b) the platform which aims is to cooperate with external entities; (c) a student's path; (d) a student's personal adviser; (e) a new method of teaching.

### *Changes in curriculum*

Introducing changes to the curriculum is the most common way to reform the law school. Such changes are introduced in law schools regardless of the continent and the legal system in force in a given country. Some changes are focussed on 'curricular reform initiatives that seek to expand students' understanding of what law is, to move beyond adjudication and the courtroom, to introduce broader forms of knowledge, and to develop a wider range of skills' [31].

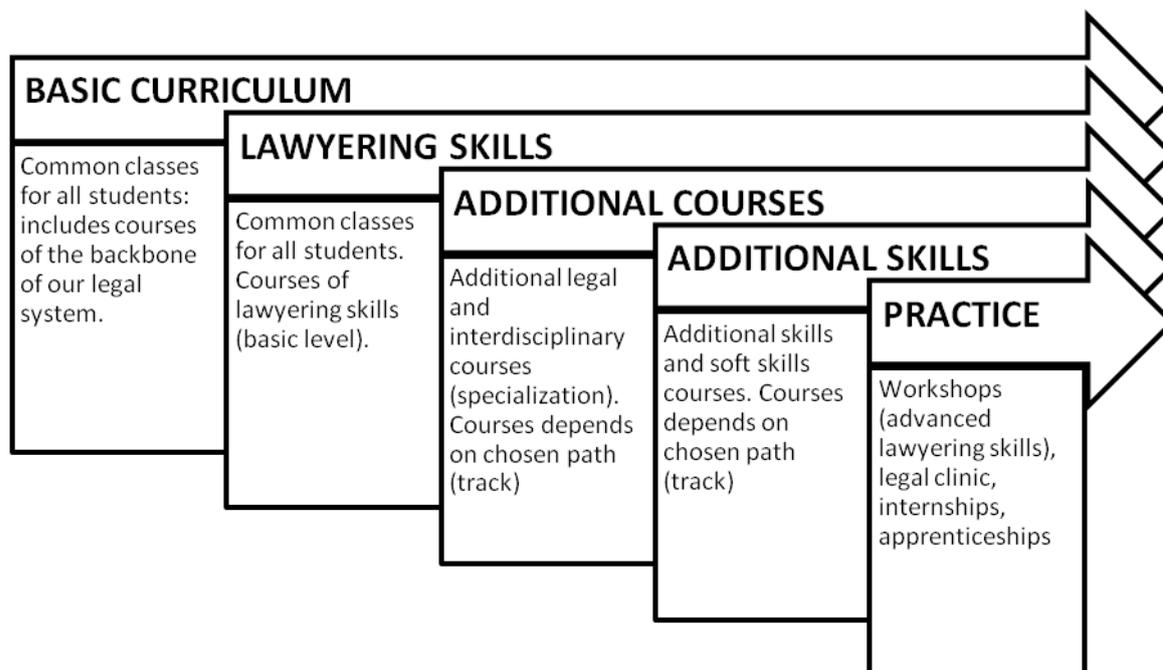
We can observe that many law schools in the US, like Columbia Law School, offer interdisciplinary courses or introduce new courses devoted to current practical issues (Columbia Law School, Law And Business Curriculum 2017-2018). Some law schools have even decided to introduce these ideas as early as in the first year [32]. It is worth noting that in the US changes in the curriculum are often entered into the program at higher years of study [33].

This kind of practice has so far functioned in Poland. New classes were added, or old classes were replaced with new ones at higher years of study. As a rule, they were optional courses, left to the students' choice. We entirely agree with Alberto Alemanno and Lamin Khadar saying that «European legal academia proved extremely resilient in protecting its traditional legal curriculum» [34]. In Poland also, this is the reason why the only reforms were about adding new optional courses. In our opinion, however, it is not enough.

The actual change of the curriculum requires a new curriculum arrangement in all years of study. And this is what we did. The change did not mean, however, the removal of existing courses.

In some cases, the order has been changed, in some others, it has been preserved. Above all, however, some new courses have been added. Nonetheless, there is one significant thing we have chosen to change – the substantive content of the courses. It will be discussed in the next section.

