



The system of education in Poland

2025

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Editors: Ewa Kolanowska, Magdalena Górowska-Fells
Editing cooperation: Michał Chojnacki, Beata Płatos-Zielińska
Editing and proofreading: Proofreaders.pl, Artur Cholewiński

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eurydice@frse.org.pl

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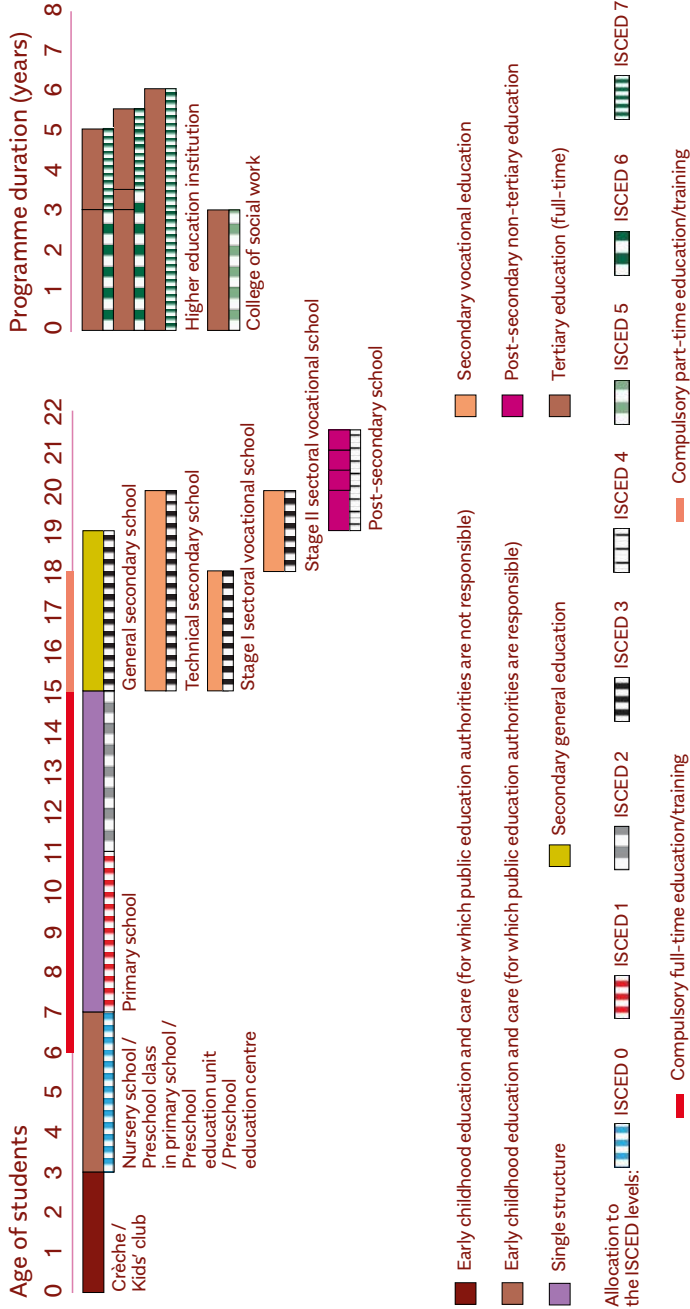
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Abbreviations

AET	Adult Education and Training
ECTS	European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System
EQF	European Qualifications Framework
HEI	Higher Education Institution
ICT	Information and communication technology
IQR	Integrated Qualifications Register
IQS	Integrated Qualifications System
ISS	Integrated Skills Strategy
LO	learning outcome
NACSN&M	National Accreditation Council for Schools of Nursing and Midwifery
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
PAC	Polish Accreditation Committee
PQF	Polish Qualifications Framework
QA	quality assurance
REA	Regional Education Authorities
SEC	Science Evaluation Committee
RPL	recognition of prior learning
SAA	skills assessment and anticipation
SEN	special educational needs
CPD	continuing professional development

Poland 2024/2025



1. Legislation and Policy

1.1. Introduction

The system of education in Poland comprises the school education system (including schools for adults and several types of adult education and training institutions), which is supervised mainly by the [Ministry of National Education](#), and the higher education system, which is supervised by the [Ministry of Science and Higher Education](#). Care institutions for children aged 0–3 years are not considered to be part of the education system and are supervised by the [Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy](#) (for information on childcare for this age group, see [Chapter 4](#) Early Childhood Education and Care for Poland in the Eurydice database '[National Education Systems](#)').



Childcare

1.2. Legislative framework

The 1997 [Constitution](#) of the Republic of Poland guarantees the **right to education** for all, provides for **free access** to education in public schools and higher education institutions (HEIs), and stipulates that education is **compulsory** until the age of 18. Public authorities ensure universal and equal access to education and, to this end, provide financial and organisational support to pupils and students. Citizens and institutions have the right to establish schools and HEIs, and parents are free to choose a public or non-public school for their children. The autonomy of HEIs is ensured in accordance with the principles laid down in the relevant Act of Parliament.

The education system is governed by Acts of Parliament and Regulations adopted, in particular, by the Minister of National Education, responsible for pre-school, general, and vocational education, and the Minister of Science, responsible for higher education. The overarching [Act on the Integrated Qualifications System](#) (IQS) of 2015 establishes the 8-level Polish Qualifications Framework (PQF), specifies the range of qualifications included in the IQS, and lays down rules for assigning levels to the qualifications awarded and for entering qualifications onto the IQS.

The main Acts concerning **school education**, which cover all levels from preschool to post-secondary non-tertiary education, are the [Law on School Education](#) and the [Provisions introducing the Law on School Education](#) of 2016, the [School Education Act](#) of 1991, and the [Teachers' Charter](#) of 1982. They regulate key aspects such as the structure of the school education system; governance and funding; the organisation of education and curricula; admissions, assessment, and certification; support for pupils; education for foreign nationals; and qualification requirements, employment conditions, and professional promotion arrangements for teachers. **Regulations** of the Minister of National Education lay down detailed arrangements in these areas. They establish, for example, core curricula for preschool, general, and vocational education; outline timetables for public schools; deliver mechanisms for so-called pedagogical supervision, including external and internal inspections of educational institutions; and provide frameworks for pupil assessment and promotion, external examinations, and teacher appraisals.

The key Act governing **higher education** is the [Law on Higher Education and Science](#) of 2018. Pursuant to the Law, HEIs carry out a mission of special importance to the state and the nation, i.e., they make a crucial contribution to the innovativeness of the economy and contribute to the development of culture and moral standards for public life. The Law covers all the main areas of higher education and research activity, including the establishment and liquidation of HEIs; the extent of autonomy, types, and tasks of HEIs; governance and funding; types of programmes and certification; rights and responsibilities of students, doctoral students, and academic staff; financial support for students and scholarships for doctoral students; qualification requirements and employment conditions for academic staff; student and doctoral student self-government bodies; commercialisation of research output and know-how; awards of doctoral and post-doctoral degrees and professorial titles; general quality assurance arrangements for higher education and external research evaluations (referred to as evaluations of the quality of scientific activity); access for foreign nationals to higher education and research activity; and national-level bodies within the higher education and science system. **Regulations** of the Minister of Science define, for example, fields and disciplines of science and disciplines of the arts, in which HEIs provide degree programmes; general requirements for the provision of degree programmes and curriculum design; national standards for degree programmes for some regulated professions; and general criteria for external evaluations of degree programmes and doctoral schools.

There is **no single Act** of Parliament for **adult education** and training as a whole. Relevant provisions are included mainly in the legislation on school

education and higher education. **Regulations** of the Minister of National Education address selected aspects such as continuing education in non-school settings, accreditation of institutions providing continuing education in non-school settings, and outline statutes for public institutions providing continuing education.

For further details about the legislative framework, see [Chapter 2.1](#). Fundamental Principles and National Policies for Poland in the Eurydice database '[National Education Systems](#)'.



Fundamental Principles

1.3. Policy documents

1.3.1. Integrated Skills Strategy 2030

Within the framework of the 2014–2020 Partnership Agreement between the European Commission and Poland, the Ministry of National Education, in collaboration with all stakeholders, developed the *Integrated Skills Strategy* (ISS) 2030. The [general part](#) of the ISS was endorsed by the Polish Government in 2019 and the [detailed part](#) in 2020. The ISS drew on several national strategies adopted earlier (for example, the 2013 Lifelong Learning Perspective, and the Strategy for Responsible Development 2017–2020, with a 2030 perspective), the OECD's 2019 *Skills Strategy Poland* report and the European Commission's *New Skills Agenda for Europe*. It was also designed in line with key EU policy documents on the development of digital skills and skills of the workforce for the labour market, teacher education, and the teaching profession, adopted in 2019 and 2020.

The ISS provides a policy framework for the development of skills to enhance social capital, foster social inclusion and economic growth, and achieve a high quality of life. It covers skills development in the field of education and training, including formal learning (general, vocational, and higher education), and non-formal and informal learning.

The general part of the ISS identifies six priority areas.

Priority 1. Improving key skills in children, young people, and adults:

Develop **key competences** for active participation in social and economic life as part of formal, non-formal, and informal education; adapt education and training to the **needs of diverse learners**; develop **ICT skills**; strengthen the system supporting the **development of skills and abilities** in all pupils and students, incl. specific support measures for particularly gifted pupils and students; develop effective and diverse **funding and quality assurance** mechanisms in the area of skills development.

Priority 2. Fostering a learning culture geared towards active and continuous development of skills:

Promote the **learning paradigm**, as opposed to the teaching paradigm, in core curricula, pedagogical approaches, and lifelong learning; redesign approaches to initial **and in-service training, recruitment, and performance appraisal of staff** to ensure that they are fully prepared to support lifelong learning; build the **organisational culture** of institutions based on collaboration and trust; promote **lifestyles** based on lifelong learning; promote lifelong learning through active participation in **social and public life**

Priority 3. Increasing employer involvement in the development and better use of skills:

Develop mechanisms for better collaboration **between educational and research institutions and employers**, and employers' organisations; promote, develop, and recognise forms of **experiential learning**, in particular where it is organised in the workplace; design and implement a system to encourage employers' engagement in **skills development**.

Priority 4. Building an effective system for skills assessment and anticipation (SAA) and dissemination of related information:

Integrate and enhance the **SAA mechanisms** in place; create a widely accessible, useful, and user-friendly **catalogue of skills**; define requirements and standards for **processing information** based on ongoing assessment, analysis of civilisation trends, and development-oriented modelling; design a mechanism for **sharing skills** information in an easily accessible way; develop an effective **counselling and guidance** system for children, young people, and adults in the area of lifelong skills development and use.

Priority 5. Developing effective and sustainable mechanisms for inter-ministerial and inter-sectoral collaboration and coordination in the area of skills development:

Create an **integrated system of institutions** involved in education and lifelong learning policies based on SAA; provide **conditions for lifelong learning** as the basis for skills development (arrangements for formal, non-formal, and informal education); create a system for effective **processing of data** on formal, non-formal, and informal education; improve **communication** among the ministries and various public administration levels concerned on **educational and training needs** of children, young people, and adults; develop opportunities, mechanisms, and tools for the **validation of skills** acquired outside the formal education system.

Priority 6. Ensuring equal access to opportunities for the development and use of skills:

Identify and eliminate **access barriers** to high-quality education and training services as part of formal, non-formal, and informal education; provide **low-skilled individuals** with customised education and training **opportunities**; combat **digital exclusion** of particularly disadvantaged groups; improve and promote inclusive education; ensure that education is based on the **principles** of solidarity, democracy, tolerance, justice, freedom, and respect for other cultures; improve **initial and in-service teacher training** in the area of intercultural education and educational needs of migrants; develop mechanisms for **online competence development** (for example, Massive Open Online Courses, MOOCs).

The detailed part of the ISS covers eight impact areas, each with specific action themes to be addressed through lines of action (for the lines of action, see the detailed part of the ISS).

Impact Area I: Basic, transversal and professional skills of children, youth, and adults

Action Themes: Dissemination of existing, and development and implementation of new approaches to both the assessment of aptitudes and skills of children, youth, and adults, and the development of their basic, transversal, and professional skills; support for the development of social capital for skills development in formal, non-formal, and informal learning.

Impact Area II: Skills development in formal education – management staff

Action Themes: Support for the management staff of formal education in creating conditions for skills development, and in managing the skills of the teaching staff.

Impact Area III: Skills development in formal education – teaching staff

Action Themes: Support for skills development of the teaching staff in formal education; support for, and the development of, processes for granting credentials to practise and function in the teaching profession; development of a culture of work in school based on cooperation, teamwork, and interdisciplinarity; skills development of the staff involved in initial and in-service training of teaching staff in formal education; development of national and international practical placements and internships for students in all fields of study preparing for the teaching profession.

Impact Area IV: Skills development outside formal education

Action Themes: Support for the family in caregiving, upbringing, and skills development; support for the management and teaching staff in non-formal education and the staff supporting informal learning; support for the staff in institutions outside the formal and non-formal education systems (involved in caregiving and education) in skills development.

Impact Area V: Skills development and use in the workplace

Action Themes: Support for the development of human capital management in the workplace; use of high-performance work practices for skills development; development of employees' skills.

Impact Area VI: Career counselling

Action Themes: Development, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of effective career counselling for children, youth, and adults; initial and in-service training of career counselling staff; development of effective mechanisms for the dissemination of information about the demand for occupations, qualifications, and skills at the national and regional levels.

Impact Area VII: Cooperation of employers with formal and non-formal education

Action Themes: Development of cooperation between employers and formal and non-formal education institutions; qualitative and quantitative development of national and international practical placements and internships for learners in formal and non-formal education and for teaching staff; development of technical, teaching and learning, and institutional facilities for vocational training taking into account actual working conditions.

Impact Area VIII: Planning lifelong learning and recognition of skills

Action Themes: Integration of formal and non-formal education and informal learning; development of the counselling services for validation and recognition of prior learning (RPL) at the national, regional, and local levels

1.3.2. Annual school education policy agenda

The Minister of National Education coordinates and implements the national school education policy and coordinates and oversees activities carried out as part of pedagogical supervision of educational institutions, in particular, by the Heads of the Regional Education Authorities. Thus, the Minister sets directions or priorities for the implementation of the national policy for each school year. The following [directions](#) are set for the school year 2024/2025:

- Health education at school: developing healthy lifestyles, physical fitness and physical activity as a habit, and first aid training.
- School as a place for civic education and the development of social and patriotic attitudes, as well as a sense of responsibility for the region and the homeland. Security and defence education.
- Support for the wellbeing of children and young people and their mental health. Development of pupils' empathy and sensitivity to other people's needs. Quality improvement of inclusive education and enhancement of skills for working with diverse teams.
- Support for the development of pupils' and teachers' digital skills, including safe internet browsing, critical analysis of information

available on the Internet, and methodologically correct use of Internet tools and resources by teachers.

- Development of analytical thinking skills through an interdisciplinary approach to the teaching of science subjects and through the enhancement of mathematical skills in general education.
- Support for the development of vocational and lifelong learning skills through greater cooperation between schools, other educational institutions, employers, and regional institutions.
- Work with pupils with a migration background, including the teaching of Polish as a foreign language.

For further details about the national policies, see [Chapter 2.1](#). Fundamental Principles and National Policies for Poland in the Eurydice database '[National Education Systems](#)'.



National Policies

2. Organisation

2.1. Compulsory education

Compulsory education is divided into:

- one-year **compulsory preschool education**;
- **full-time compulsory education** (requirement to attend school), which starts at the beginning of the school year in the calendar year when the child reaches the age of 7 and lasts until the completion of education in primary school, but not beyond the age of 18;
- **part-time compulsory education** (requirement to participate in education or training) for young people who have finished primary school and continue compulsory education until the age of 18, in particular, in a post-primary school or as part of vocational training at an employer's organisation.

Children and young people can participate in compulsory education in nursery schools or schools in Poland or abroad, or at foreign diplomatic missions in Poland. A pupil who has finished a post-primary school before reaching the age of 18 can also pursue part-time compulsory education by taking courses at an HEI.

As a form of full- or part-time compulsory education, home-based education can be provided based on a permit from the head of the relevant nursery, primary, or post-primary school. When applying for a permit, parents should submit statements wherein they confirm that they will provide conditions for the child to follow the national core curriculum for a given education stage and that the child will take qualifying exams in each school year, as required for this form of education.

2.2. Structure of the school education system

The school education system includes the following types of preschool institutions and schools:

- nursery schools (*przedszkola*) and other preschool education settings: preschool education centres (*punkty przedszkolne*) and preschool education units (*zespoły wychowania przedszkolnego*);

- primary schools (*szkoły podstawowe*);
- post-primary schools (*szkoły ponadpodstawowe*); and
- art schools (*szkoły artystyczne*).

Preschool education is provided to children at the age of 3 and above. All 6-year-olds are required to attend compulsory preschool classes for one year – either at a nursery school or in a preschool class at a primary school.

Education during the 8-year primary school period is divided into two stages: the first stage, Grades I to III, offering integrated early school education, and the second stage, Grades IV to VIII, providing subject-based education.

All pupils in Grade VIII of primary school take the external **eighth-grader exam**. Subsequently, they can continue education in the following types of post-primary schools:

- 4-year general secondary school (*liceum ogólnokształcące*), where pupils can take the maturity exam;
- 5-year technical secondary school (*technikum*), where pupils can take the maturity exam and a vocational exam;
- 3-year stage I sectoral vocational school (*branżowa szkoła I stopnia*), where pupils can take a vocational exam;
- 2-year stage II sectoral vocational school (*branżowa szkoła II stopnia*), where pupils who have finished a 3-year stage I sectoral vocational school can continue education and take the maturity exam and a vocational exam.

Secondary school graduates can train for an occupation in a post-secondary school (*szkoła policealna*), where programmes last up to 2.5 years, if they have finished a secondary school or a sectoral vocational school (and have passed a vocational exam).

Three types of **external exams** are now conducted in the school system: the **eighth-grader exam**, the **maturity exam**, and **vocational exams**. The first one “sums up” the pupil’s achievements in primary school, indirectly determining the path for further education (as pupils with better results can choose from a wider range of post-primary schools in the admissions process). The maturity

exam has replaced entrance exams which were in place in higher education institutions before 2005.

Art schools enable children and youth with particular artistic abilities to undertake individualised training in specific fields of art. In parallel to general education programmes, art education forms a separate system which is supervised by the **minister responsible for culture** and national heritage and includes art schools providing art education only and art schools providing general education and art education (with the general education component based on the national core curriculum and rules applied in general education schools). Art schools include, among others, music schools, ballet and dance schools, and fine art schools at both primary and secondary levels (for further information on this sector see [Chapters 5.4](#) and [6.10](#) for Poland in the Eurydice database '[National Education Systems](#)').



Primary Art Schools



Secondary Art Schools

2.3. Structure of the higher education system

In terms of the types and levels of programmes, higher education is divided into:

- **specialist programmes:** programmes of at least 3 semesters which are provided by HEIs and lead to a chartered specialist or chartered specialist-technologist certificate rather than a degree;
- **first-cycle programmes:** undergraduate programmes for applicants holding the maturity certificate, which provide knowledge and skills in a specific field of study leading to a bachelor's degree (*licencjat* or *inżynier*);

- **second-cycle programmes:** graduate programmes for applicants holding a bachelor's degree, which provide specialist knowledge in a specific field of study, leading to a master's degree (*magister*) or an equivalent degree; second-cycle graduates may apply for admission to a doctoral school;
- **long-cycle programmes:** graduate programmes for applicants holding the maturity certificate, which provide specialist knowledge in a specific field of study and prepare for creative work in a profession, leading to a master's degree or an equivalent degree; long-cycle graduates may apply for admission to a doctoral school;
- **doctoral education:** doctoral schools open to applicants holding a master's or equivalent degree, which provide advanced knowledge in a specific field or discipline of science, and prepare for independent and creative research and for the award of a doctoral degree (*doktor*);
- **non-degree post-graduate programmes:** programmes, usually fee-based, open to applicants who hold at least a bachelor's degree.

