
the **SYSTEM**

of **EDUCATION**

in **POLAND**



2014

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of **EDUCATION**

in **POLAND**

Warsaw 2014

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OVERVIEW

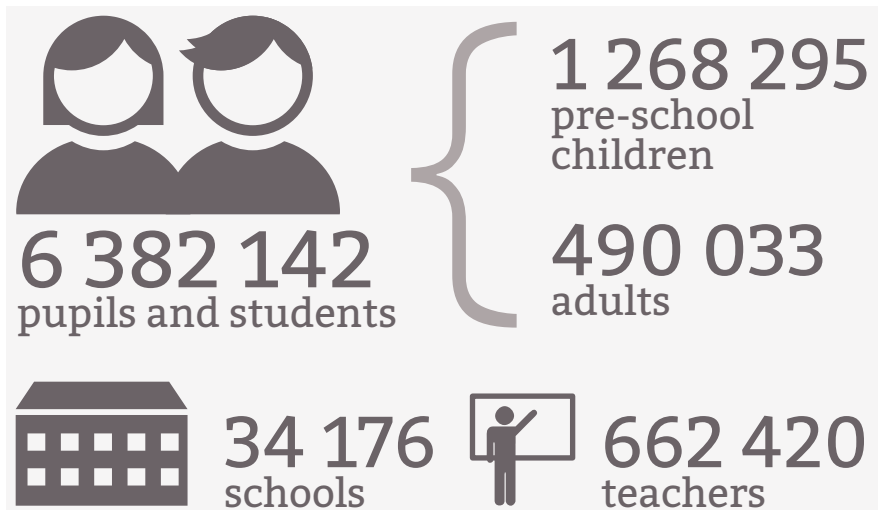
The main legal basis for education in Poland is provided by the Constitution of the Republic of Poland. According to its provisions:

- ▶ Every person has the right to education,
- ▶ Education is compulsory until the age of 18,
- ▶ Education in public schools is free of charge,
- ▶ Parents are free to choose schools other than public schools for their children,
- ▶ Public authorities provide citizens with general and equal access to education.

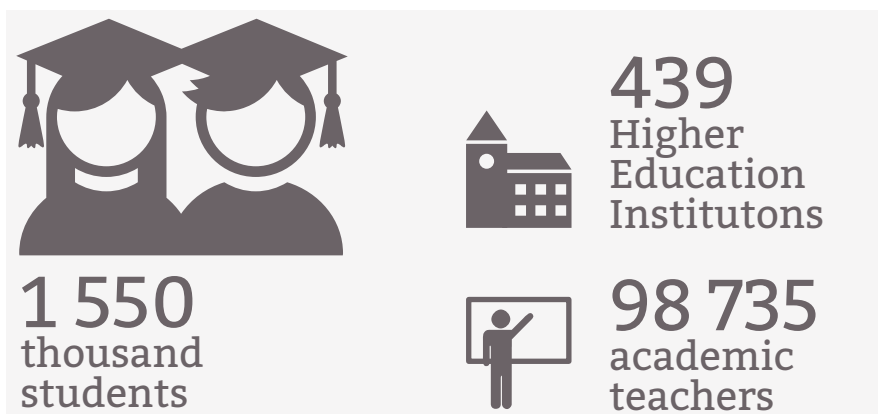
The education system in Poland is centrally managed by two institutions – the **Ministry of National Education (general and vocational education)** and the **Ministry of Science and Higher Education (higher education)**. It is only the national educational policy that is developed and carried out centrally, while the administration of education and the running of schools are decentralized.

Full-time compulsory education (to be received in school) covers children and young people aged 6–16 years, whereas part-time compulsory education (to be provided either at school or at the employers' premises) concerns young people aged 16–18 years. Full-time compulsory education includes the final year of pre-primary education, 6-year primary education and 3-year lower-secondary education. **Nursery schools** (*przedszkole*), **primary schools** (*szkoła podstawowa*) and **lower-secondary schools** (*gimnazjum*) are administered by commune (*gmina*) authorities. **Upper-secondary schools**, which are not compulsory, are attended by the vast majority of the population in the age group 16–19/20 years and are administered by district (*powiat*) authorities. Autonomous **higher education institutions** offer mainly first-, second- and third-cycle programmes (long-cycle Master's degree programmes are available only in a few fields of study). **Adult education** is provided by public and non-public schools for adults, public and non-public HEIs, continuing education centres, practical training centres and further and in-service training centres.

POLISH EDUCATION SYSTEM IN NUMBERS

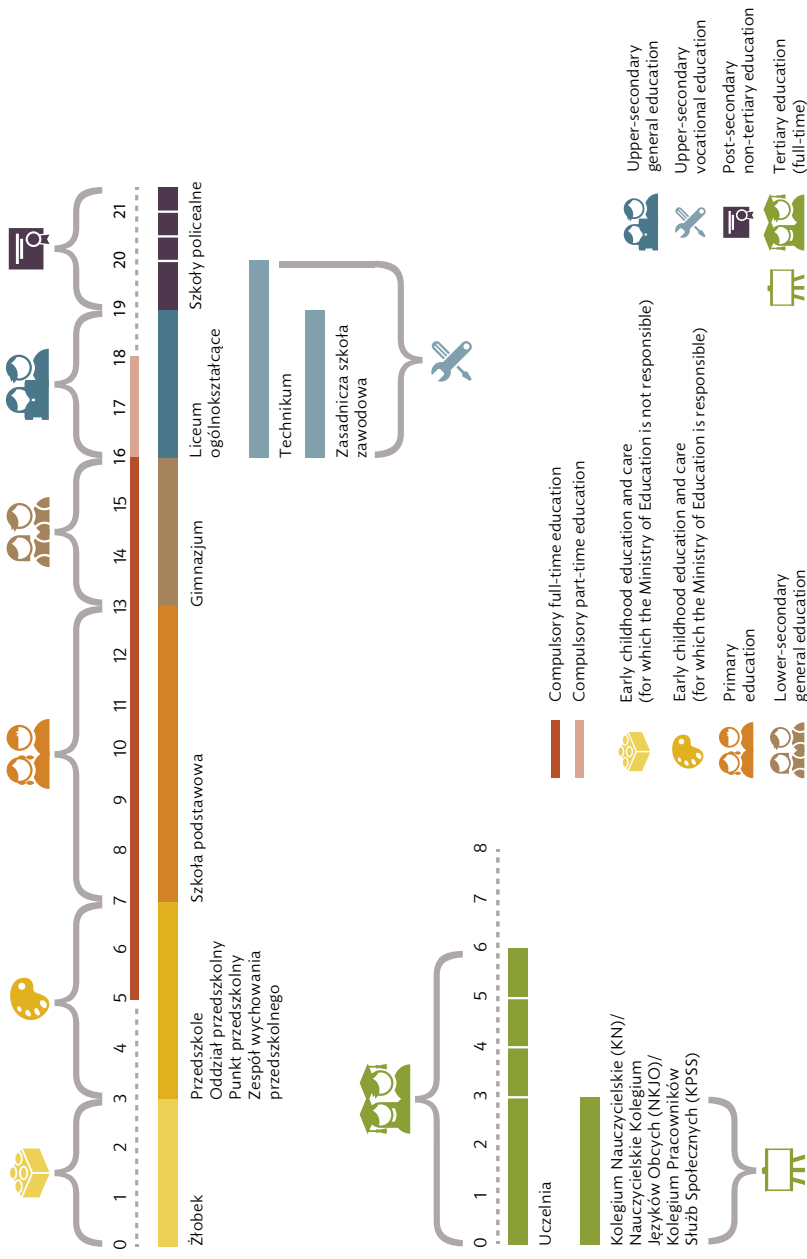


School year 2013/2014



Academic year 2013/2014

THE SYSTEM OF EDUCATION IN POLAND. SCHOOL YEAR 2013/2014





ORGANISATION AND GOVERNANCE

1.1. ORGANISATION

The education system in Poland comprises pre-school institutions as well as primary, lower-secondary, upper-secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary schools. In the light of the existing law, institutions of higher education form a separate higher education system.

1.1.1. Compulsory education

Compulsory education covers full-time compulsory education (up to the age of 16) and part-time compulsory education (up to the age of 18).

Full-time compulsory education is divided into:

- A. one-year pre-school preparation;
- B. full-time education in school settings that lasts until the completion of lower-secondary school but not beyond the age of 16.

Part-time compulsory education concerns students aged 16–18 and may be organized:

- A. in upper-secondary schools, both general and vocational;
- B. at the employers' premises (apprenticeship system).

One-year's pre-school preparation is compulsory for 6-year-olds and may be completed either in nursery schools or pre-school classes in primary schools. In September 2011 pre-school education became compulsory for 5-year-old children. Optional pre-school education is offered to children aged 3 to 5.

Children aged between 7 and 13 attend a 6-year primary school (*szkoła podstawowa*). The amendment to the School Education Act made primary school education compulsory also for 6-year-old children. This change, however, is being

implemented gradually. The process of implementation is spread over two years: (a) in 2014 education in grade 1 of the primary school is compulsory for children born in the first half of the year 2008, i.e. from January till June 2008 and all children born in 2007; (b) in 2015 – for children born in the second half of the year 2008, i.e. from July till December 2008 and all children born in 2009.

Primary education is divided into two stages: the first stage (grades 1 to 3) offering integrated early school education, and the second stage (grades 4 to 6), at which subject-based teaching is provided. At the end of the 6-year primary school pupils take a compulsory external test (set by the Central Examination Board, administered and assessed by Regional Examination Boards) which is primarily designed to provide teachers and parents with information about pupils' achievements and has no bearing on admission to lower-secondary school.

All primary school leavers continue their education in the 3-year general lower-secondary school (*gimnazjum*). At the end of lower-secondary education pupils take a compulsory external examination (set by the Central Examination Board, administered and assessed by Regional Examination Boards) which has a strong bearing on admission to upper-secondary schools.

1.1.2. Upper-secondary education

Lower-secondary school graduates can continue their education in the following types of schools:

- ▶ 3-year general upper-secondary schools (*liceum ogólnokształcące*) leading to the award of the matriculation certificate (*świadectwo maturalne*) upon passing the external matriculation examination (*egzamin maturalny*);
- ▶ 4-year technical upper-secondary schools (*technikum*) leading to the award of a vocational diploma upon passing examinations confirming vocational qualifications in a given occupation, and also offering the possibility of the award of the matriculation certificate upon passing the matriculation examination;
- ▶ 3-year basic vocational schools (*zasadnicza szkoła zawodowa*) leading to the award of a vocational diploma upon passing examinations confirming vocational qualifications in a given occupation. Basic vocational school leavers may continue their education in the 3-year general upper-secondary school for adults starting with the second grade;
- ▶ 3-year special schools preparing pupils with disabilities (special educational needs) for employment leading to the award of a certificate confirming preparation for work.

1.1.3. Post-secondary education

Graduates of general upper-secondary schools can continue their education in a post-secondary school for a maximum of 2.5 years. This leads to the award of a vocational diploma upon passing examinations confirming vocational qualifications in a given occupation.

1.1.4. Higher education

Graduates of upper-secondary schools in Poland who hold the matriculation certificate have the following educational possibilities at the level of tertiary education:

- ▶ **degree programmes**, provided by both public and non-public university-type and non-university higher education institutions which comply with relevant requirements, including:
 - ▶ first-cycle (Bachelor's degree) programmes;
 - ▶ long-cycle (Master's degree) programmes.

Holders of a Bachelor's degree can enrol in second-cycle (Master's degree) programmes.

Holders of a Master's degree or equivalent may apply to third-cycle programmes, i.e. doctoral studies that provide advanced knowledge in a specific academic area or discipline, prepare for independent and creative research and for the award of a doctoral degree. Holders of Bachelor's or Master's degrees may also follow non-degree post-graduate programmes that typically last one or two years.

- ▶ **college programmes** (which, according to the legislation, are part of the school education sector), provided by colleges of social work (*kolegium pracowników służb społecznych*), teacher training colleges (*kolegium nauczycielskie*) and foreign-language teacher training colleges (*nauczycielskie kolegium języków obcych*). The latter two types of colleges are now being phased out.

1.2. GOVERNANCE

1.2.1. School education

Governance of school education reflects the territorial organisation of the Polish state. Poland is divided into 16 provinces or regions (*województwo*), 379 districts

(*powiat*), and 2 478 communes (*gmina*). The head of the province (*wojewoda*) represents the Council of Ministers in a given region. The regional education authorities (*kuratorium oświaty*) are included in the regional administration and are responsible for pedagogical supervision over schools.

The local authorities take part in exercising public authority (levels of *powiat* and *gmina*, see below).

The central level

Responsibility for the administration of the school education system rests with the Minister of National Education. The Minister co-ordinates and pursues the national education policy, cooperating in this respect with regional authorities and other organisational units responsible for the school education system. By way of regulation, the Minister lays down, among other things: requirements and procedures for admission to public schools; general outlines of timetables for public schools; core curricula for pre-school education and general education in particular types of schools, as well as for vocational education; rules for assessing and promoting pupils and for conducting tests and examinations; organisational arrangements for the school year; and rules for the remuneration of examiners and teachers.

The regional level

The regional authorities in Poland are located at province level (*województwo*). There are two types of institutions which are responsible for educational matters at this level.

Education superintendent (state administration at the regional level)

Education superintendents (*kurator oświaty*) are chief pedagogical supervision officers at the regional level. They are responsible for general administration of education in particular provinces. They are regional administration officials appointed and supervised by the head of province (*wojewoda*) who is subordinate to the Prime Minister. The education superintendent implements the policy of the Minister of National Education.

On behalf of the head of province, the superintendent is responsible for the implementation of tasks defined in the School Education Act and in the regulations relevant to particular provinces. The most important task is pedagogical supervision over public and non-public schools, including regional in-service teacher training institutions, located in particular provinces.

Provincial government

Provincial government is responsible for administering the following types of educational institutions: teacher training and foreign-language teacher training colleges (which are being phased out), colleges of social work, in-service teacher training institutions, educational resource centres, schools and other related educational institutions operating at regional and supra-regional levels.

The district level

The district (*powiat*) is an intermediate administrative unit between the province and the commune. District authorities are responsible for running the following types of public schools and other educational institutions: upper-secondary and post-secondary schools; art schools; sports schools and schools for sports champions; special primary and special lower-secondary schools; schools at prisons; youth detention centres and hostels for minors; counselling and guidance centres; and remedial centres. Pedagogical supervision is excluded from their control – it is the responsibility of the education superintendent (see section above: “The regional level”).

The local level

The commune (*gmina*) level in Poland is the lowest administrative division. It is responsible for establishing and administering public nursery schools (including special nursery schools), primary schools and lower-secondary schools. Pedagogical supervision over these types of schools is the responsibility of the education superintendent (see section above: “The regional level”).

The school level

The school head

The head of a school is appointed by the school managing body, through open competition, for a five-year term. In justified cases, and in agreement with the education superintendent, the school head may be appointed for a shorter period, with the minimum duration of such an appointment being one school year. Where the school statutes provide for the positions of deputy school head and other management positions, management staff are appointed by the school head after consultation with the school council, the teachers’ council and the school managing body, e.g. the commune or the district.

Responsibilities of the school head include, among other things, exercising pedagogical supervision over the school, care of pupils and creating conditions

for their harmonious psychological and physical development, implementing resolutions of the school council and the teachers' council, proper use of funds, and the organisation and conduct of tests and examinations in the school.

Teachers' council

A school which employs at least 3 teachers is required to establish a teachers' council. The teachers' council is a collective body concerned with the performance of the school's statutory tasks related to education and care. The teachers' council consists of all teachers employed in the school, and staff employed in other institutions which provide practical vocational training to pupils of the school, or in boarding schools provide education and care to pupils. The teachers' council is chaired by the head of school.

The decision-making powers of the teachers' council include, among other things, approving school action plans, adopting resolutions on the results of pupils' assessment and promotion, adopting resolutions on teaching innovations and experiments in the school, and adopting organizational arrangements for in-service training of teachers in the school.

The teachers' council drafts the school statutes or any amendments to the statutes, and presents them to the school council for approval.

School council

The school council is a body that can be established in a school with the aim of solving its internal problems. It is involved in various internal matters at the school (e.g. approval of school statutes, giving opinions on the school financial plan and school action plan). The school council includes (in equal numbers) elected teachers, parents and pupils.

School councils in primary schools do not include pupils, and the participation of pupils in school councils established in lower-secondary schools is not obligatory. The council should include a minimum of 6 members. The school council decides on its own internal regulations and elects its chairperson. The school head can participate in the council meetings in an advisory capacity.

Parents' council

The parents' council represents all the parents of the pupils in the school. It can submit motions related to all school matters to the school head and other school bodies, to the school managing body or the body responsible for pedagogical supervision. It can also give opinions on timetables and on the financial plan as proposed by the school head.

Student self-government

A system of pupils' self-government operates in schools and is established by all pupils in a given school. It can submit motions to the school council, teachers' council and the school head, in particular those related to the observance of basic rights of pupils, such as the right to open and justified assessment, the right to publish a school newspaper and organise cultural, educational, sports and entertainment events, according to the pupils' needs and the organisational capacity of the school.

1.2.2. Higher education

The central level

The Minister of Science and Higher Education

The Minister of Science and Higher Education is responsible for higher education and research, as well as for formulating educational policy with respect to higher education, with support from the General Council of Science and Higher Education.