We must agree with Arthur Deyvre and Steven C. Bahls that law school is a hybrid institution [35] – they combine theory and practice. For this reason, there is no way not to leave basic courses in the curriculum. The task of the law school is not only to provide the student with the necessary knowledge but also appropriate skills and prepare him or her for the future performance of the legal profession. Preparation for legal practice, and therefore the practical aspect of the law school, does not mean, however, the school of law is a «vocational school». Higher education is above all academic. Practice is only an additional (though necessary for law schools) aspect. We believe the most important thing is a balance between the dogmatic and the practical.



**Figure 1:** A visualization of the curriculum for new law school

According to the above visualization, we divided our new curriculum into a few main categories. Firstly, there is a basic curriculum. The student will follow a designated course of study must cover many of the following courses: civil law, civil proceedings, criminal law, criminal procedure, family law, labor law, etc. It is the backbone of the Polish system of law, and this knowledge is necessary for all legal professions. The courses in the primary curriculum are all the courses a student must

complete to graduate from law school and then to be able to take the entrance examination to professional training. In this part of the curriculum, there are no changes and there cannot be any. The courses are generally the same we have been teaching to law students for years. However, the subject matter for these courses, as well as teaching methods are going to be changed.

It is an adage and common knowledge that the primary purpose of law school is to teach each student to think like a lawyer [36]. This is the reason why the law school offers courses in lawyering skills, as well as an opportunity to participate in a moot court exercise in which students must argue a hypothetical court case. In Poland, law schools have not taught any lawyering skills. Also, in professional training, there are no separate classes dedicated to lawyering skills. However, the students did the internships; they could also participate in the work of a legal clinic. Changes in this area will be discussed below.

We decided to introduce students to our idea of lawyering skills courses in the first year. We create three basic courses that include learning about the most common legal reading techniques, legal writing techniques, and research techniques, as well as a basic analysis and strategies. We have written these courses to meet the needs of law school, and their level was adapted to the level of the first year student, and therefore a person who does not have any basic legal knowledge. Designing these courses was a great challenge. We developed our method to conduct these classes and prepared many materials for the students. It took us a year to prepare these courses. During the reading class student are learning how to read like a lawyer. They learn which aspects and passages of an article to pay attention to, what the individual components of the judgments and their justifications are. They learn how to become a more efficient reader. During the writing class, they learn how to construct basic legal documents, what the parts these documents consist of, how to present arguments, etc. During the course of strategy and analysis, students learn how to construct a process strategy, what to look for and why.

Then, there are additional courses as basic knowledge is not enough. We believe the law school should offer focus areas or programs that would allow students to pursue certain subjects in depth. That is why we supplemented the basic curriculum with additional courses, such as new technologies law, medical law, or AI and blockchain, and also offered interdisciplinary classes (in finance, culture, economy). These courses allow broadening student's knowledge and interests in specific areas. With regard to these courses, the university should make use of available academics, i.e., use cooperation with other faculties.

We believe a law school should offer additional courses to develop additional but essential skills, such as teamwork, project management - and we also create such classes. Why? Namely, a lawyer's job is also teamwork, but also the management of the team (in the case of law firms). It is also working under stress and under time pressure, which is why we decided it is worth giving students the opportunity to participate in classes devoted to managing time and managing emotions. The above-

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mentioned courses are not all we offer in our school law. When planning them, we had in mind, first of all, what the legal practice looks like in Poland and what skills (beyond lawyering skills) are necessary for the smooth performance of the legal profession. We arranged them in such a way the students would develop these skills year by year. There are also additional skills which are required for a specific path. There is no doubt different skills are required for students who have chosen a classic path, and different for those who have chosen the business path. For example, if a student wants to become a judge or advocate, they should participate in moot court classes or psychology of witnesses' testimony but does not need these courses if he wants to be a manager. Then, the student needs project management or the knowledge of how to build a team.

