

**BYDGOSKI ZAKŁAD DOSKONALENIA
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INSTITUTION**



**Lifelong Learning Programme
Leonardo da Vinci, Development of Innovation**

QualiMoVET

Preliminary Study Poland



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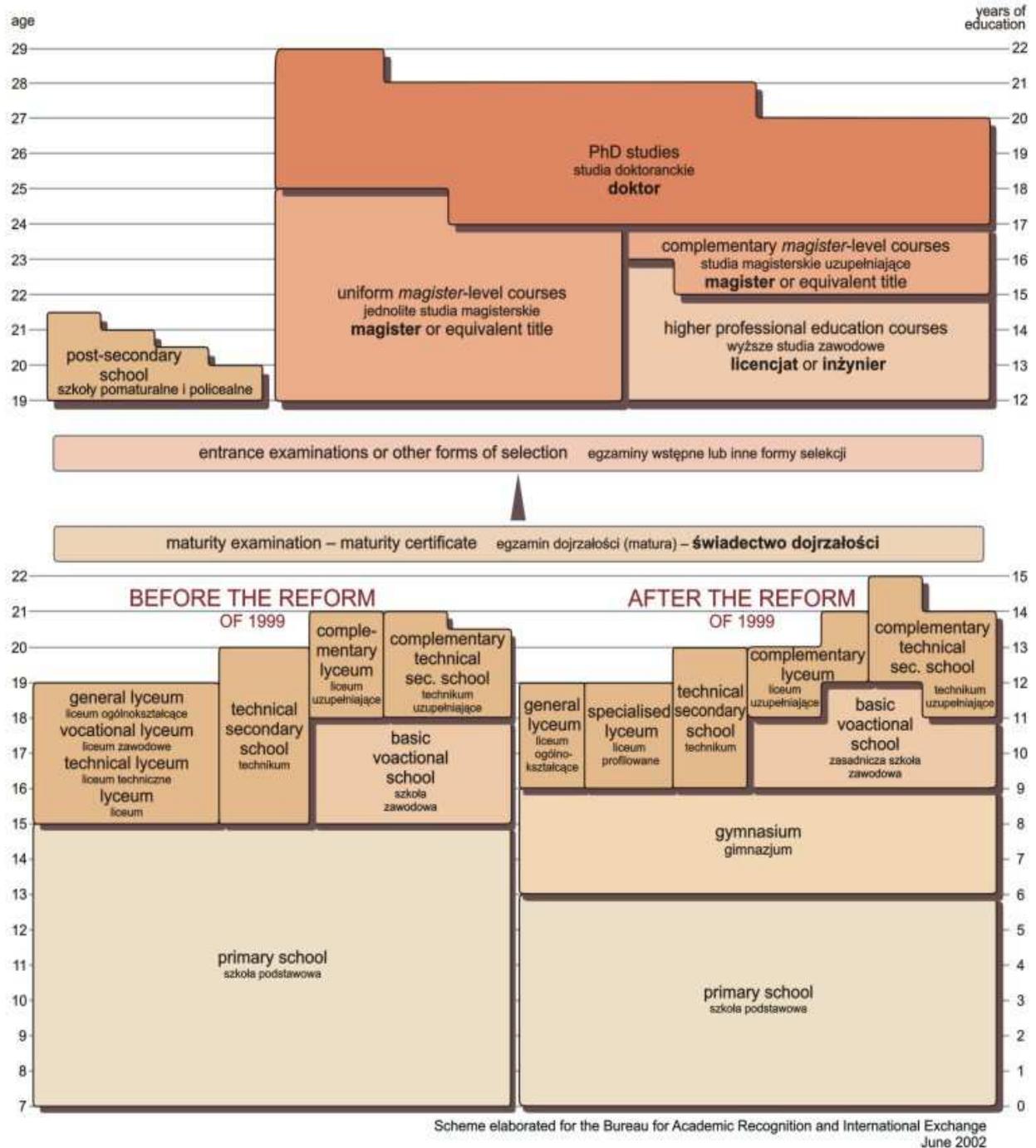
1. Please give a brief overview of your national education system

(use also a graphic for depicting the system)

The Polish education system includes nursery schools, primary schools, secondary schools, post-secondary schools and other.

The system of higher education is not considered to be a part of the education system as it is a separated administrative division and it is constitutionally autonomic. Pursuant to the regulations of the Polish Constitution, every person has the right to education. Although the education is compulsory for persons aged from 7 to 18, only primary and lower secondary schools are given the compulsory status. Education in public schools is free.