The following matters are under the supervision of the Minister of Science and Higher Education: the development of research in Poland, studies for degree students and PhD students, and the functioning of higher education institutions in Poland.

The Minister supervises the activities of higher education institutions (HEIs) in respect of their compliance with the law, with their statutes and, in the case of non-public HEIs, with the permit granted for their establishment, as well as the propriety of expenditure of public funds by HEIs. The Minister may request information and clarification from the bodies of a HEI or the founder of a non-public HEI, and may conduct inspections of HEIs.

Consultation and support institutions

In addition to higher education institutions, the higher education system in Poland includes also a host of organisations performing consultation and advisory functions. The most prominent of these are:

- ▶ **The General Council of Science and Higher Education** (*Rada Główna Nauki i Szkolnictwa Wyższego* – RGNSW) which volunteers its own opinions and proposals in all matters relating to higher education and science, and also presents its opinions on the draft state budget and proposed draft legislation.
- ▶ **The Polish Accreditation Committee** (*Polska Komisja Akredytacyjna* – PKA), an independent institution which performs a crucial role in higher education quality assurance. The primary responsibilities of the PKA include: assessment of the quality of education in fields of study, including compliance with the requirements for the

provision of degree programmes; review of applications for the establishment of higher education institutions; and review of applications by higher education institutions for authorization to provide degree programmes in a given field and at a given level of study. The PKA's opinions and evaluations are submitted to the minister responsible for higher education.

- ▶ **The Conference of Rectors of Academic Schools in Poland** (*Konferencja Rektorów Akademickich Szkół Polskich – KRASP*) and the **Conference of Rectors of Vocational Schools in Poland** (*Konferencja Rektorów Zawodowych Szkół Polskich – KRZaSP*), both of which play a particularly significant role in developing the financing principles for higher education institutions and the rules governing their operation, specifically as regards regulations that accompany legal acts.
- ▶ **The Students' Parliament of the Republic of Poland** (*Parlament Studentów Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej*) which focuses on student issues, i.e. by giving opinions on all draft regulations concerning the student body.
- ▶ **The National Representation of Doctoral Students** (*Krajowa Reprezentacja Doktorantów*) which focuses on issues concerning doctoral students.

The institutional level

Higher education institutions (HEIs) enjoy a considerable degree of autonomy. Public HEIs are governed by collective bodies which include a senate and boards of academic units. The statutes of a non-public HEI may provide for a collective body other than the senate. If provided for in the statutes, public HEIs may establish a council in addition to the senate. The collective bodies of a non-public HEI are specified in its statutes. The rector (*rektor*) and the heads of academic units are single-person authorities. The dean (*dziekan*) is the head of the faculty. The statutes of a non-public HEI may provide for another single-person authority in addition to the rector.

The powers of the senate include, among other things, adoption of the statutes of the HEI, adoption of study regulations for first-, second-, long- and third-cycle programmes and non-degree postgraduate programmes, adoption of procedures of admission to these programmes, definition of learning outcomes, assessment of the performance of the HEI, approval of the rector's annual activity reports and assessment of the performance of the rector, adoption of activity-and-finance plans for the HEI, and approval of financial reports.

The rector manages the HEI and represents it externally, and is the superior of the staff, students and doctoral students of the HEI. The rector of a public HEI takes decisions in all matters concerning the institution, except those reserved by the *Law on Higher Education* or the statutes for the remit of other bodies or the head of finance and administration.

The powers of the board of an academic unit specified in the statutes of particular HEIs include, among other things, definition of the main lines of the unit's activities, adoption of study programmes for first-, second-, long- and third-cycle programmes following consultation with the competent students' – or doctoral students' – self-government body, and in accordance with the guidelines set by the senate of the HEI, as well as adoption of study programmes for non-degree post-graduate programmes and retraining courses in accordance with the guidelines set by the senate of the HEI.



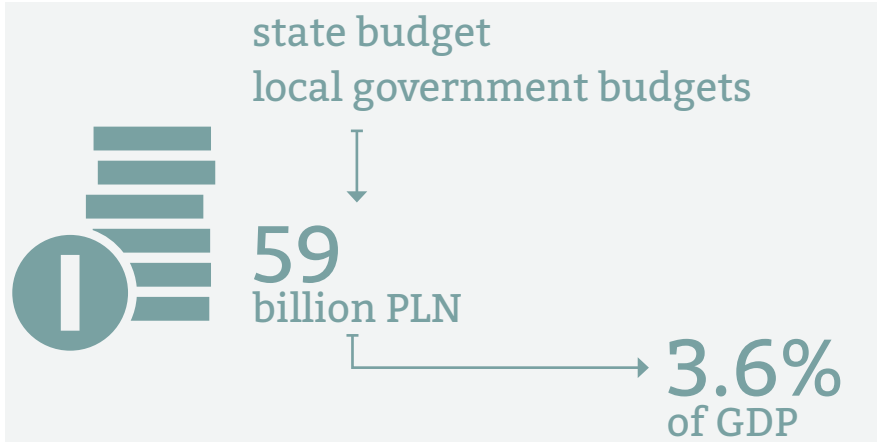
FUNDING

2.1. SCHOOL EDUCATION

2.1.1. Funding

The school education component of the general subvention from the state budget is the main source of funding for the school education sector in Poland. The amount of the general subvention for all local government units is defined annually in the Budgetary Act, and then the Minister of National Education establishes the algorithm for the distribution of these funds among the relevant local government units. According to the Act on Revenues of Local Government Units, the authorities of these units decide on the use of funds received as part of the general subvention. This means that local government units decide on the amount of the total expenditure on school education and on its allocation, taking into consideration their own income. As school governing bodies, they are responsible, in particular, for the preparation of income and expenditure (financial) plans for all educational institutions supervised. Local government units also establish regulations for teacher remuneration and for the provision of financial support for welfare-related purposes, are responsible for educational investments, and define the rules for obtaining and use of private funds by schools. The funds defined in the financial plan which is presented to the school authorities for consultation are disbursed by the school head who is responsible for their proper use.

The legislation allows also non-public schools with public school status to be co-financed from local government budgets or from the state budget. In practice, this means that such schools may receive a grant which equals up to 100% of the average current expenditure per pupil in a public school of the same type. Non-public schools which do not have public school status can also be supported.



Total public expenditure on school education in Poland (from both the state and local government budgets) in 2013 amounted to 59 billion PLN, which constituted 3.6% of GDP.

2.1.2. Fees

Public schools and nursery schools are free of charge, but some financial contribution from pupils and their families is usually required at each stage of education.

Parents of children who stay in nursery schools for more than 5 hours a day usually pay for the extra time. As of September 2013 the amount of this fee cannot now exceed 1 PLN per each additional hour, including the costs of extracurricular classes. In order to make up for lower income from the fees, the local authorities receive additional funding from the state budget in the form of a subsidy. The amount of financial support from the state budget to local authorities is approximately something over 1,5 billion PLN (400 million euro) per year.

The local authorities (commune) can also define the conditions for full or partial fee waivers. Parents also pay for meals.

The parents' council established at the school can collect funds from voluntary donations from pupils' parents and other sources.

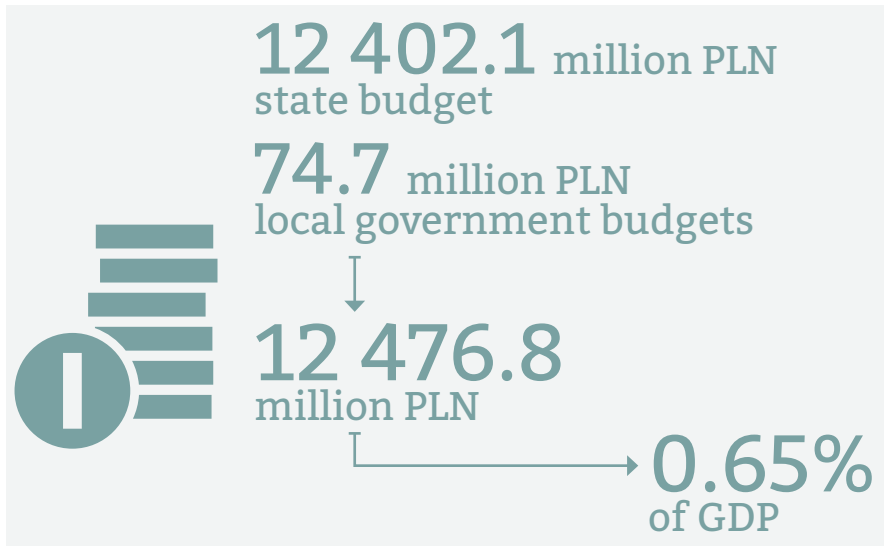
Non-public schools charge fees. Many schools offer various types of fee waivers to outstandingly gifted pupils and those from disadvantaged families.

2.2. HIGHER EDUCATION

2.2.1. Funding

Like public schools, public higher education institutions (HEIs) receive funds from the state budget for tasks related to the education of students enrolled in full-time programmes, to full-time doctoral students and for research staff; the maintenance of HEIs, including renovation of premises; tasks related to financial support for students and doctoral students; co-financing and financing of investment projects, including those supported by EU funds; and tasks related to education and medical rehabilitation of disabled students. These funds are allocated from the part of the state budget managed by the Minister of Science and Higher Education. Public HEIs pursue their own financial policy based on activity-and-finance plans.

The Minister also defines, on the basis of regulations, the conditions and rules according to which non-public HEIs apply for funds, as well as the methods of supervision of the use of these funds



In 2012 the public expenditure on higher education in Poland amounted to 12 476.8 million PLN (including 12 402.1 million from the state budget, and 74.7 million from the budgets of local governments), which constituted 0.65% of GDP.

2.2.2. Fees

In public higher education institutions no tuition fees are charged for full-time first-, second- and long-cycle programmes and full-time doctoral programmes. There are also no registration fees in public HEIs, though they charge low administrative fees that are set centrally by a regulation. However, fees are charged for the following educational arrangements:

- ▶ Part-time degree programmes and part-time doctoral programmes,
- ▶ Full-time degree programmes, if the student is enrolled in a second or subsequent full-time programme, unless he/she is among the top 10% students in terms of results,
- ▶ Full-time degree programmes if a student is enrolled in additional classes, beyond the ECTS limits,
- ▶ Classes repeated by a student in the framework of full-time degree programmes and full-time doctoral programmes due to insufficient learning outcomes,
- ▶ Degree programmes offered in foreign languages,
- ▶ Classes not included in the outline of the study programme,
- ▶ Non-degree postgraduate programmes and in-service training courses.

Public HEIs (namely their rectors) themselves determine the amount of the above mentioned fees, taking into account that this amount cannot exceed the costs incurred by the HEI in order to deliver programmes or courses. Non-public HEIs themselves determine also the amount of tuition fees. In this case, all the students are charged tuition fees, regardless of the mode of their studies (full-time or part-time). Still, they may apply for financial support in accordance with the same rules as apply to students in public HEIs.

2.3. ADULT EDUCATION

2.3.1. Funding

The funding system for adult education is very dispersed and thus it is difficult to give a total amount of the funds spent for this purpose. Adult education in school settings (primary, lower-secondary and upper-secondary schools for adults) is a part of the education system and is included as one of many school education tasks of the local government units. Funds for the financing of continuing education in out-of-school settings can come from the state budget, including the Labour Fund

and the National Fund for the Rehabilitation of the Disabled, from European funds, other aid programmes and budgets of central administration units dedicated to the training of specific professional groups (e.g. administrative staff, medical doctors, teachers, military personnel, etc.), employers, and learners' own funds.

2.3.2. Fees

Learning in public adult education institutions, enrolment in programmes supporting human resources development offered by labour offices, and some courses and training programmes supported by the EU funds are free of charge for their participants. Examinations leading to qualifications in VET are free of charge. Fees may only be charged for extramural examinations leading to qualifications and non-degree postgraduate programmes. Continuing education centres, practical training centres and further and in-service training centres can charge fees for continuing education in non-school settings, unless learning is part of part-time compulsory education.



EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE (ECEC)

3.1. ORGANISATION

Early childhood education and care (ECEC) in Poland is divided into two stages: for children aged 0–3 years in crèches, “kids’ clubs”, or settings where care is provided by child day carers and nannies; and for children aged 3–5/6 years (pre-school education) in nursery schools, pre-school classes in primary schools and other pre-school settings, including pre-school units and centres.

Childcare institutions for children aged 3 and below are supervised by the ministry responsible for labour and social policy. Care is provided in crèches to children from at least the age of 20 weeks, and in “kids’ clubs” to children aged 1 year and above. Care can be provided until the end of the school year in which the child reaches the age of 3.

Pre-school education is considered the first level of school education and as such is supervised by the ministry responsible for school education. Pre-school education in Poland is offered to children aged 3 to 5, and in some cases – 6 years. Children aged 3 and 4 attend pre-school institutions on a voluntary basis, as decided by their parents. 5-year-olds are required by law to complete one school preparatory year in one of the pre-school settings mentioned above. Children who reach the age of 6 in a given calendar year start their education in a primary school (in 2014 this is compulsory only for children born in the first half of 2008, and from 2015 – for all 6-year-olds). This is due to the gradual lowering of the age of commencement of compulsory education in primary school from the age of 7 to the age of 6.

The main aims of pre-school education are defined by the national core curriculum and include, among other things, supporting children in the development of their talents and the intellectual skills necessary in everyday life and subsequent education; building a system of values which enables children to see the difference between what is right and wrong; developing emotional resilience; developing social skills; taking care of children’s health and physical

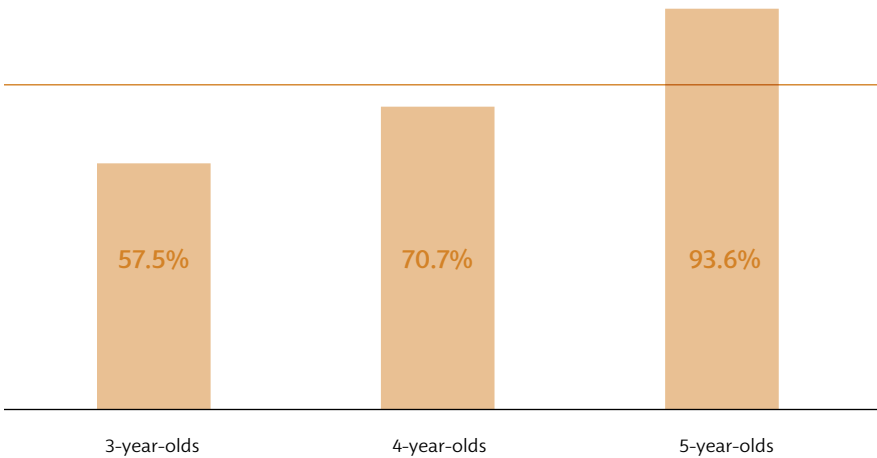
development; building children’s knowledge about the world and introducing them into the world of aesthetic values. The main form of the children’s activity is play.

Obligatory foreign language preparation has been recently introduced, to be provided starting in September 2015.

In 2013/14 there were over 10.4 thousand nursery schools, over 15.4 thousand pre-school classes of primary schools and over 2.1 thousand other forms of pre-school education. Pre-school institutions are attended by approximately 1 268.3 thousand children.

74.1%

participation rate for children aged 3–5



In the school year 2013/2014, the overall participation rate of 3- to 5-year-olds in pre-school education amounted to 74.1%. The rate of participation for children aged 3 was 57.5%, for 4-year-old children 70.7%, and for 5-year-olds – 93.6%.

At present, the increase in the participation of children in pre-school education is one of the government’s priorities.

New regulations of June 2013 (an amendment of the School Education Act) guarantee a place in a pre-school institution for every four-year-old child (from

1 September 2015) and for every three-year-old child (from 1 September 2017). Communes are obliged to organise provision of those places.

From 1 September 2017, every child aged 3–5 shall be enrolled in pre-school education in diverse forms, not only in nursery schools.

3.2. ADMISSION

Children are enrolled in public nursery schools on a free access basis. Decisions are taken by parents who, in most cases, choose institutions within the area of their commune. The age of a child is the main criterion: children must have reached 3 years of age. In special cases, younger children of 2.5 years of age may be enrolled upon the consent of the nursery school head.

Access to some nursery schools is restricted for 3- and 4-year-olds due to the limited number of places available. In nursery schools which are particularly attractive for parents, if the demand exceeds the number of places available preference is given to 5- and 6-year-olds and to single parents. Detailed admission rules for individual nursery schools are laid down in their statutes.

3.3. AGE LEVELS AND GROUPING OF CHILDREN

Children in nursery schools are grouped mainly according to age. Most nursery schools are divided into classes for 3-, 4-, and 5-year-olds. A combination of different age-groups is possible when other criteria are taken into consideration: children's needs, interests and abilities in mainstream nursery schools, and in special nursery schools the extent and type of disability. In rural areas, due to the small number of children, it is also possible to create mixed age groups.

The number of children in one class/group cannot exceed 25, except in special and integration nursery schools and special pre-school classes where the limits are lower. The number of children in integration nursery schools and classes ranges from 15 to 20, including 3–5 disabled children, and in special nursery schools or pre-school classes, depending on the type of disability, from 6 to 16.

As a rule, two teachers working in shifts supervise one class (the first one until 12 noon, and the second from 12 noon). Integration nursery schools and mainstream nursery schools with integration classes employ additional teachers who have been trained in special education.

