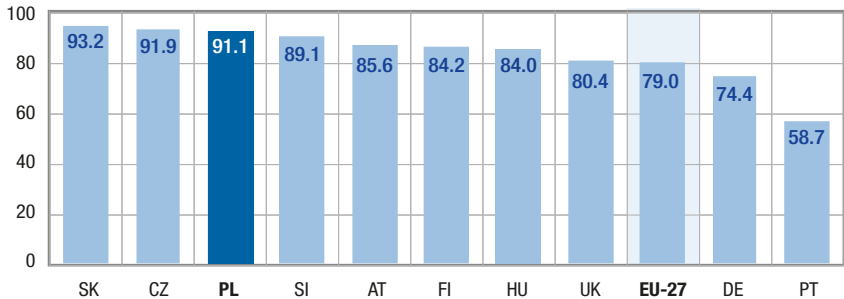




## Education and training in figures

### Youth education attainment level

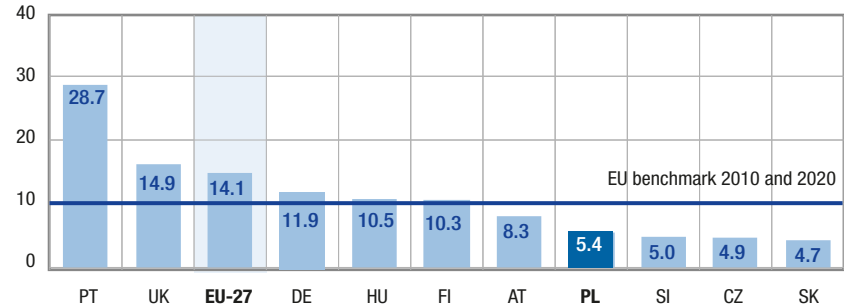
Population aged 20-24 having completed at least upper secondary education (2010, %)



Source: Eurostat, labour force survey, date of extraction 28.7.2011.

### Early-leavers from education and training

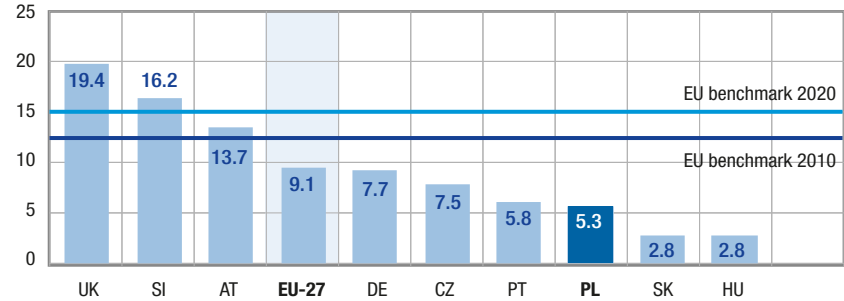
Population aged 18-24 with, at most, lower secondary education and not in further education or training (2010, %)



Source: Eurostat, labour force survey, date of extraction 28.7.2011.

### Participation in lifelong learning

Population aged 25-64 participating in education and training over the four weeks prior to the survey (2010, %)



Source: Eurostat, labour force survey, date of extraction 28.7.2011.

### Educational attainment of the population

Population aged 25-64 by highest level of education attained in Poland and in selected Member States (2010, %)

Country	ISCED 0-2	ISCED 3-4	ISCED 5-6	
Czech Republic	8.1	75.2	16.8	
Slovakia	9.0	73.6	17.3	
<b>Poland</b>	<b>11.3</b>	<b>65.8</b>	<b>22.9</b>	
Germany	14.2	59.2	26.6	
Slovenia	16.7	59.6	23.7	
Finland	17.0	44.8	38.1	
Austria	17.5	63.2	19.3	
Hungary	18.7	61.2	20.1	
United Kingdom	23.9	41.1	35.0	
Portugal	68.1	16.5	15.4	
<b>EU-27</b>	<b>27.3</b>	<b>46.8</b>	<b>25.9</b>	

**ISCED** International standard classification of education

**ISCED 0-2** Pre-primary, primary and lower secondary education

**ISCED 3-4** Upper secondary education and post-secondary education

**ISCED 5-6** Tertiary education

The countries are listed by the percentage of their population educated at least to level 3.

Source: Cedefop's calculation, based on Eurostat, labour force survey [date of extraction 28.7.2011].