THE EDUCATION SYSTEM IN POLAND



a) Pre-school activities

The pre-school education in Poland includes all kinds of nursery schools (przedszkola), which are youth welfare institutions for children aged 3 to 5. Nursery schools in Poland are not compulsory but all children aged 6 are obliged to attend one-year school preparatory class (klasa zerowa), which can be located either at a nursery school or at a primary school. The objectives of nursery schools are to provide children with the proper conditions for the physical, mental, emotional and social development and to diagnose and reduce any disorders in that matter. Nursery schools also prepare children for participation in the future school activities and offer help with child care for working parents.

Nursery schools can be of two types: public and non-public. Public nursery schools are run by the State and are free of charge, whereas non-public ones are run by private organizations or individual persons and are not free of charge.

b) School system

- Preliminary school (szkoła podstawowa)

6-year preliminary schools are divided into two 3-year stages. The first one includes grades 1-3 and offers elementary integrated schooling – there is only one teacher running all the classes. He is also the class tutor. The teacher decides on the length of the classes. At the higher stages each class lasts 45 minutes.

Pupils can attend in religion or ethics classes (because of the low rate of interest in this particular type of classes they are practically not run in Polish schools). Parents decide on the child's attendance on the religion classes.

On this education stage the additional educational classes can be introduced, for example a foreign language. Some of the pupils also attend in compulsory classes and have physiotherapy exercises. There is a possibility to provide all the pupils or just a group of them with other additional classes. Decisions on that matter are made by a headmaster, who can set aside for that so called 'hours for headmaster disposal.'

The second stage includes grades 4-6 and at that stage different teachers are responsible for different subjects. One of those teachers is also a class tutor.

The subjects taught at that stage are as follow:

Polish language, foreign language, mathematics, environment, history, civic education, music, arts, technical sciences, computing, physical education, religion or ethics.

At the end of the 6th grade pupils are required to take an external competence test (set by external examination commissions and assessed by examiners selected by these commissions) with no selection function. It serves an information on the level of achievements of the pupils.

The scale of evaluation (beginning from the 4 grade of the preliminary school):

6 – excellent, 5 – very good, 4 – good, 3 – satisfactory, 2 – passing, 1 – failing;

The scale of demeanour evaluation:

Exemplary, very good, good, correct, inappropriate, reprehensible;

The assessment of the knowledge and skills of the pupils in the 1-3 grades is only descriptive and remains exclusively at the discretion of teachers.

- Lower secondary school (gimnazjum)

When in 1999 a reform of the education system in Poland was adopted, lower secondary schools were introduced. It is compulsory for all the primary school graduates aged 13-16 and the education on that stage is of elementary character.

The subjects taught at that stage are as follow:

Polish language, foreign language, mathematics, history, civic education, music, arts, technical sciences, computing, physics and astronomy, chemistry, biology, geography, physical education, religion or ethics (not compulsory; decision taken by parents).

At the end of the 3rd grade all the pupils are required to pass an external examination set by external commissions. The date of the examination is annually set by the head of the Central Examination Commission. The examination itself is divided into two written parts, the arts and the sciences (beginning from the school year 2008/09 the examination includes also a foreign language part). The results of the examination do not influence on the graduation from the lower secondary school, but the number of points indicated on the graduation certificate (including the points from the examination) decides on pupils' admission to a upper secondary school.

- Upper secondary school (szkoła ponadgimnazjalna)

- (a) **2- or 3-year basic vocational schools** completion of which enables pupils to obtain vocational qualifications after passing the examination or to continue education in the schools described in the subsections (e) and (f);
- (b) **3-year grammar upper secondary schools**, completion of which enables to get the Standardized Secondary Education Certificate (świadectwo maturalne) after passing the standardized secondary education examination;
- (c) **3-year specialised upper secondary schools**, that educate in a general vocational specialisations and completion of which enables to get the Standardized Secondary Education Certificate (świadectwo maturalne) after passing the standardized secondary education exam;
- (d) **4-year technical secondary schools**, completion of which enables to get the vocational qualifications diploma after passing the vocational exam and also to get the Standardized Secondary Education Certificate (świadectwo maturalne) after passing the standardized secondary education exam;
- (e) **2-year complementary upper secondary schools** for the people graduating from the schools mentioned in the subsection (a), completion of which enables to get the Standardized Secondary Education Certificate (świadectwo maturalne) after passing the standardized secondary education examination;
- (f) **3-year complementary technical secondary schools** for the people graduating from the schools mentioned in the subsection (a), completion of which enables to get the vocational qualifications diploma after passing the vocational exam and also to get the Standardized Secondary Education Certificate (świadectwo maturalne) after passing the standardized secondary education exam;

- 3-year special needs schools

Those schools prepare mentally disabled pupils to work and completion of those schools enables to get the certificate confirming the training for a job.