Specialist and non-degree postgraduate programmes are considered part of adult education.

The education system also comprises colleges of social work, which – like HEIs – take holders of a maturity certificate, and which provide 3-year programmes. They are classified as institutions of the school education system in the national legislation but are considered part of higher education for international comparisons.

2.4. Adult education

There is no integrated adult education and training system. Adult education and training includes:

- education provided in primary and general secondary schools for adults, and in stage II, sectoral vocational schools and post-secondary schools (which are not classified as schools for adults but take learners aged at least 18 years) (see the structure of the school education system);
- specialist programmes and non-degree postgraduate programmes provided by HEIs;

- various courses offered mainly in non-school settings, including continuing education centres, vocational education and training centres, and sectoral skills centres, which are part of the school education system, and institutions operating outside the education system.

2.5. Institutions

Schools and HEIs may be public or non-public.

Public schools are administered by government administration (the competent minister) or a local government unit, or they can be established on the basis of a special permit issued at the request of a natural or legal person. They provide tuition-free education and develop and implement school curricula in accordance with the national core curricula complying with the rules for the assessment and promotion of pupils as established by the minister responsible for school education. The organisation of classes is based on the outline timetables and admission rules as defined in the legislation.

Non-public schools are established and administered by legal or natural persons upon entry into the register of non-public schools and other educational institutions kept by the relevant local government unit. A non-public school implements the national core curriculum for general education and conducts compulsory classes in accordance with the same rules as public schools. It also applies the rules for the assessment and promotion of pupils and employs teachers who hold relevant qualifications as required by the minister responsible for school education. It may charge tuition fees and it enrolls pupils in accordance with the rules independently laid down in its statutes.

Public HEIs are established by the state authorities. A **non-public HEI** may be established by a natural person or a legal person other than a local government unit or a state or local government legal person, based on a permit issued by the minister responsible for higher education and science. Non-public HEIs are governed by the same legislation as public HEIs. While non-public HEIs charge tuition fees, full-time first-, second-, and long-cycle programmes, as well as doctoral education, are tuition-free at public HEIs. However, public HEIs may charge fees for some education services (for example, part-time programmes, programmes delivered in a foreign language, and courses which are not included in the curriculum or are retaken by students due to academic failure).

Public and non-public **adult education institutions** other than schools which form part of the school education system are established and administered in accordance with the same rules as schools. Non-public institutions outside the school education system are established and operate in accordance with the legislation on economic activity and / or labour-market-related training activity.

For further details about the structure of the education system, see [Chapter 2.3. Organisation of the Education System and of its Structure for Poland](#), in the Eurydice database '[National Education Systems](#)'.

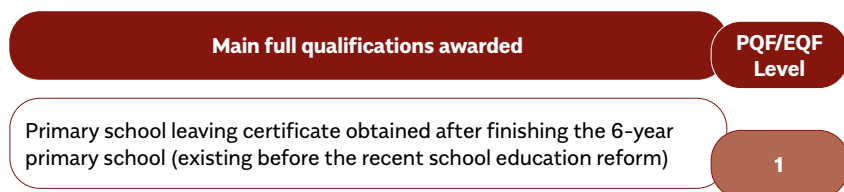


Organisation and Structure

2.6. Integrated Qualifications System

The IQS has been in place since 2016. It is based on the **8-level PQF**, which is referenced to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF), and on the Integrated Qualifications Register (IQR), which includes qualifications awarded in Poland. Qualifications in the PQF are defined in terms of learning outcomes (knowledge, skills, and social competences).

The IQS makes a distinction between full and partial qualifications. **Full qualifications** are awarded only within the school education system upon completion of education at a specific level, and within the higher education system upon completion of specialist, first-, second-, and long-cycle programmes and doctoral education. **Partial qualifications** may be established within the school education and higher education systems, and as part of non-formal education; the range of learning outcomes (LOs) to be achieved for a partial qualification is normally narrower than for a full qualification.



Lower secondary school leaving certificate obtained after finishing the 3-year lower secondary school (existing before the school education reform)

Primary school leaving certificate obtained after finishing the 8-year primary school (established by the school education reform)

2

Diploma conferring vocational qualifications / vocational diploma obtained after finishing ● a 3-year basic vocational school (existing before the school education reform) or ● a 3-year stage I sectoral vocational school (established by the reform), or attaining the same education level through other equivalent learning paths, and upon passing exams leading to qualifications for a given occupation

3

Diploma conferring qualifications / vocational diploma obtained after finishing ● a 4-year technical upper secondary school (existing before the school education reform), ● a 5-year technical secondary school or ● a 2-year stage II sectoral vocational school (both established by the reform) or ● a post-secondary school, or attaining the same education level through other equivalent learning paths, and upon passing exams leading to qualifications for a given occupation

4

Maturity certificate obtained upon passing the maturity exam in ● a 3-year general or ● 4-year technical upper secondary school (existing before the school education reform) or in ● a 4-year general or ● 5-year technical secondary school, or ● a stage II sectoral vocational school (established by the reform)

4

Vocational diploma obtained after finishing a post-secondary school and upon passing a vocational exam in an occupation for which learners are trained only at a post-secondary school

Diploma of a teacher training college or a foreign language teacher training college (institutions existing until 2014)

Diploma of a college of social work

Chartered Specialist (dyplomowany specjalista) and Chartered Specialist-Technologist (dyplomowany specjalista technolog) certificates awarded by a non-university HEI

5

Diploma confirming completion of a first-cycle programme (bachelor's degree (licencjat or inżynier))

6

Diploma confirming completion of a second- or long-cycle programme (master's (magister) or equivalent degree)

7

Doctoral diploma (doctoral degree (doktor))

8

For further details about the PQF, see [Chapter 2.5](#) National Qualifications Framework or [Chapter 8.5](#) Validation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning for Poland, in the Eurydice database '[National Education Systems](#)'.



NQF



Validation

3. Administration and governance at central, regional, and local levels

3.1. School education

3.1.2. Central level

3.1.1.1. Ministry of National Education

The responsibility for the coordination of educational policy rests with the minister in charge of school education – the Minister of National Education. Some other ministers can administer specific types of public schools and other educational institutions.

The national educational policy is developed and implemented centrally, in cooperation with the regional authorities / province governors and other organisational units responsible for the school education system. The management of education and the administration of schools, nursery schools, and other educational institutions are decentralised.

Nursery schools and primary schools are administered by the communes (the lowest-level local government unit), while post-primary schools, art schools, and special schools by the districts (the local government level above the commune and below the region or province) as their statutory responsibility. The self-governing provinces administer only schools operating at regional and supra-regional levels. The responsibility for pedagogical supervision rests with the Heads of the Regional Education Authorities (REA) in 16 provinces.

The Minister lays down, by regulation, arrangements in, for example, the following areas:

- curricular contents and **textbooks**, including **core curricula** for preschool education, general education, and vocational education, outline timetables, and rules for approving textbooks for use at schools; **classification of occupations** for vocational education;
- **admission to public schools** and other educational institutions, and transfer of pupils between different types of schools;

- **internal** and **external** pupil **assessment, progression**, and **certification**;
- **governance** and **organisation** of institutions within the school education system, including, for example, organisational arrangements for the school year; framework statutes for public schools and other public institutions; organisational arrangements for practical vocational training; conditions for the appointment to management positions;
- **pedagogical supervision**, including, for example, arrangements for inspections of schools, and types of positions and qualifications required to exercise pedagogical supervision;
- **types of preschool education institutions** and **settings**, and procedures for granting and using subsidies for preschool education;
- **continuing education**, including types of public continuing education institutions and their tasks; general arrangements for adult education and training, and types of vocational qualification courses; methods for the validation of learning outcomes achieved in non-school settings; conditions for the accreditation of institutions providing adult education and training in non-school settings;
- initial and in-service **teacher training**, including conditions and procedures for the establishment, operation, restructuring, and liquidation of in-service teacher training institutions; conditions for the accreditation of non-public in-service teacher training institutions;
- **education, care**, and **support for children** and **young people with special education needs**, including, for example, additional classes and activities, individualised learning, counselling, and guidance;
- Matters related to **education abroad** and **education for foreigners**.

3.1.2. Regional level

The regional level is the level of province. There are 16 provinces in Poland.

3.1.2.1. Heads of the regional education authorities: pedagogical supervision

The Head of the REA exercises pedagogical supervision over educational institutions at the regional level. The Head of the REA is appointed and dismissed by the Minister of National Education at the request of the province governor and, thus, is part of the central government structure. The Minister supervises the Heads of the REAs and coordinates their work.

As part of his / her main responsibilities, the Head of the REA:

- exercises pedagogical supervision over public and non-public schools and other educational institutions;
- implements the national educational policy and cooperates with local government bodies in the development and implementation of local and regional educational policies consistent with the national policy;
- gives opinions on organisational sheets of supervised public schools and educational institutions with regard to their compliance with the legislation;
- gives opinions on work plans of supervised public in-service teacher training institutions;
- gives opinions on networks of public schools administered by local government units with regard to their compliance with the statutory requirements;
- analyses teachers' in-service training needs and initiates and coordinates teacher training activities;
- supports activities related to the conduct of tests and exams in schools;
- cooperates with local government bodies in the development of facilities at schools and other educational institutions.

3.1.2.2. Local government units at the regional level

Local government units at the regional level do not have typical school education tasks. However, they administer some educational institutions which have a supporting role: in-service teacher training institutions, educational resource centres, and schools and educational institutions operating at regional and supra-regional levels.

3.1.3. Local level

3.1.3.1. Administration at district level

District authorities (the level between the province and the commune) establish and administer public special primary schools and post-primary schools, except for those operating at regional and supra-regional levels. The responsibilities of the district authorities do not include pedagogical supervision, which is exercised by the Head of the REA. However, the competent bodies at the district level have various powers related to appointments to management positions in schools, and the adoption of local regulations on matters concerning schools and teachers.

As part of their responsibilities, districts may establish and administer public initial and in-service teacher training institutions and educational resource centres.

3.1.3.2. Administration at the commune level

The commune (the lowest level of administrative division) establishes and administers public nursery schools, including special ones; and primary schools. Pedagogical supervision over these types of institutions is the responsibility of the Head of the REA. Like districts, communes may establish and administer public initial and in-service teacher training institutions and educational resource centres.

3.1.3.3. Institutional level

The responsibility for administering a school (or a nursery school, or another educational institution) rests with the **head of a school** as a single-person authority. However, heads are supported in their management tasks by other bodies and individuals. The **teaching council** is a collegial body of the school with extensive decision-making and advisory powers. Public schools also have

social participation bodies, composed entirely or partly of education stakeholders (parents and pupils): the **school council**, the **parents' council**, and the **pupil self-government**.

The **school head** is appointed by the school administering body for 5 school years. Where this is justified, in agreement with the Head of the REA, the head may be appointed for a shorter period, but the minimum duration of the term is one school year.

Where the school has established the positions of deputy head or other management positions in accordance with the national legislation, management staff are appointed and dismissed by the school head after consultation with the school council, the teaching council, and the school administering body.

The school head:

- manages the school and represents it externally;
- exercises pedagogical supervision;
- takes care of pupils and creates conditions for their harmonious psychological and physical development through various health-promoting activities;
- implements resolutions of the school council and the teaching council;
- manages funds and takes responsibility for their use;
- ensures the safety of pupils and teachers during school hours;
- provides conditions in the school for activities of volunteers, associations, and other organisations which are involved in childcare and / or education as part of their statutory activities;
- cooperates with HEIs in the organisation of teaching internships for students;
- is responsible for the proper organisation and conduct of tests and exams;
- performs other tasks as set out in specific regulations.

As the head of the institution for teaching and non-teaching staff, the school head:

- employs and dismisses teaching and non-teaching staff;
- gives awards and administers disciplinary penalties;
- presents proposals for commendations, awards, and other distinctions.

The school head is partially relieved from teaching duties. The weekly teaching load for the head depends on the size of the school.

A nursery school or school which employs at least 3 teachers should establish a **teaching council**, which is chaired by the school head and composed of all teachers working in the school. Where less than three teachers are employed, teachers join the teaching council of the school that supervises the school campus in which they work. The responsibilities of the council cover the school's statutory tasks related to education and childcare. For example, as part of its decision-making powers, the council approves school activity plans; adopts resolutions on the results of pupil assessment and promotion and on teaching innovations and experiments; adopts arrangements for in-service training of teachers; and determines how findings from pedagogical supervision will be used to improve the performance of the school. It also gives its opinions on, for example, work organisation in the school and draft financial plans of the school.

Members of the **school council** represent and are elected by teachers, pupils' parents, and pupils (except in nursery and primary schools, as well as in special schools for pupils with an intellectual disability and some other specific types of schools). As part of its main responsibilities, the council, for example, adopts the school statutes; gives its opinions on a draft financial plan of the school, the school activity plan, and proposals for educational innovations and experiments; can submit motions to evaluate the activities of the school, the school head, and teachers or may, on its own initiative, evaluate the activities of, or conditions in, the school and make related proposals to the competent bodies.

The **parents' council** represents the parents of all pupils in a given school. The council can make proposals concerning all school matters to the school head and other school bodies, the school administering body, or the body responsible for pedagogical supervision.

The **pupil self-government** is established by all pupils in a given school. A self-government body is the only body representing all pupils. It can make proposals and give opinions on all school matters to the school council, the teaching council, and the school head.

3.2. Higher education

3.2.1. Central level

3.2.1.1. Ministry of Science and Higher Education

Matters relating to the development of science, the training of students and doctoral students, and the functioning of HEIs fall within the remit of the minister responsible for science and higher education - the Minister of Science.

As part of his / her main responsibilities, the Minister:

- develops national higher education and research policies;
- supervises HEIs in respect of compliance with the law, including financial regulations, their statutes, and permits for the establishment of non-public HEIs;
- grants and withdraws permits for the establishment of non-public HEIs and authorisations for public and non-public HEIs to provide first-, second-, and long-cycle programmes in cases extending beyond their autonomy;
- regulates a number of key issues for higher education, including, for example:
 - » fields and disciplines of science and disciplines of the arts, in which HEIs may provide degree programmes;
 - » general requirements for HEIs to provide first-, second-, and long-cycle programmes and award related degrees;
 - » national standards for degree programmes for some regulated professions;
 - » elements to be included in diplomas and certificates awarded by HEIs;
 - » general arrangements for external programme evaluations and research evaluations (referred to as evaluations of the quality of scientific activities).

3.2.1.2. Other institutions at the central level

The Polish Accreditation Committee (PAC) (*Polska Komisja Akredytacyjna, PKA*) is the national body responsible for external quality assurance. It gives opinions to the Minister of Science on applications for permits to establish non-public HEIs and authorisations for HEIs to provide first-, second-, and long-cycle programmes, where required, and conducts periodic programme and complex evaluations. PAC is a member of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) and is listed on the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR).

The Science Evaluation Committee (SEC) (*Komisja Ewaluacji Nauki*) carries out research evaluations (quality evaluations of scientific activities) conducted by HEIs and other research institutions, and will also conduct evaluations of the quality of education at doctoral schools from the end of 2024.

The National Accreditation Council for Schools of Nursing and Midwifery (NACSN&M) (*Krajowa Rada Akredytacyjna Szkół Pielęgniarek i Położnych, KRASPiP*) carries out evaluations of first- and second-cycle programmes in the fields of Nursing and Midwifery, which provide the basis for accreditation granted by the Minister of Health.

The National Agency for Academic Exchange (*Narodowa Agencja Wymiany Akademickiej, NAWA*) is responsible for matters related to the mobility of students, doctoral students, and higher education staff, as well as for the internationalisation of higher education and research institutions. It runs a number of mobility and cooperation programmes and projects, (co-)funded by the EU and / or the national budget. The Agency is also responsible for the recognition of qualifications, acting as the Polish ENIC-NARIC unit.

The main national-level representative bodies in higher education include:

- Conference of Rectors of Academic Schools in Poland (*Konferencja Rektorów Akademickich Szkół Polskich*) established by university-type HEIs
- Conferences of Rectors of Non-University HEIs: the Conference of Rectors of Higher Vocational Education Institutions in Poland (*Konferencja Rektorów Zawodowych Szkół Polskich*) and the Conference of Public Higher Vocational Education Institutions (*Konferencja Rektorów Publicznych Uczelni Zawodowych*)

The Conferences are supervised by the Minister of Science. There are also regional and sectoral conferences of rectors.

- General Council for Science and Higher Education (*Rada Główna Nauki i Szkolnictwa Wyższego*): a representative body of the higher education and research community, which gives opinions on matters related to higher education and research, including, for example, governance and operational arrangements, directions for development and budgetary allocations for higher education and research, and draft legislation. It is composed of academic teachers nominated by the Conferences of Rectors from among candidates proposed by HEIs, and representatives of research institutions, students and doctoral students, trade unions and employers' organisations.
- Students' Parliament of the Republic of Poland (*Parlament Studentów Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej*) and Polish National Association of Doctoral Candidates (*Krajowa Reprezentacja Doktorantów*): national-level representative bodies of students and doctoral students, respectively, which give opinions and submit proposals on matters related to students and doctoral students, including draft legislation.

3.2.2. Institutional level

In accordance with the legislation, the governing bodies are the rector, the council, and the senate of a public HEI, or the rector and the senate of a non-public HEI. Other bodies may be established in both types of institutions by their statutes.

The **rector**:

- manages the institution;
- drafts the institution's strategy and reports on its implementation;
- develops and implements a human resources policy, and takes appointment and dismissal decisions for management positions;
- takes decisions to establish first-, second-, and long-cycle programmes, non-degree programmes, and doctoral schools;
- performs labour-law and financial management responsibilities;

- ensures compliance of the institution's activities with the regulations in force at the institution.

The **council**:

- gives opinions on the draft statutes, institutional strategy, and reports on its implementation, and on activity-and-finance plans;
- approves reports on the implementation of activity-and-finance plans and financial statements;
- puts forward candidates for the rector position.

The **senate**:

- adopts the institution's statutes, admissions and study regulations;
- approves the strategy and reports on its implementation;
- appoints and dismisses members of the council and gives opinions on candidates for the position of rector;
- establishes curricula for all types of programmes offered;
- awards doctoral and post-doctoral degrees;
- conducts evaluations of the institution's performance.

The **student self-government** and the doctoral student self-government (student and doctoral student councils) represent all students and doctoral students, of an HEI, respectively. The councils deal with all matters relevant to students or doctoral students and are involved in the governance of an institution. The president of the student council is a member of the council of an HEI. The student and doctoral student councils are consulted about appointments to management positions whose remit covers student or doctoral student matters, and elect their representatives to the body electing the rector and to the senate. The student council endorses study regulations and regulations on student benefits, is consulted about curricula for degree programmes and criteria for staff performance appraisal, and is involved in the granting of various student benefits. Regulations on a doctoral school are agreed upon with the doctoral student council, and the council also gives opinions on curricula at a doctoral school. For

further details about the administration and governance, see [Chapters 2.6](#) and [2.7](#) Administration and Governance at Central and / or Regional Level and Local and / or Institutional Level for Poland in the Eurydice database '[National Education Systems](#)'.



Central / Regional Level



Local / Institutional Level

4. Quality assurance

The **school education** system has the same quality assurance (QA) arrangements for preschool and school education in place. The main mechanisms for **external QA** are inspections of public and non-public institutions, which are part of pedagogical supervision, and performance appraisal of heads of public institutions and teaching heads of specific types of non-public institutions.