The last part of our curriculum is an area we called «practice». What does it mean? The practice includes a few different courses and classes. We have planned on teaching in higher years advanced legal writing courses to provide students with opportunities to hone further the legal writing skills taught in the first year. These courses are geared to specific subject-matter or legal writing settings, taught by the writing faculty in small seminars, and include substantial feedback to students on their written products. Some of these courses also involve continued instruction in legal research (such as legal writing in civil practice, contract drafting). We have to say at the moment we are the first Polish law school teaching lawyering skills. An important part of our program is also judicial clerkship, legal externships, participation in clinical programs, and involvement with the public interest and governmental and non-governmental agencies. Standards and substantive assumptions of the course of practical courses are one of the tasks of the Platform (as will be discussed below). With reference to this part of the curriculum, it should be noted looking at the traditional curricula that this reform proposal does not seem to be something new. Students must undergo apprenticeships during their studies (they are mandatory), and also have the opportunity to participate in the work of the legal clinic. What should change is the way these courses are organized. So far, no one has supervised the course of the internships, neither in terms of organizational issues nor the substantive apprenticeship program. The only thing was important, it was only a document confirming the completion of internship. We can say the only one practical classes student could take was a legal clinic. In Poland, at the moment, legal clinics exist at almost every university. The clinics are focussed on legal aid, and provide legal advice or another kind of legal support.

The program has been arranged so each year the student broadens his knowledge and develops skills. The starting point for the new program layout was the student who, from year to year, was to become more and more aware of his or her career path. In the first year of studies, the student is aware of the possibilities. When starting studies, students often do not know what a lawyer's job looks like, or they have some misconceptions about the job. Therefore, in the first year of study, the student learns how lawyers work and they learn basic lawyering skills. In the

second year of studies, the student seeks his or her professional path (track). The student knows the basic issues of law, he or she learned basic lawyering skills and developed his or her abilities. The students knows what legal practice looks like and they can choose if it is a right path for them. In the third year of law school, the students focus on a goal. They know what specific path they take and they follow this path. They have additional courses dedicated to expanding they knowledge and develop their skills. In the fourth year of studies, the student is focussed on a career. They decide which additional courses they want to take to follow the path they have chosen. They know in which areas they would like to gain specialist knowledge. In the last year of law school, the student is fulfilled. They know what profession they will perform, they prepare a master's thesis and passes the exam finishing the studies.

### *The platform whose aim is to cooperate with external entities*

It is obvious that the student must acquire basic knowledge of the legal system in Poland. As it was mentioned above, traditionally, the core curricula of law teaching in Poland include such courses as logic, Roman law, history of law, criminal law, criminal procedure, civil law, civil procedure, administrative law, administrative law procedure, constitutional law, international law, and European law. Obviously, new ones are added to these traditional courses. Courses that were not included in the curriculum a few years ago include copyright law, trademark law, patent law, environmental law, advertising law, unfair competition, medical law. It is obvious that adding new courses to the curriculum will not adapt the study program to the reality that surrounds us.

Therefore, when working on the new idea of the law school, we asked ourselves how to help students to best face this reality. First of all, we have noticed that not only us but also some of our fellow lecturers are not only lecturers at the university but also lawyers applying the law in practice, i.e., advocates, judges, legal advisors working for specific institutions.

As a result, we have noticed as experts in their field they have knowledge of the law and legal phenomena at the completely different level than academic lawyers. We would like to emphasize with absolute certainty we do not deflate the knowledge and skills of our dear fellow lecturers.

On the contrary, we believe that research is an inexhaustible part of academic activity. However, on the other hand, we began to wonder how to provide students with the most effective way of contact with the outside world, i.e., other than university. We have figured out the best solution is to create a platform that will be a response to the market needs and will combine: the activity of the students, external entities (i.e., business entities or non-governmental organizations) and the academic staff.

According to the assumption, university and entrepreneurs can cooperate and work together on the substantive content of particular classes (especially in higher years of study) so students will become familiar with current legal problems during their studies. In other words, their task is to co-operate in creating substantive content of classes in cooperation with university academics (this gives students the knowledge of current problems on the market). Practitioners can conduct part of the classes in order to teach the student to solve current problems and those may occur. In our opinion, the impact of cooperation between the university and external entities will be as follows:

1) law school will have the opportunity to follow market trends in the field of employers' needs;