- Postsecondary schools

1- to 2,5-year schools for youth and adults with secondary education (Standardized Secondary Education Certificate is not needed). After passing the vocational examination one gets the technician degree equal to the technical secondary school graduating (the scope of jobs is wider than in the technical secondary school);

c) Vocational education and training (in special consideration of the target group)

Nowadays, vocational education is in a deep crisis. Poor educational offer and education quality, as well as lack of vocational counselling for students and parents cause lack of applicants willing to start their education, especially in basic vocational schools. We urgently need the programme of reconstruction of vocational education and enhancement of its prestige.

The full-time vocational schools are described in the sections above. They prepare pupils for future employment and give them general or more specific vocational qualifications (they depend on the type of school).

In the section hereinafter are described some additional issues concerning the organization of vocational trainings in Poland and the vocational education for adults as well.

The schools providing vocational education guarantee the conditions for the complete realization of the vocational workframes (full spectre of qualifications). It is about planning the vocational education with the complete set of theoretical and practical classes or modules.

The vocational education is conducted pursuant to the rules shown on the following image:



In the modular education the theory and practice are inextricably linked together. However, if the vocational trainings are conducted in two parts, theoretical and practical, the practical trainings must be prepared at various levels.

It is extremely difficult for the school workshops to operate in the free-market economy as just the supportive entities. Because of that schools have some problems when it comes to organizing the practical parts of vocational trainings, but that does not mean the necessity of giving up the vocational trainings based on practical classes. The transformation of the school workshops into the practical classes rooms (PZP – pracownia zajęć praktycznych) seems to be a good solution, as well as combining the workshops of many schools into centers of practical training (CKP – centrum kształcenia praktycznego). Those well equipped centers with a professional staff are a perfect supplement to a practical vocational training, especially by introducing elements of innovation into the training process.

The following image presents the structure of vocational trainings in Poland.

- uniform MA degree studies; Duration: from 9 to 12 semesters; Graduates receive a MA degree or equal degree, depending on the field of studies;
- third level studies - PhD studies - for university graduates with a master's degree; Duration: 3-4 years; Graduates receives PhD title;
- postgraduate studies (1-2 years) - for graduates of all types of colleges and universities;

2. Please give indicators to:

a) structural data and structural development in the near future in your country

The starting point for the prognosis is the expected growth of GDP and the employment absorption increase indicators by growth.

There are presented three variants of the annual average GDP growth for the years 2004-2013: 'A' variant – 4%, 'B' variant – 5 % and 'C' variant – 6%.

The three tables presented below show the results of the prognosis:

Table 1. Economic Growth variants for 2004–2013

| Specification | Prognosis variants | | |
|--------------------|-------------------------|------|------|
| | A | B | C |
| | Average growth rate (%) | | |
| 1. GDP | 4,0 | 5,0 | 6,0 |
| 2. Employment* | 1,2 | 1,5 | 2,2 |
| 3. Productivity | 2,8 | 3,5 | 4,8 |
| 4. Domestic demand | 4,0 | 5,0 | 6,0 |
| – investments | 8,0 | 10,0 | 12,0 |
| – consumption | 3,2 | 3,8 | 4,1 |
| 5. Import | 4,0 | 5,0 | 6,0 |
| 6. Export | 6,0 | 7,0 | 8,0 |

* People working in domestic economy

Source: Own prognosis.

Table 2. GDP, employment and productivity dynamic prognosis, 2004–2013

| Specification | Prognosis variants (index 2003 = 100) | | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------|------|
| | A | B | C |
| 1. GDP | 148 | 163 | 180 |
| 2. Employment* | 112 | 116 | 124 |
| 3. Productivity | 132 | 140 | 145 |
| 4. Employment absorption rate** | 0,25 | 0,25 | 0,30 |

* People working in domestic economy

** Employment increase on 1% of GDP increase

Table 3. Employment and unemployment prognosis to 2013

| Specification | Prognosis variant | | |
|--|-------------------|------|------|
| | A | B | C |
| 1. Employment ^a in 2003 (mln) | 13,7 | 13,7 | 13,7 |
| 2. Employment in 2013 (mln) | 15,8 | 15,9 | 17,0 |
| 3. Employment increase 2004–2013 (mln) | +1,6 | +2,2 | +3,3 |
| 4. Work supply increase ^b (mln of people) | +0,9 | +0,9 | +0,9 |
| 5. Unemployment prognosis for 2003 ^c | 3,3 | 3,3 | 3,3 |
| 6. Unemployment prognosis for 2013 (5+4–3) | 2,6 | 2,0 | 0,9 |
| 7. Employment rate (%) | 62,4 | 64,9 | 70,0 |
| 8. Unemployment rate in 2013 (%) | 14,5 | 11,1 | 5,0 |

^a Working in domestic economy III quarter of 2003 according to BAEL

^b Demographic growth powiększony o przyrost odłożonej podaży pracy - szacunek własny.