Inspections aim to evaluate compliance with the legislation, educational processes, and outcomes of educational, childcare, and other statutory activities of preschool and school education institutions. The scope of planned inspections to be conducted in a given school year is defined by the Minister of National Education in the annual school education policy agenda, which provides the basis for detailed pedagogical supervision plans adopted by the Heads of the REAs for their provinces. Inspections are carried out by inspectors working in the pedagogical supervision body (the REA in most cases, as the Head of the REA is the pedagogical supervision body for most educational institutions).

Performance appraisal of a head is conducted jointly by the body administering a given educational institution and the pedagogical supervision body (the Head of the REA) against detailed criteria set out in the legislation.

Internal QA includes internal inspections or audits and teacher performance appraisal as the main mechanisms, both conducted by the head of an institution. Internal **inspections** are mandatory for public institutions, whereas non-public institutions may adopt different arrangements. The head of a public institution defines topics for inspections in a pedagogical supervision plan for each school year, considering the aims of inspections, which are the same as in external QA, the national school education policy agenda, findings from pedagogical supervision in the previous year, and specific needs of the institution. Findings from internal inspections are taken into account in external inspections.

The arrangements for **teacher performance appraisal** apply to teachers working in public and non-public institutions. Performance appraisal is mandatory for novice teachers carrying an induction programme as new entrants to the profession, and for appointed teachers (holding the first professional promotion grade available to teachers) to apply for the grade of chartered teacher (the second and highest grade). It is conducted against detailed criteria set out in the legislation.

The legislation on **higher education** provides for six external QA processes. Most of them are mandatory for non-public HEIs to be established and / or operate, and for public and non-public HEIs to establish and / or continue providing degree programmes, or to continue running a doctoral school. The four mandatory processes that are currently in place include:

- **initial institutional accreditation:** assessment of applications for registration and the granting of permits for non-public HEIs to be established and operate;
- **institutional re-accreditation:** assessment of applications and renewal of registration / permits for non-public HEIs to operate;
- **initial programme accreditation:** assessment of applications for, and the granting of, authorisations for public and non-public HEIs to establish and provide first-, second-, and long-cycle programmes in all fields of study (where HEIs do not meet the statutory requirements to autonomously establish a programme in a given field); and additional accreditation of new first- and second-cycle programmes in the fields of Nursing and Midwifery; and
- **periodic programme accreditation:** evaluation of ongoing first-, second-, and long-cycle programmes in all fields of study in public and non-public HEIs; additionally, evaluation and accreditation of ongoing first- and second-cycle programmes in the fields of Nursing and Midwifery.

The Minister of Science grants, withdraws, and renews permits for non-public HEIs to operate, and grants and withdraws authorisations for HEIs to provide programmes. PAC reviews applications for such permits and authorisations, issuing opinions which provide the basis for the Minister's decisions, conducts periodic programme evaluations as well as takes related accreditation decisions. Initial and periodic accreditation of Nursing and Midwifery programmes involves the Minister of Health, who grants and withdraws accreditation, and the NACSN&M, which carries out evaluations.

The two external QA processes to be put in place are complex evaluation and evaluation of the quality of education at doctoral schools. **Complex evaluation**, a non-mandatory process, will focus on internal QA at the institutional level and will be carried out by PAC. Evaluations of the quality of education at **doctoral schools**, a mandatory process, will be conducted by the SEC with the first round of evaluations planned for the 4th quarter of 2024.

The legislation does not predefine elements of **internal QA** for HEIs, except for the requirements to regularly evaluate and improve programmes and to conduct periodic performance appraisals of academic staff.

QA arrangements for **adult education** vary depending on whether institutions are part of the school education system. Both external and internal QA arrangements for schools for adults, stage II sectoral vocational schools, post-secondary schools, and institutions providing adult education in non-school settings within the **school education system** are the same as for school education for young people. Additionally, institutions providing adult education in non-school settings may voluntarily apply for **accreditation** granted by the Head of the REA.

There are no national QA arrangements or recommendations for institutions providing adult education in non-school settings outside the school education system, as part of economic activity or labour-market training activity. However, similarly to institutions within the school education system, they may voluntarily apply for **accreditation** granted by the Head of the REA.

For further details about quality assurance, see [Chapter 11](#). Quality Assurance for Poland in the Eurydice database '[National Education Systems](#)'.



Quality Assurance

5. Preschool education

5.1. Introduction

Preschool or pre-primary education (ISCED 020) is available to children from the beginning of the school year in the calendar year when they reach the age of 3 years, until the end of the school year in the calendar year when they reach the age of 7 years. In exceptional cases, a child aged 2.5 years may participate in preschool education.

6-year-old children are required by law to attend one year of preschool education. Children aged at least 3 years have the right to preschool education guaranteed by law (3-year-olds since 1 September 2017; 4-year-olds since 1 September 2015; and 5-year-olds since 1 September 2009).

5.2. Aims

The aims of preschool education are set out in the core curriculum for preschool education established by the national legislation.

Preschool education aims to support the comprehensive development of children. Support is provided through childcare, education, and teaching and learning processes so that children can discover their own abilities and the meaning of their activities, and gain experience on their way to understanding and appreciating truth, goodness, and beauty. In this way, children achieve readiness to enter the first stage of school education.

Preschool education institutions have the following tasks:

1. supporting multidimensional activities for children by providing conditions for experiences in physical, emotional, social, and cognitive areas of their development;
2. providing conditions for children's unconstrained development, play and leisure, while giving them a sense of security;
3. supporting activities that improve children's sensory integration and ability to use emerging cognitive processes;

4. providing appropriate conditions for children's experiences ensuring continuity in their adaptation processes, and support for children who are developing in a non-harmonious way, at either a slower or an accelerated pace;
5. supporting children in their independent exploration of the world, and selecting learning content that is adequate for the level of their development, perceptual abilities, concepts and reasoning, while respecting their individual needs and interests;
6. increasing children's self-esteem, enhancing their individuality and originality, and strengthening their need to create interpersonal relations and participate in a group;
7. creating situations that encourage the development of habits and behaviours leading to independence, caring for health, motor fitness, and safety, including road traffic safety;
8. preparing children to understand their own and other people's emotions and feelings, and taking care of their mental health, among other things, through real-life situations emerging in a nursery school and task-oriented situations that embrace learning content appropriate for children's intellectual abilities and development expectations;
9. creating learning situations that build children's sensitivity, including aesthetic sensitivity, with regard to many spheres of human activity – speech, behaviour, motion, environment, dressing, music, dancing, singing, theatre, and visual arts;
10. providing conditions for safe and independent exploration of the surrounding natural environment, which stimulates the development of children's sensitivity and enables them to learn about values and norms concerning the natural environment, as appropriate for the stage of their development;
11. providing conditions for safe and independent exploration of elements of technology in children's environments, and for designing, tinkering, planning, and undertaking purposeful action, and presenting the products of their work;

12. collaborating with parents and various communities, organisations, and institutions that parents consider to be a source of important values, in order to provide conditions for the development of children's identity;
13. creating, together with these entities, situations in which children learn about values and social norms that come from the family, a group in a nursery school, and other adults, including elderly people, and shape behaviours based on values that children may understand at this stage of development;
14. systematically extending, with parental consent, learning content to include new issues in response to changes and phenomena emerging in children's environments that are relevant to their safety and harmonious development;
15. systematically supporting the development of children's learning mechanisms so that they achieve school readiness;
16. organising classes and activities, in line with needs, in which children can learn the culture and language of a national or ethnic minority or the regional language (Kashubian);
17. creating learning situations that arouse children's interest in a modern foreign language and in learning about other cultures.

The core curriculum also sets out expected achievements for children in terms of physical, emotional, social, and cognitive development upon completion of preschool education.

5.3. Types of institutions

Preschool education is provided in:

- nursery schools,
- preschool classes in primary schools, and
- other preschool education settings: preschool education units and preschool education centres.

Nursery schools are open, and preschool classes in primary schools are run throughout the school year, except for breaks established by the school's administering body. Preschool education units work on some days of the week throughout the school year, and preschool education centres are open all days of the week throughout the school year, except for breaks established by their administering bodies.

5.4. Admission

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** for admission; children should have reached 3 years of age. In special cases, younger children aged at least 2.5 years may be enrolled with the consent of the head of the nursery school.

In nursery schools where the demand exceeds the number of available places, the admission process may be comprised of up to three **stages**. In the first stage, priority is given to children who are required or have the statutory right to participate in preschool education. If necessary, the second stage is based on the criteria relating to a difficult family situation or health problems in the family (e.g., a large or lone-parent family; a family member with a disability), which are set in the legislation, and the third stage on local criteria such as the needs of the family and the local community and / or the financial situation of the family, as defined by the commune.

Public nursery schools which still have vacant places after taking all children from their own commune can enrol children from other communes, at their parents' request. Where necessary, applicants from outside the commune may follow the criteria applied in the second and third stages of the admission process.

Where the commune does not provide places to all children who are required or have the right to participate in preschool education, it should select non-public preschool education institutions through a tender and provide them with funding that is equal to 100 % of the current expenditure per pupil in public nursery schools administered by the commune.

5.5. Organisation

Age is the criterion most often used to group children. Most nursery schools are divided into four grades (groups for 3-, 4-, 5-, and 6-year-olds). Children

of a similar age are also sometimes grouped according to their needs, interests, and abilities. Children of different ages can also be grouped together in a 'family group' for educational reasons, as interacting with peers of various ages stimulates their individual development. In rural areas, **mixed-age groups** are created if the number of children is small. Nursery schools in rural areas usually have two groups (6-year-olds and other children) or one group only.

The **number of children** per group may not exceed 25, except in integration nursery schools and preschool classes where the limit is lower (for integration schools and classes, see the chapter on Inclusive education). In integration nursery schools and preschool classes, the maximum number of children is 20, including up to 5 children with a disability. In alternative preschool education settings (preschool education units and preschool education centres), a group has 3 to 25 children.

As a rule, two teachers working in shifts supervise one group (one until noon and the other in the afternoon).

For children aged 3 years and over, free-of-charge education and care are provided for at least **5 hours a day**. Each commune decides the duration of fee-free education and care (not shorter than 5 hours per day). The maximum amount of the fee that communes can charge parents from 1 September 2024 is PLN 1.44 (EUR 0.34) for each additional hour of preschool education (beyond the minimum of 5 fee-free hours). The commune can also lay down conditions for a full or partial fee waiver. For 6-year-olds, preschool education is free of charge regardless of the duration of stay; parents pay for meals only.

In the case of 5- and 6-year-olds, if the distance between the child's home and the school or nursery school exceeds 3 km, the commune is required to provide free transport to a public nursery school, public alternative preschool education setting, or public school with a preschool class, and free care during transport; alternatively, it can reimburse the costs of public transport.

Public nursery schools can organise various additional classes in, for example, rhythmic gymnastics or an additional foreign language, but may not charge related additional fees.

6-year-olds take the compulsory preparatory year of preschool education, or may start full-time compulsory education in Grade I of the primary school, as parents are free to choose a preferred education path for their 6-year-old children (preschool education or school education).

Preschool education institutions are attended by a much larger proportion of children aged 3-5 years in urban areas (97.8%) than in rural areas (80.8%). The relatively low participation rate in rural areas results, in particular, from the fact that some children living in rural areas attend preschool education settings in cities as parents commute for work to the city where their children participate in preschool education.

5.6. Curriculum

In accordance with the core curriculum for preschool education, play, learning, and leisure time are organised so as to follow the rhythm of the day: regularly repeated phases enable children to gradually understand the concept of time and organisation, and give them a sense of security and tranquillity, thus ensuring their healthy development.

Play is the main form of activity for children in preschool education. Most preschool education institutions do not use any specific educational, teaching, or learning methods, and their work with children is based on spontaneous activities. The preschool environment stimulates and directs their imitative and creative activities. Games and activities stimulating development are the most common methods.

5.7. Assessment

A preschool teacher should observe individual children, keep records of their achievements to identify and respond to their developmental needs and cooperate with counselling and healthcare specialists. Teachers use the information gathered in their daily work with children and in collaboration with parents in order to support children's development.

Heads of preschool education institutions are required to issue a statement on **school readiness** to parents of children who are taking the compulsory preschool education year. Teachers assess school readiness of 6-year-olds attending preschool education. For 5-year-old children, a school-readiness assessment is conducted at the parents' request if the parents decide that their child will start school at the age of 6. The assessment takes place at the beginning of the school year preceding the child's possible enrolment in Grade I of the primary school.

The assessment aims to collect information that may help:

- parents to learn about the level of the child's readiness for school education;
- preschool teachers to set up an individualised programme supporting the child's development;
- staff at a counselling and guidance centre to conduct a more in-depth assessment of the child, where necessary.

For further details about preschool education, see [Chapter 4](#) Early Childhood Education and Care for Poland in the Eurydice database '[National Education Systems](#)'.



Preschool Education

6. Primary (single-structure) education

6.1. Introduction

Primary or single-structure education, comprising ISCED / PQF Levels 1 and 2, is **compulsory for all children**, including pupils with a disability. Only children with profound intellectual disability follow full-time compulsory education in the form of rehabilitation and education classes.

The 8-year primary school takes children aged 7 to 15 years. Subsequently, young people continue education in secondary schools or in other settings, as defined by law, such as practical vocational training at a workplace combined with theoretical training, or vocational qualification courses.

The school starting age is set at 7 years. However, the national legislation provides an option for parents to apply for admission of their 6-year-old children to the primary school under certain conditions (preschool education completed by the child and his / her school readiness).

Education in public primary schools is free of charge for all pupils. Parents may also choose a non-public school.

Education in the primary school is divided into two stages:

- Grades I to III of the primary school: integrated early school education,
- Grades IV to VIII of the primary school: teaching based on subjects.

No compulsory test or examination is taken between the two stages.

The 8-year primary school prepares pupils for the **eighth-grader exam**.

6.2. Aims

The national core curriculum sets the aims of primary education and defines key skills that children should acquire.

General education in the primary school **aims** to:

1. introduce pupils to the world of values, including generosity, collaboration, solidarity, altruism, patriotism and respect for traditions, as well as identify models of behaviour and build social relationships which support pupils' development in safe conditions (family, friends);
2. strengthen pupils' sense of individual, cultural, national, regional, and ethnic identity;
3. develop pupils' sense of personal dignity and respect for other people's dignity;
4. develop competences such as creativity, innovativeness, and entrepreneurship;
5. develop critical and logical thinking, reasoning, argumentation, and deduction skills;
6. demonstrate the value of knowledge as the basis for the development of skills;
7. generate cognitive inquisitiveness among pupils and their motivation to learn;
8. provide pupils with a body of knowledge and skills that enables them to understand the world in a more mature and structured way;
9. support pupils in identifying their own aptitudes and further education paths;
10. ensure comprehensive personal development of pupils by enhancing their knowledge and satisfying and stimulating their natural cognitive inquisitiveness;
11. develop open-minded attitudes towards the world and other people, activity in social life, and a sense of responsibility for a community;
12. encourage pupils to undertake structured and purposeful self-education based on the ability to develop one's own working methods;
13. guide pupils towards values.

Key skills to be developed include:

1. proficiency in Polish language and modern foreign languages;
2. efficient use of mathematical tools in everyday life, and development of mathematical thinking;
3. searching, sorting out, critical analysis, and use of information from various sources;
4. creative problem-solving in various areas, with purposeful use of ICT-based methods and tools, including programming;
5. solving problems, also with the use of mediation techniques;
6. teamwork and societal engagement;
7. active participation in the cultural life of the school, the local community, and the country.

Early school education aims to support the comprehensive development of children. The education process in Grades I to III of primary school enables children to discover their own abilities and the meaning of activity, and gain experience on the way towards truth, goodness, and beauty. Education at this stage is designed to cater to pupils' natural developmental needs. The school recognises that the pupil is at the centre of the process of building individual knowledge and transition from childhood to adolescence. With such support, children achieve readiness to start education at Stage II.

The aims of education in Grades IV to VIII of the primary school are multi-faceted and relate to individual subjects taught at school.

6.3. Admission

Access to public schools is ensured through **catchment areas**. These are areas designated by law within the jurisdiction of a given commune. Primary schools are required to take children living in their catchment area.

If places are available, the school can also take children living outside a given catchment area at their parents' request. Admission criteria for vacant places

in primary schools are defined locally by the commune, based on general arrangements for the admission process laid down in the national legislation.

6.4. Organisation

Grouping into classes is based on the **age** of pupils as the basic criterion and, where applicable (at the education stage comprising Grades IV to VIII), on the promotion of the pupil to the next grade. Each class is supervised by a **class** tutor or homeroom teacher. As a rule, the tutor holds this function throughout an education stage: separately for early school education (Grades I to III) and for subject-based education (Grades IV to VIII).

The legislation does not define the minimum or maximum **size of a class**, but there are some exceptions. For example, as a general rule, the number of pupils in Grades I to III is limited to 25. However, in view of a mass influx of Ukrainian citizens seeking temporary protection in Poland, special provisions allow schools to increase temporarily the number of pupils in a class. Regulations for special and integration primary schools (for special and integration schools, see the chapter on Inclusive education) may provide for other exceptions, for example, the maximum number of pupils per class in integration schools and classes is 20, including up to 5 pupils with a disability.

For some classes or school activities, pupils are further divided into **groups**. In Grades IV to VIII of primary school, this is required for compulsory computer science, modern foreign language, physical education and some practical classes if the number of pupils is higher than the limits set in the legislation.

The school year is divided into two **semesters**. Detailed information on the organisation of the school year can be found in the Eurydice publication [“School calendars in Europe”](#).

Classes are normally taught **five days per week**, from Monday to Friday. Some schools may, however, extend the working week to six days where this is justified by specific working conditions. The school head makes decisions in these matters after consultation with the competent school bodies, including the teaching council and the school council.

Classes in upper grades usually start at 8 a.m. and finish around 2–3 p.m. if the school works in one shift (they last longer if the school works in two or three shifts). Each lesson (teaching period) lasts 45 minutes, but the duration of lessons

in Grades I to III of the primary school is determined by the teacher. Breaks usually last from 5 to 25 minutes. The duration of the school day also depends on the size of the school building, the number of classrooms, and other facilities available for after-school activities.

6.5. Curriculum

Primary education is based on the core curriculum and the outline timetable, which are both established by the national legislation. The requirement for compulsory classes to be based on the core curriculum for general education is the same for public and non-public schools.

The core curriculum provides a list of teaching and learning aims, and LOs (knowledge, skills, and competences) that pupils should achieve at a given education level. The outline timetable specifies the weekly number of hours for pupils in individual grades (semesters) in a given type of school that are allocated to classes, in particular compulsory general education classes.

All schools are required to follow the core curriculum. School **curricula** describe how the aims and content of education are implemented in individual classes. Teachers may implement curricula which they develop independently, or other curricula of their choice, provided that they are approved by the school head after consultation with the teaching council.

Stage I of the primary school covers Grades I to III. Teaching at this stage aims to ensure a smooth transition from preschool education to school education. It is organised on an integrated basis and classes are taught according to a timetable prepared by the teacher, with the duration of lessons and breaks determined by pupils' activity. The next stages, Grades IV to VIII, comprise education divided into subjects.