## Further information

- Cedefop (2011). *Vocational education and training in Poland: short description*. 2011. Luxembourg: Publications Office. Available from Internet: [http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/Files/4105\\_en.pdf](http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/Files/4105_en.pdf)
- ReferNet. Poland: *VET in Europe – Country report 2010*. Available from Internet: [http://libserver.cedefop.europa.eu/vetelib/eu/pub/cedefop/vetreport/2010\\_CR\\_PL.pdf](http://libserver.cedefop.europa.eu/vetelib/eu/pub/cedefop/vetreport/2010_CR_PL.pdf) [cited: 20.07.2011]
- Eurydice (2010). *The system of education in Poland: Warsaw, 2010*. Available from Internet: [http://www.eurydice.org.pl/sites/eurydice.org.pl/files/the\\_system\\_2010.pdf](http://www.eurydice.org.pl/sites/eurydice.org.pl/files/the_system_2010.pdf) [cited: 20.07.2011]

<a href="http://www.poland.gov.pl">www.poland.gov.pl</a>	Official promotional website of the Republic of Poland (service under auspices of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs)
<a href="http://www.stat.gov.pl">www.stat.gov.pl</a>	Central Statistical Office
<a href="http://www.funduszestrukturalne.gov.pl/english/">www.funduszestrukturalne.gov.pl/english/</a>	EU Structural Funds in Poland (information service of the Ministry of Development)
<a href="http://www.mg.gov.pl">www.mg.gov.pl</a>	Ministry of Economy
<a href="http://www.standardyiszkolenia.praca.gov.pl">www.standardyiszkolenia.praca.gov.pl</a>	Ministry of Economy database on modular vocational training and vocational qualification standards
<a href="http://www.mpips.gov.pl/">www.mpips.gov.pl/</a>	Ministry of Labour and Social Policy
<a href="http://www.men.gov.pl">www.men.gov.pl</a>	Ministry of National Education
<a href="http://www.nauka.gov.pl">www.nauka.gov.pl</a>	Ministry of Science and Higher Education
<a href="http://www.english.pan.pl/">www.english.pan.pl/</a>	Polish Academy of Sciences
<a href="http://www.zrp.pl/tabid/314/language/pl-Default.aspx">www.zrp.pl/tabid/314/language/pl-Default.aspx</a>	Polish Crafts Association
<a href="http://www.psz.praca.gov.pl/">www.psz.praca.gov.pl/</a>	Public Employment Services
<a href="http://www.refernet.pl">www.refernet.pl</a>	ReferNet, Poland
<a href="http://www.ohp.pl/en/">http://www.ohp.pl/en/</a>	Voluntary Labour Corps

We wish to thank the staff of ReferNet Poland and the task force for training and human resources (BKKK), and in particular Agnieszka Luck for her valuable contribution.

This brochure focuses on some of the main aspects of vocational education and training in Poland and does not claim to be exhaustive.

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# Spotlight on VET Poland



### Transition and modernisation

Successful vocational education is one of the priorities of Polish education policy. Recent changes in vocational education focus on developing a flexible system relevant to the labour market needs, and on technological and scientific progress responsive to the challenge of globalisation. Reform is also induced by requirements of the Copenhagen process and the need to prepare the system to accommodate the national qualification framework.