^c Third quarter of 2003 (according to BAEL)

b) Percentage of young people under the age of 27 reaching ISCED levels 2-6

The Educational System in Poland after the 1999 system reform in accordance with ISCED 1997 levels:

| ISCED'97 Level | Programme | enrolment rate nett ⁽¹⁾ (%) |
|----------------|---|---|
| 0 | Nursery school | |
| 1 | Primary school | 98,1 |
| 2A | Lower secondary school | 95,8 |
| 3A | Secondary schools | 78,0 |
| 3C | Basic vocational school | 12,2 |
| 4C | Postsecondary schools | 9,8 |
| 5A | Higher education (BA, MA and Postgraduate studies) | 38 |
| 5B | Teachers College; Foreign Languages Teachers College | |
| 6 | PhD studies | |

⁽¹⁾ the enrolment rate nett presents the relation between the number of learning people (in the given age group) on the particular level of education and the number of people in the age group described as corresponding for the level of education.

c) Percentage of young people under the age of 27 finishing vocational education (ISCED level 3 and 4)

| ISCED'97 Level | Programme | % of graduates |
|----------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 3A | Secondary schools | 32,6 53,7 19,4 |
| 3C | Basic vocational schools | 29,7 |
| 4C | Postsecondary schools | 29,4 |

d) + e) Current unemployment rate overall and under the age of 27 or which other age limit is normally used in your country; Rate of long term unemployment overall and under the age of 25

The following data is based on the statistical reports by the Central Statistical Office (GUS – Główny Urząd Statystyczny).

The number of the unemployed registered in the labour offices at the end of September 2008 amounted to 1376.6 thous. persons (among which 814.2 thous. were women), it was lower than the one observed at the end of the previous quarter by 78.7 thous. persons (i.e. by 5.4%), while compared to the same period of the previous year, it was lower by 401.2 thous. persons (by 22.6%).

Compared to the end of the previous quarter, a decrease in unemployment was observed among the population of men and women, respectively by 35.6 thous. (i.e. by 5.9%) or below by 43.2 thous. (i.e. by 5.0%). Compared to September 2007 a decrease in the number of the unemployed was observed in both populations: male and female. The number of men registered in the labour offices decreased over the year by 156.4 thous. (i.e. by 21.8%), while the number of women dropped by 244.8 thous. (i.e. by 23.1%).

In the III quarter of 2008, there were registered 645.2 thous. unemployed persons in the labour offices, i.e. by 7.8 thous. persons less than in the same period of 2007. The highest number of the newly registered was observed in September (240.0 thous.), while the lowest – in August (192.3 thous.).

Among the total number of the newly registered unemployed persons in the III quarter 2008 – 496.9 thous. comprised re-entrants to the unemployment rolls of the labour offices (the last year they comprised 505.5 thous. persons), while 193.9 thous. of the newly registering comprised persons who had never worked before, their percentage share amounted to 30.1% (in the previous year the respective figures were: 210.0 thousand persons and 32.1%). Persons aged up to 25 years constituted 37.1% of the total number of the newly registered over the presented period.

In the III quarter of 2008, the employers submitted 312.0 thous. job offers to the labour offices (24.7 thous. were from the public sector), i.e. by 10.9 offers less than the last year. Among all offers, 17.5% concerned traineeship, 8.0% – on a job training, 2.2% were addressed to disabled persons, while 1.7% – to the persons who completed education within the last 12 months. At the end of September, labour offices had job offers for 73.8 thous. persons (25.5 thous. comprised offers not undertaken for a period exceeding one month).

The youths still remain a group mostly affected with unemployment. At the end of the presented period, the largest group among the unemployed constituted persons aged 25 – 34 years. Their number amounted to 391.6 thous., while their share in the total number of the unemployed increased as compared to the previous year by 0.5 point and amounted to 28.4%. Persons aged up to 24 years constituted 20.7% of the total number of the unemployed.

The percentage share of registered unemployed persons at the age 35 – 44 years comprised 18.5%, 45 – 54 years – 23.6%, while persons aged over 54 constituted 8.8%. Compared to the same period of 2007 the highest changes in the structure of the unemployed were observed for the group of persons aged 45 – 54 years old (an in minus difference by 1.6 percentage point), in the group 35 – 44 years old (in minus difference by 0.8 percentage point) whereas in the group 24 years and less (in plus difference by 1.2 percentage point).

The majority of the unemployed registered in the labour offices comprised persons with relatively low level of education. The two largest groups among the unemployed constituted persons with basic vocational education and lower secondary, primary and incomplete primary education (their shares amounted respectively to 28.3% and 30.3% of the total number of the unemployed registered at the end of September 2008). Both these populations jointly amounted to 58.6% of the total number of the unemployed. The certificate of completion of post-secondary and vocational secondary schools had 22.8% of the total number of the unemployed, general secondary schools completed 10.4%, while the graduates from tertiary schools constituted 8.3%.