6.5.1. Grades I to III

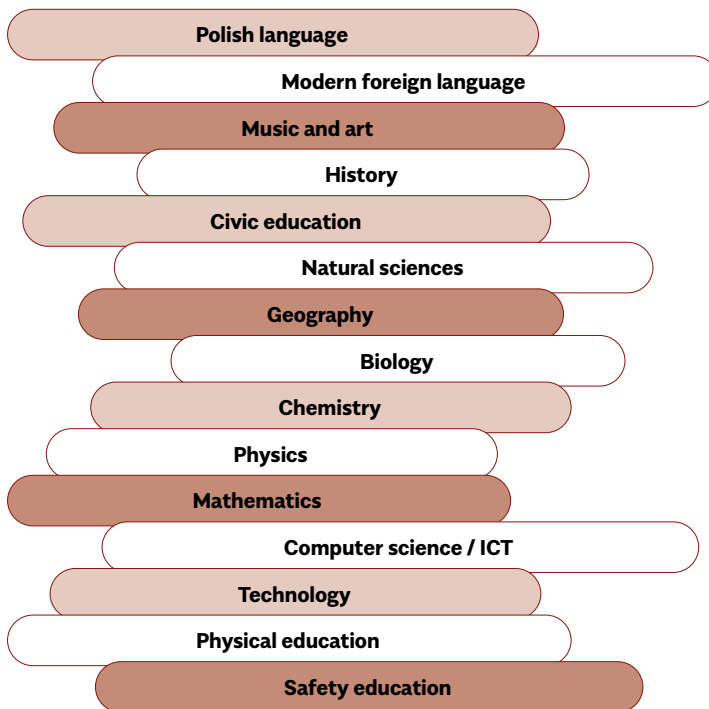
Compulsory integrated teaching (Polish language, social education, natural sciences, mathematics, technology, modern foreign language, music education, art education, ICT education, and physical education) includes in total **60 hours per week** in the 3-year period. Hours are distributed among the individual types of classes by the generalist teacher who conducts classes.

The number of compulsory teaching hours for pupils in individual grades at Stage I is 20 per week for Grades I, II, and III. Additionally, throughout the early school education period, 3 hours are distributed or allocated by the school head.

6.5.2. Grades IV to VIII

The total number of **teaching hours** per week in the 5-year period is 137, including 132 hours for compulsory subjects and 5 compulsory hours with the class tutor. Additionally, 4 hours are distributed or allocated by the school head, and 4 hours are allocated to a modern foreign language which is the second language of tuition in bilingual classes.

The total number of teaching hours is distributed among the following **compulsory subjects**:



For the number of hours allocated to each compulsory subject, see the outline timetable in [Chapter 5.2 Teaching and Learning in Single-Structure Education for Poland](#), in the Eurydice database '[National Education Systems](#)'.



Outline Timetables

At **both stages** of primary education, pupils and their parents may choose **optional subjects**, for example, Religion or Ethics, Family education, National or Ethnic minority language, or Regional language. Just as for compulsory subjects, the number of hours for such subjects is set in the national legislation.

Teachers are free to choose the forms and **methods** of teaching. The methods depend largely on the number of pupils per class and the equipment available in the school (for example, the number of computers, audio-visual equipment, and other teaching aids).

6.6. Assessment

The assessment system combines internal and external assessment.

Internal assessment is carried out by school teachers against the requirements which they define on the basis of school curricula. This type of assessment covers pupils' learning achievements and aims to support their development. It is primarily formative.

External assessment (summative assessment) is carried out by the Central Examination Board and Regional Examination Boards, which are external to the schools.

6.6.1. Internal assessment

Pupils in **Grades I to III** receive one end-of-year mark for educational activities and one end-of-year mark for behaviour. Assessment is descriptive.

In **Grades IV to VIII** pupils are assessed separately in **each subject**. Assessment is conducted by the teacher of a given subject, although it may not be arbitrary considering the pre-defined assessment criteria. Results of the assessment carried out during a school year are taken into account in the end-of-year assessment.

Assessment is based on single, mid-year (end-of-semester) and end-of-year marks. Mid-year and end-of-year marks are based on an assessment which sums up the achievements of the pupil in a given semester or school year, respectively. In Grades IV to VIII, a pupil who has received a positive mark at the end of the school year is promoted to the next grade.

The teacher uses the following marking scale to assess pupils' learning achievements: 6: excellent, 5: very good, 4: good, 3: satisfactory, 2: acceptable, 1: unsatisfactory. Teachers can also use descriptive assessments of pupils' achievements in compulsory or optional subjects if this is provided for in the school statutes.

When giving marks for physical education, technology, technical classes, visual art, or music and art classes, teachers should consider, in particular, the efforts made by the pupil to fulfil the specific requirements of a given subject.

School marks and the marking criteria should be made available to pupils and their parents. The statutes of a given school lay down detailed requirements and marking procedures for internal assessment; aside from annual information for parents on the requirements set, this is the key element ensuring fairness in assessment in schools.

Pupils also receive **marks for behaviour** according to the following scale: excellent, very good, good, acceptable, unacceptable, inadmissible. The mark for behaviour should not influence subject marks, the promotion to the next grade, or the completion of primary education. However, in specific cases, the teaching council of the school may decide that the pupil cannot be promoted to the next grade or complete education in the primary school due to their inadmissible behaviour.

6.6.2. External assessment

All pupils finishing Grade VIII take the compulsory **eighth-grader exam**. This is a written exam assessing the knowledge and skills that pupils have acquired in relation to the requirements set in the core curriculum for general education in primary school.

The exam covers the following compulsory subjects:

1. Polish language
2. Mathematics
3. Modern foreign language

Results of the eighth-grader exam have no impact on the completion of primary education. However, they are of major importance as one of the criteria in the process of admission to post-primary schools.

6.7. Progression and certification

Pupils in Grades I to III are **promoted** to a higher grade on the basis of a descriptive yearly assessment of their performance in classes. The assessment takes into consideration the pupil's level of knowledge and skills in relation to the requirements in the core curriculum for general education at the first stage of education. It also shows the pupil's developmental and educational needs that should be addressed to overcome learning difficulties or develop talents. Repeating the year at this stage of education is an exception and should be justified by psychologists and accepted by parents.

Pupils in Grades IV to VIII are promoted to a higher grade if they have received end-of-year marks higher than 'unsatisfactory' for all compulsory subjects. In the case of one 'unsatisfactory' mark, they can take a **repeat exam**. Pupils who have not passed the exam are not promoted to the higher grade.

All public and non-public primary schools award official **standardised certificates**. The legislation defines the layout of the documents. A pupil finishing primary school receives a certificate with results of the eighth-grader exam, issued by the Regional Examination Board, together with the final primary school leaving certificate.

For further details about primary education, see [Chapter 5](#) Single-Structure Primary and Lower Secondary Education for Poland in the Eurydice database '[National Education Systems](#)'.



Primary Education

7. Secondary education

7.1. Introduction

Secondary or post-primary schools provide education at ISCED Level 3 / PQF Levels 3 and 4, while primary school (or single-structure education) covers ISCED Levels 1 and 2.

Secondary education comprises general and vocational education strands. Pupils in general schools and some types of vocational schools can take the maturity exam and obtain a maturity certificate, which gives access to higher education. Technical and vocational school pupils who have passed vocational exams acquire qualifications to practise specific occupations.

7.2. Aims

The national core curriculum for the 4-year **general secondary school** and the 5-year **technical secondary school** considers general education in a post-primary school as a coherent whole in curricular terms. It lays the foundations for education, enabling pupils to acquire various qualifications for future employment and, subsequently, to upgrade or modify them, thus initiating the lifelong learning process.

General education in the two types of school **aims** to:

1. treat structured and systematic knowledge as the basis for skills development;
2. improve thinking and language skills such as reading comprehension; creative writing; formulating questions and problems; using criteria; substantiating judgements; explaining; classifying; reasoning; defining; using examples, etc.;
3. develop personal interests and integrate subject-area knowledge gained in various disciplines;
4. develop skills to formulate independent and considered judgments, and substantiate one's own and other people's judgments in the process of dialogue within a community of enquiry;

5. combine critical and logical thinking skills with imagination and creativity skills;
6. develop social, moral, and aesthetic sensitivity;
7. develop thinking tools which enable pupils to commune with, and understand culture;
8. develop pupils' respect for knowledge, arouse their passion for exploring the world, and encourage them to apply in practice the knowledge gained.

The core curriculum defines a set of skills to be acquired by pupils. It includes, for example, ICT skills, including respect for copyrights and safety in cyberspace; skills necessary to independently retrieve, select, combine, and judge the value of information, and use sources in a reliable way; and skills for communication in the national language and foreign languages, including both speaking and writing skills.

Education in **stage I sectoral vocational schools** is designed to prepare pupils for the labour market. Stage II sectoral vocational schools aim to improve learners' vocational skills and qualifications and offer them access to the maturity exam if they wish to continue their education in an HEI.

7.3. Types of institutions

Secondary schools include:

General secondary schools

- **4-year general secondary schools**, where pupils who have finished the school can take the maturity exam leading to a maturity certificate.

Vocational schools

- **5-year technical upper secondary schools**, where pupils can obtain a diploma upon passing vocational exams and can also take the maturity exam and obtain a maturity certificate.
- **3-year stage I sectoral vocational schools**, where pupils finishing the school receive a diploma upon passing vocational exams. They can

continue education either in a stage II sectoral vocational school training for an occupation which embraces a qualification common to the occupation for which pupils are trained in stage I and stage II schools, or in a general secondary school for adults, starting in Grade II.

- **2-year stage II sectoral vocational schools**, where learners can obtain a Technician Diploma upon passing a vocational exam; the diploma confers vocational qualifications for an occupation which embraces a qualification common to the occupation for which pupils or learners are trained in stage I and stage II schools. Learners can also obtain a maturity certificate upon passing the maturity exam.

7.4. Admission

A secondary school is one of many settings where young people can participate in part-time compulsory education until they reach the age of 18 (see the section on Compulsory education in the chapter on Organisation). In principle, there are no restrictions regarding the choice of a secondary school for young people.

Grade I of secondary schools takes applicants who hold a primary school leaving certificate. The decision to apply for admission to the chosen school is taken by pupils and their parents. Where the number of applicants is higher than the number of available places, schools take into account, in particular, the results of the eighth-grader exam and the marks for Polish language, Mathematics, and two compulsory subjects or types of classes in the primary school certificate. The school head selects the two compulsory subjects or types of classes to be considered in the process of admission to a given class of the school.

7.5. General secondary education

7.5.1. Organisation

Education in general secondary schools is **not divided into cycles**.

A **class** is the basic organisational unit in a secondary school. It groups pupils of the same age who jointly follow the same curriculum under the supervision of teachers.

Grouping into classes is based on the **age** of pupils as the main criterion and, where applicable, on the promotion of the pupil to the next grade. Each class is supervised by a class tutor or homeroom teacher. As a rule, the same teacher holds this function throughout the period of education in school.

The legislation does not define the minimum or maximum **number of pupils** per class. There are, however, some exceptions for special and integration general secondary schools (for special and integration schools and classes, see the chapter on Inclusive education). For example, the number of pupils per class in integration schools and classes should range between 15 and 20, including 3 to 5 pupils with a disability.

For some school activities or classes, pupils are further divided into **groups**, based on arrangements similar to those in primary schools.

The school year is divided into two **semesters**. Detailed information on the organisation of the school year can be found in the Eurydice publication "[School calendars in Europe](#)".

Pupils go to school **five days a week** (from Monday to Friday). The school week can be extended to 6 days. However, this requires a reasoned decision taken by the school head after consultation with the school governing bodies, and this option is rarely chosen in practice.

Classes usually start at 8 a.m. and finish around 2-3 p.m. if the school works in one shift (they finish later if the school works in two shifts). Each lesson (period) lasts 45 minutes. Breaks usually last between 5 and 25 minutes. The duration of the school day also depends on the size of the school building and the number of classrooms and other facilities for after-school activities.

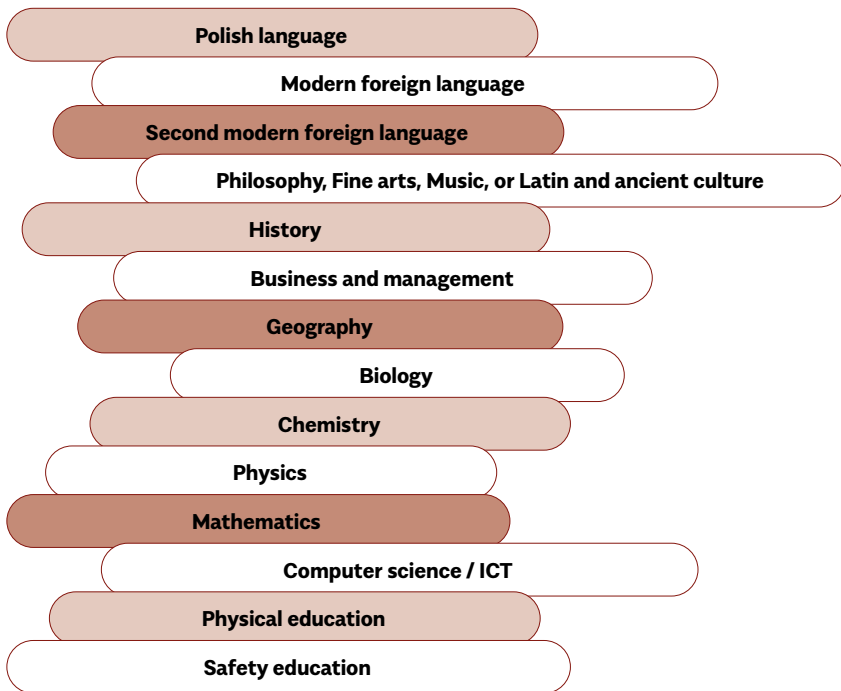
7.5.2. Curriculum

As in primary school, education in the general secondary school is based on the core curriculum for general education and the outline timetable, which are established by the national legislation. Subjects are taught at the basic and advanced levels.

The minimum total number of **compulsory teaching hours** per week in the 4-year education cycle is 118, including 114 hours for subjects taught at the basic and advanced levels and 4 hours with the class tutor. Additionally, 3 hours are

distributed or allocated by the school head; at least 10 hours should be allocated to career guidance classes; and 11 hours to a modern foreign language which is the second language of tuition in bilingual classes or schools.

The minimum total weekly number of teaching hours for the compulsory subjects at the **basic level** in the 4-year education cycle is 92. They are distributed among the following subjects:



On a temporary basis, the total number of hours for pupils enrolled before the school year 2024/2025 also includes 3 hours for the subject History and the Present, which is being phased out and will no longer be taught in Grade I of the general secondary school in 2024/2025, nor in the higher grades in the next years.

The school head selects a set of subjects to be taught at the **advanced level** after consultation with the competent school bodies and taking into consideration pupils' interests and the organisational, human, and financial resources available in the school. Each pupil chooses **2 or 3 subjects** from the ones selected by the head.

The total weekly **number of teaching hours** for the subjects taught at the advanced level (in addition to the hours taught at the basic level) in the 4-year education cycle is 22. They are distributed among the following subjects: Polish language, Civic Education, History of Music, History of Art, Latin and Ancient Culture, and Philosophy, Modern foreign language, History, Geography, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Mathematics and Computer Science.

Subjects at the advanced level are taught in Grades I to IV. The exceptions are History of Music, History of Art, Latin and Ancient Culture, Philosophy, and Business and Management, which can be taught at the advanced level starting in Grade I, II, or III.

The school head may increase the number of hours allocated to the subjects taught at the advanced level or allocate hours to additional subjects which are not covered by the core curriculum but are included in the school set of curricula.

For the number of hours allocated to each compulsory subject, see the outline timetable in [Chapter 6.2 Teaching and Learning in General Upper-Secondary Education](#), in the Eurydice database '[National Education Systems](#)'.



Outline Timetables

As in primary education, general secondary school pupils and their parents may also choose some **optional subjects**, for example, Religion or Ethics, Family education, National or ethnic minority language or Regional language. The number of hours for such subjects is set in separate regulations.

Subject teachers are free to choose teaching **methods** and approaches, although this is partly determined by the number of pupils per class as well as by teaching and learning facilities and resources available in the school (for example, the number of computers or other teaching aids).

7.5.3. Assessment

As in primary education, assessment combines internal and external assessments.

7.5.3.1. Internal assessment

Internal assessment covers pupils' learning achievements in terms of the level of **knowledge and skills** acquired and in relation to the requirements set in the curricula, as well as pupils' **behaviour**. It is mainly a formative assessment.

Internal assessment aims to:

1. inform pupils about their learning achievements and behaviour, and their progress in this respect;
2. support pupils in learning by providing feedback to them on where they have performed well and how they should continue to learn;
3. support pupils in the individual planning of their development;
4. motivate pupils to make further progress in learning and behaviour;
5. provide parents (legal guardians) and teachers with information on pupils' progress or learning difficulties, behaviour, and special talents;
6. enable teachers to improve organisational approaches and teaching and learning methods.

Teachers assess pupils separately in **each subject**. Marks for subjects are given by teachers of individual subjects. The end-of-year assessment takes into account the results of the assessment carried out during the year. Assessment is based on single, end-of-semester (mid-year), and end-of-year marks.

To assess pupils' learning achievements the teacher uses the same **marking scale** as in primary education (Grades IV to VIII): 6 – excellent, 5 - very good, 4 – good, 3 – satisfactory, 2 – acceptable, 1 – unsatisfactory. When giving marks in physical education, teachers should consider, in particular, the pupil's efforts to meet specific requirements of the subject. School marks and marking criteria should be made available to pupils and their parents.

Where this is provided for in the school statutes, teachers can use **descriptive assessment** as single, end-of-semester / mid-year, and end-of-year marks in all or selected compulsory or optional subjects.

Pupils receive marks for their **behaviour** according to the same scale as in primary school.

Pupils may take a **qualifying exam** if they or their parents consider that the end-of-semester or end-of-year mark given by the teacher is too low.

7.5.3.2. External assessment

Pupils in the final grade of the general secondary school can take the **maturity exam**. The exam assesses the level of knowledge, skills, and competences acquired by the end of this education cycle.

The exam consists of two parts: the oral part, which is internal and assessed at the school, and the written part, which is external, set by the Central Examination Board and assessed by examiners registered with the Regional Examination Boards.

The **written part covers** the following compulsory subjects: Polish language, Mathematics, and Modern foreign language (and a National minority language which is taken only by pupils who have finished a school or class with a national minority language as the language of tuition). Written exams in all these **compulsory subjects** are taken at the basic level. Additionally, for the written part, pupils should choose up to 5 subjects from a list which includes: Biology; Chemistry; Philosophy; Physics; Geography; History; History of music; History of art; History of dance, Computer science / ICT; Latin and ancient culture; Minority language (ethnic or national); Modern foreign language; Polish language; Regional language; Mathematics; and Civic education. All **additional subjects** in the written part are taken at the advanced level.

The **oral part**, assessed by the school teachers, covers **compulsory and additional subjects**. Compulsory subjects include the Polish language and a Modern foreign language (and a National minority language for pupils who have finished a school or class with this language as the language of tuition). Additionally, one subject should be chosen from the list including a Modern foreign language; an Ethnic minority language; a National minority language; or a Regional language. The level (basic or advanced) is not defined for oral examinations.

The list of Modern foreign languages from which pupils choose those to be taken at the maturity exam includes English, French, Spanish, German, Russian, and Italian.

To pass the maturity exam, pupils should: (a) score at least 30% of the points available for each compulsory subject, in both the written and oral parts; and (b) score at least 30% of the points available in at least one additional subject in the written part.

7.5.4. Progression and certification

Pupils are promoted to a **higher grade** if they have received 'acceptable' (2) or higher marks for all compulsory subjects at the end of the school year. Pupils who have received one 'unsatisfactory' (1) mark can take a repeat exam in the subject concerned. A pupil who has not passed the exam is required to **repeat a year**.

The school's teaching council may **promote conditionally** a pupil who has received a mark 1 (unsatisfactory) in only one subject. A pupil can be conditionally promoted to the next grade only once during the entire education cycle in a given type of school.

If pupils did not attend more than 50% of compulsory classes and, thus, there is no basis for assessment, they can take a **qualifying exam** on an agreed date.

Upon finishing general secondary school, pupils receive a **school leaving certificate** based on end-of-year marks for all subjects in the final grade, without the results of the final examination. The certificate provides access to a post-secondary (non-tertiary) school or the maturity exam.

General secondary school graduates who have passed the maturity exam receive a **maturity certificate**. The certificate includes the results of the written and oral parts of the exam. The certificate and its annexes are issued by the Regional Examination Boards. The maturity certificate provides **access to higher education**.