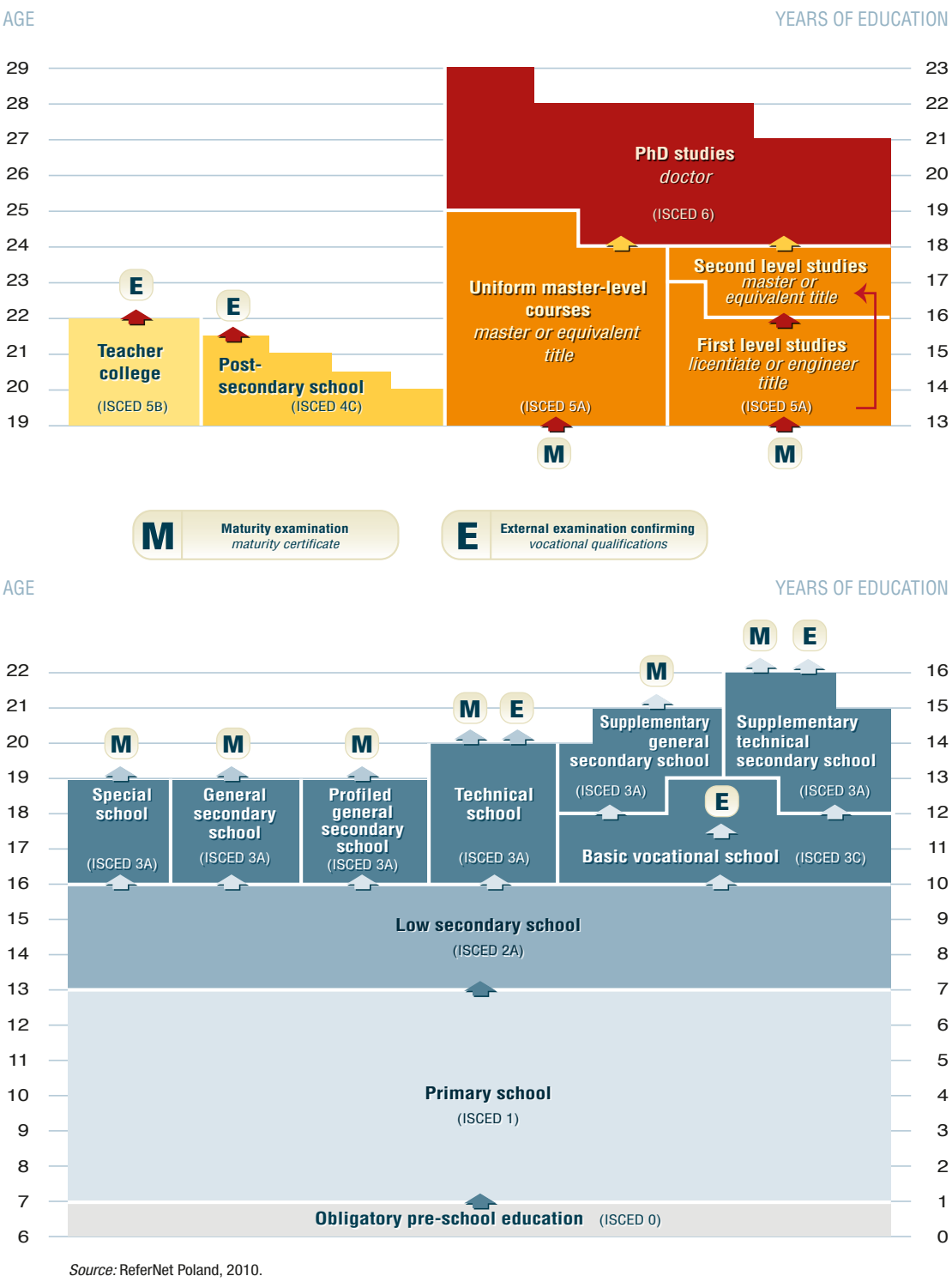
- Key priorities of education policy include:
- developing a flexible education system able to adapt to progress in science, new technologies and globalisation, as well changes in the labour market;
  - building up a transparent system of vocational qualifications;
  - creating a unified system for recognising vocational qualifications acquired in different forms;
  - developing key competences along with vocational skills.

### Structure

In Poland students are obliged to continue education up to age 18. After compulsory lower secondary education at the age of 16 they decide whether to choose VET and, if so, what type. Upper secondary vocational education in schools lasts between two and six years and tertiary vocational education lasts between three and six years depending on the type of school.