The education structure of unemployed women was different than the structure of men, as 48.2% of the unemployed women had secondary and tertiary education, while among men the share of people with this educational levels amounted to 31.6%.

The number of persons seeking employment for a long time (over 12 months) amounted to 540.0 thous. at the end of the III quarter of 2008. It constituted 39.2% of the total number of the registered unemployed. The number of the long-term unemployed decreased as compared to the same period of 2007, by 315.9 thous. persons, i.e. by 36.9%. Persons staying without a job for a relatively short duration, i.e. up to 1 month, constituted 14.9%, between 1 and 3 months – 16.2%, between 3 and 6 months – 12.8%, while those who stayed without a job from 6 to 12 months comprised 16.8% of the total number of the unemployed.

The quarterly data - compiled according to E.U. standards and more comprehensive than GUS's monthly figures - estimated that Poland's unemployment rate edged up to 6.7% in the fourth quarter of 2008, from 6.6% in the third quarter.

According to the Central Statistical Office (GUS) Poland's unemployment rate rose to 10.5% in January 2009, from 9.5% in December 2008. GUS reported that 1.63 million people were officially registered as out of work in January, an increase of 160,600 from December.

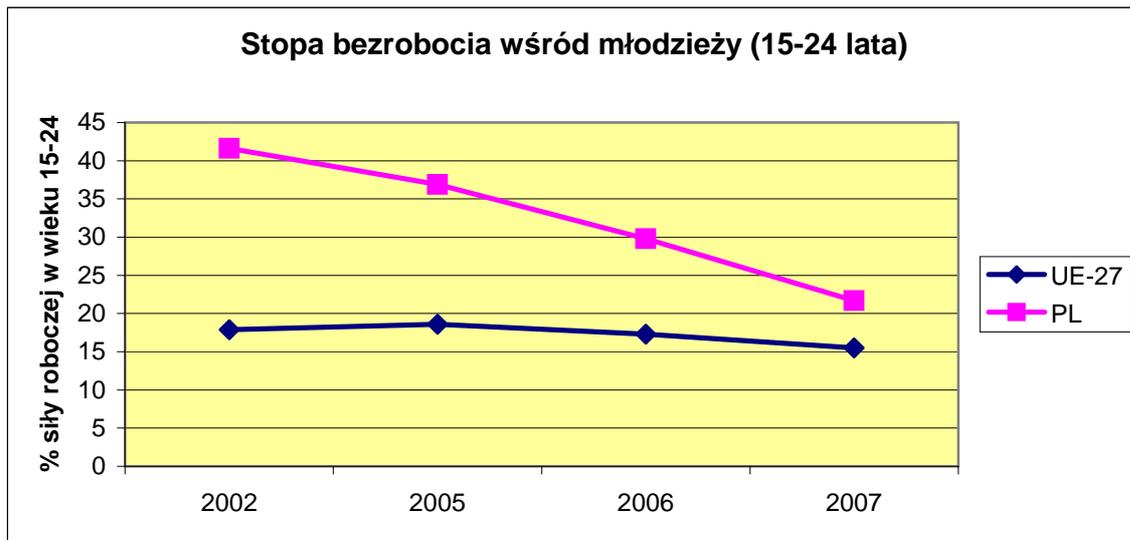
Table 4. The youth unemployment rate for the age 15-24 (%)

| | 2002 | | | 2005 | | | 2006 | | | 2007 | | |
|--------------|---------|------|------|---------|------|------|---------|------|------|---------|------|------|
| | Overall | M | F |
| UE-27 | 17,9 | 17,7 | 18,2 | 18,6 | 18,5 | 18,7 | 17,3 | 17,0 | 17,7 | 15,5 | 15,2 | 15,8 |
| PL | 41,6 | 41,0 | 42,4 | 36,9 | 35,7 | 38,3 | 29,8 | 28,3 | 31,6 | 21,7 | 20,0 | 23,8 |

M – male, F - female

Source: Eurostat, Labour Force Survey

Graph 1. The youth unemployment rate (aged 15-24) (%)



Source: Eurostat, Labour Force Survey, dane roczne przeciętne, stan na dzień 21 maja 2008 r.