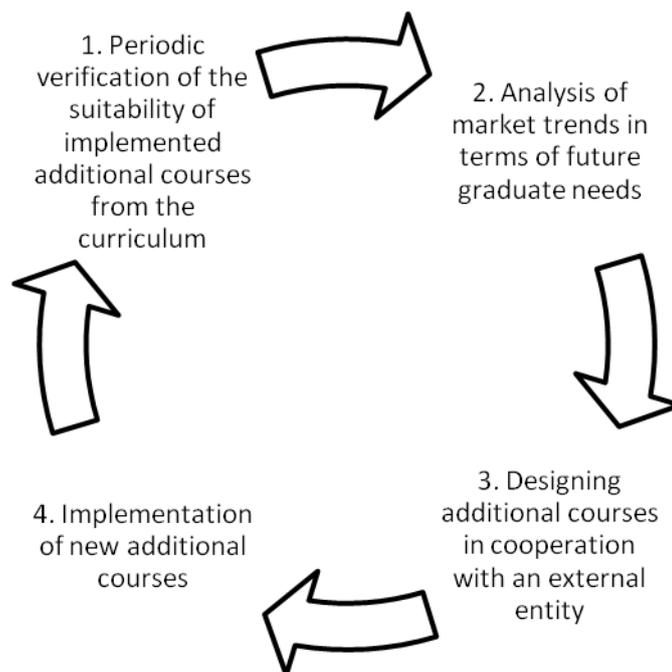
2) academic staff can dynamically react to changes and market demands and as a consequence adjust the curriculum accordingly;

3) the curriculum of the law school will have a business 'certificate' regarding its suitability on the market;

4) law school will maintain regular contacts with business (openness to other entities) – getting to know its weaknesses and strengths in the current curriculum of the law school;

5) as part of the cooperation, scientific employees may prepare expertise for external entities.

We assume that cooperation with external entities on the curriculum should take place on a regular basis according to the following scheme:



**Figure 2:** Cooperation with an external entities

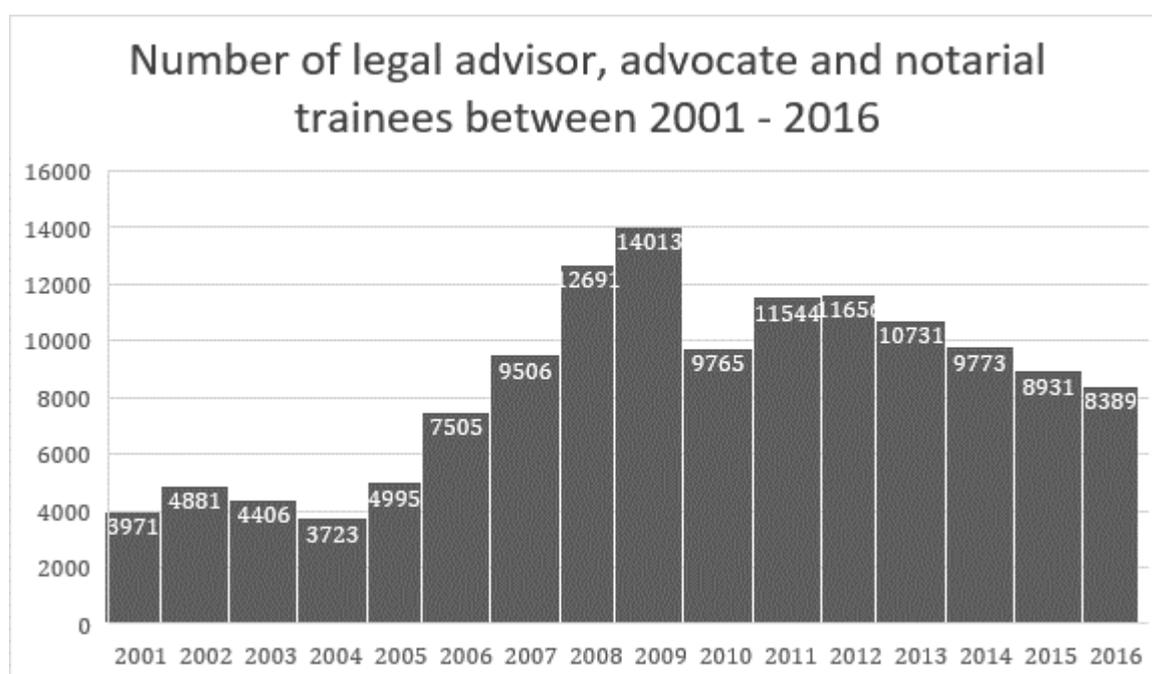
In addition, such cooperation creates an opportunity to organize various types of conferences, providing internships for students who would naturally establish contact with, e.g., representatives of legal professions, business, scientific-research institutions or non-governmental organizations. On the other hand, the students will have a real opportunity to get know about current problems regarding the application of the law and participate in solving such problems. In this way, students who will participate in a platform program will naturally acquire valuable skills. It should be emphasized no law school in Poland has so far offered students of such formalized cooperation with external entities.