7.6. Vocational secondary education

7.6.1. Types of schools

The vocational education system includes the following **types of schools**:

- **5-year technical secondary schools** (for pupils aged 15 to 20 years), where pupils obtain not only a vocational diploma, which confers vocational qualifications for a given occupation upon passing a vocational exam, but also a maturity certificate upon passing the maturity exam.
- **3-year stage I sectoral vocational schools** (for pupils aged 15 to 18 years), where pupils who have finished the school obtain a vocational diploma upon passing a vocational exam. Subsequently, they may continue education in a stage II sectoral vocational school or in Grade II of a general secondary school for adults;
- **2-year stage II sectoral vocational schools** (for learners aged 19 to 20 years), where learners who have passed a vocational exam for a given occupation obtain a vocational diploma, with the title of Technician, in an occupation that embraces a qualification common to the occupation for which pupils / learners are trained in stage I and stage II sectoral vocational schools. They may also obtain a maturity certificate upon passing the maturity exam.

7.6.2. Organisation

The **duration** of the education cycle in technical secondary schools, and in stage I and stage II sectoral vocational schools jointly, is 5 years. Vocational secondary education is not divided into cycles.

A **class** is the basic organisational unit in schools. It groups pupils or learners of the same age who jointly follow the same curriculum under the supervision of teachers. Grouping into classes is based on the **age** of pupils or learners as the basic criterion and, where applicable, on the promotion of the pupil or learner to the next grade. Each class is supervised by a class tutor or homeroom teacher. As a rule, the same teacher holds this function throughout the period of education in the school.

The legislation does not define the minimum or maximum **number of pupils** or learners per class. There are exceptions to this rule; for example, the number of pupils or learners per class in integration schools and integration classes of mainstream sectoral vocational schools should range between 15 and 20, including 3 to 5 pupils or learners with a disability (for integration schools and classes, see the chapter on Inclusive education).

Where the number of pupils or learners in a class of a sectoral vocational school is high, they should be divided into groups for some classes (for example, Computer science and Foreign language).

The organisation of the school year and school day is similar to that in the general secondary school; see the section on Organisation for this type of secondary school.

7.6.3. Curriculum

Vocational education is based on the Classification of Occupations for Vocational Education and the core curricula and outline timetables, which are established by the national legislation.

Descriptions of occupations in the **Classification of Occupations** are based on qualifications. The classification for vocational education covers about 200 occupations. They include over 250 qualifications which are assigned to 32 sectors or branches, based on specific vocational skills or the extent to which such skills are used in occupational tasks. One, two, or three qualifications are identified within individual occupations. Moreover, five artistic occupations are identified with no qualifications specified. Pupils and adult learners can acquire qualifications one by one throughout the education process rather than only upon finishing the school.

There are separate core curricula for general education and outline timetables for each type of vocational school, and core curricula for vocational education (training for specific occupations).

General education subjects in **technical secondary schools** are taught at the basic and advanced levels as pupils can take the maturity exam. The minimum total number of **compulsory teaching hours** per week in the 5-year education cycle is 164, including 103 hours for general education subjects taught at the basic and advanced levels, 56 hours for vocational training, and 5 hours with the class tutor. Additionally, 4 hours are distributed or allocated by the school head; at least

10 hours should be allocated to career guidance classes; and 10 hours are allocated to a modern foreign language which is the second language of tuition in a bilingual school or class.

The minimum total weekly number of teaching hours for the compulsory **general education subjects** in the 5-year education cycle is 95 for the basic level and 8 for the advanced level. The hours are distributed among the same subjects as in general secondary schools. The number of hours for **practical vocational training** may not be lower than 50% of the total number of hours for vocational education.

In **stage I sectoral vocational schools**, general education subjects are taught only at the basic level. The minimum number of **compulsory teaching hours** per week in the entire 3-year education cycle is 91, including 38 for general education subjects, 50 hours for vocational education, and 3 hours with the class tutor. Additionally, 3 hours are distributed or allocated by the school head, and at least 10 hours should be allocated to career guidance classes.

The hours for **general education** are distributed among the same compulsory **subjects** as in general and technical secondary schools, except that the curriculum in a stage I sectoral vocational school does not include a Second modern foreign language, Philosophy, Fine arts, Music, or Latin and ancient culture. The number of hours for **practical vocational training** may not be lower than 60% of the total number of hours for vocational education.

Stage II sectoral vocational schools offer full-time day programmes (classes conducted 5 days per week), other full-time programmes (3 to 4 days per week), and part-time programmes (2 days every 2 weeks), each with a different allocation of teaching hours. Thus, the minimum total number of **compulsory teaching hours** for general education subjects in the 2-year education cycle varies from 34 and 25 per week for full-time programmes to 407 per semester for extramural programmes. The **subjects** include the Polish language, Modern foreign language, Mathematics, Computer science/ICT, and Physical education. The outline timetable does not set the number of hours for vocational education as learners take vocational qualification courses for which the number of hours is set in the core curriculum for vocational education. However, the number of hours for **practical vocational training** may not be lower than 50% of the total number of hours for vocational education.

For the number of hours allocated to each compulsory subject in vocational secondary schools, see the outline timetables in [Chapter 6.5](#) Secondary Education:

Teaching and Learning in Vocational Upper-Secondary Education, in the Eurydice database '[National Education Systems](#)'.



Outline Timetables

As in primary and general secondary education, pupils or learners in vocational secondary schools and pupils' parents may also choose some **optional subjects**, for example, Religion or Ethics, Family life education (only in technical and stage I sectoral vocational schools), National or ethnic minority language or Regional language. The number of hours for such subjects is set in separate regulations.

As in general secondary schools, subject teachers in vocational schools are free to choose teaching **methods** and approaches, although this is partly determined by the number of pupils or learners per class as well as by the teaching and learning facilities and resources available in the school.

7.6.4. Assessment

As in primary and general secondary education, assessment in vocational education combines internal and external assessment.

7.6.4.1. Internal assessment

As in general secondary education, internal assessment in vocational education schools covers learning achievements in terms of the **level of knowledge and skills** acquired, in relation to the requirements set in the curricula, as well as behaviour, except in stage II sectoral vocational schools, which take adult learners. The general aims of internal assessment and the marking scale are the same as in general secondary education.

7.6.4.2. External assessment

7.6.4.2.1. Maturity exam

Pupils or learners who have finished a 5-year technical secondary school or a 2-year stage II sectoral vocational school can take the maturity exam, which gives access

to higher education. The arrangements for the maturity exam are **the same** as for general secondary schools.

7.6.4.2.2. Vocational examinations

These exams aim to assess the extent to which a pupil or learner has acquired the **knowledge and skills** required for a given qualification, as defined in the core curriculum for vocational education. The arrangements for the conduct of a vocational exam are laid down in the legislation.

A **vocational exam** is based on a set of intended **LOs** identified for a given occupation (qualifications for an occupation). Thus, the number of exams for a given occupation depends on the number of qualifications identified for the occupation in the Classification of Occupations. The number of exams varies between 1 and 3 per occupation.

Each exam consists of two parts:

- The **written part** takes between 45 and 90 minutes (the exact duration is defined separately for each occupation in the guidelines published by the Central Examination Board) and is carried out as a test, with exercises assessing knowledge and skills required for a qualification in a given occupation.
- The **practical part** involves performing an examination task and aims to assess the practical skills needed for a qualification in a given occupation. It lasts between 120 and 240 minutes (the exact duration is defined separately for each occupation in the guidelines published by the Central Examination Board).

The exam is mandatory as, in principle, pupils or learners in vocational secondary schools are required to take it.

To **pass** the vocational exam, an exam taker should score:

- at least 50% of the total number of points available for the written part;
- at least 75% of the total number of points available for the practical part.

7.6.4.3. Progression and certification

Progression of pupils and learners is based on the same rules as in general secondary education.

Vocational secondary school graduates receive **a school leaving certificate**.

Pupils or learners finishing a technical secondary school or a stage II sectoral vocational school who have passed the maturity exam are awarded a **maturity certificate** which provides access to higher education.

Each vocational exam leads to a **vocational qualification certificate** for one qualification, which is issued by the competent Regional Examination Board. Once pupils or learners have obtained certificates for all the qualifications identified for a given occupation and have finished the school, they are awarded a **vocational diploma**.

At the holder's request, a vocational diploma can be issued together with a [Europass Certificate Supplement](#). The Supplement describes the holder's qualifications or the occupation as provided in the core curriculum for a given occupation.

For further details about secondary education, see [Chapter 6](#) Upper Secondary and Post Secondary Non-Tertiary Education, in the Eurydice database '[National Education Systems](#)'.



Secondary Education

8. Post-secondary non-tertiary education

8.1. Introduction

Post-secondary non-tertiary education is considered part of secondary education in the Polish classification of education, but it is classified at ISCED / PQF Level 4. Similarly to those offered by stage II sectoral vocational schools, programmes provided by post-secondary schools can also be considered part of adult education as schools take learners aged at least 18 years.

As in secondary vocational schools, education in post-secondary schools aims to prepare learners for the labour market.

8.2. Types of institutions

Post-secondary schools enable learners who have completed general secondary education to obtain a vocational diploma upon passing vocational exams. Most post-secondary schools are non-public. Post-secondary schools offer **programmes of up to 2.5 years**. The duration of a programme depends on the specialisation chosen by the learner.

8.3. Admission

Post-secondary schools take general secondary school graduates. Most of them require only a **secondary school leaving certificate** rather than a maturity certificate. Admission rules for public institutions are set out in the legislation. Non-public schools lay down admission rules in their statutes.

8.4. Organisation

As in secondary schools, a **class** is the basic organisational unit in a post-secondary school. It groups learners at the same level of education who jointly follow the same curriculum under the supervision of teachers. The legislation does not predefine the number of learners in a class, except, in particular, classes which have learners with a disability.

For some subjects (for example, Foreign language) and for vocational education classes, learners may be divided into **groups** or classes may be organised in a different way, as defined in the statutes of a given school.

As in primary and secondary schools, the school year is divided into **two semesters**. Detailed information on the organisation of the school year can be found in the Eurydice publication "[School calendars in Europe](#)".

8.5. Curriculum

Post-secondary schools provide programmes in more than 20 groups of **subject areas**, including, for example, fine arts, economics and administration, medical studies, engineering and technology, agriculture, forestry and fishery, transport and communication, and services.

School curricula are based on the Classification of Occupations, the core curricula for vocational education (training for specific occupations), and the outline timetable established by the national legislation. Just as stage II sectoral vocational schools, post-secondary schools offer full-time day programmes (classes conducted 5 days per week), other full-time programmes (3 to 4 days per week), and part-time programmes (2 days every 2 weeks).

For a 2-year education cycle, the minimum weekly number of **compulsory teaching hours** is 28 per school year (in total, 56 hours) for full-time day programmes, and 19 hours per school year (in total, 38 hours) for other full-time programmes. The minimum total number of teaching hours for compulsory classes in 2-year part-time programmes is 175 per semester (700 hours in total). For a 1-year, 1.5-year, or 2.5-year education cycle, the number of teaching hours is proportionally lower or higher.

The total number of hours is distributed between **vocational education** (25 per year and 50 in total) and physical education (3 per year and 6 in total) for full-time day programmes and includes only vocational education for the other two types of programmes. The number of hours for **practical training** in all types of programmes may not be lower than 50% of the total number of hours allocated to vocational education.

For the outline timetable, see [Chapter 6.8 Teaching and Learning in Post-Secondary Non-Tertiary Education for Poland](#) in the Eurydice database '[National Education Systems](#)'.



Post-Secondary Education

As in secondary schools, subject teachers are free to choose **teaching methods** and approaches, although this is partly determined by the number of learners per class as well as by the teaching and learning facilities and resources available in the school.

8.6. Assessment

As in primary and secondary education, assessment in post-secondary education combines internal and external assessment.

8.7. Internal assessment

Teachers assess learners separately in **each subject**. Marks are given by teachers of individual subjects. The end-of-semester and end-of-year assessments take into account the results of the assessment carried out during the year. Assessment includes single, end-of-semester, and end-of-year marks. To assess learning achievements, the teacher uses the same **marking scale** as primary and secondary education.

Behaviour is not assessed in post-secondary schools.

To be eligible for end-of-semester and end-of-year assessments, learners should pass internal **qualifying exams** in individual compulsory subjects.

8.8. External assessment

Just like in other types of vocational schools, learners in post-secondary schools and graduates can take **vocational exams**. For details about such exams, see External Assessment in the section on Vocational Secondary Education.

8.9. Progression and certification

The promotion of learners takes place at the end of each **semester**. Learners are promoted to the next semester if they have received end-of-semester marks higher than unsatisfactory in all subjects. Learners who have been given one 'unsatisfactory' (1) mark can take a repeat exam in the subject concerned. A learner who has failed the exam is not promoted and has to repeat a semester.

The school's teaching council may decide to **promote conditionally** a learner who has received a mark 1 ('unsatisfactory') in only one subject. A learner can be conditionally promoted only once during the entire education cycle in a post-secondary school.

If learners did not attend more than 50% of compulsory classes for reasons beyond their control and, thus, there is no basis for assessing their performance in compulsory classes, they can take a **qualifying exam** on an agreed date.

Learners finish school if they have received marks that are higher than 'unsatisfactory' in the final assessment, which includes marks for compulsory classes received in individual semesters. Graduates are awarded a **school leaving certificate**.

Upon passing an exam for one vocational qualification, learners receive a **vocational qualification certificate**. Once they have obtained certificates for all of the qualifications required to practise a given occupation, they are awarded a **vocational diploma**. Certificates and diplomas are issued by the competent Regional Examination Board.

As in vocational secondary schools, a diploma can be issued at the holder's request, together with a [Europass Certificate Supplement](#).

For further details about post-secondary education, see [Chapter 6](#) Upper Secondary and Post Secondary Non-Tertiary Education for Poland in the Eurydice database '[National Education Systems](#)'.



Secondary Education

9. Higher education

9.1. Introduction

Higher education includes the following main types of programmes:

- **First-, second-, and long-cycle programmes**, provided by university-type and non-university HEIs:
 - » **first-cycle programmes** (ISCED / PQF Level 6): programmes leading to a bachelor's degree (*licencjat* or *inżynier*), which last at least 6 semesters and lead to a *licencjat* degree or last at least 7 semesters and lead to an *inżynier* degree, depending on the field of study;
 - » **second-cycle programmes** (ISCED / PQF Level 7): programmes which last 3 to 5 semesters and lead to a master's (*magister*) degree or an equivalent degree, depending on the field of study;
 - » **long-cycle programmes** (ISCED / PQF Level 7): programmes which last between 9 and 12 semesters and lead to the same master's (*magister*) degree or equivalent degree as awarded upon completion of second-cycle programmes; the 25 fields in which either only long-cycle programmes are to be provided (10) or such programmes can be provided (15) are specified in the national legislation;
- **Doctoral education** (ISCED / PQF Level 8): a 3- to 4-year education cycle (previously, third-cycle programmes) at doctoral schools, established by university-type HEIs or research institutions which meet specific requirements as set out in the national legislation.

The duration of a first-, second-, or long-cycle programme may depend on the mode of study; part-time programmes may last longer than the corresponding full-time programmes.

Non-university HEIs also provide **specialist programmes** at ISCED / PQF Level 5, which are open to holders of a secondary school leaving certificate, last at least 3 semesters, and lead to a chartered specialist certificate. HEIs and research institutions offer 1- to 2-year **non-degree postgraduate programmes** which are open to applicants holding at least a bachelor's degree, last at least 2 semesters, and lead to a certificate of completion, with partial qualifications awarded at ISCED / PQF Levels 6, 7, or 8. However, such programmes are considered part of adult or continuing education (see the chapter on Adult education).

Furthermore, the education system comprises 3-year **college programmes** (ISCED / PQF Level 5) provided by public colleges of social work, which are considered as tertiary education for international comparisons but are classified as part of the school education system in the national legislation. There are only 4 such institutions in the country. For information about colleges, see [Chapter 7.2.2 Higher Education for Poland in the Eurydice database 'National Education Systems'](#).



Colleges

9.2. Aims

The main **general aims** of the education policy for first- and second-cycle programmes are to:

- reduce the extent of mass participation in higher education by promoting appropriate student-to-academic staff ratios;
- boost internationalisation through adequate financial incentives (for example, a specific algorithm for the distribution of State-budget subsidies for HEIs) and institutional arrangements (for example, the establishment of the National Agency for Academic Exchange, which runs various programmes supporting the internationalisation of higher education and science, as well as the mobility of students, doctoral students, and academic staff);
- intensify activities encouraging quality enhancement (for example, specific funding streams for quality enhancement available to HEIs);
- ensure closer linkage between the programmes offered and labour market needs.

First-cycle programmes aim to provide knowledge and skills in a specific area of study and give access to second-cycle programmes. **Second-** and **long-cycle programmes** aim to provide specialist knowledge in a specific area.

The completion of a second-cycle or long-cycle programme provides access to doctoral education.

Doctoral education aims to impart advanced knowledge in a specific field or discipline of science and prepare doctoral students for independent research and creative activity as well as for the procedure leading to the award of a doctoral degree (which is a separate process). Doctoral degree holders may continue their research career to obtain a post-doctoral degree and subsequently a professorial title.

9.3. Types of institutions

HEIs are divided into university-type and non-university institutions.

A **university-type HEI** is an institution which conducts research activity and has been awarded scientific category A+, A, or B+ (one of the three highest scientific categories on a scale ranging from A+ to C, awarded as an outcome of an external quality evaluation of research, referred to as an evaluation of the scientific quality) in at least 1 discipline of science or fine arts. It may provide first-, second-, and long-cycle programmes and doctoral education.

A **non-university HEI** does not fulfil the criteria for a university-type HEI and offers programmes responding to the needs of the socio-economic environment. It provides practically oriented first-cycle programmes and may also provide specialist programmes and practically oriented second- and long-cycle programmes.

Doctoral schools are a form of structured education programme covering at least 2 disciplines and preparing for the process leading to the award of a doctoral degree (the degree awarding process is separate from doctoral education). Whether an institution is authorised to run a doctoral school depends on its scientific category. Schools may be set up by university-type HEIs or by specific types of research institutions listed in the legislation which have been awarded the A+, A, or B+ scientific category in at least 2 disciplines; alternatively, they may be run jointly by such entities. As an exception, a university-type HEI conducting research in only one specific discipline (Theology, Physical Culture, or a discipline of Fine Arts) may run a doctoral school in the discipline concerned if it holds at least the B+ category. Doctoral education may be provided in cooperation with another entity, for example, an entrepreneur or a foreign HEI or research institution. Organisational

and governance arrangements for a school are laid down by the institution running the school in its internal regulations.

9.4. Admission

9.4.1. First-, second-, and long-cycle programmes

General admission requirements are set in the national legislation and are the same for all types of HEIs.

First- and long-cycle programmes are open to applicants who hold a maturity certificate, and the admission process is based on results achieved in the maturity exam (see Assessment in the section on General Secondary Education). HEIs may not conduct entrance exams in the subjects that were taken by student applicants in the maturity exam. However, each HEI may specify which results of the maturity exam provide the basis for admission. As an exception, an HEI may conduct entrance exams only when it is necessary to assess knowledge and / or skills which are not covered by the maturity exam (for example, artistic or other specific aptitudes or physical fitness required in some fields of study) or when an applicant holds a secondary school leaving certificate awarded abroad.

To be enrolled on a **second-cycle programme**, applicants should hold a bachelor's or master's degree, or an equivalent degree. HEIs may set additional requirements regarding, for example, the correspondence between the degree held and the field of study chosen for a second-cycle programme.

Each HEI may set its own additional admission conditions and procedures, including the number of places available to students, except for medicine and dentistry for which the maximum number of students to be enrolled are specified for each HEI concerned in the national legislation.