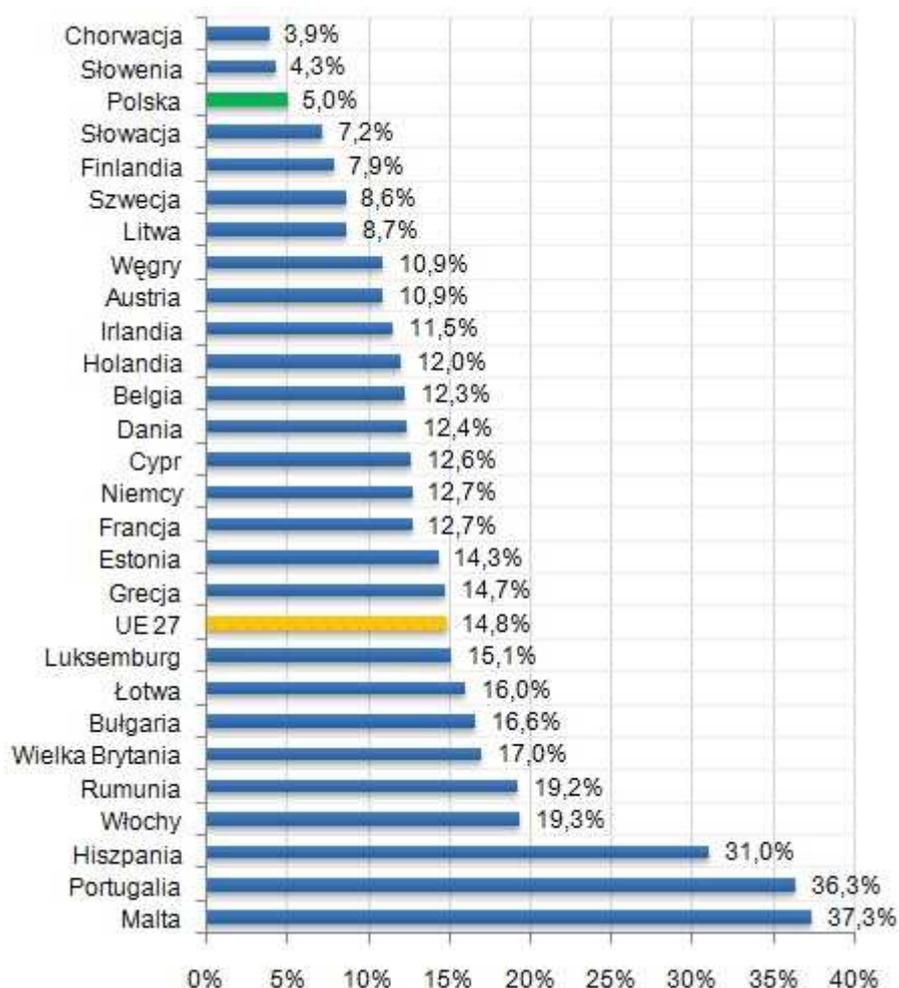
f) current percentage of school dropouts, early school leavers and VET drop outs

Polish people understand that education is the key to the future success. Almost 95% of people aged 18-24 continue their education. That gives Poland the 3rd place in Europe. In 2001 the percentage of the early school leavers among people reaching 18 was 7,9% and in 2007 it decreased to the level of 5%.

It seems that the hunger for knowledge among the young people in Poland results from their labour market competitiveness consciousness. In the group aged 18-24 almost 3 million people are still learning. Their level of education is very high, about 44% of them are students.

Men dominate among the early school leavers (6,4% while there is only 3,6% of women).

It should be assumed that the number of male early school leavers and drop outs can increase because of the fact that the compulsory military enlistments in Poland have been recently ceased.



Graph 2. Percentage of early school leavers aged 18-24 in 2007

Prepared on the basis of Eurostat

3. Please make comments to the state of implementation of NQF (National Qualification Framework), EQF (European Qualification Framework) and ECVET (European Credit System for VET)

Poland is preparing to undertake works on the National Qualifications Frameworks and the National Qualification System. The National Reform Program 2005-2008 provides for these tasks. The Ministry of Science and HE made a decision about works on the NQF in summer 2006. The Ministry nominated the NQF Working Group, consisting of experts in HE issues (mainly the Bologna Experts), and a select group of crucial stakeholders (18 people altogether). The main task of the Group was to prepare the first draft of the NQF and to present it to the Ministry and the Steering Committee.

Some months later, the Steering Committee for NQF HE was established (full set of stakeholders, governmental agencies represented at the level of deputy-ministers). Due to the parliamentary election (winter 2007), followed by changes in the government, the Steering Committee re-established in 2008.

In January 2008, the Working Group presented the basic concept, containing the NQF main assumptions, to the newly nominated Ministry, and got the preliminary approval of it in April 2008.

The Group are continuing their work by developing the project under the supervision of the Steering Committee, and developing the 'consultation' stage. Several study visits abroad to the countries more advanced in the establishment of NQFs are also planned.

In February 2008 the Group was invited by the Ministry of National Education (MEN) to present their project. That time, the MEN started their work on the NQF for LLL on the basis of the EQF. The last recommendation of the EP and EC on the NQF/EQF intensified their work – in a close collaboration with the Working Group for NQF for HE. (*From the report on the Bologna Process*)

One of the main problems in implementing the NQF, EQF and ECVET is the lack of the unified terminology on the European level which can lead to many misinterpretations.