3.4. ORGANISATION OF TIME

The new Core Curriculum recommends the following timetable for pre-school education and care in pre-school institutions: one fifth of the total time should be devoted to play, one fifth to outdoor activities, one fifth to educational activities, and the remaining two fifths should be devoted by teachers to care and organisational matters.

The organisation of time in pre-school institutions is regulated in the form of a timetable established by the nursery school head, who takes into consideration parents' expectations. In general, classes are organised in such a way as to enable children to spend some of the play time in the garden every day. The teacher in charge of a given class prepares a detailed timetable for his/her group on the basis of the general timetable, taking into consideration the needs and interests of children.

Nursery schools are open throughout the school year, except for breaks established by the governing body at the request of the nursery school head who takes into consideration parents' needs. Pre-school classes in primary schools are also open throughout the school year, except for breaks established by the school governing body.

The minimum working time for nursery schools and pre-school classes in primary schools is 5 hours a day. Most nursery schools work approximately 9 hours a day and are open 5 days a week. During the day children participate in activities organised or proposed by the teacher and engage in play activities in the classroom or in the garden. The duration of structured activities depends on the age of children: approximately 30 minutes for 5- to 6-year-olds, and approximately 15 minutes for younger children, i.e. 3- to 4-year-olds.

3.5. CURRICULUM

Nursery schools, pre-school classes and institutions offering pre-school education in other settings are obliged to follow a curriculum based on the Core Curriculum and adjusted to the needs and abilities of the children concerned. The curriculum is approved for use in nursery schools or pre-school classes of a primary school by the head of the school. In the case of other pre-school education settings, the curriculum is approved for use by the head of the teachers working in such alternative settings.

Pre-school education does not introduce subjects as these are understood in the school system. Education is considered globally and is based mainly on play

activities for children. One of the major tasks of pre-school institutions is to create suitable conditions for the child's individual development and preparation for school education. Pre-school pupils learn occasionally and spontaneously while playing. Pre-school teachers enable children to undertake various forms of activity, to develop their self-reliance and ability to cooperate and coexist in a group in safe conditions suited to their needs and abilities. Children participate in games designed to improve their speaking, visual and aural skills and to arouse their interest in reading.

From 1 September 2014 it is optional for every nursery school to start free language lessons. Compulsory language lessons will be introduced in 2015 for all 5-year-olds and 2 years later, from 1 September 2017, all the children attending nursery schools will be learning a foreign language.

3.6. ASSESSMENT

According to the legislation, pre-school teachers are responsible for continuous observation of individual children and for keeping records of their achievements. This is aimed at the recognition of children's needs and provides a basis for teachers' cooperation with counselling and healthcare specialists. The information gathered helps the teachers in their daily work with the child and in contacts with the child's parents.

The Core Curriculum introduces an obligation for teachers of 5- and 6-year-olds (6-year-olds up to 2014) enrolled in pre-school education to assess the child's readiness for school education (so-called pre-school diagnosis). This assessment takes place at the beginning of the school year preceding the child's enrollment in grade 1 of the primary school. The parents of a child who completes pre-school education receive a written document informing about the child's readiness to undertake education in a primary school.

In well justified cases commencement of compulsory school education can be postponed, but only by up to one year. This decision is taken by the primary school head upon consultation with the counselling and guidance centre.



PRIMARY EDUCATION

Primary education is compulsory – children between the ages of 6/7 and 13 attend primary schools for a period of six years.

Public primary education is free of charge for all pupils.

General education in the primary school is divided into two stages:

1. Stage I, including grades 1 to 3 of the primary school and covering early school education,
2. Stage II, including grades 4 to 6 of the primary school.

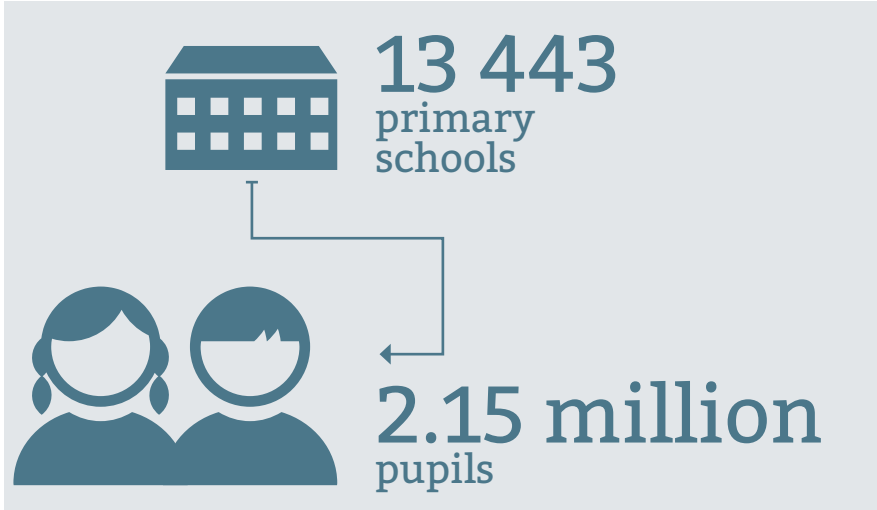
General education in the primary school aims to enable pupils to:

1. acquire a basic body of knowledge about facts, rules, theories and practice related in particular to topics and phenomena close to their experience;
2. acquire the ability to use the knowledge gained to carry out tasks and solve problems;
3. develop attitudes which are necessary for efficient and responsible functioning in the modern world.

The most important skills to be acquired by pupils in primary schools include:

1. reading: understood as both a simple activity and the ability to understand, use and process texts to an extent enabling acquisition of knowledge, emotional, intellectual and moral development, as well as participation in social life;
2. mathematical thinking: the ability to use basic mathematical tools in everyday life and to apply elementary mathematical reasoning;
3. scientific thinking: the ability to formulate conclusions based on empirical observation related to nature and society;
4. communication skills in the mother tongue and in a foreign language, including both speaking and writing skills;
5. the ability to use ICT effectively, including the ability to search for and make use of information;

- 6. learning to learn as a means enabling pupils to satisfy their curiosity about the world, to identify their interests and to prepare for further education;
 - 7. teamwork skills.
-



In 2013/2014 there were 13 443 primary schools for children, attended by approximately 2.15 million pupils.

4.1. ADMISSION

Children are admitted to primary schools at the age of 6 or 7 (they must reach the age of 6 or 7 during the calendar year in which they start compulsory education). Before 2014 admission of 6-year-olds to grade 1 of primary school was left to the parents' discretion. In 2014 education in primary schools is compulsory for 6-year-old children born in the first half of 2008, i.e. children born before the end of June 2008. Starting in 2015 all 6-year-olds will commence compulsory schooling.

The decision on admission or its postponement is taken by the school head upon consultation with a counselling and guidance centre. Communes are divided into school catchment areas in order to provide even access to schools. Children are admitted easily to a school in their catchment area. If there are

places in a relevant class, children from another catchment area may be admitted to a school on their parents' request.

4.2. ORGANISATION OF SCHOOL TIME

The organisation of the school year is defined by the Ministry of National Education in a separate regulation. The Ministry of National Education issues the calendar for the school year on an annual basis, specifying the dates of the start and the end of the school year and of school holidays.

The school year (for primary and secondary schools) is divided into two semesters, the first semester lasting from the first day of classes (the first working day of September) until the last Saturday preceding the winter holidays; and the second semester from the Monday directly after the winter holidays until the last day of classes (the last Friday in June). The dates of the winter break vary among the provinces in Poland. The winter holidays should, in principle, be scheduled between mid-January and the end of February and last for two weeks. The exact timing of the winter break is determined by the head of the regional education authorities (education superintendent) in agreement with the head of the province. Primary and secondary schools in Poland also have Christmas and Easter breaks.

In most public schools lessons start at 8 a.m. and finish at 2 or 3 p.m. if a school works in one shift. Each lesson usually lasts 45 minutes. Breaks are considered sufficient if they last at least 5–10 minutes, but no longer than 25 minutes. Pupils usually attend school five days a week, from Monday to Friday. Specific organisation of classes in a given school is defined in the school's statutes.

Classes are organised by age which is the first level of division. PE classes can be conducted in separate groups for boys and girls. Grouping of pupils is obligatory in the following cases:

- ▶ for compulsory computer classes, if groups have more than 24 pupils; the number of pupils in a group cannot exceed the number of computers in the computer laboratory;
- ▶ for compulsory foreign language classes, with pupils grouped according to the level of their language skills; classes are taught in cross-grade groups of up to 24 pupils;
- ▶ for a maximum of 50% of compulsory general education which, in accordance with curricular content, should comprise practical classes (including laboratory classes), in classes of more than 30 pupils.

4.3. CURRICULUM

Education in primary school is based on the core curriculum which defines the learning outcomes and some general requirements for the organisation of teaching at this level of education.

Core curricula have to be respected by each school, but school curricula are determined at the school level. Teachers are free to follow curricula chosen or developed by them independently and approved by the school head. The curriculum proposed by the teacher should be based on the core curriculum and adjusted to the needs and abilities of the pupils concerned. Teachers may also use textbooks selected from the list approved by the Minister of National Education.

The new Core Curriculum of 2008, introduced gradually since 2009/2010, has been defined in terms of general and detailed learning outcomes regarding knowledge and skills that have to be acquired by each pupil by the end of a given educational stage. In this way the Core Curriculum determines the scope of knowledge and skills to be tested at the end of grade 6. The process of its implementation in the primary schools will be completed in 2015.

4.3.1. Stage I (grades 1 to 3 – early school education)

Teaching at stage I is meant to provide a smooth transition from pre-primary experience to school education. Educational activities are conducted according to a flexible timetable prepared by the teacher, in which the duration of lessons and breaks is influenced by the pupils' activity.

Education in grades 1–3 of the primary school is implemented in the form of integrated teaching provided by a generalist teacher. Music education, art education, physical education (PE), computer classes and modern foreign language classes can be taught by a specialist teacher with relevant qualifications.

Early school education aims to support children in their intellectual, emotional, social, ethical, physical and aesthetic development. The new curriculum defines the scope of knowledge and skills to be acquired by pupils completing education in grade 3. The scope of knowledge and skills which pupils should have gained by the end of education in grade 3 is defined in such a way as to enable teachers to work with children of average-level abilities.

The minimum number of compulsory classes (where 1 teaching hour equals 45 minutes) has been defined in the legislation for grades 1–3 of the primary schools as follows:

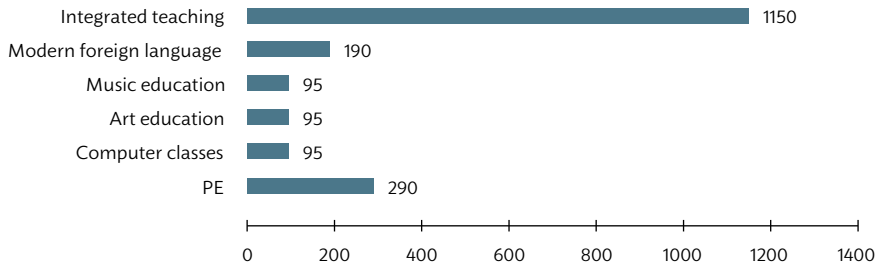


Figure 1. Stage I (grades 1–3, primary school) – minimum number of teaching hours by subject in the 3-year period

Non-compulsory religion/ethics classes are also envisaged. The weekly number of teaching hours of compulsory classes for pupils in particular grades at stage I has been defined as: grade 1 – 20, grade 2 – 21, grade 3 – 21.

4.3.2. Stage II (grades 4 to 6)

Stage II of the 6-year primary school covers grades 4, 5 and 6. Teaching at this stage is arranged by subjects.

The minimum number of compulsory classes (where 1 teaching hour equals 45 minutes) has been defined in the legislation for grades 4–6 of the primary schools as follows:

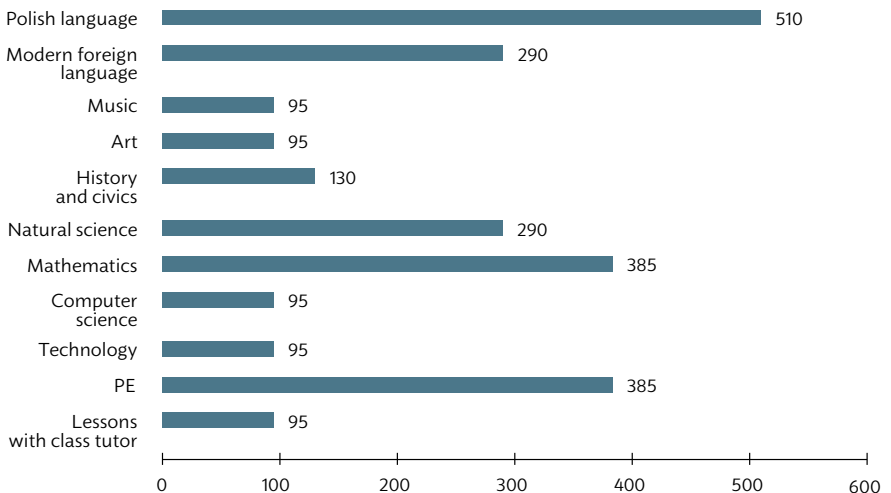


Figure 2. Stage II (grades 4–6, primary school) – minimum number of teaching hours by subject in the 3-year period

Non-compulsory religion/ethics classes are also envisaged. The weekly number of teaching hours of compulsory classes for pupils in particular grades at stage II has been defined as: grade 4 – 25; grade 5 – 26; grade 6 – 28.

4.4. ASSESSMENT

Internal assessment is carried out by school teachers, while external assessment is conducted by the Central Examination Board and Regional Examination Boards i.e. institutions external to the school.

4.4.1. Internal assessment

The performance and progress of pupils are regularly assessed by teachers throughout the school year. The school defines its own internal assessment system which is included in the school statutes.

Pupils are assessed separately in each subject. Results of the assessment carried out during a school year (single marks) are taken into account in the end-of-term (mid-year) and end-of-year assessment. Pupils' achievements are assessed by the teacher of a given subject.

At the end of the school year pupils in grades 1 to 3 of the primary school receive a descriptive assessment for educational activities and for behaviour. Starting in grade 4, the teacher can use the following marking scale to assess pupils' learning achievements: 6 – excellent, 5 – very good, 4 – good, 3 – satisfactory, 2 – acceptable, 1 – unsatisfactory (fail). School marks and the assessment criteria should be made available to pupils and their parents.

A pupil is promoted to a higher grade if he/she has received marks at the level of “acceptable” or above for all compulsory subjects at the end of the school year. If he/she receives an “unsatisfactory” mark in one subject, he/she can take a re-sit examination in this subject. A pupil who has failed the re-sit is not promoted and remains in the same grade. In some cases, the teachers' council can decide upon a pupil's promotion to a higher grade on condition that this subject will be continued by the pupil in the following school year.

Pupils also receive marks for their behaviour (conduct) on the following scale: excellent, very good, good, acceptable, unacceptable, inadmissible. The mark for behaviour should not influence subject marks, the promotion to a higher grade, or graduation. However, in specific cases, the teachers' council of the school may decide

that the pupil cannot be promoted to the higher grade or complete education in the primary school due to his/her inadmissible behaviour.

At the end of each school year pupils receive certificates in a standardized form.

4.4.2. External assessment

On completion of primary school (at the end of grade 6) pupils sit an external standardized test. The test is set by the Central Examination Board and assessed by Regional Examination Boards. It is obligatory for all pupils.

Before 2015 the test was designed to assess the level of skills as defined in the national examination standards. Starting in 2015 the test will be based on the requirements included in the Core Curriculum. It consists of two parts: the first comprising Polish language and mathematics, and the second – a modern foreign language.

The test has no selection function, i.e. its results have no bearing on admission to lower-secondary school. The head of the local lower-secondary school is obliged to admit a primary school graduate residing in his/her school's catchment area regardless of the results obtained in the test or marked on the school leaving certificate. The test is intended to provide pupils, parents and teachers with information about the level of pupils' achievements.



SECONDARY EDUCATION

In Poland secondary education has two levels – 3-year lower-secondary school (*gimnazjum*) which is compulsory for all pupils and is referred to as stage III of the Polish education system, and several types of post-compulsory upper-secondary schools, both general and vocational, referred to as stage IV and open to candidates who have successfully graduated from lower-secondary schools. They are:

- A. 3-year general upper-secondary schools (*liceum ogólnokształcące*);
- B. 4-year technical upper-secondary schools (*technikum*);
- C. 3-year basic vocational schools (*zasadnicza szkoła zawodowa*).

The new Core Curriculum was introduced as from 2009 in grade 1 of the lower-secondary school and since then has been gradually implemented at the subsequent grades. The process of its implementation was completed in 2012 in lower-secondary schools, and will be completed in 2015 in general upper-secondary and basic vocational schools, and in 2016 in technical upper-secondary schools.

According to the 2008 Core Curriculum educational aims are formulated jointly for the two stages of secondary education: stage III (lower-secondary) and stage IV (upper-secondary).

Upon completion of general education at stage III (lower-secondary) and IV (upper-secondary) the pupils/students should have:

- ▶ acquired a body of knowledge covering facts, rules, theories and practices;
- ▶ acquired the ability to use the knowledge gained in carrying out tasks and solving problems;
- ▶ developed attitudes which are necessary for efficient and responsible functioning in the modern world.