9.4.2. Doctoral education

Access to doctoral education is open to applicants who hold a master's degree or an equivalent and meet any additional entry requirements which may be set by individual HEIs or research institutions running a doctoral school. In exceptional cases, where this is justified by the highest-quality research achievements, a doctoral school may enrol a first-cycle degree holder or a student who has

completed the third year of a long-cycle programme. Admission to a doctoral school is a competitive process based on the rules established by the senate of an HEI or the scientific council of a research institution.

9.5. Organisation

The academic year is divided into two semesters, each ending with an examination period. Semesters are separated by a winter break (1 to 2 weeks in the first half of February) and a summer break. Classes usually begin on 1 October and finish in June. Detailed arrangements for the organisation of classes and the timing of holidays and breaks are laid down by each HEI.

9.6. Curriculum

9.6.1. First-, second-, and long-cycle programmes

As with the authorisation to set up a doctoral school, the extent of an HEI's autonomy in establishing degree programmes is determined by its scientific category. HEIs are required to obtain a permit from the Minister of Science to establish a programme. Such permit is not required for an HEI that intends to establish a programme in a field of study assigned to a discipline for which it has the A+, A, or B+ scientific category.

First-, second-, and long-cycle programmes are provided in **fields of study**, within fields and disciplines of science and disciplines of the arts predefined in the national legislation. Each field should be assigned to at least one discipline.

HEIs develop their own **curricula** which should meet the general requirements set out in the legislation. The curriculum should specify, for example, the mode of study; the number of semesters and ECTS credits necessary to complete each semester, and the degree to be awarded to graduates; courses, the related learning outcomes (LOs) and curricular content for achieving the LOs; the total number of class hours; methods for the verification and assessment of the LOs achieved by students; the total number of ECTS credits that students should earn in classes; and other activities directly involving teachers. Furthermore, a curriculum should specify the length and arrangements for practical placements and the related number of ECTS credits. As a rule, a curriculum

should enable students to choose courses (classes) that are allocated at least 30% of the total number of ECTS credits.

Programmes in several fields where students are trained for some **regulated professions** are based on the standards set in the national legislation. The fields include Medicine, Dentistry, Pharmacy, Nursing, Midwifery, Veterinary Medicine, Architecture (corresponding to the seven professions covered by Directive 2005/36/EC), Medical Analysis, Physiotherapy, Emergency Medical Services, and Teacher Training. The national **standards** define detailed programme requirements, including the total duration, the number of class hours, ECTS value, and the discipline to which the field is assigned; courses or classes together with the minimum number of hours and ECTS value; the scope, duration, and ECTS value of practical placements; requirements for teaching and learning facilities; staff conducting classes; LOs and methods for assessing the LOs achieved; and requirements for staff and facilities.

First-, second-, and long-cycle programmes are divided into **practically** and **academically oriented** programmes, and this is reflected in curriculum design. A curriculum for a practically-oriented programme includes courses or classes developing practical skills, which represent more than 50% of the total number of ECTS credits. In a curriculum for an academically oriented programme, more than 50% of the total number of ECTS credits are allocated to courses or classes related to an HEI's research activities in (a) discipline(s) to which a given field of study is assigned.

In terms of the organisation or the mode of delivery, first-, second-, and long-cycle programmes are divided into full-time and part-time programmes:

- **a full-time programme:** a programme where at least half of the ECTS credits covered by a curriculum are earned in classes directly involving academic teachers, other staff conducting classes, and students;
- **a part-time programme:** a programme specified in a resolution of the HEI senate where less than half of the ECTS credits covered by a curriculum can be earned with direct involvement of academic teachers, other staff conducting classes, and students.

A university-type HEI which has the A+ or A scientific category in at least 4 disciplines that are part of at least 2 fields may provide **individualised inter-field programmes**, which lead to a degree in more than one area of study.

An HEI may provide a **joint programme** together with another HEI or a research institution, either domestic or foreign. Collaboration arrangements are laid down in a written agreement. A joint programme graduate can receive a joint degree.

An HEI may offer a **dual programme**, which is a practically oriented degree programme delivered jointly with an employer. Organisational arrangements for such a programme are laid down in a written agreement.

If this is possible for a given degree programme, some LOs covered by a curriculum may be achieved in classes or courses delivered using **distance learning methods** and techniques. The requirements for conducting classes in a distance learning mode are set out in the legislation. The number of ECTS credits that students can earn in such classes may not be higher than 50% of the total number of ECTS credits required to complete a practically oriented programme, or 75% of the total number of ECTS credits required to complete an academically oriented programme.

9.6.2. Doctoral education

Doctoral education prepares for the award of a doctoral degree in the **fields and disciplines** defined in the national legislation.

The legislation does not predefine the exact duration of education in terms of the number of hours or the ECTS value, and the decision on whether or not ECTS is used is taken by the institution running a doctoral school. In general, doctoral education lasts between 6 and 8 semesters.

Doctoral education is based on a curriculum and an individual research plan. The two components should be designed primarily to ensure that a doctoral student prepares a dissertation which complies with the requirements set in the legislation and achieves the LOs defined for a doctoral degree. Each doctoral student is assigned a supervisor or supervisors who oversee(s) the preparation of a doctoral dissertation.

A curriculum should specify the number of compulsory course hours to be attended, coursework to be completed, and examinations to be taken and passed in each year of study. Additionally, doctoral students in HEIs may be required to teach courses (for a maximum of 60 hours) as part of their practical training. An **individual research plan** is developed by a doctoral

student in consultation with his / her supervisor(s), and includes, in particular, the timeframe for the submission of a dissertation.

9.7. Assessment and certification

9.7.1. First-, second-, and long-cycle programmes

The national legislation specifies only the minimum number of ECTS credits for each degree and aspects which should be addressed in internal regulations adopted by HEIs. Detailed arrangements for student assessment, progression, and graduation are laid down by individual HEIs.

Student performance is assessed by teachers responsible for individual courses. LOs achieved by students are assessed in **coursework** and written and oral **examinations**. Coursework assessment methods include, for example, a paper, midterm essay, research or laboratory class report, presentation, individual and group project, portfolio, test, and peer and self-assessment. Students failing an exam may take a repeat exam, followed by an exam conducted by an examination review board if they fail the repeat exam.

HEIs usually use a **marking scale** of 2 to 5! (2: unsatisfactory; 3: satisfactory; 3.5: satisfactory+; 4: good; 4.5: good+; 5: very good; 5!: excellent). Where a practical placement is part of a programme, assessment is often descriptive and covers not only knowledge, but also skills and social competences.

Students complete each semester and academic year in accordance with the rules set by individual HEIs. To graduate and obtain a **degree**, students are required to:

- achieve the **LOs** defined in the curriculum that are allocated at least the following number of **ECTS credits**:
 - » 180 credits for a first-cycle programme;
 - » 90 credits for a second-cycle programme;
 - » 300 credits for a long-cycle programme lasting 9 or 10 semesters;
 - » 360 credits for a long-cycle programme lasting 11 or 12 semesters;
- pass the **final exam**; and

- receive at least a 'satisfactory' mark for the **final thesis** (in second- and long-cycle programmes, and in a first-cycle programme if this is provided for in the curriculum).

Where a programme does not provide for the final thesis (for example, in medical areas) and / or the final exam, students are required only to complete all courses and practical placements, and pass all exams included in the curriculum.

The final exam is conducted by an examination board composed of academic teachers of the faculty or department that provides a given programme. Students who have failed the final exam may take a repeat exam, followed by an exam conducted by an examination review board if they fail the repeat exam.

Upon passing the final exam, students are awarded a higher education **diploma** which confirms the completion of a given programme and confers a degree. In the case of a joint programme, HEIs award a joint diploma which should, however, include all elements specified in the national legislation.

In addition to a diploma, all students receive a **Diploma Supplement**, based on the [Europass](#) format. The Supplement provides more detailed information about the qualification awarded, programme contents, and results achieved.

9.7.2. Doctoral education

The national legislation lays down only some general rules for doctoral student assessment, progression, and certification. Detailed arrangements are adopted by each institution running a doctoral school.

Doctoral students are required to attend courses and take exams, conduct research and submit reports on their progress, and prepare a doctoral dissertation. **Exams** are conducted by the academic teacher (in HEIs) or research staff member (in other research institutions) responsible for a given course or type of class. The supervisor of a doctoral student assesses progress in research and the preparation of a doctoral dissertation on an ongoing basis. Additionally, a mandatory **mid-term assessment** reviews progress in the implementation of the student's individual research plan at the mid-point of the education cycle. It is conducted by a board which consists of 3 members, including at least one external to the doctoral school, with the student's supervisor not allowed to be a member.

Doctoral education ends with the submission of a doctoral **dissertation**. A dissertation should demonstrate the candidate's general theoretical knowledge in the discipline(s) concerned and the skills required for independent research or artistic work. It should be devoted to an original solution of a research problem, an innovative application of the candidate's research findings in the economic or social sphere, or an original artistic achievement. The final stage leading to the award of a doctoral degree is the public **defence of the dissertation**. However, as mentioned earlier, the degree awarding process is separate from doctoral education.

A doctoral **degree** may be awarded not only to a doctoral student who has completed a structured education programme in a doctoral school, but also to an 'external' candidate. Regardless of the path taken, candidates are required to meet the following **requirements**:

- hold a master's degree or an equivalent degree;
- have achieved learning outcomes for a qualification at Level 8 of the PQF, with the LOs for proficiency in a modern foreign language at B2 level confirmed by a certificate or a higher education diploma (degree);
- have achievements which include at least:
 - » 1 scientific paper published in a scientific journal or as part of peer-reviewed international conference proceedings which were included in the register of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education in the year when the final version of the paper was published; or
 - » 1 scientific monograph published by a publishing house which was included in the register of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education in the year when the final version of the monograph was published, or a chapter in such a monograph; or
 - » a significant artistic work;
- have submitted and successfully defended a doctoral dissertation;
- have fulfilled other requirements set by the institution awarding a given degree.

Successful candidates are awarded a doctoral **diploma**, which includes the exact name of the doctoral degree.

For further details about higher education, see [Chapter 7](#) Higher Education for Poland in the Eurydice database '[National Education Systems](#)'.



Higher Education

10. Adult education

10.1. Introduction

Adult education and training (AET) is the shared responsibility of numerous ministries, however, the ministries in charge of education and labour have a leading role in this area. Other ministries are involved in skills development and in areas where learning outcomes are achieved mainly through non-formal education. The overall framework for AET is set by the *Integrated Skills Strategy 2030* and the Integrated Qualification System (see the chapters on Legislation and Policy, and Organisation).

AET is the most diversified area of education in Poland. This is due not only to the diversity of the target groups – their age, social and professional status, forms of education and training, and methods for the validation of LOs achieved, in particular, in non-formal and informal learning but also to the wide range of providers. A broad definition of AET should consider all sectors of socio-economic activity, including public administration, business entities, and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) as, unlike in school education, the national authorities do not have a dominating position in AET. With regard to its objectives and organisational form, AET may be divided into formal and non-formal education, which lead, in most cases, to certified LOs.

Furthermore, informal learning has become a major part of education and training as some informal learning outcomes may be validated and certified. Certification of learning outcomes is increasingly important in AET, and learners may attain each qualification level through both formal education and other learning paths.

10.2. Providers and programmes

AET programmes and courses are offered by 8-year primary and 4-year general secondary schools for adults, stage II sectoral vocational schools, post-secondary schools (which are not classified as schools for adults but take learners aged at least 18 years), continuing education centres, practical training centres, and sectoral skills centres – all of which form part of the school education system – as well as by HEIs and a wide range of training and other institutions and organisations. For information about stage II sectoral vocational schools and post-secondary schools, see the chapters on Vocational secondary education and Post-secondary non-tertiary education.

Main providers

Main types of provision

Public and non-public schools: primary and general secondary schools for adults, stage II sectoral vocational schools and post-secondary schools

The same education cycles as in school education for children and young people
Vocational qualification courses, vocational skills courses, and supplementary theoretical vocational training for juvenile workers

Public and non-public continuing education centres (CECs), vocational training centres (VTCs), and vocational and continuing education centres (VCECs), combining a vocational school and a CEC

Vocational qualification courses, vocational skills courses, general competences courses (CEC, VTC, and VCEC); practical training for vocational school pupils or learners, and supplementary theoretical vocational training for juvenile workers (VTC); and other courses providing new or upgrading knowledge, skills, and vocational qualifications (CEC, VTC, VCEC)

Public and non-public sectoral skills centres (being established since 2023)

Sectoral vocational or professional courses, and supplementary theoretical vocational training for juvenile workers

Public and non-public HEIs, and research institutions

Specialist programmes (HEIs only) and non-degree postgraduate programmes

Training institutions included in the National Training Register kept by Regional Labour Offices

Vocational qualification courses and various training courses for the unemployed and job seekers

Entities providing education and training as part of their economic activity

Vocational qualification courses (only entities accredited by the school education authorities) and various general and area-specific courses (for example, foreign language or ICT courses) for the general public

Various institutions and organisations (HEIs, culture institutions, NGOs, civic organisations) providing non-formal education (incl. open universities and third-age universities)

Courses and other learning opportunities for specific groups (for example, seniors) and the general public (for example, foreign language courses)

The main types of courses available to adult learners are as follows:

- A **vocational qualification course** covers one qualification as part of a given occupation.
- A **vocational skills course** focuses on one section of the LOs defined for a given qualification or the LOs corresponding to additional vocational skills (for example, trichology for a hairdresser; tourist guiding for a hospitality technician; network security for an ICT technician).
- **Supplementary theoretical vocational training** for juvenile workers covers curricular content for a stage I sectoral vocational school.
- A **sectoral vocational** or **professional course** is a specialist course in a vocational or professional education area which can be offered to school pupils and other trainees, including, in particular, students, doctoral students, academic staff, employees, and practical vocational training instructors.
- A **general competences course** covers a selected part of the national core curriculum for general education.
- A **specialist programme** is a practically oriented programme which lasts at least 3 semesters, develops knowledge and practical skills in a specific area, and leads to a qualification at ISCED / PQF Level 5.
- A **non-degree postgraduate programme** lasts at least 2 semesters and leads to a partial qualification at ISCED / PQF Level 6, 7, or 8. Such programmes include, for example, teacher training programmes for those who have completed a degree programme in a given field and wish to obtain a teaching qualification (required to work as a teacher in the school education system) or a qualification to teach another school subject.

Other types of AET provisions are not regulated by national legislation.

10.3. Admission

Primary schools for adults take learners aged 18 and above or those who will reach the age of 18 in the year in which they are enrolled. To enter a **general**

secondary school for adults, learners should be aged 18 years or above and should have finished the 8-year primary school.

Learners wishing to attend a **vocational qualification course** should be aged at least 18 years and have a medical certificate confirming fitness for practical vocational training. Juvenile workers undertake **supplementary theoretical vocational training** based on a decision of the stage I sectoral vocational school that they attend, or their employer. There are no national regulations or recommendations concerning admission requirements for various types of **other courses** offered below the higher education level in non-school settings. Admission requirements for sectoral vocational or professional courses vary depending on the occupation concerned.

Admission requirements for **specialist programmes** are laid down by individual HEIs; the minimum requirement at HEIs which have established such programmes is a secondary school leaving certificate. To be enrolled on a **non-degree postgraduate programme**, applicants should hold at least a bachelor's degree. Individual HEIs and research institutions may lay down additional admission criteria.

10.4. Curriculum

As in schools for children and young people, curricula in **schools for adults** (for Grades VII and VIII of the 8-year primary school for adults and general secondary schools for adults) should be based on the national core curricula and outline timetables. For details see the chapters on Primary (single-structure) education and General secondary education.

Vocational qualification courses and **vocational skills courses** are based on the national core curricula for vocational education (for each occupation identified in the Classification of Occupations). **General competences courses** follow the national core curricula for general education in primary and post-primary schools. The content of **supplementary theoretical vocational training** for a juvenile worker, based on the core curriculum for a stage I sectoral vocational school, is agreed between the school that the juvenile worker attends or his / her employer. The curriculum for a **sectoral vocational** or **professional course** should cover knowledge and / or vocational or professional skills in one of the vocational or professional education areas which are useful for a given occupation, including digital skills and skills for the green transition.

The legislation lays down only general requirements for specialist and non-degree postgraduate programmes. Curricula for **specialist programmes** should define the LOs covering the first-stage (universal) descriptors and second-stage descriptors (which expand on the universal ones) set out in the PQF for Level 5 (ISCED Level 5), and include courses developing practical skills. Curricula for **non-degree postgraduate programmes** should be based on the LOs for partial qualifications which cover second-stage descriptors of the PQF at Level 6, 7, or 8 (ISCED Level 6, 7 or 8), and enable learners to earn at least 30 ECTS credits.

Curricula for other types of courses are developed by individual providers and are based on their internal regulations.

10.5. Assessment and certification

10.5.1. Formal education

Assessment and certification arrangements for **schools for adults** are the same as for other types of schools, except that assessment does not cover behaviour. For details, see the chapters on Primary (single-structure) education and General secondary education.

Vocational qualification courses, vocational skills courses, and general competences courses end with an assessment in a form defined by the provider. Successful learners receive a certificate of completion of the course. Those who have completed a vocational qualification course may take a vocational exam for a qualification (for vocational exams, see External Assessment in the section on Vocational Secondary Education). The same arrangements are in place for entities outside the formal education system which are authorised to provide vocational qualification courses (see the table above). A **sectoral vocational course** ends with an exam set by the sectoral skills centre offering a given course, and conducted by a board consisting of the head and the responsible trainer of the centre, along with a representative of the sectoral organisation concerned.

Assessment methods for learners taking **specialist** and **non-degree postgraduate programmes** are established by individual HEIs and they usually combine coursework and examinations. Those who have completed a specialist programme receive a Chartered Specialist or Chartered Specialist-Technologist certificate, classified as an ISCED Level 5 or PQF Level 5 qualification. A certificate of completion of a non-degree postgraduate programme

is considered a partial qualification within the IQS (see the section on the IQS in the Chapter on Organisation).

10.5.2. Validation of non-formal and informal learning

The national legislation lays down separate validation and certification arrangements for **qualifications** awarded within the school education and higher education systems, and for those awarded outside the formal education system.

The nationally regulated mechanisms for the validation of LOs at the **school education** level include external ('extramural') exams. They may be taken by individuals aged at least 18 years as 'externals' rather than upon completion of a formal education programme or course.

- **External exams** cover the scope of compulsory subjects or classes included in the **outline timetables** for primary and general secondary schools for adults, or requirements set out in the national **core curricula** for general education in stage I and stage II sectoral vocational schools.
- **External vocational exams**, based on the core curricula for vocational education, assess the knowledge and skills required for a given qualification as part of an occupation included in the Classification of Occupations for Vocational Education.

Upon passing the relevant exams, adults receive a primary or post-primary school leaving certificate or certificates for individual vocational qualifications, and a vocational diploma for all qualifications required to practise a given occupation (see the sections on Progression and Certification in the Chapters on Primary (Single-Structure), General Secondary Education, and Vocational Secondary Education). As is the case for school pupils, external exams are administered by the Central and Regional Examination Boards.

Pursuant to the legislation on **higher education**, an HEI may validate LOs achieved outside the degree system for individuals applying for admission to a first-, second-, or long-cycle programme (except for most of the programmes based on national standards) if the HEI has one of the three highest scientific categories (A+, A, or B+) in the discipline to which the field of study concerned is assigned, or if the degree programme concerned has been accredited by PAC

(based on a positive outcome from an external programme evaluation). LOs are validated to the extent to which they are covered by a curriculum for a given programme. LOs can be validated for applicants who meet the following conditions:

- for enrolment on a first- or long-cycle programme: they have a maturity certificate or an equivalent document and at least 5 years of work experience;
- for enrolment on a first- or long-cycle programme: they have a full qualification at PQF Level 5 or a qualification awarded within a foreign higher education system corresponding to Level 5 of the EQF;
- for enrolment on a second-cycle programme: they have a full qualification at PQF Level 6 and at least 3 years of work experience gained after completion of a first-cycle programme;
- for enrolment on an additional first-, second-, or long-cycle programme: they have a full qualification at PQF Level 7 and at least 2 years of work experience gained after completion of a second- or long-cycle programme.

