

# 2018 law reforming VET

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

REGULATION/LEGISLATION

 POLAND

## Timeline

2018 **Approved/Agreed**

**ID number 28754**

## Background

Legislation in 2015 aimed to strengthen the role of employers in shaping VET curricula based on their needs and to support cooperation between VET schools and businesses. National policy priorities in VET for 2016-20 focused on actions to promote practical learning to deliver more quality apprenticeships, strengthen cooperation between VET schools and businesses and increase the role and involvement of social partners and sectoral council representatives in VET delivery.

The changes introduced in VET complement the most recent reform of the education system initiated in 2016 and answer the need to better adjust VET to the labour market. They are also in line with the National strategy for responsible development introduced by the government in February 2017.

## Objectives

According to the rationale of the act, VET has to address the socio-economic challenges in Poland:

- (a) demographic changes and the decreasing number of young people joining the labour market;
- (b) changes in economic indicators, including the lowest unemployment rate in recent years, the deficit of employees with appropriate qualifications and the development of an 'employees' market';
- (c) persistent high unemployment rates among graduates of VET programmes.

The main aim of the act is to restore the prestige of vocational education by improving its quality and effectiveness. Special emphasis is placed on strengthening the mechanisms involving employers in the development of VET in all its stages, particularly in practical vocational training, and on the systematic adaptation of VET to labour market needs by forecasting the demand for professions and skills.

## Description

The new act:

- (a) makes it mandatory for VET learners to take a State vocational examination or a journeyman's examination as a condition of school graduation; it also changes the form of exams, the process of preparing examination tasks and the requirements set for examiners;
- (b) introduces, in cooperation with employers, apprenticeship as a new form of vocational learning for learners in upper secondary VET and first stage sectoral programmes, who are not juvenile workers;
- (c) introduces new options for VET learners to obtain additional vocational skills or qualifications beyond the core curriculum;
- (d) allows VET schools to organise short-cycle vocational courses for adults;
- (e) makes it mandatory for schools to cooperate with employers when launching new programmes; this cooperation may include: patronage classes, the organisation of practical training, teacher training, participation in the organisation of vocational examinations and providing schools with equipment. Further, employers and various employers' organisations will be able to participate in teachers' council meetings;
- (f) introduces obligatory professional training for VET teachers in companies;
- (g) introduces a labour-market-needs forecast mechanism; annual forecasts of the demand for employees in VET occupations will take into account various data sources, including data from Statistics Poland, the education information system, social insurance data and opinions of skills councils;
- (h) increases State subsidies to local government for VET schools offering higher demand occupations and to employers involved in training VET students in higher demand occupations;
- (i) introduces the functioning regulation of the newly-established second stage sectoral programmes;
- (j) introduces changes in the accreditation system for institutions providing continuing education in out-of-school forms, aimed at greater quality control;
- (k) provides changes in financial regulations (e.g. tax deductions for donations to VET schools; it will be possible for schools to charge fees for services offered as part of vocational training and use them for that training).

## 2018 Approved/Agreed

## Bodies responsible

- Ministry of National Education
- Ministry of National Education (until 2021)

## Target group

### Learners

Learners in upper secondary, including apprentices  
Young people (15-29 years old)

### Education professionals

Teachers  
Trainers  
School leaders

### Entities providing VET

Companies  
VET providers (all kinds)

### Other stakeholders

Social partners (employer organisations and trade unions)

## Thematic categories

## **Governance of VET and lifelong learning**

Optimising VET funding

Further developing national quality assurance systems

Establishing and developing skills intelligence systems

## **Modernising VET offer and delivery**

Modernising VET standards, curricula, programmes and training courses

Reinforcing work-based learning, including apprenticeships

## **Teachers, trainers and school leaders competences**

Systematic approaches to and opportunities for initial and continuous professional development of school leaders, teachers and trainers

## **Supporting lifelong learning culture and increasing participation**

Permeability between IVET and CVET and general and vocational pathways, academic and professional higher education

# **Subsystem**

IVET CVET

## **Further reading**

[VET reform continues](#)

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[Act of 22 December 2018 amending the Education Law, the Act on the Education System and other acts \(Journal of Laws 2018, item 2245\)](#)

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[Ministry of Education rationale to the Act, 2018](#)

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[Legislative process, printout no. 917](#)

## **Related policy developments**

**2024 Implementation**

### **Obligatory training in companies for VET teachers**

As of September 2019, VET teachers are required to participate in a new form of continuing professional development: 40-hour training cycles (that must be completed within three years) at a company active in the field of the occupation they teach.