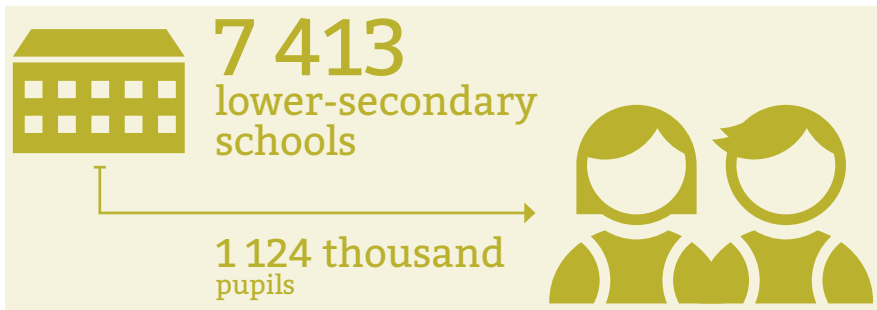
The most important skills to be acquired by pupils/students at stages III and IV of education include:

1. reading: the ability to understand, use and reflectively process texts, including texts in the realm of culture, leading to the attainment of one's own goals, individual development and active participation in social life;

2. mathematical thinking: the ability to use mathematical tools in everyday life and to formulate conclusions based on mathematical thinking;
3. scientific thinking: the ability to use scientific knowledge in order to identify and solve problems, and the ability to formulate conclusions based on empirical observation related to nature and society;
4. communication skills in the mother tongue and in foreign languages, including both speaking and writing skills;
5. the ability to use ICT effectively;
6. the ability to search for, select and analyze information in a critical way;
7. the ability to identify one's own educational needs;
8. teamwork skills.

5.1. LOWER-SECONDARY EDUCATION

The lower-secondary school offers 3 years of full-time general education for pupils who have completed the 6-year primary school. It is compulsory for all pupils. Study covers grades 1 to 3 (pupils aged 13 to 16). Lower-secondary education is concluded with an external examination giving access to upper-secondary education.



In 2013/2014 there were 7 413 lower-secondary schools (*gimnazjum*) for young people, attended by approximately 1 124 thousand pupils.

5.1.1. Admission

The only admission requirement is successful completion of the 6-year primary schooling confirmed by the primary school leaving certificate. This certificate is

awarded together with a certificate from the Regional Examination Board which includes results of the external standardized test taken at the end of primary education.

5.1.2. Curriculum

As of 2012 all three grades at lower-secondary schools have been following the 2008 Core Curriculum.

The minimum number of compulsory classes (where 1 teaching hour equals 45 minutes) has been defined in the legislation for grades 1–3 of the lower-secondary schools as follows:

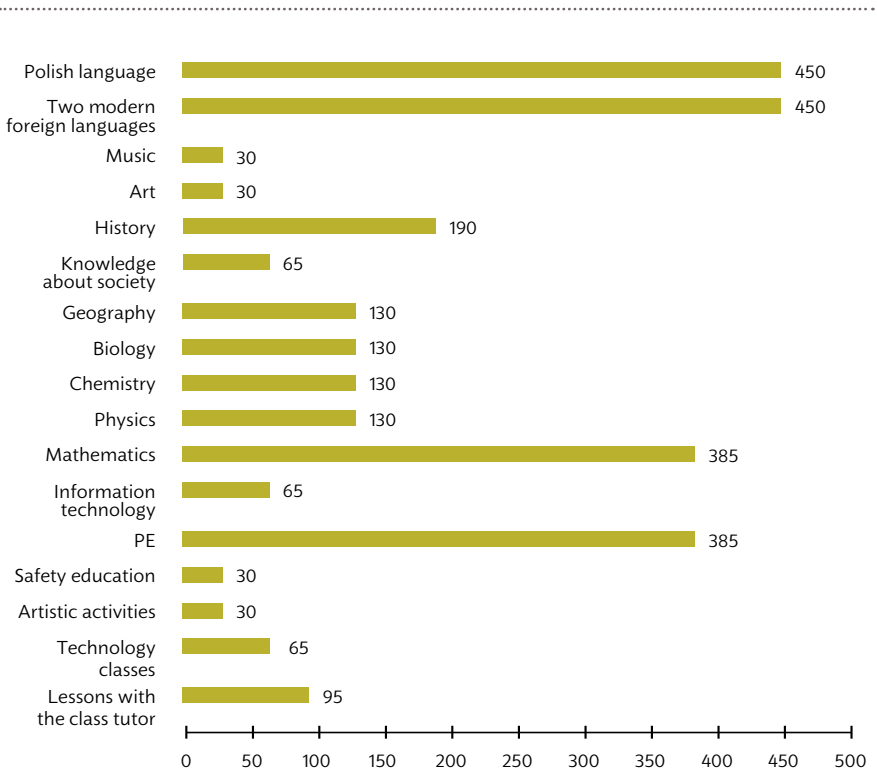


Figure 3. Stage III (grades 1–3, lower-secondary education) – minimum number of teaching hours by subject in the 3-year period

Non-compulsory religion/ethics classes are also envisaged. The distribution of hours between the two modern foreign languages is left to the school head's discretion.

The weekly number of teaching hours of compulsory classes in particular grades of the lower-secondary school is as follows: grade 1 – 29, grade 2 – 30, grade 3 – 31.

5.1.3. Assessment

Internal assessment

Internal assessment is based on the same rules as for grades 4 to 6 of primary school. For details see point 4.4.1., section “Internal assessment”.

External assessment

An external standardized examination is organised at the end of the 3rd year of the lower-secondary school. This examination tests abilities, skills and knowledge in the fields of humanities and science, as well as foreign language competence. As from 2012 it has been adjusted to requirements included in the new Core Curriculum. It is compulsory for all pupils.

It consists of three parts:

1. humanities, including two subsections:
 - a. history and civic education,
 - b. Polish language,
2. mathematics and natural sciences, including two subsections:
 - a. natural sciences (biology, chemistry, physics and geography),
 - b. mathematics,
3. a modern foreign language (basic or extended level).

The results are annexed to the lower-secondary school leaving certificate. They are comparable on a national scale and have strong bearing on admission to upper-secondary schools.

5.2. GENERAL UPPER-SECONDARY EDUCATION

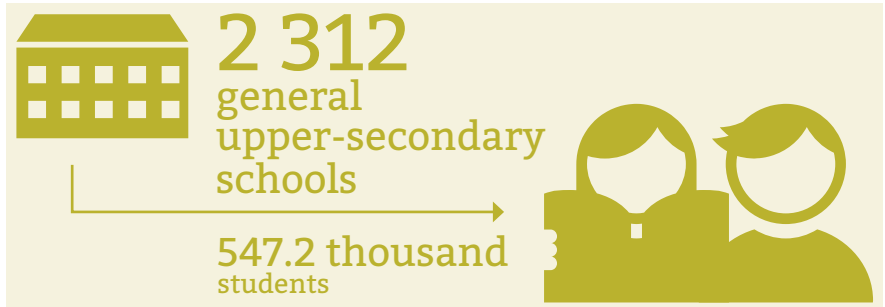
General upper-secondary schools (*liceum ogólnokształcące*) offer 3 years of full-time general upper-secondary education for young people aged 16 to 19. They offer the matriculation examination that leads to the receipt of the matriculation certificate required for admission to higher education.

The main objective of general upper-secondary education is to prepare young people for admission to higher education establishments of various types.

For the general aims of secondary education according to the 2008 Core Curriculum see the beginning of section 5.

Education in public secondary schools is free of charge. In the case of non-public schools the bodies governing the schools define the level of tuition fees.

For more details see section 2. "Funding".



In 2013/2014 there were 2 312 general upper-secondary schools for young people with approximately 547.2 thousand students.

5.2.1. Admission

The number of points indicated on the lower-secondary school leaving certificate (based on results achieved in chosen areas of study and other achievements) including the points received at the lower-secondary school leaving examination give the basis for pupils' admission to an upper-secondary school. The detailed admission rules are defined by each upper-secondary school which opens admissions to new pupils. The winners of regional competitions (subject competitions which encompass the curriculum of at least one subject) are admitted to the upper-secondary school of their choice regardless of the criteria applied to other candidates.

5.2.2. Curriculum

The Core Curriculum includes the following subjects to be taught in general secondary schools: the Polish language, two modern foreign languages, Latin and ancient culture, mathematics, history, knowledge about society, geography, biology, physics, chemistry, technology classes, information technology, safety education, physical education (PE), education for family life, cultural studies, introduction to entrepreneurship, minority language (in schools for linguistic minorities), and, only at the extended level, history of music, history of art, Latin and ancient culture, and

philosophy. Four additional subjects are also envisaged: history and society, natural science, artistic classes and economics in practice.

The minimum number of compulsory classes (where 1 teaching hour equals 45 minutes) has been defined in legislation for grades 1–3 of the general upper-secondary schools as follows:

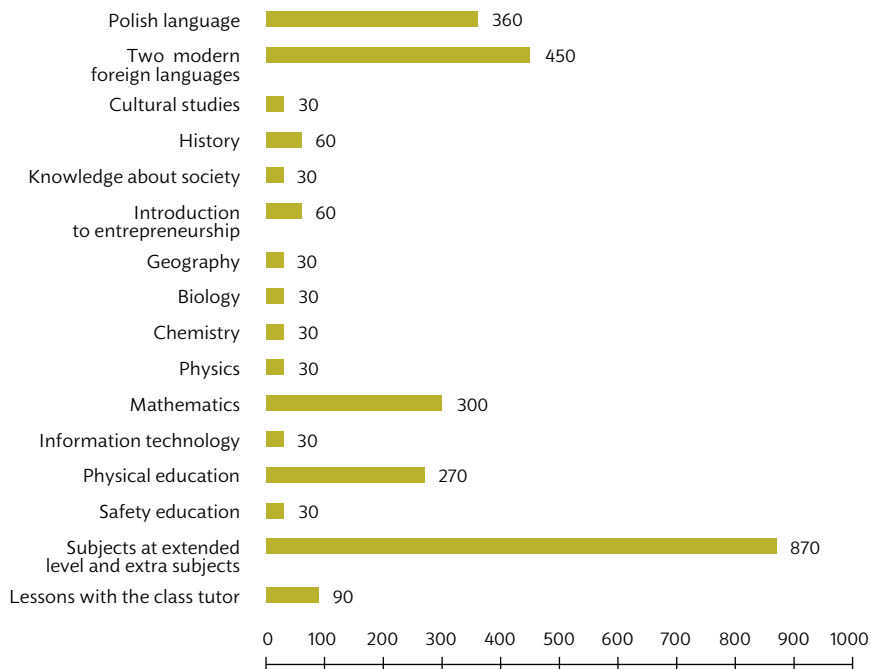


Figure 4 Stage IV (grades 1–3, general upper-secondary education) – minimum number of teaching hours by subject in the 3-year period

The distribution of hours between the two modern foreign languages is left to the school head's discretion. Non-compulsory religion/ethics classes are also envisaged.

Subjects taught at the extended level (with a total number of 870 teaching hours, added to the number of hours defined for the basic level): Polish language, history, geography, biology, chemistry, physics, history of music, history of art, Latin and ancient culture, and philosophy – 240 teaching hours each; a modern foreign language, knowledge about society, mathematics and IT – 180 teaching hours each.

Additional subjects: history and society, and natural science – 120 teaching hours each; arts classes and economics in practice – 30 teaching hours.

The school head decides upon the list of subjects to be taught at the extended level, of which a pupil chooses from 2 to 4 subjects which he/she follows with a view to taking the *Matura* examination, under the condition that one from the following five subjects is chosen: history, geography, biology, chemistry or physics.

A pupil who does not follow history at the extended level has to follow the curriculum of the additional subject history and society. A pupil who does not follow geography, biology, chemistry or physics at the extended level has to follow the curriculum of the additional subject natural science.

The weekly number of teaching hours of compulsory classes in particular grades is as follows: grade 1 – 30, grade 2 – 32, grade 3 – 29.

5.2.3. Assessment

Internal assessment

The performance and progress of pupils are regularly assessed by teachers throughout the school year. The school defines its own internal assessment system which is included in the school statutes.

Pupils are assessed separately in each subject. Results of the assessment carried out during a school year (single marks) are taken into account in the end-of-term (mid-year) and end-of-year assessment. Pupils' achievements are assessed by the teacher of the given subject.

The teacher can use the following marking scale to assess pupils' learning achievements: 6 – excellent, 5 – very good, 4 – good, 3 – satisfactory, 2 – acceptable, 1 – unsatisfactory (fail). School marks and the assessment criteria should be made available to pupils and their parents.

A pupil is promoted to a higher grade if he/she has received marks at the level of “acceptable” or above for all compulsory subjects at the end of the school year. If he/she receives an “unsatisfactory” mark in one subject, he/she can take a re-sit examination in this subject. A pupil who has failed the re-sit is not promoted and remains in the same grade. In some cases, the teachers' council can decide upon a pupil's promotion to a higher grade on condition that this subject will be continued by the pupil in the following school year.

Pupils also receive marks for their behaviour (conduct) on the following scale: excellent, very good, good, acceptable, unacceptable, inadmissible. The mark for behaviour should not influence subject marks, the promotion to a higher grade or graduation. However, in specific cases, the teachers' council of the school may decide that the pupil cannot be promoted to the higher grade or complete education in the upper-secondary school due to his/her inadmissible behaviour.

At the end of each school year pupils receive certificates in a standardized form.

External assessment

Upon the completion of the 3-year general upper-secondary school pupils are awarded a **school leaving certificate** on the basis of school results, without a final examination. It mentions the subjects and the marks obtained at the end of the final year. It gives access to the matriculation examination or to post-secondary education.

At the end of upper-secondary education (except at basic vocational schools) pupils may sit a matriculation exam, a national external examination, which is compulsory only for award of the **matriculation certificate** and to gain access to higher education. The matriculation examination is held on completion of the general and technical upper-secondary schooling and consists of two parts – written and oral.

Starting in 2015 the matriculation examination for graduates of general upper-secondary schools (and in 2016 for graduates of technical upper-secondary schools) is based on different rules, i.e. it is adjusted to requirements included in the new Core Curriculum.

Changes introduced to this examination complete the process of harmonization of the system of external examinations which started in 2012.

The matriculation examination in the new form also consists of written and oral parts. The written part, set by the Central Examination Board and assessed by Regional Examination Boards, includes the following subjects: Polish language, mathematics, a modern foreign language and also the national minority language for those pupils for whom this language was the language of instruction. All these subjects are compulsory and taken at the basic level. Additionally, for the written part, all pupils will have to choose at least 1 optional subject (up to max. 5 subjects) from the list of optional subjects, which includes: biology, chemistry, philosophy, physics, geography, history, history of music, history of art, computer science, Latin and ancient culture, the minority language (ethnic or national), a modern foreign language, the Polish language, the regional language, mathematics, and knowledge about society. All additional subjects in the written part are taken at the extended level.

The oral part, prepared and assessed by the school teachers, consists of compulsory as well as additional subjects. Compulsory subjects will be the Polish language and a modern foreign language, as well as the national minority language for those pupils for whom this language was the language of instruction. Additionally, one subject has to be chosen from the list including: a modern foreign

language, ethnic minority language, national minority language, or regional language. The level at which oral examinations are taken (whether basic or extended) is not defined.

The list of modern foreign languages to be taken by pupils at the matriculation examination includes: English, French, Spanish, German, Russian and Italian.

To pass the matriculation examination, it is necessary to score at least 30% of points in each compulsory subject in both the written and oral parts, and to take at least one additional subject in the written part.

5.3. VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (VET)

Significant changes were introduced in the system of vocational education and training in 2012 on the basis of the legislation adopted in 2011. The most important reason behind the reform was the need to improve the effectiveness and relevance of the VET system and to adjust it to better meet the needs of employers and the labour market.

Occupations are now described in terms of qualifications. The new classification includes 200 occupations which encompass 252 qualifications. Within particular occupations one, two or three qualifications are distinguished. And thus the classification includes 98 single-qualification occupations, 72 double-qualification occupations and 23 triple-qualification occupations. Seven artistic occupations have no qualifications distinguished.

Students and adult learners can acquire qualifications one by one throughout the whole education process and not only upon the completion of the school as was the case before the reform. Examinations confirming vocational qualifications are held at different stages of education, making it possible for the students to receive a certificate for a single qualification. After passing examinations for all the qualifications required for a given occupation, and having completed the required level of education, the students receive a vocational diploma. Until 2017 it will be possible for the graduates of vocational schools who followed the programme according to the previous VET core curriculum to take the “old” version of the vocational examination.

The modernized system of examinations confirming vocational qualifications is flexible enough to allow validation of non-formal and informal learning outcomes. Starting in September 2012, this system has become open to those persons who had acquired vocational knowledge and experience outside vocational schools.

5.3.1. Organisation of vocational education and training in upper-secondary schools

The main objective of vocational upper-secondary education is to prepare young people for entry into the labour market. The following upper-secondary technical and vocational schools are currently open to candidates who have successfully graduated from a lower-secondary school:

- ▶ 4-year technical upper-secondary school (*technikum*) – a type of school that offers 4 years of full-time technical and vocational upper-secondary education for students aged 16 to 20; it offers the matriculation examination necessary for admission to higher education, and external examinations confirming vocational qualifications;
- ▶ 3-year basic vocational school (*zasadnicza szkoła zawodowa*) – a type of school that offers 3 years of full-time upper-secondary vocational education for students aged 16 to 19; graduates have access to work after passing examinations confirming vocational qualifications or examinations for the title of journeyman in a craft; moreover, they can continue their education in settings for adults (they can enrol in grade 2 of an upper general secondary school for adults and/or acquire further qualifications in vocational qualification courses).

