

# The System of Education in Poland



- Education in public schools is free of charge.
- Every person has the right to education. Education is compulsory until the age of 18.
- Parents are free to choose schools other than public for their children.

## Pre-school education

- Pre-school education is regarded as the first level of the school system.
- Pre-schools are optional for 3-, 4- and 5-year-old children.
- **Six-year-old children** are obliged to complete a year of preparation for primary education called "0 grade".
- This education stimulates the general development and gives the primary reading skill and basic mathematics.

# Primary education

## Old structure:

6-year primary school (szkoła podstawowa) compulsory for all pupils who are usually aged 6/7-13.

It was divided into two stages:

- **grades 1-3** (early school education),
- **grades 4-6** where teaching is done by subject.
  
- **3-year gimnazjum** (lower secondary school) for students aged 13-16. At the end of it pupils take a compulsory external exam and its results influence admission to upper secondary schools.

# New structure (starting in 2017)

**8-year primary school** (compulsory for all pupils who are usually aged 6/7-15).

It includes two stages:

- **grades 1-3** (early school education),
- **grades 4-8** where teaching is done by subject

At the end of the 8-year primary school, pupils take a compulsory external examination. Its results will influence admission to secondary schools.

## Secondary Education

Vast majority of students continues education in the following types of schools:

- 4-year general upper secondary school (*liceum ogólnokształcące*) leading to obtain the *Matura* certificate, which gives access to higher education.
- 5-year technical secondary school (*technikum*) leading to obtain a diploma confirming vocational qualifications
- 3-year basic vocational school (*zasadnicza szkoła zawodowa*) leading to obtain a diploma confirming vocational qualifications

# Subjects

## Compulsory subjects

- **Stage 1** (grades 1-3, primary school): early school education (including: mother tongue education, social education, natural sciences education, mathematical education, technology education, foreign language education, education in music and arts, computer education, physical education).



- **Stage 2** (grades 4-8, primary school): Polish language, History and civics, Modern foreign languages, Mathematics, Natural science, Music/ Art, Technology, Computer classes, Physical education, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Geography, lessons with class tutor

In the lower grades one teacher teaches all subjects, while in the higher grades each subject has a different teacher.

## The grading system

**The grading system is as follows:**

- 1 - (*niedostateczna, insufficient*)
- 2 - (*dopuszczajaca, passing*)
- 3 - (*dostateczna, sufficient*)
- 4 - (*dobra, good*)
- 5 - (*bardzo dobra, very good*)
- 6 - (*celujaca, excellent*)

1 is the failing grade,

2 to 5 are normal passing grades

and 6 means that the student has exceeded expectations.

## HIGHER EDUCATION

There are two types of Higher Education Institutions:

- **university-type** (uczelnia akademicka),
- **non-university-type** (uczelnia zawodowa).

They both offer first- and second-cycle programmes as well as long-cycle **Master's degree programmes**.

Studies are organized in the form of full-time (studia stacjonarne) or part-time (studia niestacjonarne) programmes.

First-cycle programmes lead to two types of degrees:

- **licencjat** (equivalent of Bachelor's degree) - 3-4 year programmes,
- **inżynier** (equivalent of Bachelor's degree) - 3.5-4 year programmes.

Holders of the Bachelor's degree can enter second-cycle programmes, which take 1.5-2 years depending on the area of study.

Further information may be found on the websites:

- Ministry of National Education,
- Ministry of Science and Higher Education,

[https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/poland\\_en](https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/poland_en)