ECVET

The proper authorities responsible for the ECVET in Poland is the Ministry of Education – the Department of Vocational Training.

Its bodies are responsible for:

- defining the tools for giving opinions on, transferring, recognizing and certifying the qualifications;
- defining and describing the qualifications;
- making decisions about ECVET implementation;

After analysing the comments gathered during the consultations stage it became obvious that ECVET is considered to be an innovative initiative, useful for the society and able to improve the mobility of people and the process of qualifications recognition as well. It should also be treated as a tool of cooperation between the persons involved in the vocational trainings not only on the European level but also on the national one.

The following conclusions were brought after the consultations:

- ECVET is essential and the implementation of it should be based on the rule of voluntariness.
- ECVET must be based on the learning outcomes and the learning units.
- ECVET should be used in connection to the formal and non-formal learning outcomes.
- ECVET should be useful for all people learning, especially in the view of life long learning.
- The transfer of ECVET points must be based on evaluation, recognition and certification of the learning outcomes.
- The ECVET points connected to the units and certificates should provide an additional data about the learning outcomes in order to make the points transfer easier.
- to provide the quality is the key factor enabling the use of the mutual trust rule vital for the effective implementation of ECVET.
- ECVET shall be connected to other European tools, especially to Europass.

4. Target group

a) + b) which subgroups would you define as most relevant for your country and for this project? How many young people would you relate to each relevant group?

The target group most relevant for our purposes includes unemployed young people aged 15-27 with low education attainment and widely understand socially disadvantaged youth.

The main groups of socially disadvantaged young people are:

- people without finished vocational education:
- people with low educational attainment:
- children from job-less houses:
- children from difunctional families:
- children living with single-parents:

The above mentioned groups of people are in Poland endangered with a long-term unemployment, dequalification, loss of professional contacts (very important in the process of job seeking). The brakes in the professional activity are caused mostly by the very low remuneration in the building and industry related branches, where most of the people of low education attainment seek for job.

The training programmes for those groups should be longer and fill in not only basic gaps in vocational skills but also in general qualifications. Those trainings should be strengthen with a huge amount of practical classes with the use of the brand new innovative technology used currently in our economy.

The investments directed into the specific area of developing the skills of such people are in Poland still insufficient.

c) Are in your country any legal regulations concerning the target group to assure social inclusion?

There are no specific regulations concerning the given target group. Those people have all the rights and obligations as everyone pursuant to the Polish Constitution, Law Codes and other national and international provisions.

5. VET system with focus on the target group

a) The situation and perspective of the target group in regard to vocational education

in many professions, especially in those that do not require high level of education, the relative number of unemployed exceeded 2-3 times the number of employed. This concerns especially the professions connected with mining, agriculture and forestry, industry, craft and trade.

Employers report that the problems with finding good staff in about 50% concerns qualified workers. It means that people who want to find employment should have much more specific skills and qualifications than those of unemployed. The problem lies not in the lack of workers but in the lack of their professional qualifications.

Those who are in demand are simply experts in almost every branch. Their participation in the overall number of unemployed is 5-times less than in the number of employed. The employers seek now for more specific and concrete qualifications and they increase the requirements concerning the general competencies.

b) The reasons which prevent access to education and employment

According to the newest researches, there are some factors that prevent access to education and employment. The worst situation can be spotted in the rural regions. The reasons for that are:

- the poor material conditions of the rural households;
- lower educational aspirations;
- malfunctions of the education system;

Management of education is in Poland decentralised, that means the schools are now in the responsibilities of the local government bodies. Low level of the regional development and at the same time very poor financial condition of regions (gminas) have a very bad influence on the education system. The poorer regions are not able to cofinance education. They try to rationalize the net of schools which only increases the distances between the schools in a region.

The actions preventing the raising of such barriers should be undertaken by the governmental authorities, local governments and also by the local societies, which are the most affected by the problem.

c) special programmes existing in your country for the (re-)integration of the target group in the national VET system

As it was mentioned in the above mentioned sections concerning VET system, Poland is in great need of reforming the system, thus all the programmes focused on the reintegration of our target group either do not yet exist or they are in the stage of preparation and planning.

d) Do modules play a significant role in vocational education and training in your country

Innovative modular curricula and educational packages developed within national and international programmes, are significant Polish experience and input into the development of vocational education. Innovative education is based on new teaching units, new organization and technology of education.

Modular education integrates conceptions of demonstrative, curricular, individual, problem, structural, many-sided and multimedial teaching. It is strictly connected with achieving vocational competencies, what means that during the final test the student must be able to demonstrate work executed according to standards.