5.3.2. Practical training

Practical vocational training may be organised in school laboratories and workshops, in conditions as close as possible to real working conditions. Training can also take place in practical or continuing training centres equipped with modern technology or at the employers' premises. Practical vocational training at the employers' premises applies to students of public upper-secondary schools that offer vocational education as well as to juvenile workers/apprentices undergoing practical training as a part of apprenticeship training.

As a part of practical vocational training, traineeships are obligatory for all occupations at technical and post-secondary level and take place in the enterprises relevant for a given occupation. The period of traineeship lasts from 4 to 12 weeks, depending on the occupation.

5.3.3. Curriculum

General education in vocational schools is based on the 2008 Core Curriculum (as amended in 2012).

Vocational training in particular occupations listed in the 2011 classification of occupations for vocational education is carried out in compliance with the updated Core Curriculum for vocational education (2012).

Technical upper-secondary school

The minimum number of compulsory classes (where 1 teaching hour equals 45 minutes) has been defined in the legislation for grades 1–4 of the technical upper-secondary school as follows:

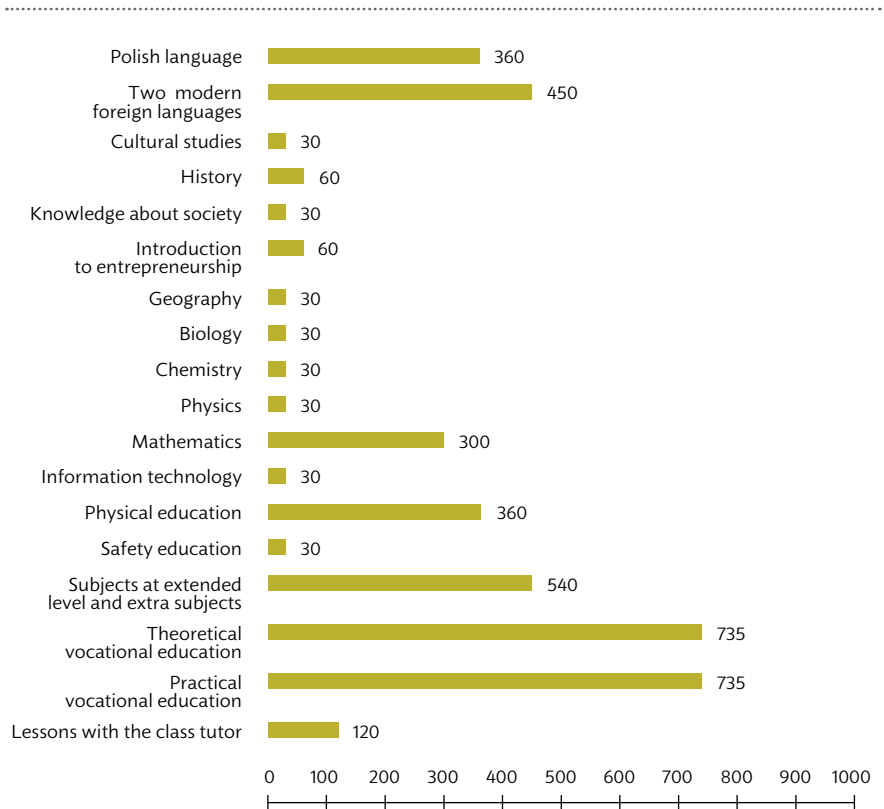


Figure 5. Stage IV (grades 1–4, technical upper-secondary school) – minimum number of teaching hours by subject in the 4-year period

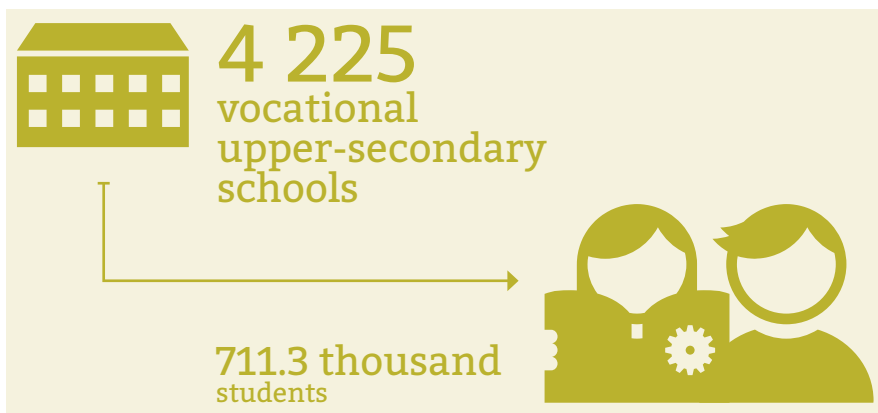
The weekly number of teaching hours of compulsory classes in particular grades is as follows: grade 1 – 33, grade 2 – 35, grade 3 – 34, grade 4 – 31.

The distribution of hours between the two modern foreign languages is left to the school head's discretion. Non-compulsory religion/ethics classes are also envisaged.

Subjects taught at the extended level (with a total number of 540 teaching hours, added to the number of hours defined for the basic level): the Polish language, history, geography, biology, chemistry, physics, history of music, history of art, Latin and ancient culture, and philosophy – 240 teaching hours each; a modern foreign language, knowledge about society, mathematics and information technology – 180 teaching hours each. Additional subjects: history and society and natural science – 120 teaching hours each; economics in practice and artistic classes – 30 teaching hours.

The school head decides upon the list of subjects to be taught at the extended level, of which a pupil chooses 2 subjects under the condition that one of the following five subjects is chosen: mathematics, geography, biology, chemistry or physics. A pupil who does not follow history at the extended level has to follow the curriculum of the additional subject history and society.

A student who has chosen history and one of the following subjects: geography, biology, chemistry or physics at the extended level has to follow the curriculum of the additional subject economics in practice. A student who has chosen history and mathematics at the extended level has to follow the curriculum of the additional subject natural science.



In 2013/2014 there were 4 225 vocational upper-secondary schools (including basic, technical, as well as specialized and supplementary schools which are being phased out) for young people, with approximately 711.3 thousand students.

Practical training in technical upper-secondary schools must take not less than 50% of the time dedicated to vocational education. On-the-job training (traineeships) is implemented according to the scope provided in the core curriculum for vocational education, and lasts from 4 to 12 weeks, depending on the occupation.

Basic vocational school

The minimum number of compulsory classes (where 1 teaching hour equals 45 minutes) has been defined in the legislation for grades 1–3 of the basic vocational school as follows:

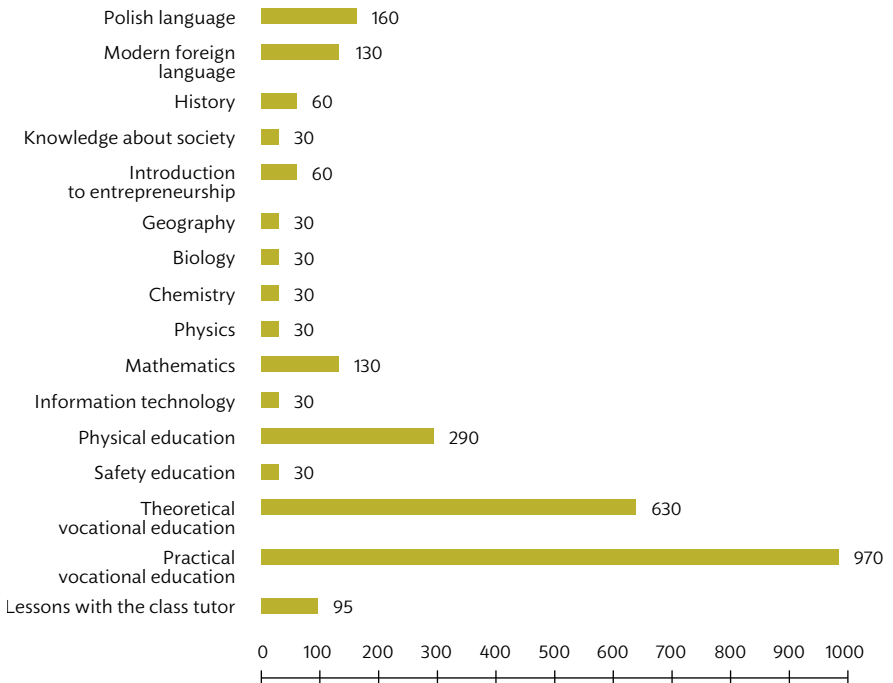


Figure 6. Stage IV (grades 1–3, basic vocational school) – minimum number of teaching hours by subject in the 3-year period

Non-compulsory religion/ethics classes are also envisaged. The weekly number of teaching hours of compulsory classes in particular grades is as follows: grade 1 – 27, grade 2 – 29, grade 3 – 30. Subject teachers have the right to choose methods of

teaching, depending on the number of pupils per class and on school equipment available (e.g. IT and specialist equipment, workshops). Teachers are free to choose textbooks from the list approved by the Ministry.

Practical training in basic vocational schools must take not less than 60% of the time dedicated to vocational education. Practical training classes are aimed at the acquisition of vocational skills necessary for a given occupation. Approximately 61% of students in basic vocational schools are apprentices/juvenile workers. The apprentices take part in apprenticeship training spending the majority of their time acquiring skills at the employers' premises (who are mainly craftsmen) after a contract has been signed between the employer and the apprentice (juvenile worker aged between 16 and 18). In this type of dual system, learning at school usually takes place 2 days a week (theoretical knowledge: general and vocational), while the remaining 3 days are spent at the workplace.

5.3.4. Assessment

Internal assessment

See point 5.2.3. "Assessment", section "Internal assessment" in the point 5.2. "General upper-secondary education".

External assessment in vocational education and training

Examinations confirming vocational qualifications are designed to assess the level of acquisition by a student/learner of the knowledge and skills required for a given qualification, as defined in the Core Curriculum for vocational education.

Vocational examinations in the new form were conducted for the first time in April 2013 for those students and adult learners who started vocational education and training after 1 September 2012.

Since 1 September 2012 vocational schools have provided vocational education in 200 occupations which encompass 252 qualifications where each qualification is described as a set of expected learning outcomes which are defined in the Core Curriculum for Vocational Education and Training (VET). Their achievement, and thus the completion of a given qualification, is confirmed by a certificate issued by the Regional Examination Board upon passing of an examination as described below.

Each examination is conducted in one qualification only, which means that the number of examinations in an occupation depends on the number of qualifications distinguished in this occupation – in practice it is one, two or three examinations per occupation (one examination per qualification). The Central Examination Board develops guidelines for each examination.

Examinations confirming vocational qualifications consist of two parts: a written part and a practical part. The written part is carried out in the form of a test of knowledge and skills required for a given qualification. The practical part is intended to test practical skills needed for a given qualification.

Upon passing an examination for a single qualification, a student/adult learner receives a certificate issued by the Regional Examination Board, and after passing examinations for all the qualifications required in a given occupation, and having completed the expected level of general education, he/she receives a vocational diploma.

Vocational examinations are taken by:

- ▶ students of basic vocational schools and technical upper-secondary schools, as well as students of post-secondary schools;
- ▶ graduates of these schools;
- ▶ adult learners who have completed a vocational qualification course.

Both the written and the practical part of the vocational examination can take place either at a school or vocational education centre, or in an enterprise. To pass an examination, it is necessary to score at least 50% of points in the written part, and at least 75% of points in the practical part.



POST-SECONDARY NON-TERTIARY EDUCATION

Post-secondary non-tertiary schools (*szkoła policealna*), due to the type of qualifications they offer, are included in the Polish classification as part of secondary education. Post-secondary schools offer programmes lasting from 1 up to 2.5 years which are a follow-up to upper-secondary education. They enable students who have completed general upper-secondary education to acquire a diploma confirming vocational qualifications upon passing vocational examinations.

Post-secondary schools are administered by central administration units, local government units, non-governmental and religious organisations, and associations. There are post-secondary schools for young people or adult learners, and others providing special education. This type of school prepares general upper-secondary school leavers for employment in the following groups of occupations: middle-level technical staff, middle-level technical staff in biological sciences and health protection, office staff, personal services and security workers, and workers in other areas of specialization. Education in public post-secondary schools is free of charge. In the case of non-public schools the bodies managing the school define the level of tuition fees.



In 2013/2014 there were 2 323 post-secondary schools (both public and non-public) attended by 268.3 thousand students. Most of them were non-public schools.

6.1. ADMISSION

Post-secondary schools admit mainly graduates of general upper-secondary schools. Almost all of them require only a secondary school leaving certificate, not the matriculation certificate. Students usually start their education in post-secondary schools at the age of 19. Detailed admission rules are defined by each post-secondary school which opens admissions to new students.

6.2. CURRICULUM

Post-secondary schools provide courses within more than 20 groups of specialization: arts, economics and administration, medical studies, technology, agriculture, forestry and fishery, transport and communication, services and others. The most popular specializations include: economics and administration, medical services, services to the population and computing.

According to the legislation in post-secondary schools for young people, in a 2-year cycle the minimum number of compulsory lessons is as follows: theoretical vocational training – 800 teaching hours, practical vocational training – 800 teaching hours and PE – 190 teaching hours. In the case of 1- and 1.5- or 2.5-year cycles the number of hours defined for the 2-year cycle is proportionally adjusted (reduced or increased).

Practical training in post-secondary non-tertiary schools must account for not less than 50% of the time dedicated to vocational education. On-the-job training (traineeships) is implemented according to the scope provided in the core curriculum for vocational education. As of 1 September 2012 the new Core Curriculum for vocational education is in place. A modified classification of occupations has been introduced – they are now described in terms of qualifications: students can acquire qualifications separately throughout the whole education process and not upon completion of schooling, as was the case before the reform.

6.3. ASSESSMENT

6.3.1. Internal assessment

Students are assessed separately in each subject. Rules of internal assessment are the same as in other secondary schools, with one exception – behaviour (conduct) which

is not assessed in post-secondary schools. Students are promoted after completion of each semester of the programme. For details on internal assessment see point 5.2.3., section “Internal assessment”.

6.3.2. External assessment

Both students and graduates of post-secondary schools can take external examinations confirming vocational qualifications. For details on external assessment in vocational education and training see point 5.3.4. “Assessment”, section “External assessment in vocational education and training”.



TERTIARY EDUCATION

Tertiary education currently includes the following types of programmes:

- ▶ **degree programmes** provided by both public and non-public university-type and non-university higher education institutions, including:
 - ▶ first-cycle (Bachelor's degree) programmes;
 - ▶ second-cycle (Master's degree) programmes;
 - ▶ long-cycle (Master's degree) programmes;
- ▶ **third-cycle or doctoral programmes**
- ▶ **college programmes** classified as tertiary education for international comparisons, but not recognised as such in the national legislation (teacher training colleges are currently being phased out).

Higher education programmes may be offered as full-time or part-time programmes.

7.1. DEGREE PROGRAMMES

7.1.1. Institutions

According to the Law on Higher Education of 2005, a higher education institution (HEI) may be organised as:

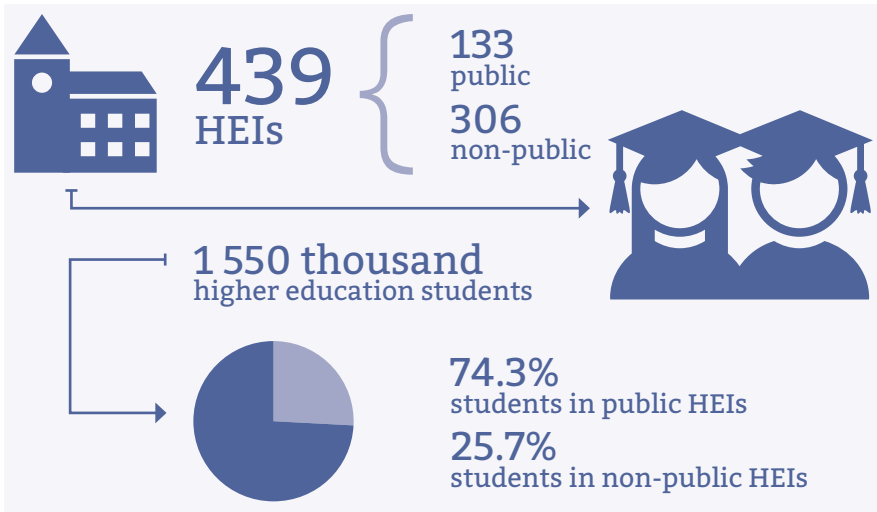
- ▶ a university-type higher education institution (*uczelnia akademicka*): where at least one academic unit (e.g. faculty) is authorized to award doctoral degrees;
- ▶ a non-university higher education institution (*uczelnia zawodowa*): which offers first-cycle, second-cycle and/or long-cycle programmes, but is not authorised to award the doctoral degree or provide doctoral programmes.