### *Students' paths (tracks)*

As mentioned above according to the official data, the number of advocate trainees and legal advisor trainees is systematically dropping. The lower graph illustrates the numbers of persons taking the legal advisor, advocate and notarial apprenticeship in 2001–2016 (Fig. 3).

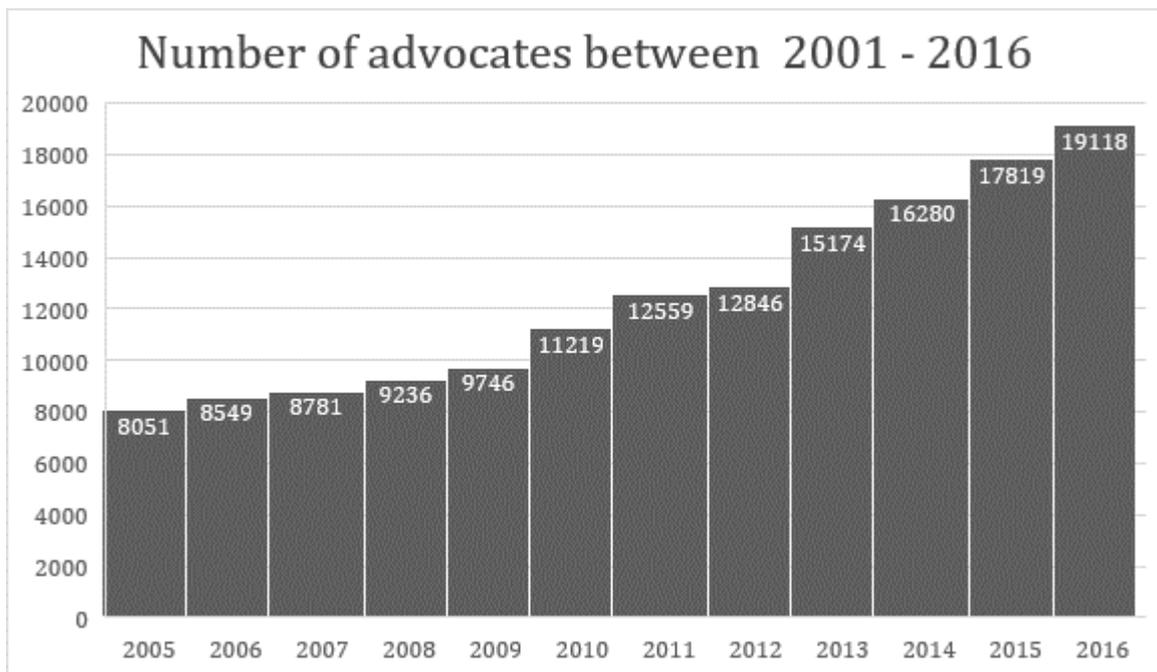
At the same time, in the years 2005–2016, we can see a systematic increase in the number of practicing lawyers, i.e., advocates, legal advisors, and notaries. According to the report, the number of advocates increased from 8051 in 2005 to 19118 in 2016 (Fig. 4).

In the case of legal advisors, their number in the years from 2005 to 2016 increased from 22545 to 41461, which means almost a two-fold increase (Fig. 5).



