

Speech by Professor Daria Lipinska-Nałęcz, Undersecretary of State in the Ministry of Science and Higher Education, delivered at "The Polish Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning from a European perspective" conference on July 3, 2013.

This is indeed a great satisfaction, when such an enormous effort, requiring creativity and not at all easy, led to the achievement of our goal. *Laudatur* - as they say when conferring doctoral degrees. This is the first time that a meeting of the Advisory Group, which was accepting a report, rewarded its authors with applause. Never, in any previous meeting, has anyone been the recipient of such applause. As a result, I believe that this confirms the high quality of our product. This quality is due to the fact, among others, that this is one of the few reports whose written word is identical to what is actually being done. It often happens that a report describes a certain prediction of the future, an unfolding of events, whereas our report summarised achievements and the results that are already being put to practice. So we have something to be proud of and reason to thank those who worked on the report. This is the way to improve the quality of the higher education system, and also the other stages of education.

Switching from perceiving students as recipients of provided knowledge to engaging them in the learning process is a fundamental change. This is a change in approach to one where what I know as a professor is not important, but rather to have my small field yield its anticipated harvest; in other words, to achieve the appropriate learning outcomes. In a word, to really teach someone, and not just to present knowledge and be satisfied with the lesson I gave, even though I basically don't know what I provided to that young person.

This is a change in philosophy that we are witnessing, it is being done and it is truly happening. I believe that we can be satisfied with this, because right now we have 60% of those coming out of upper secondary school in higher education. This is a different population, a different group than the former 10% who once attended university. This requires a different approach to the aims we set as educators. For this reason, I believe that introducing the NQF is a good move, which enables us to better prepare students for professional life and to teach them how to cope in life, how they should improve their qualifications and competencies.

Heartfelt thanks go to the Bologna experts for their extraordinarily hard work, and that they were able to convince us that this new philosophy was right. Thank you to all who contributed to the development of the report. I also want to thank very much the entire team under the leadership of Agnieszki Chłoń-Domińczak and to congratulate them that they received such applause at the Advisory Group meeting, because this is indeed a rare event, and it can even be said – the only time

it has happened in history. You have done excellent work. I take great satisfaction that there were no comments directed to the report on higher education. Here I would once again like to thank Prof. Zbigniew Marciniak, who took on the main responsibility of preparing this report, and to thank all those who worked on it. I believe that we can look with heads held high on the fruits of this effort, while at the same time continuing the work to improve educational quality. This is our challenge, so that our young people win not only in contests in constructing space rovers, but also find success as the best students in all tests of skills. I wish all of you this.