As a result of the validation process, an HEI may recognise up to **50% of the ECTS credits** allocated to courses or classes covered by a curriculum. Students enrolled on the basis of a validation process may represent up to **20% of all students** enrolled on a given programme. Within this national framework, HEIs establish their own detailed validation arrangements.

The national legislation lays down validation and certification arrangements for qualifications which are included in the IQS (for the IQS, see the section on the IQS in the Chapter on Organisation) and awarded **outside the formal education system**. Validation verifies whether, regardless of the learning setting, an applicant has achieved certain or all LOs required for a qualification to be awarded; this covers the recognition of LOs achieved in non-formal and informal learning. Certification is a process in which, based on a positive outcome of validation, an applicant receives a document conferring a given qualification from an authorised certifying institution. Validation and certification are separated as in some cases (for example, a driving licence) different institutions are responsible for each process.

Aside from the nationally regulated mechanisms, AET providers outside the formal education system have in place various mechanisms for the validation of non-

-formal and informal learning. These include, for example, international methods adapted by individual providers for specific settings or innovative methods developed within internationally recognised or adopted procedures.

For further details about AET, see [Chapter 8](#) Adult Education and Training for Poland in the Eurydice database '[National Education Systems](#)'.



Adult Education

11. Inclusive education

11.1. Introduction

The education process in all institutions at all levels of the school education system is organised so as to consider the diverse developmental and educational needs of pupils or learners. Teachers should take an individualised approach in working with each pupil or learner during classes. As part of their responsibilities, teachers, class or group tutors, and teachers-specialists (psychologists, educationalists, special education counsellors, speech therapists, and educational therapists) identify the developmental and educational needs of pupils or learners and provide support to those who need it, as well as to their parents.

The school education system has in place the following arrangements to cater to the educational needs of children and young people:

- various forms of psychological and educational support (counselling and guidance) provided in nursery schools and schools, counselling and guidance centres, and other institutions; for example, ongoing work with the pupil or learner; aptitude development, corrective, compensatory, and speech therapy classes or activities; advice sessions; workshops;
- adaptation of curricular content, educational requirements, and organisation of the teaching and learning processes and methods to individual needs and abilities of pupils or learners:
 - » the choice of the core curriculum for general education;
 - » adjustment of educational requirements;
 - » special education;
 - » individualised one-year preschool preparatory classes, individualised learning, and an individualised learning programme or learning path available to, for example, gifted or chronically ill pupils;
 - » exemption from selected classes;
 - » a one-year compulsory preschool education programme and a compulsory full-time or part-time education programme, provided in the form of one-to-one or group rehabilitation and education classes;
- adjustment of the time of entry into education and the length of an education cycle:

- » earlier entry into compulsory education;
 - » deferred entry into compulsory education;
 - » extension of the duration of education stages for pupils with disabilities;
 - » shortened periods of education for socially maladjusted pupils or pupils at risk of social maladjustment;
 - » progression of pupils to a higher grade during a school year;
 - » individualised learning;
- adaptations and adjustments to the conditions and forms of external examinations.

Special education is a type of provision for pupils with disabilities, socially maladjusted pupils, and pupils at risk of social maladjustment, who require special organisation of teaching and teaching methods. Pupils participate in special education based on a statement of special educational needs (SEN statement), issued by a counselling and guidance centre.

11.2. Organisation

Special education is provided in:

- **mainstream nursery schools:**
 - » mainstream groups,
 - » special groups,
 - » integration classes;
- **special nursery schools;**
- **integration nursery schools;**
- **other preschool education settings;**
- **mainstream schools** at all education levels in:
 - » a mainstream class,
 - » a special class,
 - » an integration class;

→ **integration schools;**

→ **special schools:** primary schools, including primary schools for pupils with a mild, moderate, or severe intellectual disability; 3-year secondary schools preparing for employment (for pupils with a moderate or severe intellectual disability, or multiple disabilities); general and vocational secondary schools, and post-secondary schools.

Integration groups or classes are attended by disabled pupils with a SEN statement and their peers without a disability. Integration nursery schools and schools consist solely of integration groups or classes. Mainstream nursery schools and schools with integration groups or classes have both mainstream and integration groups or classes. Special classes and schools only take disabled pupils with a SEN statement, except for pupils with a mild intellectual disability, for whom special classes are not established.

Other institutions providing education to pupils with a SEN statement include youth education centres, youth social therapy centres, special education and care centres, special educational centres, and rehabilitation and education centres.

Parents are free to choose a setting for their children.

Where necessary, **entry** into the primary school may be deferred for children with a SEN statement until they reach the age of 9.

The **duration** of education in special schools may be extended by 1 year at education stage I and by 2 years at education stage II in the primary school, and by 1 year or 2 years in a post-primary school. Pupils with a disability, socially maladjusted pupils, and those at risk of social maladjustment may participate in special education in mainstream and integration schools until the end of the school year in the calendar year in which they reach 20 years of age (for primary schools) or 24 years of age (for post-primary schools).

For socially maladjusted pupils and those at risk of social maladjustment who attend stage I sectoral vocational schools within specific types of institutions (youth education centres, youth social therapy centres, juvenile detention centres, or juvenile shelter care homes), the duration of education may be reduced from 3 to 2 years on condition that the compulsory subjects are taught at least for the minimum number of hours set for a 3-year education cycle.

11.3. Curriculum

11.3.1. Mainstream nursery schools and schools

Pupils with a SEN statement – except for those with a moderate, severe, or profound intellectual disability – follow the national **core curricula** for preschool education, general education and, where appropriate, vocational education, across all school levels.

Pupils with a moderate or severe intellectual disability follow a separate core curriculum in primary schools (and, subsequently, in special schools preparing for employment). For those who attend a mainstream primary school or an integration class in a mainstream primary school or an integration school, the outline timetable includes compulsory classes in personal care and social functioning, communication skills, creativity, and physical education.

Pupils with a profound intellectual disability in mainstream nursery schools and schools attend the compulsory one-year preschool education classes and participate in compulsory education in the form of **rehabilitation and education classes**. For pupils who are unable to attend a nursery school or school due to their health, **individual teaching** may be organised.

Each pupil with a SEN statement has an **individual education-and-therapy programme** (IETP), which is based on the SEN statement and developed by a team of teachers and specialists, and where necessary, in collaboration with a counselling and guidance centre. An IETP specifies, for example, special classes or activities appropriate for the pupil's individual developmental and educational needs and psychophysical abilities, including, in particular, rehabilitation classes for a pupil with a disability, social rehabilitation classes for a socially maladjusted pupil, or social therapy classes for those at risk of social maladjustment. Such classes are designed to improve the functioning of pupils and enhance their participation in the life of their nursery school or school, and / or in the family and social environment. An IETP is revised where necessary based on a periodic multi-faceted specialist assessment of the pupil's functioning.

Rehabilitation classes for pupils with a disability include therapy and rehabilitation activities. Depending on the pupils' needs, they may be conducted for a group or on an individual basis. The number and duration of such classes in preschool institutions should be adjusted to individual needs.

11.3.2. Special nursery schools and schools

Education provided to all three groups of pupils with a SEN statement, except those with a moderate or severe intellectual disability, in special nursery schools and special schools is based on the same **core curricula** and **outline timetables** as in the corresponding types of mainstream settings. Thus, as a rule, pupils attend the same compulsory classes as their peers without a disability but may be exempt from taking some subjects or classes (for example, a Second foreign language, Computer science, Physical education).

As in mainstream schools, pupils with moderate or severe intellectual disability follow separate core curricula and outline timetables. The outline timetables include **compulsory classes** in personal care and social functioning, communication skills, creativity and physical education in special primary schools, and training for employment in special (secondary) schools preparing for employment. For pupils who are unable to attend a special nursery school or a special school due to their health, an **individual teaching** programme is organised.

As in mainstream settings, each pupil in a special nursery school or school has an **IETP**, which specifies, for example, any classes appropriate for their individual developmental and educational needs and psychophysical abilities, including rehabilitation classes. The number of hours for **rehabilitation classes** in special nursery schools should be determined by children's individual needs.

11.4. Assessment and certification

Overall, the rules for **internal and external assessment** of pupils in special education are the same as for their peers without disabilities. However, assessment is descriptive for pupils with a moderate or severe intellectual disability, and for those with multiple disabilities in special schools preparing for employment. Pupils with multiple disabilities may be, and those with a moderate, severe or profound intellectual disability are, exempt from taking external exams. For others, where necessary, special arrangements may be put in place for external exams; for example, separate examination sheets suitable for a given type of disability; extended duration of an exam; specialised equipment and aids; assistance from a teacher during the exam; or rules for assessing exercises amended according to the abilities of the exam taker.

Regardless of the setting, all pupils in special education, except those with a moderate or severe intellectual disability, receive the same types of **school**

certificates and **external exam documents** as in mainstream education. Regardless of the type of school, end-of-year and school leaving certificates for pupils with a moderate or severe disability are issued in a special format and include descriptive assessment. Pupils finishing a special school preparing them for employment receive a certificate confirming preparation for work.

Due to their specific functioning, pupils attending rehabilitation and education classes or activities are not assessed and promoted and do not receive certificates.

For further details about inclusive education, see [Chapter 12](#) Educational Support and Guidance for Poland in the Eurydice database '[National Education Systems](#)'.



Inclusive Education

12. Teachers

The national legislation makes a distinction between teachers working in the school education system, which comprises early childhood and school education, adult education in school settings and other educational institutions; and academic teachers in the higher education system. Separate regulations and different arrangements are in place for school education teachers and academic teachers.

12.1. School education teachers

12.1.1. Initial teacher training

Initial teacher training comprises subject-specific training for teaching the first subject (or the first type of classes), as well as training in psychology, pedagogy, teaching methodology (including the basics of teaching and voice production), and the methodology for teaching the first subject (or the first type of classes). It may also cover training for teaching an additional subject (or an additional type of classes).

Two models of initial training exist side by side:

- a **concurrent model**, which is predominant: students following a degree programme in a given field of study can choose a teacher specialisation track; in this way, they complete teacher training as part of their degree programme in parallel with their subject-specific training;
- a **consecutive model** available to those who have not taken a teacher specialisation track as part of a degree programme in a given field of study and choose the teaching profession later; they may complete teacher training provided as a non-degree postgraduate programme or a qualification course.

Initial teacher training can be provided only by HEIs which have been awarded at least scientific category B (see the chapter on Higher education) in the discipline to which a given field of study is assigned. HEIs offer the following types of programmes which may be taken by prospective teachers:

- **degree programmes**: first-cycle programmes leading to a bachelor's degree; second- and long-cycle programmes, both leading to a master's or an equivalent degree;
- **non-degree postgraduate programmes** leading to a certificate of completion.

Qualification courses are offered by in-service teacher training institutions.

National standards are in place for initial teacher training as part of both degree programmes and non-degree postgraduate programmes. They specify, in particular, the total duration, ECTS value, and number of class hours for a programme; courses, their ECTS value and LOs; general arrangements for internships; and requirements for teaching staff and teaching and learning facilities. Compulsory internships are undertaken in schools, counselling and guidance centres, and other institutions of the school education system. There are also similar national outline programmes for qualification courses.

The national legislation also sets **qualification requirements** for the position of subject teacher or teacher conducting specific types of classes. As a general rule, teachers are required to complete:

- a long-cycle (master's degree) programme; or
- a first-cycle (bachelor's degree) programme followed by a second-cycle (master's degree) programme, with both programmes in the same field of study corresponding to the subject or the type of classes to be taught;

and

- a teacher training programme.

There are, however, specific requirements or exceptions to the general rule for, for example, teachers working in nursery schools and Grades I to III of primary schools, theoretical vocational subject and practical vocational training teachers, and foreign language teachers. For details, see the section on Qualifications, Evaluation, and Certificates in [Chapter 9.1](#) Initial Education for Teachers Working in Early Childhood and School Education for Poland in the Eurydice database '[National Education Systems](#)'.



Initial Teacher Training

12.1.2. In-service teacher training

Teachers are required to develop their professional competence in line with the needs of their schools. Continuing professional development (CPD) is a statutory duty of every teacher. Participation in CPD activities is one of the aspects assessed as part of teacher performance appraisal.

In-service training is provided mainly by **in-service teacher training institutions** and **HEIs**. The CPD funding allocated to local government units as the bodies administering schools (in total, 0.8% of the forecast annual budget for teacher salaries) is distributed among schools based on their **CPD plans**. Funding can be used, for example, to cover costs for teachers taking degree and non-degree postgraduate programmes in HEIs and for training courses in in-service teacher training institutions and other institutions; costs for teachers participating in other CPD activities (conferences, seminars, etc.); and costs of support measures for schools and cooperation and self-study networks for teachers provided by in-service teacher training institutions, counselling and guidance centres, and educational resources centres.

12.1.3. Conditions of service

12.1.3.1. Employment

The national legislation regulates in detail aspects such as teachers' duties; qualification requirements; professional promotion; the establishment, change and termination of an employment relationship; working conditions and salary; awards and distinctions; welfare benefits and holiday entitlements; financial support for the upgrading of qualifications and professional development; healthcare; disciplinary liability; and retirement and pension entitlements.

Entrants to the teaching profession are considered teachers with no professional promotion grade (novice teachers).

A **novice teacher** carries out a mandatory induction programme, supported by an experienced teacher as a mentor, to obtain the professional promotion grade of appointed teacher. The duration of an induction programme is 3 years and 9 months, but it may be shortened in specific circumstances.

There are two professional **promotion grades** for teachers:

→ appointed teacher

→ chartered teacher

and the honorary title of school education professor awarded to outstanding chartered teachers.

→ Teachers are employed by the head of a nursery school or school on the basis of an **employment agreement** or so-called **appointment** (an employment agreement ensuring greater job security and legal protection). The employment relationship with a novice teacher may be based only on an employment agreement. Novice teachers have an agreement for one school year to complete an induction programme required for promotion to the appointed teacher grade. An agreement with an appointed teacher is signed for an indefinite period. Appointed and chartered teachers employed on the basis of appointment are not covered by the legislation on civil service, but in performing their duties, they are entitled to the protection provided to civil servants.

Teachers may **retire** in accordance with the general legislation on retirement – at the age of 60 for women and 65 for men – but can also remain in service after reaching the statutory pension age or retire earlier based on specific regulations for the teaching profession.

12.1.3.2. Working time

The **total working time** for teachers may not exceed 40 clock hours per week, spread over 5 working days. This includes the teaching time allocated for teaching classes and other educational and / or childcare activities in direct contact with pupils, the time for other activities related to the statutory tasks of the nursery school or school, and activities as part of the preparation for classes, self-study, and CPD.

The **teaching time** or compulsory teaching load for a full-time teacher varies from 18 to 30 teaching hours (45 minutes each) **per week**, depending on the education

level, the type of institution, and the type of classes or activities. For example, it is 18 hours for teachers in special nursery schools, special schools, primary and general secondary schools, and for theoretical subject teachers in vocational schools; 20 hours for practical vocational training teachers in all types of schools; 25 hours for nursery school teachers, and 22 hours for nursery school teachers and teachers in other institutions working with 6-year-olds.

Teachers with 18 teaching hours per week may have their weekly teaching load increased to 27 hours. The weekly teaching load of 18 hours provides the basis for a **full-time teacher's salary**. Teachers receive **overtime pay** for hours extending beyond the 18-hour weekly teaching load.

Teachers are entitled to paid holiday **leave** during school and public holidays. Other types of paid leave available include health leave, maternity leave and related additional leave, parental leave, and training leave for full-time teachers. Teachers may also be granted paid or unpaid leave for research, artistic, or educational activities, and unpaid leave for other important reasons.

12.1.3.3. Salaries

The salary of a teacher consists of **basic pay** (depending on the qualifications held, promotion grade, and teaching load), a number of **allowances**, including length-of-service, motivation, function-related and conditions-of-service allowances, pay for overtime and ad-hoc replacement hours, and awards and other benefits as provided for in the employment relationship.

The **average salary** of teachers should be equal to the following percentages of the reference amount set annually for public sector employees: 120% for a novice teacher; 144% for an appointed teacher; and 184% for a chartered teacher.

Detailed information on teachers' salaries is available in the Eurydice database '[Teachers' and School Heads' Salaries and Allowances in Europe](#)'.



Teachers' Salaries

12.1.4. Assessment and Promotion

The arrangements for **teacher performance appraisal** apply to teachers working in both public and non-public sectors of the school education system.

Appraisal is **mandatory** for a novice teacher carrying out an induction programme and is a precondition for an appointed teacher (a teacher holding the first of the two promotion grades available to teachers) to apply for the chartered teacher grade (the second and highest grade). Otherwise, performance appraisal is not mandatory. It can take place at any time, but not earlier than one year after the previous appraisal, on the school head's initiative or at the request of the teacher concerned, the pedagogical supervision body (the Head of the REA in most cases), the body administering a given school, the school council, or the parents' council (for details about the bodies involved, see the section on School Education in the Chapter on Administration and Governance at Central, Regional, and Local Levels).

Appraisal covers the performance of teaching, other educational and childcare duties, and other duties stemming from the statutory activities of schools as specified in the legislation. The legislation sets out mandatory and additional **criteria** for performance appraisal. The school head conducts an appraisal against all of the mandatory criteria and one of the additional criteria chosen by the school head and the teacher according to the specificity of his / her work. For the criteria, see the section on internal QA in [Chapter 11.1](#). Quality Assurance in Early Childhood and School Education for Poland in the Eurydice database '[National Education Systems](#)'.



Teacher Appraisal

In conducting an appraisal, the school head collects feedback on the teacher's performance from the parents' council, the mentor of the novice teacher concerned, a teacher-methodological adviser (at the request of the teacher concerned or on the head's own initiative) and optionally the pupil self-government organisation.

A performance appraisal ends with one of the following **outcomes**, depending on the number of points received for each criterion: Outstanding, Very Good,

Good, or Negative. A novice teacher must receive at least a Good grade in the appraisal conducted in the final year of the induction period to be promoted to the appointed teacher grade, and at least a Very Good grade is required for the promotion of an appointed teacher to the chartered teacher grade. A Negative grade leads to dismissal of a teacher, regardless of whether or not the appraisal is linked to promotion. Teachers may appeal against the outcome of an appraisal to the pedagogical supervision body (the Head of the REA in most cases).

For **promotion** to the grade of appointed teacher, a novice teacher is required to have the necessary qualifications, complete an induction programme, receive at least a Good grade in the performance appraisal (see above), receive a positive opinion on the classes conducted, and pass an exam conducted by an exam board. To be promoted to the chartered teacher grade, an appointed teacher is required to have the necessary qualifications, have worked in a school for a specific period, receive at least a Very Good grade in the performance appraisal in the year preceding the initiation of the promotion process, and obtain approval from a qualifying board. For details about the promotion procedures for teachers, see the section on Promotion, Advancement in [Chapter 9.2](#). Conditions of Service for Teachers Working in Early Childhood and School Education for Poland in the Eurydice database '[National Education Systems](#)'.



Conditions of Service

12.2. Academic teachers

Academic staff are divided in the national legislation into teaching staff, research staff, and research-and-teaching staff. Only **teaching staff** and **research-and-teaching staff** are statutorily required to teach students.