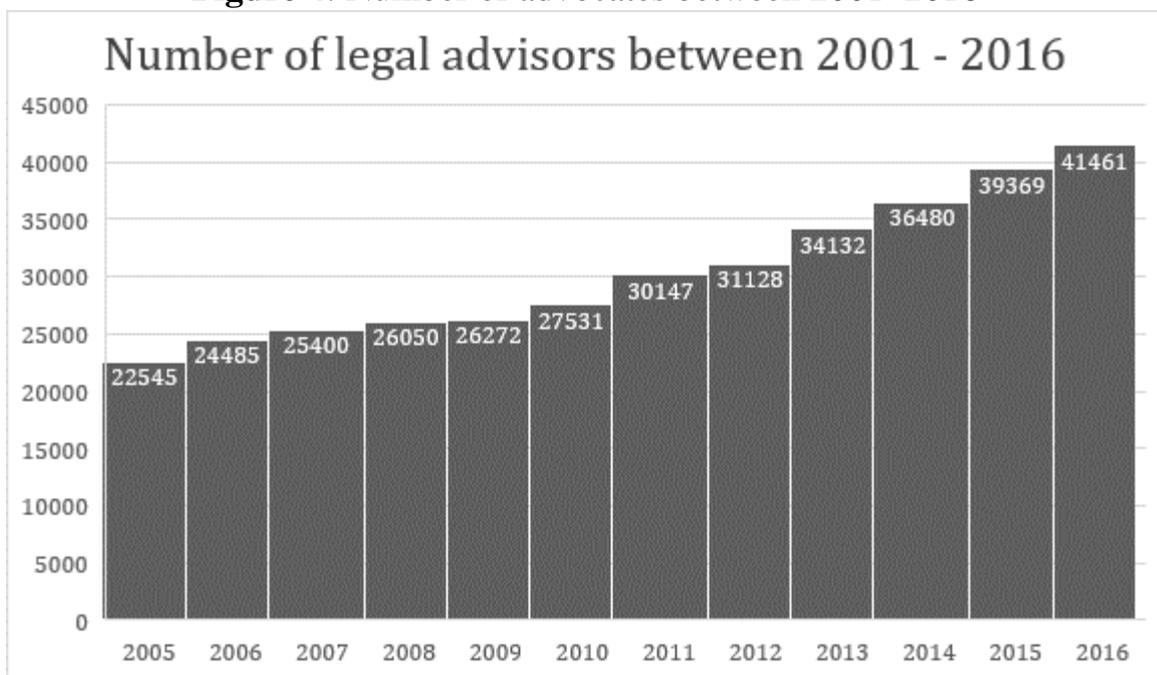
Source: Research published by the Ministry of Justice in Poland.

**Figure 3:** Number of legal advisor, advocate and notarial trainees between 2001–2016



Source: Research published by the Ministry of Justice in Poland.

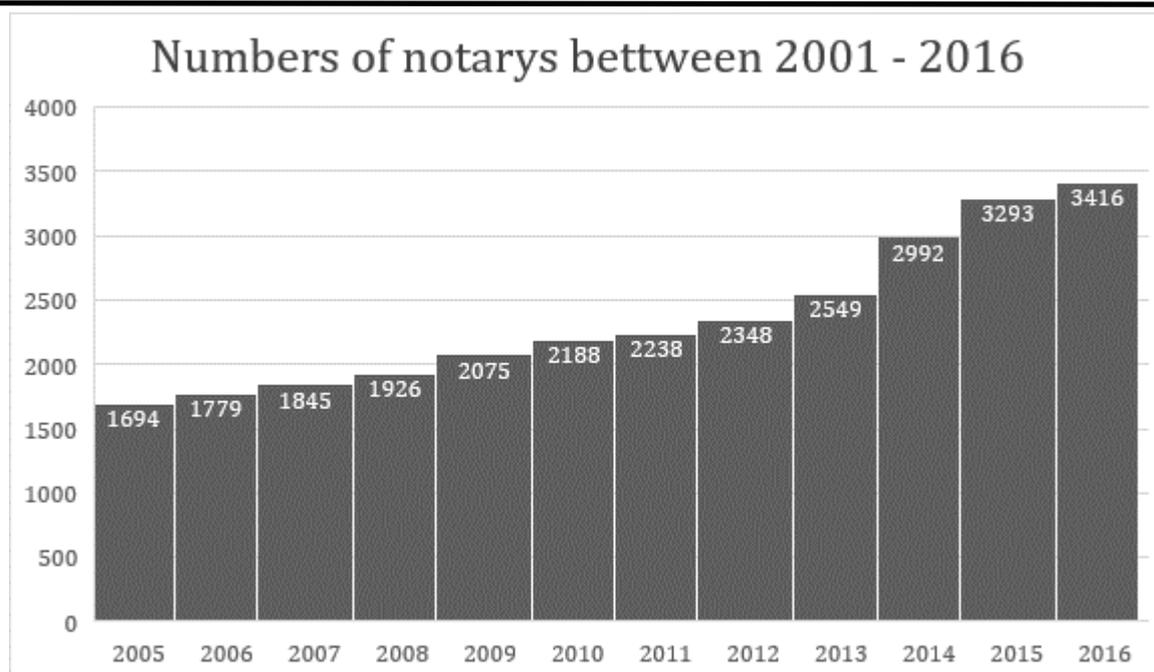
**Figure 4:** Number of advocates between 2001–2016



Source: Research published by the Ministry of Justice in Poland.