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#### **Type of development**

Regulation/Legislation

#### **Subsystem**

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## 2024 Implementation

### Classification of occupations and VET core curricula

The Regulation modifying the VET core curricula and the Regulation establishing the new classification of occupations were adopted in March 2017. They provide the occupations and curricula for the new structure of vocational education.

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**Type of development**

Regulation/Legislation

**Subsystem**

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## 2021 Completed

### Development of curricula for additional vocational skills in various occupations

The call for projects was announced in July 2019 and, up until the end of February 2020, seven rounds of the competition had been organised. It was planned to develop 174 curricula in 16 sectors of special importance for the economy.

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**Type of development**

Practical  
measure/Initiative

**Subsystem**

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## 2019 Approved/Agreed

### Modifications in the requirements for VET schools (quality assurance system)

Following the changes to the VET system introduced in November 2018, the Ministry of National Education amended the regulations on the requirements for schools and institutions that are an important element of the pedagogical supervision system.

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Regulation/Legislation

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2019 **Approved/Agreed**

## Vocational education professions of particular significance for culture and national heritage

On 11 September 2019, the education ministry announced a list of vocational education professions of particular significance for culture and national heritage. The list covers 21 occupations, most being niche and rare professions (e.g.

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### Type of development

Regulation/Legislation

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2019 **Completed**

## Vocational education regional congresses

16 regional congresses dedicated to vocational education were organised in all regions of Poland in March and April 2019. During the meetings, VET reforms (entering into force in September 2019) were presented.

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### Type of development

Practical  
measure/Initiative

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2018 **Approved/Agreed**

## Systemic approach to vocational/career guidance

A Regulation establishing a systemic approach to vocational/career guidance in schools was adopted in September 2018. The regulation defines the goals as well as the terms and manner of implementing and organising vocational guidance, including detailed programme content.

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Regulation/Legislation

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IVET

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2024 Implementation

## Revising VET exams

Changes to VET examinations were introduced in November 2018 as part of the broader changes to Poland's VET system.

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**Type of development**

Regulation/Legislation

**Subsystem**

IVET

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2024 Implementation

## Annual forecast of the demand for employees in VET occupations

The Law of 22 November 2018 initiated an annual forecast of the demand for employees in VET occupations as a new tool to help shape the vocational education and training offer at local and regional level.

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**Subsystem**

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2019 Approved/Agreed

## Reviewing accreditation for out-of-school CVET

The Law of 22 November 2018 further developed the accreditation system for institutions providing continuing education outside of schools aimed at greater quality control.

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**Type of development**

Regulation/Legislation

**Subsystem**

CVET

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2019 Approved/Agreed

## Requirements for trainers in companies

A Regulation on practical vocational training introduced in February 2019 provides more flexibility in the requirements for in-company trainers on work experience and pedagogical

training, as some of the previous regulations limited the possibilities for professionals to engage in VET.

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Regulation/Legislation

**Subsystem**

IVET CVET

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**2024 Implementation**

## Teacher and trainer training in companies

Since 2016, several regions (*województwa*) have initiated CPD projects for teachers and trainers in companies. The projects are co-funded by the ESF and implemented as regional programmes.

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Practical  
measure/Initiative

**Subsystem**

IVET CVET

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**2020 Completed**

## Structural changes in VET pathways

In December 2016, the education ministry introduced a structural reform of the education system, influencing progression routes within the education and training system. The changes aim to enhance responsiveness of VET to the needs of the modern economy and include:

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**2018 Approved/Agreed**

## Supporting ancillary occupations for specific target groups

The Law of 22 November 2018 supports the setting up of the so-called 'ancillary occupations'. Ancillary occupations are targeted at people with minor intellectual disabilities.

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**2024 Implementation**

**Initiatives supporting stakeholder involvement in VET development and delivery**

The Polish Agency for Enterprise Development (PARP) implemented an ESF co-financed project to establish and support the functioning of Sector Skills Councils - SSCs (*Sektorowe Rady ds. Kompetencji*).

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Practical  
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**2019 Approved/Agreed**

**Changes in the regulation on practical vocational training**

In August 2015, the Ministry of National Education amended the Regulation on practical vocational training. The amendments came into force in September 2015, bringing important changes, including:

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