Degree programmes, provided by both university-type and non-university HEIs, include first-cycle programmes, second-cycle programmes and/or long-cycle programmes. First-cycle programmes aim to provide knowledge and skills in a specific area of study, preparing students for work in a specific profession. Graduates of first-cycle programmes have access to second-cycle programmes. Second-cycle

and long-cycle programmes aim to provide specialist knowledge in a specific area of study, preparing students for creative work in a specific profession. The completion of second-cycle or long-cycle programmes provides access to third-cycle (doctoral) programmes.

The duration of degree programmes in both university-type and non-university HEIs is as follows:

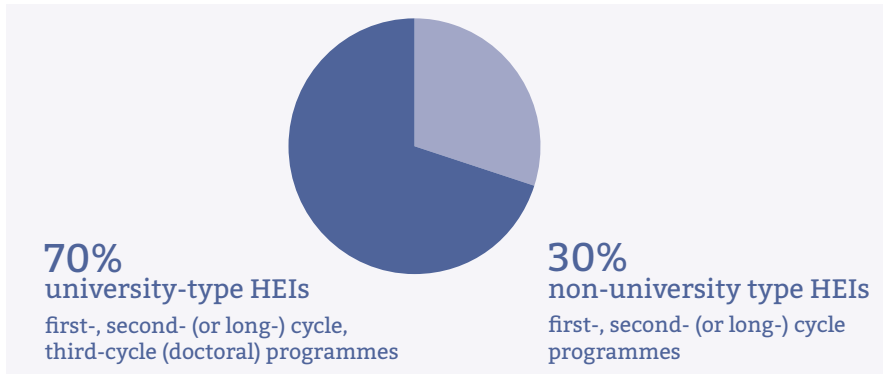
- ▶ **first-cycle (Bachelor's degree) programmes** last a minimum of 6 semesters and lead to a degree of *licencjat* or a minimum of 7 semesters and lead to a degree of *inżynier*, depending on the field of study;
- ▶ **second-cycle (Master's degree) programmes** last 3 or 4 semesters and lead to a degree of *magister* or equivalent, depending on the field of study;
- ▶ **long-cycle (Master's degree) programmes** last 9 to 12 semesters and lead to a degree of *magister* or equivalent. They are however provided only in selected fields of study such as medicine, pharmacy, veterinary medicine, dentistry, psychology, law and some art and design areas.



In the academic year 2013/2014, there were 439 HEIs in Poland (including 133 public and 306 non-public ones), attended by 1 550 thousand higher education students. The number of students in public HEIs amounted to 1 151.5 thousand and in non-public ones to 398.5 thousand. These numbers account for 74.3% and 25.7% of the total number of students respectively.

The following types of HEIs may be currently distinguished (according to the Central Statistical Office):

- ▶ Universities (*uniwersytet*),
- ▶ Technical universities (*wyższa szkoła techniczna*),
- ▶ Agricultural academies (*wyższa szkoła rolnicza*),
- ▶ Academies of economics (*wyższa szkoła ekonomiczna*),
- ▶ Higher teacher education schools (*wyższa szkoła pedagogiczna*),
- ▶ Medical universities/academies (*akademia/uniwersytet medyczny*),
- ▶ Maritime universities (*wyższa szkoła morska*),
- ▶ Physical education academies (*akademia wychowania fizycznego*),
- ▶ Fine arts academies (*wyższa szkoła artystyczna*),
- ▶ Theological academies (*wyższa szkoła teologiczna*),
- ▶ Academies of the Ministry of National Defence (*szkoła resortu obrony narodowej*),
- ▶ Academies of the Ministry of Interior (*szkoła resortu spraw wewnętrznych*).



Around 70% of public HEIs are university-type institutions which provide first-, second- (or long-) cycle and third-cycle (doctoral) programmes, while the remaining ones, ca 30%, are non-university HEIs providing only first- and second- (or long-) cycle programmes.

7.1.2. Admission

General requirements for admission to degree programmes are the same both for university-type and non-university HEIs.

Access to first-cycle programmes and long-cycle programmes is open to holders of a matriculation certificate, and admission is based on the results of this examination. Thus, HEIs may not organise entrance examinations in the subjects taken by applicants at the matriculation examination. However, each HEI may specify which results of the matriculation examination provide the basis for admission. Additional entrance examinations may be organised by HEIs, upon the consent of the minister responsible for higher education, but only:

- ▶ when it is necessary to assess the applicant's artistic skills, physical aptitude or specific knowledge and skills required to follow a particular programme, not assessed during the matriculation examination,
- ▶ when the applicant holds an upper-secondary school leaving certificate obtained abroad.

Access to second-cycle programmes is open to holders of a Bachelor's degree, a Master's degree or an equivalent degree.

While respecting these general admission requirements, each HEI may define its own additional admission conditions and procedures, including the number of places available to students, except in medical fields of study (*numerus clausus*). Admission conditions and procedures may be similar across an HEI or may vary according to the field of study. Different conditions and procedures may be applied by different HEIs for the same fields of study. Admission conditions and procedures must be published by each HEI not later than by 31 May of the year preceding the academic year to which they refer.

7.1.3. Organisation of the academic year

The academic year in higher education institutions begins on 1 October and lasts until the end of September. It is divided into two semesters. There are two examination periods – in winter and in summer. Apart from the summer holidays, there are also the following breaks: two weeks of winter holidays (first half of February) and two shorter breaks at Christmas and Easter. Detailed arrangements concerning the academic year are laid down by individual HEIs.

7.1.4. Assessment

Courses end with an oral or written examination or a pass based on the work of the student during a course, including papers/essays or projects. A pass is always given together with a mark (except for information classes and practical training/placements). Passes are obtained on the basis of the assessment carried out by the

academic teacher responsible for a given course. An examination is also carried out by the academic teacher responsible for a given course. The performance of students during practical training (a practical placement) is assessed by the academic teacher responsible for practical training in a given HEI and the supervisor in the institution where the placement takes place. Students' learning achievements are recorded in their student record books.

Detailed arrangements concerning student assessment, including the grading scale applied, the frequency of assessment and the requirements for obtaining passes and taking examinations, are laid down in the study regulations of individual institutions.

Detailed rules for taking examinations, progression to the next semester and year, repeating a year and admission to the final (diploma) examination are laid down in the study regulations adopted by individual HEIs. However, all students are allowed to take re-sit examinations, including the final examination, and an examination following a failed re-sit examination, conducted by an examination review board after an appeal made by the student to such a board. In order to be admitted to the final examination, students are required to complete all courses and practical placements provided for in the curriculum, and to submit their final thesis (except in medical fields) which must then receive a positive assessment. If the study programme does not provide for the preparation of a thesis and taking a final examination, students are only required to complete the courses and practical placements foreseen in the curriculum.

In order to progress to the next semester or academic year and to complete a degree programme, students are required to obtain a minimum number of ECTS (European Credit Transfer System) credits, specified on the basis of the study regulations.

The number of the ECTS credits provided by the regulations for one semester is 30, while it is 60 ECTS credits for an academic year. To be awarded a diploma, it is necessary to gather at least 180 ECTS credits upon completion of a first-cycle programme, at least 90 ECTS credits upon completion of a second-cycle programme, at least 300 ECTS credits upon completion of a long-cycle programme lasting five years, and at least 360 credits upon completion of a long-cycle programme lasting six years.

All three types of degree programmes end with a diploma examination, except in medical fields. The examination is conducted by an examination board composed of academic teachers of the academic unit of an HEI (e.g. faculty or department) which provides a given programme.

Students who have passed the final examination are awarded a higher education diploma (*dyplom ukończenia studiów wyższych*) which confirms the completion of a

given type of degree programme and the award of a relevant degree in a given field of study. If the study programme does not provide for a final examination, students are only required to have completed all courses and practical placements. Diplomas and degrees are awarded by university-type and non-university HEIs. Diplomas are prepared and issued in accordance with the amended Law on Higher Education and are officially recognised documents. Every graduate receives free of charge a Diploma Supplement in the EU/CoE/UNESCO Diploma Supplement format issued by the HEI in Polish and, upon request, also in English.

A Bachelor's degree entitles its holder to practice a given profession and provides access to second-cycle programmes. A Master's degree entitles its holder to practice a given profession and provides access to doctoral programmes.

7.2. DOCTORAL PROGRAMMES

Doctoral (third-cycle) programmes which are offered by university-type HEIs, the Polish Academy of Sciences and research institutes, aim to provide advanced knowledge in a specific area or discipline of science, preparing students for independent research and creative activity and for the award of a doctoral degree (*doktor*). They facilitate the preparation of an applicant for the procedure leading to the award of a doctoral degree. However, the completion of a doctoral programme is not a precondition for the award of this degree. Doctoral programmes last no longer than four years and can be offered as full-time or part-time programmes.

7.2.1. Admission

Access to doctoral programmes is open to applicants who hold a Master's degree and fulfil admission requirements laid down by a given institution. Detailed admission requirements are defined by the board of the academic unit authorised to provide doctoral programmes in a given institution, and must be published not later than by 31 May of the year preceding the academic year to which they refer.

7.2.2. Assessment

Doctoral students are required to attend courses and take examinations provided for in the doctoral study regulations, to conduct research and submit reports on the progress in research, to prepare their doctoral dissertation and to teach classes. Progress in research and the preparation of a doctoral dissertation are assessed by the

doctoral student's tutor (an academic teacher/researcher holding a degree of *doktor habilitowany* or the title of *profesor*). The teaching of classes by doctoral students in HEIs is assessed by the supervising academic teacher. Detailed rules for progression and taking of examinations are laid down in the doctoral study regulations prepared by individual academic units of HEIs and research institutions which provide doctoral programmes.

The degree of *doktor* is awarded to a person who holds a Master's degree (*magister* or an equivalent degree), has successfully passed doctoral examinations, has submitted and successfully defended a doctoral dissertation.

The academic degree of *doktor* (or the equivalent of doctoral degree in artistic areas) is awarded in a given area and discipline.

Doctoral degree holders may continue their research career to obtain first a post-doctoral degree (*doktor habilitowany*) and subsequently the academic title of professor (*profesor*).

Academic degrees (and degrees in arts) are conferred by academic units of higher education institutions and the Polish Academy of Sciences, as well as research institutes in compliance with their powers. The title of professor is conferred by the President of the Republic of Poland.

7.3. COLLEGE PROGRAMMES

College programmes are offered in three types of colleges and prepare students for employment. They are: **teacher training colleges** (*kolegium nauczycielskie*), **foreign language teacher training colleges** (*nauczycielskie kolegium języków obcych*) and **colleges of social work** (*kolegium pracowników służb społecznych*).

All the three types of colleges provide 3-year programmes leading to a college diploma.

Starting in 2013/2014 teacher training colleges and foreign language teacher training colleges are being phased out. In September 2016 they will be closed and teacher training will continue only in higher education institutions.



ADULT EDUCATION

Adult education is provided in two broadly understood settings – school and out-of-school – as well as in the form of non-degree postgraduate programmes offered by higher education and research institutions.

8.1. PROGRAMMES AND PROVIDERS

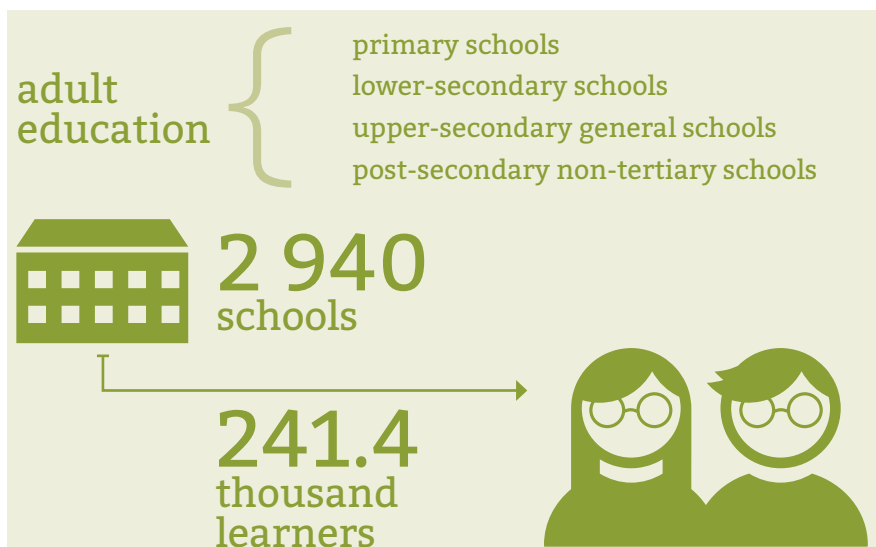
School and out-of-school settings of adult education:

Table 1. Main institutions and forms of adult education

| School settings |
|--|
| <p>▶ Public and non-public schools for adults, including: primary schools, lower-secondary schools, general upper-secondary schools and post-secondary schools;</p> |
| <p>▶ Public and non-public higher education institutions (HEIs): first- and second-cycle programmes, third-cycle (doctoral) programmes, non-degree postgraduate programmes, open university courses, third-age university courses, incl. those based on distance learning, conferences, workshops and seminars.</p> |
| Out-of-school settings |
| <p>▶ Public continuing education centres (CECs), practical training centres (PTCs) and further and in-service training centres: vocational qualification courses, occupational skills courses, courses of general competencies, other courses allowing acquisition and development of knowledge, skills and qualifications;</p> |
| <p>▶ Non-public institutions for continuing education and practical training administered by associations and individuals;</p> |
| <p>▶ People's universities;</p> |

Table 1. – cont. Main institutions and forms of adult education

- ▶ **Employers:** courses, on-the-job training, job shadowing, rotation, replacement, learning clubs, supervised individual learning, fairs, conferences, coaching, mentoring, cooperation with equipment and software suppliers;
- ▶ **Employers' organisations and trade unions;**
- ▶ **Training institutions,** including those registered in the Register of Training Institutions;
- ▶ **Public employment services:** support tools, including training, practical placements, vocational training for adults;
- ▶ **Research institutions, research foundations and the Polish Academy of Science units:** non-degree postgraduate programmes and doctoral programmes, courses, conferences, seminars, workshops;
- ▶ **Institutions specialised in specific areas of study.**



Adult education in school settings is provided by primary schools, lower-secondary schools, upper-secondary general schools and post-secondary non-tertiary schools for adult learners. In 2013/2014 there were 2 940 schools for adults, with 241.4 thousand learners enrolled.



In 2013/2014 (according to data from the School Education Information System – SIO), there were 98 public continuing education centres (CECs) which comprised schools, and 163 public continuing education centres (CECs) providing education only in out-of-school settings. This inventory also includes 151 public practical training centres (PTCs) and 321 public and non-public further and in-service training centres.

As of 1 September 2012 existing basic vocational and technical schools for adults are being replaced by a more flexible system of VET courses for adults. VET schools offering vocational education for young people have been allowed to conduct vocational qualification courses.

In September 2012, in compliance with the amended School Education Act, the possibility was introduced for adult learners to acquire vocational qualifications during vocational qualification courses. These courses are organised in public and non-public schools, and also in continuing education centres, practical training centres, labour market institutions, as well as in private training institutions.



In 2013/2014 there were 963 vocational qualification courses of this type. The number of learners who participated in these courses equalled 34.9 thousand.

8.1.1. Non-degree postgraduate programmes

Higher education institutions offer non-degree postgraduate programmes which are considered another form of adult education in school settings.

Non-degree postgraduate programmes are provided by public and non-public higher education institutions (HEIs), research institutions and the Polish Academy of Science. HEIs also offer opportunities to acquire knowledge and skills within open universities and third-age universities. So-called popular or folk universities are also considered to be institutions providing education in out-of-school settings.

8.2. ADMISSION

Schools for adults are open to people who have reached the age of 18. In specific cases, such schools may also accept young people aged 16 and above, as well as young people aged 15 if they work e.g. in the so-called Voluntary Labour Corps. An 18-year-old can also take an extramural examination in all subjects included in curricula of all types of general schools for adults. He or she can also take an extramural examination in VET, confirming the knowledge, skills and competences acquired in different learning contexts, including professional experience. Extramural vocational examinations introduced in September 2012 are designed for persons with at least 2 years of professional or learning experience who want to confirm their vocational qualifications without going to school/attending courses.

Admission requirements for out-of-school settings are defined by education providers. They usually depend on the aims of the training, and there are no uniform

rules in this respect. The exception are vocational qualification courses that can be taken by people holding at least a lower-secondary school leaving certificate.

Non-degree postgraduate programmes are open only to applicants who have completed a first-cycle programme (leading to a Bachelor's degree) or a second-cycle programme (leading to a Master's degree). Higher education institutions offering non-degree postgraduate programmes can define additional admission requirements.

8.3. CURRICULUM, TEACHING METHODS

Teachers in schools for adults may choose curricula and textbooks from the list approved for use in schools. Teachers may also develop their own curricula, provided that they cover contents included in the Core Curriculum. Teachers may choose teaching methods adjusted to the age and abilities of learners and the specificity of the subject taught.

In 2-year cycle post-secondary schools for adults, the minimum number of compulsory lessons is as follows:

- A. In full-time form: theoretical vocational training – 590 teaching hours, practical vocational training – 590 teaching hours and basics of entrepreneurship – 30 teaching hours,
- B. In extramural form: theoretical vocational training – 340 teaching hours, practical vocational training – 340 teaching hours and basics of entrepreneurship – 20 teaching hours.