12.2.1. Initial and in-service training

Unlike for school education teachers, **no initial training paths** for academic staff are pre-defined by the legislation, and academic teachers are not required

to complete any teacher training programme. Specific **qualification requirements** are set by law for the individual positions that may be taken by teaching and research-and-teaching staff (Professor, University Professor, Assistant Professor, and Assistant). HEI may define other positions for academic staff and qualification requirements for the positions.

Academic staff are explicitly required by law to develop their professional competence. HEIs lay down detailed CPD arrangements in their internal regulations.

12.2.2. Conditions of service

Academic staff are employed on the basis of an **employment agreement**. The legislation sets out the conditions under which academic staff can be employed on either a fixed-term or indefinite agreement.

Except for cases specified in the legislation, public HEIs should hold an **open recruitment competition** if the first employment agreement with an academic teacher is concluded for an indefinite period or for a definite period longer than 3 months, and for a working time which exceeds 50% of full-time employment. Competition procedures are set out in the internal regulations of a public HEI. Recruitment arrangements in non-public HEIs are laid down in their internal regulations.

The **working time** of academic teachers is task-based. The rules for defining the range of duties for each group and the type of position for academic staff are laid down in the internal regulations of an HEI. Regardless of their teaching or research duties, academic staff are required to participate in the organisational tasks of their HEI and continuously develop their competences.

The working time includes the **annual teaching load** (the number of class hours for teaching duties, with one class hour lasting 45 minutes). The annual teaching load for academic staff in a public HEI is:

- up to 240 class hours for research-and-teaching staff;
- up to 180 class hours for research-and-teaching staff holding the position of Professor;
- up to 360 class hours for teaching staff;

→ up to 540 class hours for teaching staff holding the position of Foreign Language Teacher or Instructor if such a position is provided for in the internal regulations of an HEI.

Where this is justified by the need to implement a curriculum, academic teachers may be required to teach overtime classes. The additional teaching load may not exceed half of the annual teaching load for teaching staff, and one-fourth of the annual teaching load for research-and-teaching staff. With their consent, academic staff may teach overtime hours that do not exceed their double annual teaching load.

Academic teachers are entitled to paid holiday **leave**, and to health leave under conditions specified by the law. The rector of an HEI may also grant paid sabbatical leave to staff holding at least a doctoral degree or preparing a doctoral dissertation, and paid leave to undertake a training period, research or teaching placement abroad, attend a conference abroad, or participate in joint research based on a research cooperation agreement with a foreign institution.

The **salary** of a teacher in a **public HEI** consists of the basic salary, determined by the position held, and a length-of-service allowance. Additionally, similarly to non-academic staff, academic staff may be granted other allowances, including a function-related allowance (for managing a team); a task-related allowance (for temporarily extended responsibilities); overtime pay; a hardship allowance for work in hazardous or difficult conditions; and any other allowances specified in the internal regulations of a given HEI.

The minimum level of the monthly **basic salary** for a Professor is set out in the legislation. The basic salary of a teacher in a public HEI may not be lower than 50% of the salary of a Professor; the basic salary of a University Professor and an Assistant Professor may not be lower than 83% and 73%, respectively, of the salary of a Professor.

Non-public HEIs adopt remuneration arrangements for academic teachers in their internal regulations.

The legislation does not lay down any specific **retirement** arrangements for employees of an HEI. Academic teachers may retire at the statutory pension age of 60 for women and 65 for men, but they usually work longer.

12.2.3. Assessment and promotion

All academic teachers, except for rectors, undergo a mandatory **performance appraisal** at least every 4 years or at the request of the rector. It covers, in particular, the performance of teaching and / or research duties, and the observance of intellectual and industrial property rights. The criteria, procedure, and unit conducting appraisal are specified by the rector after consultation with the relevant bodies of an HEI. Appraisal takes into consideration outcomes of student evaluation of teaching, conducted at least once a year by students and doctoral students. Appraisal ends with a positive or negative outcome. Teachers may appeal against the outcome to the rector. The rector may terminate the employment agreement with a teacher after one negative assessment and is required by law to do so when two consecutive assessments have ended with a negative outcome.

Teachers holding the required degree or title (master's degree, PhD, title of professor) may be promoted to a higher position during their **academic career**. The national legislation sets the requirements for the award of degrees and titles, and the minimum level of qualifications for each position. Detailed criteria for promotion to particular positions are set by individual HEIs in their internal regulations.

For further details about teachers, see [Chapter 9](#) Teachers and Education Staff for Poland in the Eurydice database '[National Education Systems](#)'.



Teachers and Education Staff

13. Practical information for international learners and education staff

13.1. Access to education and support

13.1.1. School education

Pursuant to the national legislation, foreign national children and young people, regardless of their nationality, have access to preschool and full-time compulsory education in public and publicly subsidised **nursery schools** and public **primary schools** under the same conditions as Polish nationals. The same applies to those in part-time compulsory education, who may attend public **post-primary schools** until the age of 18 or the completion of education in a school.

All pupils in preschool and school education are entitled to learning **support** when they need it. In addition to what is available to all, the school education system offers some specific support and services to foreign national children and young people of the compulsory education age (and to Polish national children who attended a school abroad). Depending on their needs, they can:

- attend a preparatory unit;
- take additional or remedial classes covering subjects taught as part of the curriculum;
- attend an additional Polish language course;
- follow a course in the language and culture of their country of origin;
- take external exams whose form is adapted to their specific needs and abilities.

A school may establish a **preparatory unit** for pupils in compulsory education whose knowledge of Polish is insufficient to follow a mainstream education programme and / or who have communication problems or adaptation difficulties resulting from, for example, cultural differences or a change of the learning environment. Teaching is based on the curricula implemented

in a given school and grade, but the content and methods are adjusted to individual needs. Teachers may be supported by an assistant speaking the language of the learner's country of origin. Additional or **remedial classes** for subjects included in the curriculum may be taken by pupils who need to fill in gaps in their knowledge resulting from curricular differences. Classes are conducted as additional lessons in a given school subject, on an individual basis or in a group.

Where their knowledge of Polish is insufficient to follow a mainstream programme, pupils in compulsory education can take a fee-free **Polish language course**. Classes are conducted on an individual basis or in a group. A diplomatic mission or consulate of the country of origin located in Poland, as well as a cultural or educational association for a given nationality, may offer courses in the **language and culture of the country of origin** to foreign nationals in full-time compulsory education. A hosting school provides premises and educational resources free of charge.

Just as Polish nationals, foreign national pupils take **external exams**. Where their knowledge of Polish, culture and traditions is insufficient and they have attended a Polish school only for a short time, they may use adapted examination sheets and aids, such as bilingual dictionaries, and have the duration of the exam extended.

13.1.2. Higher education

Foreign nationals can follow higher education programmes (specialist, first-, second-, and long-cycle programmes, non-degree postgraduate and other programmes, and doctoral education), take up a teaching assignment and / or participate in research on the basis of:

- international **agreements** and inter-institutional agreements between Polish HEIs and foreign institutions; and
- a **decision of the competent body** (for example, the Minister of Science, the Director of the National Agency for Academic Exchange, the rector of an HEI).

Public HEIs may not charge **tuition fees** for full-time first-, second-, or long-cycle programmes provided in Polish to nationals of EU Member States, member states of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) which are signatories

of the European Economic Area (EEA) agreement (Iceland, Liechtenstein, and Norway) and of the Swiss Confederation; United Kingdom nationals who exercised their right as residents or frontier workers in an EU Member State in accordance with EU law before the end of the transition period after the withdrawal of the UK from the EU and continue to do so; individuals who have been granted a permanent residence permit, a long-term EU-resident permit, or a specific status or rights (for example, refugee status or temporary or subsidiary protection).

The national legislation provides for various types of financial **support** such as grants, scholarships, and credits, which are available to international students under specific conditions. While it does not refer to any specific types of learning or practical support, Polish HEIs offer a range of support services to international students on a regular basis. These include, for example, Polish language courses; orientation programmes, cultural preparation courses and integration weeks and events; support in practical matters (visa- and stay-related formalities, accommodation etc.); academic tutors supervising a group of international students, and mentors or buddies assisting individual international students.

13.1.3. Adult education

Under the same conditions as for Polish nationals, specific groups of foreign nationals, including nationals of EU and EFTA / EEA Member States and the Swiss Confederation, as well as those who have been granted a specific permit or status (see the section on Higher Education), have access to adult education in public institutions within the **school education system** (stage II sectoral vocational schools, post-secondary schools, colleges of social work and schools for adults, and vocational qualification courses).

Other foreign nationals may attend the types of public institutions mentioned above and take vocational qualification courses:

- as holders of a **scholarship** awarded by the Minister of National Education, the body administering a given educational institution or the head of an educational institution;
- on a **fee-paying basis**.

13.2. Recognition of qualifications

Recognition of qualifications, including certificates, diplomas and degrees, is regulated by the national legislation in accordance with EU legislation and international conventions.

13.2.1. Qualifications awarded in school education

The following documents confirming completion of secondary education and providing access to higher education are **recognised automatically**, by virtue of the law:

- certificates which are awarded by schools or other educational institutions in EU Member States and member states of the EEA and OECD (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development) and provide access to higher education in the awarding country;
- International Baccalaureate diplomas awarded by the International Baccalaureate Organisation in Geneva, Switzerland;
- European Baccalaureate diplomas awarded by the European Schools in accordance with the Convention laying down the statutes of the European Schools, adopted in Luxembourg in 1994;
- certificates covered by international agreements signed by Poland.

Other certificates and documents can be recognised as confirming completion of primary or secondary (general or vocational) education on a case-by-case basis through an **administrative process** conducted by the Head of the REA in a given province. However, where incoming pupils intend to **continue** education in a primary or secondary school, recognition of foreign end-of-year certificates or school leaving certificates is not required. Applicants should contact the head of the school which they wish to attend directly.

Bilateral agreements can be found in the [database](#) of treaties and agreements managed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and on the [website](#) of the Ministry of National Education.

The arrangements for the recognition of vocational qualifications for the purpose of **employment** vary depending on whether a profession (occupation)

is regulated in Poland. For **non-regulated professions**, the decision to recognise a foreign qualification is taken by the employer. For most of the professions that are **regulated** in Poland, qualifications awarded in **EU** and **EFTA / EEA countries** and **Switzerland** are recognised under the general recognition system in accordance with the national legislation based on the relevant EU Directives. In the recognition process, the competent body verifies the level of education completed and the qualifications that give the right to practise a profession in the country where they were awarded. If the scope of education, training or an exam required to practise a profession in Poland, and the range of professional activities in the applicant's country differ significantly, the applicant may be required to undertake an adaptation period of up to 3 years or take an aptitude test. The recognition of qualifications awarded in EU and EFTA / EEA countries and Switzerland for other regulated professions is governed by specific regulations.

Vocational qualifications awarded in **other countries** are recognised in accordance with the legislation applicable to a given profession.

Details about the professions that are regulated in Poland are available in the [EU database of regulated professions](#).

13.2.2. Qualifications awarded in higher education

As in other countries, a distinction is made between:

- **academic recognition**: for individuals wishing to continue or begin studying, or use an academic degree; and
- **professional recognition**: for individuals wishing to practise a profession.

Academic recognition

Foreign higher education degrees are **automatically recognised**, by virtue of law, for the purpose of further education. A foreign degree awarded in any country gives its holder access to a second-cycle programme (or a non-degree postgraduate programme), doctoral education, or the right to initiate the process for the award of a doctoral degree in Poland, provided it grants the corresponding right to follow a second-cycle programme or apply for a doctoral degree in the country where it was awarded.

In Poland, degrees awarded by recognised HEIs in EU, EFTA / EEA and OECD countries not only grant access to further studies at the corresponding level recognised in the awarding country, but also confirm the completion of a higher education cycle at an equivalent level. A degree awarded by an HEI operating in the higher education system in an EU, EFTA / EEA, or OECD country, upon completion of:

- a 3-year programme or a first-cycle programme of the nominal duration of at least 3 years, confirms in Poland that its holder has completed a first-cycle programme;
- a second-cycle programme or a long-cycle programme of a nominal duration of at least 4 years, confirms in Poland that its holder has completed a second-cycle programme.

A first-, second-, or long-cycle degree awarded in another country may be recognised as equivalent to a Polish one based on an international agreement or – in the absence of such an agreement – through a recognition process established by law, which is referred to as **nostrification**.

A doctoral degree awarded by an authorised institution in an EU Member State, a member state of the OECD or EFTA / EEA, or the European University Institute is considered equivalent to a corresponding degree awarded in Poland. Otherwise, it may be recognised on the basis of an international agreement or – in the absence of such an agreement – through nostrification.

Bilateral agreements signed by Poland can be found in the [database](#) of treaties and agreements run by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and on the [website](#) of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education.

In the procedures for the nostrification and confirmation of the completion of a higher education programme at a given level, a Polish HEI or research institution identifies a Polish qualification corresponding to a foreign one. For first-, second-, and long-cycle degrees, the process can be conducted only by HEIs which have the A+, A, or B+ research category (one of the three highest categories; see the chapter on Higher education) in the discipline concerned. To be authorised to recognise a doctoral degree, HEIs and research institutions are required to have the A+ or A scientific category in the discipline concerned.

Detailed information about the recognition of foreign degrees and the relevant legislation can be found on the [website](#) of the Polish National Agency of Academic Exchange (NAWA), which acts as the Polish ENIC-NARIC centre.

NAWA's database **KWALIFIKATOR** enables users to check online how foreign degrees are recognised in Poland and download an electronically certified recognition statement.

Professional recognition

Procedures vary depending on whether a given profession is regulated in Poland. If a profession is **not regulated**, the decision to recognise a foreign qualification is taken by the **employer**. The employer may require confirmation of the equivalence of a foreign certificate or diploma (based on an international agreement or through the official recognition procedure; see above).

In Poland, **regulated professions** include sectoral professions (doctor, dentist, pharmacist, nurse, midwife, veterinary surgeon, and architect) and other professions such as teacher (working in the school education system) and lawyer. Qualifications obtained in **EU** and **EFTA / EEA countries** and **Switzerland** are recognised in accordance with the national legislation based on the relevant EU Directives. Since the national standards for programmes for **sectoral professions** are based on EU legislation, a qualification may be recognised automatically if its holder provides proof of qualification to the competent Polish body. Qualifications for professions such as **teacher** are recognised under the general recognition system in the EU. A competent Polish body recognises a qualification when the scope of education or the profession in the applicant's home country does not differ significantly from that in Poland, and when the level of the qualification is at least equivalent to the level immediately below the one required in Poland. Otherwise, the applicant may need to undertake an adaptation period of up to 3 years or take an aptitude test. Recognition of qualifications for legal and **other professions** is governed by separate regulations.

For qualifications obtained in **other countries**, applicants should first apply for academic recognition of a qualification (see above) and, subsequently, for an authorisation to practise a given profession in accordance with the legislation applicable to this profession.

Details about the professions that are regulated in Poland are available in the [EU database of regulated professions](#).

The National Agency for Academic Exchange (NAWA) provides information and advice on academic recognition of first-, second- and long-cycle degrees, doctoral and post-doctoral degrees, and professorial titles.

For further details about education for foreigners and recognition of qualifications, see [Chapter 12.3](#) Educational Support and Guidance, and [Chapter 13](#) Mobility and Internationalisation for Poland in the Eurydice database '[National Education Systems](#)'.



Support for Foreigners



Mobility and Internationalisation

Basic statistics

Table 1. Pre-school education, 2023/24

Types of pre-schools	Number of pre-schools	Teachers in thousands	Pupils in thousands
Nursery schools	13 888	140.5	1 228.7
Pre-school units	37	0.1	0.5
Pre-school centres	1 362	4.2	22.8
Total	15 287	144.8	1 252.0

*There are 260 thousand pupils in pre-school classes (11 557 classes) in primary schools so the total number of pupils in pre-school education is: 1 512 000.

Source: <https://dane.gov.pl/pl/dataset/212,szkoy-i-uczniowie-wedug-organow-prowadzacych>
<https://dane.gov.pl/pl/dataset/811,nauczyciele-w-osobach-i-etatach>

Table 2. Schools for youth and adults, 2023/24

Types of schools	Number of schools	Teachers in thousands	Pupils and students in thousands
Primary schools	14 046	415.7	3 257.2
Special schools preparing for employment	565	12.4	12.5
stage I sectoral vocational schools	1 695	45.6	217.5
stage II sectoral vocational schools	261	2.4	13.0
general secondary schools	3 178	92.4	904.3
technical secondary schools	1 858	87.0	755.2
post-secondary schools	1 233	7.5	242.2
Total	22 836	662.9	5 401.9
Art schools	707	23.3	91.1
Total	23 544	753.0*	5 493.1

*Additionally 66.7 thousand teachers are employed in various educational settings such as e.g. school clusters, rehabilitation-and-education centres, psychological and educational counselling and guidance centres.

Source: <https://dane.gov.pl/pl/dataset/212,szkoy-i-uczniowie-wedug-organow-prowadzacych>
<https://dane.gov.pl/pl/dataset/811,nauczyciele-w-osobach-i-etatach>

Table 3. Schools for adults, 2023/24

Types of schools	Number of schools	Students
Primary schools	44	1.0
General secondary schools	730	98.4
Total	774	99.4

Source: <https://dane.gov.pl/pl/dataset/212,szkoy-i-uczniowie-wedug-organow-prowadzacych>

Table 4. Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), 2023/24

Types of HEIs	Number of HEIs	Students
University-type	135	961.7
Non-university type	227	243.2
Total	362	1 204.9

Sources: <https://radon.nauka.gov.pl/dane/instytucje-systemu-szkolnictwa-wyzszego-i-nauki>
https://radon.nauka.gov.pl/raporty/studenci_2022

Table 5. Doctoral schools, 2024

Number of doctoral schools	157
Number of doctoral students in doctoral schools	16 570

Sources: <https://radon.nauka.gov.pl/dane/szkoly-doktorskie>
<https://polon2.opi.org.pl/home>



Statistics School Education



Statistics Higher Education

Useful links

- Ministry of National Education
www.gov.pl/web/edukacja
- Ministry of Science and Higher Education
www.gov.pl/web/nauka
- Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy
www.gov.pl/web/rodzina
- Polish Accreditation Committee
<https://pka.edu.pl/en>
- The Science Evaluation Committee
www.gov.pl/web/nauka/komisja-ewaluacji-nauki
- National Agency for Academic Exchange
<https://nawa.gov.pl/en>
- Conference of Rectors of Academic Schools in Poland
www.krasp.org.pl/en
- Conference of Public Higher Vocational Education Institutions
<https://krepuz.pl>
- General Council for Science and Higher Education
<https://rgnisw.nauka.gov.pl>
- Students' Parliament of the Republic of Poland
<https://psrp.org.pl/en>
- Polish National Association of Doctoral Candidates
<https://krd.edu.pl>
- Constitution of the Republic of Poland
www.sejm.gov.pl/prawo/konst/angielski/kon1.htm
- Act on the Integrated Qualifications System
<https://bit.ly/49a43Sx>

- Law on School Education
<https://bit.ly/3BbJkRE>
- School Education Act
<https://bit.ly/3V8C002>
- Teachers' Charter
<https://bit.ly/4eMxag6>
- Law on Higher Education and Science
<https://bit.ly/3ZoBc9Q>
- *Integrated Skills Strategy*
<https://zsu2030.mein.gov.pl>

Eurydice is a network of 43 national units based in 40 countries of the Erasmus+ programme. Its task is to explain how education systems are organised in Europe and how they work. Eurydice publishes descriptions of national education systems, comparative reports devoted to specific topics, indicators and statistics. Eurydice reports show how countries tackle challenges at all education levels: early childhood education and care, primary and secondary education, higher education and adult learning.

**Polish Eurydice Unit
Research and Publishing Department
Foundation for the Development
of the Education System (FRSE)**

Al. Jerozolimskie 142a, 02-305 Warsaw
eurydice@frse.org.pl
www.eurydice.org.pl