Many modular curricula in vocational education have been created at the level of secondary and postsecondary schools, but because of the lack of equipment in the school workshops the scope of their use is not wide.

e) options for the recognition of informal and non-formal acquired knowledge

Under the auspices of the EQUAL Project there was prepared "*Modelowy System Wsparcia Przedsiębiorstw i Pracowników w tworzeniu Systemów Zarządzania Wiedzą*". The objective of this theme is facilitating and supporting the introduction of new technologies and innovative information and communication solutions. The solutions are to increase the competitiveness of firms and raise the awareness of employers with regard to the necessity of continuous training of the managerial staff and employees in order to ensure the development of the firms and maintaining workplaces (particularly in the case of employees more advanced in age and women).

One of its elements is System No 2: The Certification of qualifications gained in non-formal education.

The guidelines for the System call for implementation of the two-stage process of certification of the vocational qualifications.

- inside the enterprise with the use of the system functioning in the enterprise;
- the external examination held by the legally authorised institution;
the problem is that at the moment there are no legal frameworks enabling the introduction of system functioning in the presented way.

f) needs for a reform in VET system (or parts of it) for the target group

see 5c)

6. Quality assurance in VET

a) methods or systems used for quality assurance in VET

The quality of educational services in Poland is influenced by institutions and actions, part of which was introduced not long ago but has already contributed to changes in the education and higher education sectors.

The quality assurance system includes elements such as:

- Nationwide external examinations (compulsory: after primary and lower secondary schools and voluntary: standardized secondary education exam and vocational exam), outcomes of which help to measure the quality of learning.
- The regular (every three years) PISA students assessing coordinated by the OECD; it helps to compare the assessments of Polish students with the assessments of the students in other countries.
- The governmental accreditation in higher education (since 2002), which decides about the institution's rights to conduct activity on the given level and on given conditions; there is also accreditation for the life long learning institutions (since 2002), which influences their entrustment with the trainings financed from the public sources.
- Social accreditation (since 1994) launched from the initiative of the educational subjects, equal to the assurance of the quality of the institution or its frameworks.
- Education and trainings of the staff and unification of their professional promotion, which assures the achievement of the top quality of the services.
- Educational Data System (since 2004) used for obtaining the data necessary to carry out the educational policy. They include information about pupils, students and graduates (for example, about the number of people learning given foreign language).

b) Which methods or systems are most relevant

The former Ministry of Economy and Labour (now there are two separate Ministries: of Economy and of Labour and Social Policy) in 2005 released a new information system accessible on-line which was built under the 'National System of Vocational Training' PHARE 2000 Project. The system consists of two databases of the vocational qualifications standards and of vocational modular trainings syllabuses. Those databases are intended for people and institutions interested in using them as a source for preparation of vocational trainings and education syllabuses or for setting out the standards for the examination requirements. All the syllabuses are recommended by the Ministries of Economy and of Labour and Social Policy.

c) Are there possibilities of certification and accreditation of vocational training and education courses and/or educational providers? Which organisation/institution is making these licences available?

The bodies responsible for accreditation of the educational institutions are regional education offices. The accreditation is one of the external methods to assure the quality of the training process and its outcomes.

If the institution launches the accreditation procedure it is equal to reaching the high level of quality and when the institution is finally given the accreditation it certifies the fulfillment of the established requirements and the quality criteria. The process of accreditation gives profits to all its participants.

Profits for individuals:

- improvement of the services quality;
- the training entity gains more trust;
- the increase of competitiveness on the educational services market;
- the students' motivation for systematic work increase;
- getting the certificate of completing the training on the appropriate level and issued by a credible institution;
- increasing the training offer;

Profits for institutions:

- access to a high level of educational services;
- increase of the chances for employment;
- getting the certificate of completing the training on the appropriate level and issued by a credible institution;
- trainings cofinanced by the employer are free of VAT;

d) + e) Are there standards (legal or other) for VET in your country; methods and instruments used for the documentation of VET and further training activities

There are no standardized and unified standards or instruments. The existing ones differ between organizations and institutions. The works on unification are in Poland still in progress.

f) requirements (legal or other) exist concerning the qualification of trainers and other educational staff in the field of VET

In 2004 the standards concerning the qualification of teachers were changed. In 1994 only 64% of teachers had higher education, whereas in 2002 the number increased to 90%. Since 2004 the requirements of teachers' trainings have been improved and the subjects, programmes, syllabuses and curricula have been changed.

The separate issue is the process of qualification of trainers in the field of VET. There are no solutions that can guarantee the education of a fully qualified and competent staff. It is a commonly shared opinion that the trainings of VET staff do not cope with the speed of technological changes. The true professionals do not look for employment in education because of the low remuneration and at the same time the older trainers do not have the opportunities to update their knowledge and skills.

g) procedures/standards for further training of staff in the field of VET

- trainings concerning production and services technologies held in the enterprises;
- education and trainings financed and cofinanced from the EU Funds sources;
- external trainings for the enterprises' employees;
- continuing education and trainings;

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