In the case of 1-, 1.5- or 2.5-year cycles the number of hours defined for the 2-year cycle is proportionally adjusted (reduced or increased).

Teachers or trainers who provide various types of training in out-of-school settings may choose teaching methods depending on the level of education, the training programme followed, the number of learners, their age and work experience, and teaching aids available at the institution.

Workshops are considered to be the most effective method of course-type training, in particular in large companies with long in-service training traditions. In the case of contracted courses, the contractor may suggest the teaching methods to be applied. Computer software is often used to support education and training. Modular programmes are popular in continuing education. Teaching methods used in non-degree postgraduate programmes depend on the field of study and the aim of the programme. They include lectures as well as active learning methods

such as workshops, practical placements and projects. Non-degree postgraduate programmes are often taught in the form of extramural or evening courses.

8.4. ASSESSMENT

8.4.1. School settings

As in schools for young people, two assessment systems, internal and external, are in place in schools for adults. The internal assessment system is based on a grading scale of 1 to 6 (1 – insufficient, and 6 – excellent). Learners in schools for adults are promoted to a higher level after each semester. An adult learner completes (primary, lower or upper-secondary) school if he/she has received end-of-semester marks higher than “insufficient” for all compulsory subjects. Moreover, learners are required to take a final test and a final examination at the end of primary and lower-secondary education respectively. Results obtained in the test and examination have no influence on the completion of primary or lower-secondary education. Both the test and the examination are external and obligatory. Results of the test/examination are comparable at the national level.

Assessment and promotion at schools with an extramural form of learning is based on end-of-semester examinations in compulsory classes/courses which are included in the school timetable. Arrangements for end-of-semester examinations in extramural schools are laid down in the school statutes.

Public schools for adults award a certificate or a diploma. Learners in general upper-secondary schools for adults may obtain a matriculation certificate and continue education at a higher education institution. School leaving certificates from the six-year primary school, and lower- and upper-secondary general schools can also be obtained on the basis of extramural examinations. At all levels of general education, extramural examinations are taken only in written form. Extramural examinations are included in the external examination system. The Central and Regional Examination Boards are responsible for setting and conducting these examinations. The vocational education reform effective from 1 September 2012 allowed adults to take extramural examinations in vocational fields, and consequently, to obtain certificates confirming vocational qualifications. In this case extramural examinations are taken in both written and practical form.

See also point 5.3.4. “Assessment”, section “External assessment in vocational education and training”.

Higher education institutions (HEIs), as well as research institutions providing non-degree postgraduate programmes define the methods to be used in assessment of their students. Upon completion of non-degree postgraduate programmes or in-service training courses, graduates receive a diploma/certificate.

8.4.2. Out-of-school settings

In out-of-school settings, education and training providers define the methods for assessing learning outcomes in their curricula or training programmes. Courses can (but do not have to) end with an internal examination which assesses the level of selected vocational qualifications for occupations included in the classification of occupations for vocational education. Additionally, the completion of a vocational qualification course allows learners to attend an external examination confirming one of the qualifications distinguished in a given occupation.

For more details see point 5.3.4. “Assessment”, section “External assessment in vocational education and training”.



SPECIAL NEEDS EDUCATION (SEN)

Education of pupils with special educational needs is an integral part of the Polish education system.

Support for SEN children aims at stimulating pupils' psychological and physical development and enhancing the effectiveness of learning. It is intended to correct disorders, reduce gaps in the knowledge or skills to be acquired within the framework of a curriculum, and eliminate causes and symptoms of disorders, including behavioural disorders. It is crucial to prepare children and young people for life as full members of society (within the family, local community and labour market) by ensuring, through special methods, the most comprehensive development of pupils within their potential.

In order to ensure the effectiveness of psychological and educational support, it is necessary first to identify properly the pupil's needs and then to provide the most suitable types and methods of support which will indeed bring the expected effects. In the legislation the following pupils and students are defined as those with special educational needs:

Students:

- ▶ with high abilities,
- ▶ with long-term illness,
- ▶ with disability,
- ▶ with specific learning difficulties (including dyslexia, dysgraphia, dyscalculia and dysorthography),
- ▶ with speech impairment,
- ▶ with trauma-induced emotional and behavioral difficulties,
- ▶ who are experiencing repeated educational failures,
- ▶ who are experiencing community negligence relating to their family's welfare, quality of spare time activities and community socializing,
- ▶ who are experiencing adaptation difficulties resulting from cultural differences or a different educational background,
- ▶ who are socially maladjusted and at risk of being so.

All pupils who require assistance due to individually identified developmental and educational needs are eligible to receive support.

Early childhood intervention (ECI)

In nursery schools and primary schools, including special ones, residential special schools and rehabilitation centres as well as in public guidance and counselling centres, teams for early child development assistance may be organized in order to stimulate psychomotor and social development of the child with disability.

ECI is organised on the basis of an opinion issued by the guidance and counselling centre. It could be provided from the moment of detection of a disability until the child starts education at school and is provided directly to the child and their family by the multi-specialist team (ECI team).

An ECI team:

- ▶ develops an individual ECI programme for a child including a schedule of activities in the scope of early assistance and support for the child and his/her family;
- ▶ establishes cooperation with a healthcare entity or a social welfare centre in order to ensure rehabilitation, therapy, or other forms of assistance to the child suitable for his/her needs;
- ▶ makes assessment of the child's progress and efficiency of assistance provided to the child and their family and introduces changes to the ECI programme if such changes are needed.

9.1. ORGANISATION

The organisation of the school year is the same for all schools throughout the country. Special education attendance may be adjourned up to the end of the calendar year when pupils have reached the age of 8 (before August 2014 – the age of 10).

Special education is intended for children and young people with disabilities (physically disabled, incl. aphasia, intellectually disabled, blind, visually impaired, deaf, hearing impaired, autistic, incl. Asperger syndrome, with multiple impairments), with social maladjustment or at risk of social maladjustment who require special organisation of teaching and learning processes and working methods.

A need of special education is ascertained in a decision issued after a psychological and pedagogical examination is carried out by specialists from a guidance and counselling centre for youth and children.

Special education is an integral part of the Polish education system. This is reflected in the legislation, which is common to both mainstream and special education.

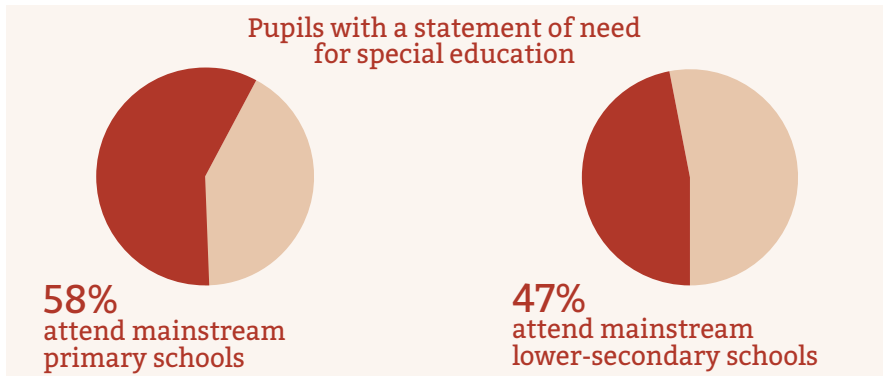
Special education may be provided in mainstream and special settings – mainstream schools, integration schools and classes or in special schools and residential special schools. It can be also provided, as in the case of all pupils/students, in the form of individualized teaching when their health prevents school attendance.

Socially maladjusted young people are targeted on the basis of a court decision directing them to a centre of re-socialization for young people. Young people at risk of social maladjustment can learn in a centre of socio-therapy for young people provided that their parents consent.

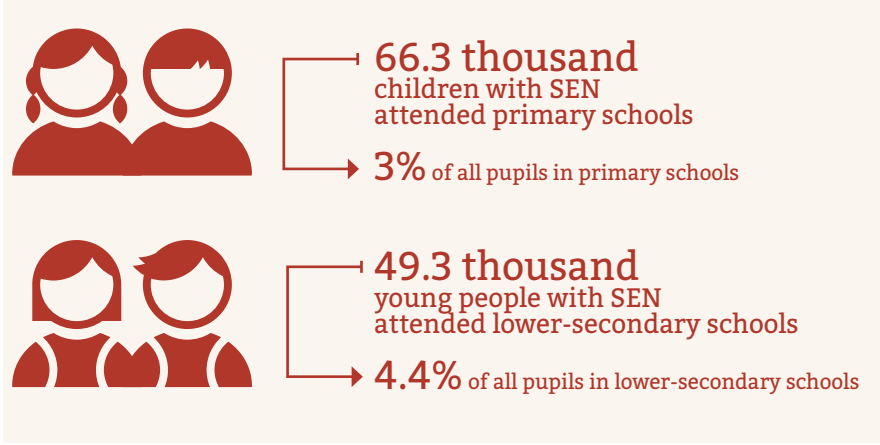
9.1.1. Special education within mainstream education – integrated provision

In general, pupils with special educational needs learn together with other pupils either in mainstream schools/nursery schools, integration schools/nursery schools (where all classes/groups are integration classes/groups) or in integration classes in mainstream schools/nursery schools (where classes are either integration or mainstream classes).

Decisions about which form of special education is the best for a child belong to the parents. A mainstream school/nursery school cannot refuse to admit a child with special educational needs and is obligated to provide support appropriate to his or her needs.



Approximately 58% of all pupils with a statement of need for special education attend mainstream primary schools and around 47% attend mainstream lower-secondary schools.



In the school year 2013/2014

- ▶ **66.3 thousand children with special educational needs attended primary schools – they accounted for 3% of all pupils in primary schools.**
- ▶ **49.3 thousand pupils with special educational needs attended lower-secondary schools – they accounted for 4.4% of all pupils in lower-secondary schools.**

Improving the quality of inclusive education is one of the main directions of the state educational policy in school years 2013/2014 and 2014/2015.

9.1.2. Special education outside mainstream education – separate provision

Special schools (including residential schools), special education and care centres (with boarding facilities and extended rehabilitation programmes) and special sections in mainstream schools are established for pupils who have a written statement recommending special education and whose parents have decided in favour of attendance of this type of school/section.

Depending on the special educational needs and type of disability, pupils with disabilities attend special nursery schools, special primary schools, special lower-secondary schools, basic vocational schools and schools preparing for employment, or special general and technical upper-secondary schools.

Approximately 42% of all pupils with special educational needs attend special primary schools and around 53% attend special lower-secondary schools.

In the school year 2013/2014 there were:

- ▶ 688 special primary schools attended by 27.7 thousand pupils (i.e. 42% of all pupils with special educational needs);
- ▶ 770 special lower-secondary schools with 27.9 thousand pupils (i.e. 53% of all pupils with special educational needs);
- ▶ 469 special schools preparing for employment with 10.9 thousand pupils;
- ▶ 941 special upper-secondary schools with 14.9 thousand pupils;
- ▶ 20 special post-secondary schools with 388 students.

Specific arrangements

The number of pupils in integration classes which are organized in integration or mainstream schools should be between 15 and 20, including 3 to 5 disabled pupils. A school with integration classes has to employ additional “supporting” teachers qualified in special education. “Supporting” teachers work also individually with disabled pupils, teaching them various educational techniques, e.g. the Braille alphabet or sign language.

Within special education, the number of pupils in a class differs: 10 to 16 in special classes for children with mild intellectual disabilities and for socially maladjusted children; 6 to 8 in special classes for children with moderate and severe intellectual disabilities, as well as for deaf and hearing impaired children; 2 to 4 in special classes for autistic children and children with multiple disabilities; 8 to 12 in special classes for physically disabled children; 8 to 10 in special classes for blind and visually impaired children.

The local authorities (*gmina*) are required to provide transport and care for pupils attending primary and lower-secondary schools within its jurisdiction as well as for young people with physical, moderate or severe intellectual disability attending upper-secondary schools until they reach 21 years of age. For young people with profound or multiple disability including intellectual impairment, transport should be provided until they reach 25 years of age.

Course of education

Having completed attendance at primary and lower-secondary school, SEN pupils may continue education in upper-secondary schools. There, having passed the matriculation examination, they are awarded a matriculation certificate that gives access to higher education. They may also choose a basic vocational school which leads to a diploma confirming vocational qualifications. Pupils with intellectual disabilities as well as multiple disabilities can follow programmes in 3-year special vocational schools that lead to a certificate confirming completion of the school.

Teaching methods

Special education applies the same teaching methods as mainstream education, although more emphasis is placed on individual work with each pupil. While teachers are free to choose specific methods and forms of work as well as teaching resources, they are required to apply some crucial principles of special education (e.g. the need to adjust teaching activities to abilities and needs of pupils and to existing circumstances, the need to increase the level of difficulty gradually, the need to use demonstration and example in the teaching process).

9.2. CURRICULUM

Curricula followed within special education (except in schools for children with moderate and severe intellectual disabilities) are based on the common Core Curriculum for particular stages of education. The curriculum should be adjusted to the needs and abilities of the pupils concerned and approved by the school head. Every pupil with a statement of need for special education has his/her individually formulated educational and therapeutic programme which is adjusted to his/her needs and psychological and physical abilities.

Table 2. The minimum number of therapy and support classes in different types of schools

| | Special classes | Mainstream or integration classes |
|-----------------------------------|--|--|
| Primary schools | ▶ 1150 hours per class/ 12 hours per class weekly | ▶ 190 hours per pupil/ 2 hours per pupil weekly |
| Lower-secondary schools | ▶ 1150 hours per class/ 12 hours per class weekly | ▶ 190 hours per pupil/ 2 hours per pupil weekly |
| General upper-secondary schools | ▶ 900 hours per class/ 10 hours per class weekly | ▶ 180 hours per pupil/ 2 hours per pupil weekly |
| Technical upper-secondary schools | ▶ 900 hours per class/ 8 hours per class weekly | ▶ 240 hours per pupil/ 2 hours per pupil weekly |
| Basic vocational schools | ▶ 960 hours per class/ 10 hours per class weekly | ▶ 190 hours per pupil/ 2 hours per pupil weekly |

The outline timetables for special schools are very similar to those in mainstream schools. The main difference is related to the minimum number of therapy and support classes, which differs from one type of school to another:

In the case of children and young people with moderate and severe intellectual disability, the outline timetables are considerably different.

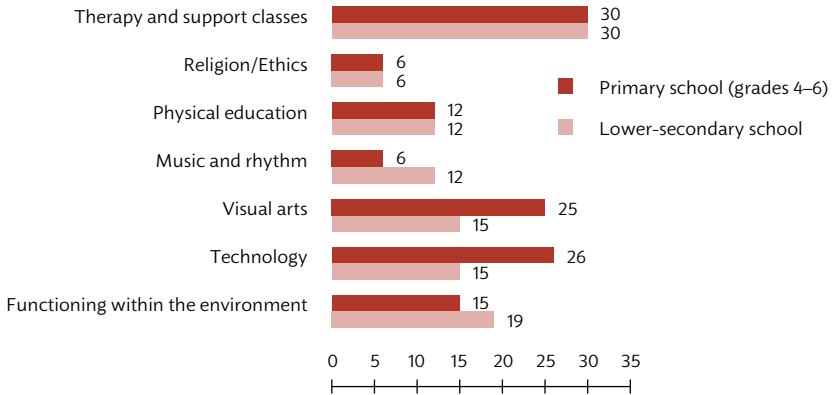


Figure 7. Outline timetables for primary and lower-secondary schools for pupils with moderate and severe intellectual disability

9.3. ASSESSMENT

Pupils in special education are assessed throughout the school year according to the same rules that apply in mainstream schools and this includes both descriptive assessment and marks. The exception are pupils with moderate and severe intellectual disability, in the case of whom descriptive assessment is used at all levels of education.

The form of the final external tests and examinations (primary school test, lower-secondary school examination, matriculation examination, vocational examination) that pupils take is adapted to their speaking, writing and physical abilities. If necessary, the examination takes place in a separate classroom, at the pupil's house or in a hospital. Pupils with multiple disabilities can qualify for exemption from the final test and examinations, whereas pupils with moderate and severe intellectual disabilities are entirely exempt from taking them.

All special education leavers, except those with moderate and severe intellectual disabilities, receive the same school certificates as mainstream pupils. Certificates for pupils with moderate and severe intellectual disabilities are issued on a special form and include descriptive assessment/marks. Graduates of schools preparing for employment are awarded certificates confirming qualifications in a particular occupation.



TEACHERS

The national legislation distinguishes between teachers working within the school education system and academic teachers, i.e. teachers working in the higher education system. School education teachers and academic teachers are subject to different regulations.

10.1. SCHOOL EDUCATION TEACHERS

The legislation regulates initial teacher training for school education teachers, thus defining training models or paths which lead to qualifications required to practice the teaching profession.

10.1.1. Initial training and qualifications

Initial training of teachers is provided within two sectors of the education system:

- ▶ within the **higher education sector**:
 - ▶ degree programmes, including first-, second- and long-cycle programmes;
 - ▶ non-degree postgraduate programmes.
- ▶ within the **school education sector (until 2015)**:
 - ▶ college programmes (now being phased out), including teacher training colleges and foreign language teacher training colleges.

All educational institutions operate in both the public and non-public education sectors.