**Figure 5:** Number of legal advisors between 2001–2016

We can observe a similar systematic increase in the profession of notary (Fig. 6)



Source: Research published by the Ministry of Justice in Poland.

**Figure 6:** Number of notaries 2001–2016

The quoted data, as well as the declarations of the students with whom we conducted interviews, show that students are less and less willing to choose the traditional legal career path. On the other hand, the interviews conducted by us show that people who do not want to practice traditional legal professions nonetheless consciously decided to choose law studies. Students who were asked by us why they chose law studies answered that studying law gives a concrete and solid foundation for performing other professions. As examples, students most often indicated occupations related to business activity. In connection with the above, we have argued due to the change in how students perceive legal studies and how they want to use skills and knowledge acquired during the studying, it is necessary to change part of the curriculum and to develop a separate teaching path for people oriented to business.

On the other hand, changes in the curriculum cannot be overridden by students who are oriented to the lawyer's traditional career path, i.e., a lawyer, legal advisor, notary or judge. We know every student must acquire basic knowledge and skills, regardless of whether he or she will be oriented to work in a profession of a traditional lawyer or another. Based on the aforementioned research and adapting the curriculum to the changing reality, we came to the conclusion that two independent learning paths should be developed at the law school. This is the reason why we propose the curriculum should include both the classic and the business path, which we have named respectively: «Classic Lawyer» and «Business Lawyer». However, because as mentioned, every student should have the same basic legal education, the choice of a student's path would occur in the third year of study.

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To sum up the above considerations the path “Classic Lawyer” is for students who after graduation want to become a professional lawyer (it is the only first step to become a professional lawyer). Courses on this path are strictly dedicated to a future professional lawyer and are focussed on knowledge and skills which future lawyer should have. The «Business Lawyer» path is for students who after graduation want to do a different job (work as a manager, run their own business, work in a corporation). Courses on this path are dedicated to those students and are focused on the knowledge and skills necessary in the business world. We want to emphasize that according to our assumption, paths should be optional; however, regardless of the path chosen, a part of selected courses should still be common and obligatory for both paths. Nonetheless, the curriculum should be developed in this way that even if the student decides to take the classic path but completest the business path (during a studies), he or she has the essential knowledge (and basic skills) necessary to take the entry exam to the professional internship (such as advocate’s training, judge’s training, legal advisor’s training).

### *Student’s personal adviser*

We indicated above that one of the disadvantages of the Polish education system is the fact that students have no support. Our experience nonetheless shows that students look for such support. We and many of our colleagues, owing to their openness and willingness, try to support our students and to answer their questions about the choice of career path and their development. Students also sometimes ask for help in solving their personal problems. These experiences led us to the conclusion that students need support, but in order for this support to be efficient, it is necessary for its providers to have adequate knowledge and the right tools. Yet the legal academics do not have adequate knowledge and the right tools. Before starting work at the university, we do not undergo courses devoted to methods of conducting classes. Lecturers of law do not have to have teaching qualifications. There are also no textbooks or didactic materials in Poland that could be useful in academic work dedicated to lectures of law.

Reflecting on finding the right model for the students support, we took into account the students’ needs. We believe the response to these needs is a person who can give individual support to a student. It is not a tutor but someone more. Why? A tutor is a person who provides expertise, shares their experience, and a person who can encourage a student. Yet a tutor cannot diagnose learning disabilities or measure any competences or skills. All the diagnosis is taking place outside of the tutoring process. However, the diagnosis is necessary so the student can work on himself or herself and can grow further. Moreover, this diagnosis should cover not only learning disabilities but also the student’s competences and skills.

Student’s personal adviser (SPA) is a professional academic counselor. His or her s aim is to support the student in the development of competencies and to help

with the diagnosis of student competencies and skills. Therefore, the SPA has the necessary knowledge to motivate the student, often using coaching tools. Student's personal adviser also helps the student to select the right path of professional development. In this aspect, his or her support lies in the assessment if the choice of optional classes as well as practice and internships is right for the individual student. For example, if a student, after graduation, wants to be a prosecutor, his or her personal adviser will check if they has the right skills. Next, the advisor will indicate which areas the student should work on, in which direction he or she should develop. Subsequently, it will help the student choose additional courses in such a way they are compatible with the path of development chosen by the person. So, the student's personal adviser is a person who helps the student to fulfill his or her academic, personal and professional potential. The SPA offers support not only in the implementation of academic duties but also helps in choosing the right career path and helps to implement it.