- There are several vocational schools:
- 3-year **profiled general secondary school** (*liceum profilowane*) as well as general education, provides education in general vocational profiles. The 15 profiles of general vocational education correspond to the categories of activities listed in the Polish classification of activities. Those leaving *liceum profilowane* may continue their education in new post-secondary schools. Further, with an upper secondary school-leaving certificate (*matura*), they can access higher education institutions, including higher vocational schools.
  - 2-3 year **basic vocational school** (*zasadnicza szkoła zawodowa*), which confers the qualification of skilled worker, is the only vocational school at the upper secondary level that awards a vocational qualification diploma but does not lead to a *matura*. The duration of education for particular vocations is indicated in the classification of vocations for vocational schooling.
  - 4-year **technical secondary school** (*technikum*) enables the acquisition of both a matura and vocational qualifications to the level of technician. After completion of technical secondary school, graduates may take an external exam confirming their vocational qualifications. Obtaining a *matura* in their fourth year opens the door to higher education institutions.
  - 3-year **supplementary technical secondary school** (*technikum uzupełniające*) is a school with a follow-up curriculum to that of the basic vocational school. Its goal is to bring students' education up to intermediate level and prepare them for the examination confirming their vocational qualifications and for the *matura* exam. On completion, students are awarded the *technikum* leaving certificate, provided they have received no fail marks at the end of the final year.
  - 3-year **special schools** (*szkoła specjalna*), offering preparation for performing a given job, are mostly for mentally disabled students and for those with complex disabilities who completed lower secondary school: curricula and organisation of education are adapted to their specific needs and capabilities. On completion, they receive certificates confirming their preparedness to perform specific work, but do not have full vocational qualifications.
  - 2,5-year **post-secondary schools** (*szkoły policealne*) award a vocational qualification diploma for graduates from general secondary schools
  - 3-year **teacher colleges** (*kolegia nauczycielskie*) – graduates can obtain qualifications entitling them to teach a foreign language in primary, lower and upper secondary schools. A different type of teacher college prepares teachers for kindergartens, primary schools and other educational establishments
  - **Higher education institutions** (*instytucje szkolnictwa wyższego*) may be academic or vocational depending on their competence. Both types are entitled to provide first and second level studies and uniform master studies; however, vocational ones are not eligible to offer doctoral studies.

### The education system in Poland



### Characteristics

- **Improving the quality of VET is a focus** of Polish education policy. This will be achieved through collaboration with employers and the development of networks of companies with the best training opportunities. In these, students will be able to acquaint themselves with modern methods of management, work organisation, application and use of modern technologies; their teachers will have the potential to update theoretical and practical knowledge. Efforts are under way to encourage employer participation in vocational training by establishing financial mechanisms supporting cooperation with educational institutions. One such mechanism is financing the cost of vocational training for young workers from the labour fund.
- **Apprenticeship training is regarded as alternative pathway** to full-time, school-based vocational education. It is organised in small and medium-sized enterprises, mainly in handicrafts. Employers are usually members of a guild or a chamber of handicrafts; a particular chamber of handicrafts or appointed guild supervises the training. According to data provided by the Polish Association of Crafts (*Związek Rzemiosła Polskiego*), in the 2009/10 school year, 90 669 juvenile workers were in apprenticeship training.
- The figure for early school leavers in Poland was 5.4% in 2010, relatively low compared to the EU average of 14.1%. Data show a decreasing tendency since 2004, suggesting **increased awareness of the need for education** in society. It also reflects the success of instruments supporting learners threatened by or suffering from social or economic exclusion; one example is the network of pedagogical assistance and counselling centres cooperating with schools and voluntary labour corps (*Ochotnicze Hufce Pracy*).
- The education system enables relatively **flexible transition from a vocational pathway to general one** and vice versa since the curricula for general subjects are the same in both vocational (technical secondary school) and general schools. Basic vocational school leavers can continue their education in supplementary technical or general schools.

### Challenges

- The main challenges in Polish VET include:
- **Developing the national lifelong learning policy.** The new national lifelong learning strategy has not yet been developed, although the national reform programme for years 2008-11, set out by the Ministry of Economy, foresees preparation and implementation of the lifelong learning strategy together with legal and institutional instruments resulting from it.
  - **Participation of adults in lifelong learning.** According to Eurostat data, in 2010 5.3% of those aged 24-65 years old participated in lifelong learning (continuing education), much lower than the EU average of 9.5%. The group with the highest rate of participation in formal continuing education are women (57.1%). The employed are more likely to participate in formal continuing education; almost half of those doing so were under 30 years of age. Groups facing particular difficulties in accessing continuing education are the disabled; people aged 45+; and women coming back to the labour market after maternity leave.
  - **The national qualification framework** has not yet been introduced but it will be completed in 2012. Full stocktaking of the components of the qualifications system is being undertaken and the framework and its implementation methods will be designed, including necessary legislative changes. Parallel to that, a system for validating learning outcomes acquired outside the formal system will be developed.
  - **Development of an efficient system for anticipating skill needed on the labour market.** There is no national system for anticipating skill needs: employers and research institutes carry out random surveys related to vocational competences among school leavers and demand for specific skills as part of sectoral, regional or local research projects. Launching a common effective and efficient system to anticipate demand for specific sets of skills requires development of an efficient system for diagnosing the external effectiveness of education and agreeing cooperation arrangements between individual entities.