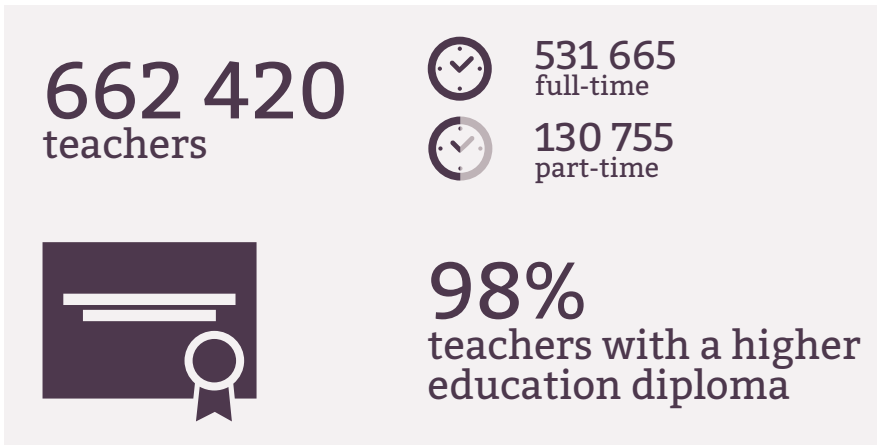
Teacher training in Poland is organised according to two models, i.e. a concurrent model and a consecutive one.

The concurrent model predominates in Poland. As part of degree programmes in individual fields of study at HEIs, students may choose a teacher specialisation track, which means that they can undertake teacher professional training

(pedagogical training) as part of their degree programmes, in parallel to their general subject-specific training. Those who have not taken a teacher specialisation track and choose the teaching profession later may obtain a teaching qualification upon the completion of a non-degree postgraduate programme or a qualification course. The latter option represents the consecutive model of teacher training.

Teacher education and training standards are formulated in the 2012 Regulation by the Minister of Science and Higher Education. Teacher education and training consists of preparation in a given subject matter (biology, mathematics, etc.) and pedagogical training (teaching methods, psychology, pedagogy).

Under the above-mentioned regulation, teachers employed in pre-primary and primary schools ought to have as minimum qualifications a Bachelor's degree, whereas teachers employed in lower-secondary and upper-secondary schools as well as basic vocational schools ought to hold, at the minimum, a Master's degree or equivalent.



In the school year 2013/2014 there were 662 420 teachers in Poland, of whom 531 665 were employed full-time and 130 755 part-time. The total number of teachers expressed in full-time equivalents (FTEs) equalled 642 630. At present, teachers who hold a higher education diploma (a Bachelor's or Master's degree) represent 98% of all teachers working in the school education sector.

Master's degree studies seem to be the most popular route of training for teachers in school education of all levels. E.g. high quality of pre-school education is guaranteed by a very well prepared teaching staff at nursery schools: most frequently

they are university graduates holding a Master's degree (84.0% of teaching staff), and less often holding a Bachelor's degree (11.8%).

10.1.2. Conditions of service

A graduate of an HEI who has completed teacher training (i.e. holds a teaching qualification) is recognised as a qualified teacher in the area of specialization of the programme completed. Entrants to the profession begin with the grade of trainee teacher (the first of the four grades in the teacher promotion system) and undertake a probation period (*staż*) lasting one school year in order to be promoted to the grade of contract teacher.

There are many support measures offered to new entrants in Poland. In implementing the school's education and care programme, the teacher is entitled to support from a teacher-education specialist (referred to as "teacher-pedagogue") and teacher-psychologist in the school. In implementing the curriculum, the teacher can receive support from teachers' methodological advisers. During the "probation period", the teacher is supported by a mentor (*opiekun stażu*), appointed by the school head; mentors are experienced teachers at the appointed or chartered teacher grade who are employed in a given school.

Teachers are employed by the school head through an open recruitment procedure. Pursuant to the Teachers' Charter, teachers in the two lower professional promotion grades (trainee teachers and contract teachers) are employed on the basis of an employment contract. Teachers in the two upper grades (appointed teachers and chartered teachers, see also point 10.1.4 "Assessment and promotion") may be employed on the basis of appointment.

The school head is the employer for all teachers working in a given school. Teachers employed on the basis of appointment are not subject to the civil service legislation. However, in performing their duties, teachers are entitled to the protection provided for civil servants. The body managing the school is obliged by law to defend the teacher when the rights which he/she has been granted are infringed.

In terms of implementing the curriculum, teachers are free to apply any methods chosen from those recognised in contemporary pedagogy as they consider most appropriate. They are also free to develop, on the basis of the Core Curriculum, their own curricula which they will be allowed to follow upon the approval by the school head, as well as to choose textbooks from those approved for use in school, and to choose other teaching aids. While teachers are not formally required by law to undertake continuing professional development (CPD) activities, it is stated in the

Teachers' Charter that they should improve their knowledge, using their priority right to participate in all forms of CPD.

10.1.3. Working time

The working time of teachers may not exceed 40 "clock" hours per week. Within this working time, teachers teach classes and conduct care-related activities for pupils/students, and undertake other activities provided for in the school statutes, as well as other activities related to preparing for classes, self-education and CPD.

The compulsory weekly workload, including teaching, educational or care-related activities undertaken directly with pupils, varies according to the type of school or institution and according to activities. For example, the compulsory weekly load is 25 teaching hours for pre-primary school teachers; 18 teaching hours for teachers in special pre-primary schools, and in mainstream primary, lower-secondary and upper-secondary schools; and 15 teaching hours for teachers in teacher training colleges. 1 teaching hour equals 45 minutes.

Teachers with 18 teaching hours per week can have their weekly teaching load increased to a maximum of 27 teaching hours. The weekly teaching load of 18 teaching hours provides the basis for a full-time teacher's salary. Teachers receive overtime pay for teaching hours extending beyond the 18-hour weekly teaching load. Besides teaching time and overall working time, teachers are obliged, according to the legislation, to be available at school 2 extra teaching hours per week in primary and lower-secondary schools and 1 extra teaching hour per week in upper-secondary schools.

10.1.4. Assessment and promotion

Assessment of teacher performance covers all teachers, except trainee teachers as they apply for promotion to the second professional grade at the end of their first school year, and thus are already subject to assessment of professional achievements. Teacher performance assessment at all levels of the school education system is carried out by the school head.

Pursuant to the Teachers' Charter, teachers can obtain the following professional promotion grades:

- A. trainee teacher,
- B. contract teacher,
- C. appointed teacher,
- D. chartered teacher.

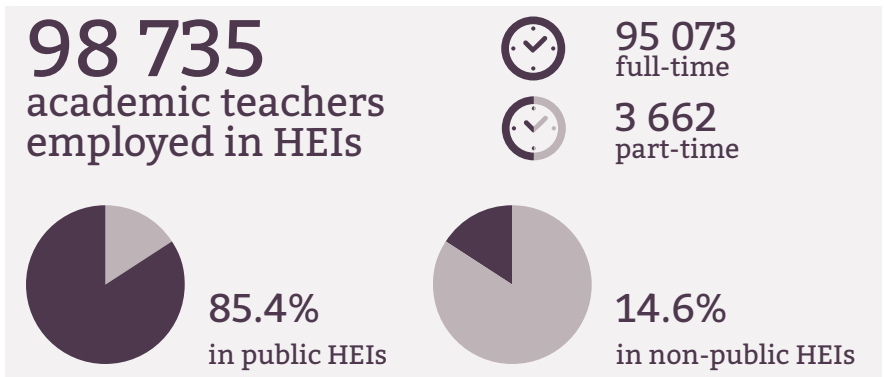
Chartered teachers who have outstanding professional achievements may be awarded the honorary title of education professor.

In order to be promoted to a higher grade, a teacher should:

- ▶ hold the required qualifications;
- ▶ complete a “probation period” (the period preceding an application for promotion) and receive a positive assessment of his/her professional achievements during this period (the teacher follows an individual professional development plan during the probation period);
- ▶ have his/her application for promotion approved by a so-called qualifying board or, in the case of a contract teacher, pass an examination before an examination board.

10.2. ACADEMIC TEACHERS

In accordance with the legislation concerning higher education, there are four categories of academic teacher: 1) research-and-teaching staff; 2) research staff; 3) teaching staff and 4) qualified librarians and qualified documentation and information staff. Among the four categories, only research-and-teaching staff and teaching staff are statutorily required to train and educate students.



In the academic year 2013/2014 there were 98 735 academic teachers employed in HEIs in Poland, of whom 95 073 were full-time, and 3 662 part-time teachers. Academic teachers in public HEIs accounted for 85.4%, and academic teachers in non-public HEIs for 14.6%.

Qualification requirements, professional development and conditions of service are regulated in the higher education legislation for academic teachers.

10.2.1. Entry to the profession

The requirements concerning the level of formal qualifications and academic degrees or titles (*doktor*, *doktor habilitowany* or *profesor*, respectively) to be held by research-and-teaching staff, research staff and teaching staff are defined by the Law on Higher Education. The statutes of an HEI may also define additional requirements. The lowest position (assistant) within the categories of research-and-teaching and research staff, and all positions available to teaching staff, may be taken by those who hold at least a Master's degree or an equivalent degree. However, in accordance with the rules laid down in the statutes of an HEI, students in one of the two final years of study may also prepare for this position.

In accordance with the latest amendments to the Law on Higher Education, academic teachers in public HEIs are employed, for both definite and indefinite periods of time, on the basis of an open competition procedure in cases where the working time exceeds 50% of the statutory working hours. Competition procedures and conditions are laid down in the statutes of an HEI, but HEIs are required by law to publish information about vacancies on their websites and on the website of the Ministry.

Academic teachers are employed on the basis of an employment contract, or on the basis of appointment, providing greater legal protection. They may now be employed on the basis of appointment only when they hold the title of professor and are employed on a full-time basis in a given HEI as the place of their primary employment.

10.2.2. Working time

The working time of academic teachers is determined by the scope of their teaching and research as well as that of their organisational duties. The rules for determining the scope of duties, the type of teaching activities, including the teaching load for individual positions, and the rules for calculating teaching hours are defined by the senate of an HEI. The detailed scope of duties and the corresponding load for a teacher are determined by the head of the academic unit specified in the statutes. The annual teaching load defined in the Law on Higher Education is as follows (where teaching hours are defined as 45-minute periods):

- ▶ between 120 and 240 teaching hours for research-and-teaching staff;

- ▶ between 240 and 360 teaching hours for teaching staff, except for language teachers and instructors;
- ▶ between 300 and 540 teaching hours for language teachers, instructors and equivalent positions.

10.2.3. Promotion and assessment

The positions for research-and-teaching staff and research staff in an HEI include assistant, reader, visiting professor, associate professor and professor, and those for teaching staff include instructor, foreign language teacher, lecturer and senior lecturer. The Law on Higher Education specifies only academic qualifications (degrees and titles) required for holding individual positions, but additional requirements may be laid down in the statutes of an HEI. The following qualifications are required for individual research-and-teaching and research staff positions:

- ▶ assistants: a Master's degree (*magister*);
- ▶ readers: a doctoral degree (*doktor*);
- ▶ visiting professors (a position for persons employed on a regular basis in other HEIs): a post-doctoral degree (*doktor habilitowany*) or a professorial title (*profesor*), or a doctoral degree (*doktor*) and significant research, professional or artistic achievements;
- ▶ associate professors: a post-doctoral degree (*doktor habilitowany*) or a professorial title (*profesor*);
- ▶ professors: a professorial title (*profesor*).

Pursuant to the amended Law on Higher Education, competitions are now obligatorily held for all positions.

Academic teachers may also be promoted to management positions within the authorities of an HEI, including those of rector and vice-rector, and head and deputy head of an academic unit (dean and vice-dean of a faculty where faculties are the academic units).

All academic teachers are subject to periodic assessment which concerns, in particular, the performance of their statutory duties, and observance of rights related to intellectual property and industrial property. Obligatory regular evaluation of teaching staff by students has also been introduced.



ANNEXES

STATISTICAL ANNEX

Table 1. Pre-school participation rate by age, 2013/2014

| Age of children | Population | Children in pre-school institutions | % of the total |
|-----------------|------------|-------------------------------------|----------------|
| 3 | 414 644 | 238 293 | 57.5% |
| 4 | 433 879 | 306 656 | 70.7% |
| 5 | 431 875 | 404 067 | 93.6% |
| 6 | 404 041 | 319 279 | 79.0% |
| 3–6 | 1 684 439 | 1 268 295 | 75.3% |

Table 2. Public and non-public schools for children and young people, including special schools, 2013/2014

| Type of school | Number of Schools | Pupils (in thousands) |
|--|-------------------|-----------------------|
| Primary schools | 13 443 | 2 152.5 |
| Lower-secondary schools | 7 413 | 1 124 |
| General upper-secondary schools | 2 312 | 547.2 |
| Basic vocational schools Technical upper-secondary schools Specialised/supplementary upper-secondary schools | 4 225 | 711.3 |
| Post-secondary schools | 2 323 | 268.3 |

Table 3. Higher Education Institutions and students, 2013/2014

| Type of HEI | Number of HEIs | Number of students (in thousands) |
|-----------------|----------------|-----------------------------------|
| Public HEIs | 133 | 1 151.5 |
| Non-public HEIs | 306 | 398.5 |
| Total | 439 | 1 550 |

Table 4. Schools for adults and adult learners, 2013/2014

| Type of school | Number of schools | Number of students |
|---|-------------------|--------------------|
| Primary school | 4 | 77 |
| Lower-secondary school | 200 | 14 555 |
| General upper-secondary school | 1 693 | 197 621 |
| Basic vocational school | 82 | 1 221 |
| Technical upper-secondary school/ specialised upper-secondary school | 961 | 27 969 |
| Total | 2 940 | 241 443 |

Table 5. School teachers by professional promotion grade, 2013/2014

| | Trainee teachers | Contract teachers | Appointed teachers | Chartered teachers | Total |
|---------------------------------------|------------------|-------------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------|
| Number of teachers | 50 212 | 108 773 | 178 738 | 324 697 | 662 420 |
| Full-time teachers | 22 177 | 75 919 | 140 609 | 292 960 | 531 665 |
| Part-time teachers | 28 035 | 32 854 | 38 129 | 31 737 | 130 755 |
| Full-time Equivalent/FTEs/ | 35 417 | 102 591 | 173 752 | 330 870 | 642 630 |

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- Educational Research Institute (*Instytut Badań Edukacyjnych*) www.ibe.edu.pl
- Centre for Education Development (*Ośrodek Rozwoju Edukacji*) www.ore.edu.pl
- National Centre for Supporting Vocational and Continuing Education (*Krajowy Ośrodek Wspierania Edukacji Zawodowej i Ustawicznej – KOWEZiU*) www.koweziu.edu.pl
- Polish Rectors' Foundation (*Fundacja Rektorów Polskich – FRP*) www.frp.org.pl
- Polish Accreditation Committee (*Polska Komisja Akredytacyjna – PKA*) www.pka.edu.pl
- School Education Information System (*System Informacji Oświatowej – SIO*) www.cie.men.gov.pl

LEGISLATION

The Constitution is available at the following website:

www.sejm.gov.pl/prawo/konst/angielski/kon1.htm

Key Legislation on school and adult education

Parliamentary acts:

- School Education Act of 7 September 1991 (with further amendments),
- Act of 26 January 1982 – The Teachers' Charter (with further amendments),
- Act of 8 January 1999 on the Implementation of the School System Reform.

Regulations:

- Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 27 August 2012 on the core curricula for pre-school education and general education in individual types of schools,
- Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 30 April 2007 on the conditions and rules for pupil assessment, eligibility for assessment, promotion and examinations and tests in public schools, further amended by the Regulation of 25 April 2013,
- Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 21 June 2012 on the approval of pre-school education curricula, school curricula and textbooks for the use in school,
- Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 7 October 2009 on pedagogical supervision, further amended by the Regulation of 10 May 2013,
- Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 30 April 2013 on the rules for provision and organisation of psychological and educational support in public nursery schools and schools and institutions,
- Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 11 October 2013 on the provision of early support for children's development,
- Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 23 December 2011 on the classification of occupations for vocational education,
- Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 7 February 2012 on the outline timetables in public schools,
- Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 7 February 2012 on the core curriculum for vocational education,
- Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 11 January 2012 on continuing education in out-of-school settings,
- Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 11 January 2012 on extramural examinations.

Key Legislation on higher education

Parliamentary acts:

- Act of 27 July 2005 – The Law on Higher Education (with further amendments),
- Act of 14 March 2003 on Academic Degrees and Title, and on the Degrees and Title in the field of Art (with further amendments),
- Act of 17 July 1998 on Student Loans and Credits (with further amendments).

Regulations:

- Regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher Education of 5 October 2011 on the conditions of providing degree programmes in a given field and at a given level of study, further amended by the Regulation of 23 August 2012,
- Regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher Education of 14 September 2011 on the requirements and procedures for the transfer of student achievements,
- Regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher Education of 9 May 2012 on the teaching standards for the following fields of study: medicine, dentistry, pharmacy, nursing and midwifery,
- Regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher Education of 1 September 2011 on the types of degrees for graduates, conditions of issue and necessary elements of the diplomas confirming the completion of study programmes and the certificates confirming the completion of non-degree postgraduate study programmes, as well as the specimen of the Diploma Supplement,
- Regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher Education of 17 January 2012 on initial teacher training standards.

EURYDICE

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www.eurydice.org.pl/eurypedia

For more information on other education systems in Europe and Eurydice publications go to the Polish Eurydice website:

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