### **New methods of teaching**

The method of teaching and the way of presenting knowledge to students is the most critical aspect of legal education. The question remains: how do we teach in Polish law school? As indicated above, the current methods are not sufficient. There is no doubt that teaching law is the leading role of law school. In Poland, there is no discussion if the method currently used is sufficient. While in the US, discussions on the methodology of law teaching have been going on for years, [37] in Poland these issues are not at all the subject of a broader interest or of interest at all. The conscious analysis of methods of law teaching is extremely rare and generally, it is focussed on legal clinics. We believe to bring a law school into the future, we must change the way we teach our students.

First of all, we should change the way lectures are conducted; so, instead of presenting knowledge, the lecturer focusses on pointing out problems and the possibilities of solving them. Students now have many opportunities to find knowledge, so the key is not just to present it, but to provide students with the ability to understand the information they receive. It does not mean we should give up on this method (lecturing); we should just make it more interesting for students. At the moment, most lectures in Poland are for students an opportunity to sleep through. Therefore, we should change the approach to this method of teaching, where traditionally the audience plays a passive role. We believe the lecture should, therefore, be a problem presentation with elements of discussion between academics and students. A lecture should be an opportunity for students to receive new information, understand problems and ask questions.

To take a law school into practice and teach lawyering skills, a part of classes should be workshops. There are a lot of methods academic can use to activate a student (active learning). The teacher should choose the method of conducting the

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classes in such a way as to serve the purpose of the specific class. The options for choosing methods are numerous, finding efficient ones is therefore not a problem. Having assumed what the goals of a specific course (learning outcomes) are, one should choose an appropriate method to achieve them. It can be the same method for the whole course as well as for a particular class.

The challenge for us was to find the right method to run the lawyering skills courses. In our opinion, the methods used so far do not allow to achieve the goal of the course, which is to equip the student with basic lawyering skills such as legal reading, legal writing, legal analysis, and strategic thinking. For this reason, we have created our method (the text map method) we use during the course in legal reading and legal writing. Using this method, we can visualize the content of the entire text and find connections between the various parts of the text (for legal reading class). This method also allows us to build a text, which is why we also use it in a legal writing class. For the course in legal strategy and analysis, we modified the method of SWOT analysis. We believe these methods are suitable for basic lawyering skills. However, these skills should be developed during all subsequent courses such as civil law or family law (during workshops). The course in analysis and legal strategy assumes that the student, based on the materials provided by the lecturer, is obliged to analyze and develop an optimal strategy for the client. The materials are so prepared that it is possible to apply different types of strategies to them. The use of SWOT analysis helps the student in choosing the optimal strategy by defining the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of the selected strategy.

### **Conclusions**

Our proposal to reform the law school focusses on the five assumptions described above (foundations of our reform) that are closely related to each other. If we do not create a platform for cooperation with third parties, the merits of the course will remain unchanged. Consequently, even if we change the teaching method (and the content stays the same), it will not be enough to bring law school into the future. We must remember law schools cannot function in a vacuum. After all, they serve the education of successive generations of lawyers and legal practitioners.

We cannot state at the moment if our reform succeeds. We completed an only first year of our new educational model of law study. We know very well what problems each new change encounters, especially in a system unchanged for many years. We experienced them all. At the moment, we can only say students and some employers value very highly the first year in our new law school. Students are especially interested in lawyering skills courses. Moreover, for those reasons, some of the students in higher years (before reform) wanted to participate in those courses by paying an extra fee. Some of our students after the first year of studies did internships (at the university's partners), and their skills were rated very high (higher than students from other universities).

We believe the reform proposal can be interesting not only for European, but also for US law schools. We would also like the proposals contained in our article to become the basis for a broader discussion about the reform of legal studies. We know the reform of each law school should take into account many factors such as culture, tradition, the legal system etc.. At the same time, however, the principles of practicing the profession of a lawyer and its purpose, like the objectives set for universities, remain the same.

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