Report of the Republic of Poland on the implementation of the Convention against Discrimination in Education in 2006-2011

Warsaw, September 2012

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS:

Polish Constitution	–	The Constitution of the Republic of Poland
The Sejm	–	The Sejm of the Republic of Poland
The Convention	–	Convention against Discrimination in Education, adopted by the General Conference at its eleventh session, Paris, 14 December 1960
ESA	–	Act of 7 September 1991 *on Education System*
HEA	–	Act of 27 July 2005 *on Higher Education*

MAD	–	Ministry of Administration and Digitization
MNE	–	Ministry of National Education
MCNH	–	Ministry of Culture and National Heritage
MSHE	–	Ministry of Science and Higher Education
MLSP	–	Ministry of Labour and Social Policy
MST	–	Ministry of Sport and Tourism
MI	–	Ministry of Interior

CSO	–	Central Statistical Office
CCR	–	Commissioner for Children's Rights
HRD	–	Human Rights Defender
GPET	–	Government Plenipotentiary for Equal Treatment
FRSE	–	Foundation for the Development of the Education System

INTRODUCTION

1. This interim report on the implementation in the Republic of Poland of the *Convention against Discrimination in Education* adopted in Paris on 15 December 1960 was prepared in the Ministry of National Education together with the Ministry of Science and Higher Education, Ministry of Culture and National Heritage, Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, Ministry of Administration and Digitization, Ministry of Sport and Tourism, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Office for Foreigners, Government Plenipotentiary for Equal Treatment and the Foundation for the Development of the Education System for the purpose of the 8th Consultation of UNESCO Member States on their implementation of the *Convention*.

The Ministry of National Education has put forward a draft of this report for consultation purposes to the Ombudsman for Children as well as Polish Committee for UNESCO, Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights and Amnesty International Poland.

Pursuant to art. 7 of the *Convention* this report contains information about the legal solutions decided upon and measures undertaken with a view to implementing in Poland the *Convention* in 2006-2011.

This document was drawn up based on the UNESCO Guidelines for the preparation of the Reports on the implementation of the *Convention* (annex to the document no. 186 EX/45 – *Report of the Committee on Conventions and Recommendations*, published on 17 May 2011).

I. LEGAL INSTRUMENTS FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION

2. Documents underlying the ordinary national rules of law in the Republic of Poland include the Constitution, legislative acts, ratified international agreements and regulations (art. 87 of Polish Constitution). A ratified international agreement, as soon as it is published in the Journal of Laws of the Republic of Poland, becomes a part of the national legal order and is applied directly, unless it is required that an appropriate legislative act be issued (art. 91 of Polish Constitution). Polish Constitution is the supreme law of the Republic of Poland. Pursuant to the constitutional rule (art. 32 and 33 of Polish Constitution) that no person can be discriminated against in political, social or economic life for any reason, and that women and men have equal rights in family, political, social and economic life, in particular equal right to education, the education system in Poland provides equal access to education at all stages of education.

Art. 70 of Polish Constitution provides that every person in the Republic of Poland has the right to education. Education is compulsory up to the age of 18. The methods for fulfilling the obligations of school education and of learning are laid down in the Act of 7 September 1991 *on Education System* (ESA).

For more information – see paras. 79-88 and 153-169 hereof.

3. Education in the Republic of Poland is guided by the principles set out in the Constitution of the Republic of Poland as well as the recommendations provided for in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Pursuant to the preamble to the Act of 7 September 1991 *on Education System* education and upbringing have the basis in universal ethical principles, while complying with the Christian system of values. Schools are required to provide every student with conditions necessary for his/her development, while respecting the principles of solidarity, democracy, tolerance, justice and freedom.

Education in public schools is free of charge.

It is allowed that some educational services are provided by public universities and higher education schools on a payable basis. Pursuant to art. 99 para. 1 of the Act of 27 July 2005 *on Higher Education* (HEA) public universities are permitted to charge fees for educational services related to:

- the teaching dispensed to students enrolled on a part-time programme and participants of part-time doctoral programmes,
- the teaching dispensed to students enrolled on a full-time programme (if this is their second or successive programme on a full-time basis),
- the teaching dispensed to students enrolled on a full-time programme (for classes beyond the additional limit of ECTS credits as defined in the Act *on Higher Education*),
- retaking specific classes as part of a full-time programme or a full-time doctoral programme due to unsatisfactory results,
- participating in programmes with a foreign language as a language of instruction,
- the teaching dispensed in the form of classes not included in the standard university programme,
- the teaching dispensed in the form of post-graduate programmes and retraining courses.

The terms and conditions of payments for the teaching or educational services referred to above are defined in the form of a written agreement between the university or higher education school and the student.

4. Pursuant to art. 70 of Polish Constitution parents have the right to choose schools other than public establishments for their children. Citizens and institutions have the right to set up kindergartens, primary schools, lower secondary schools, upper secondary schools, various types of educational institutions[1] and also higher education institutions. The conditions for establishing and operating non-public kindergartens, primary schools, lower secondary schools, upper secondary schools and institutions as well as the participation of public authorities in their financing, and also the rules for pedagogical supervision are specified in the Act *on Education System*. The conditions for establishing and operating non-public universities and higher education schools, participation of public authorities in their financing, and also supervision over compliance of their activities with the legal regulations, school's charter and the granted consent to the establishment of non-public university or higher education school and over the correct expenditure of public funds are specified in the Act *on Higher Education*.

5. Public authorities provide citizens with universal and equal access to education. To this end they establish and support systems with the aim of providing individual financial and organisational assistance to university and school students. The conditions for the assistance are laid down in the Act of 12 March 2004 *on Social Welfare* and the ESA (see paras. 89-114 hereof).

6. It is ensured that Polish citizens with national and ethnic minority background have the right to maintain and develop their own language, customs and traditions and to develop

[1] e.g. education and upbringing institutions, continuous education institutions, practical education institutions, further education and professional development centres, art institutions, youth educational centres, youth sociotherapeutic centres, special school and education centres, special educational centres for children and youth who require special organization of learning activities, methods of work and education, centres enabling children and youth with profound mental retardation and those with mental retardation and multiple disabilities to fulfill the obligations of one-year pre-school preparation, school education and learning as well as institutions providing care and educational services to students when they are in education outside their place of residence.

their own culture as well as the right to establish their own educational or cultural institutions and also institutions seeking to protect religious identity, and to take part in the settlement of cases related to their cultural identity (art. 35 of Polish Constitution).

Furthermore, pursuant to art. 35 of Polish Constitution, parents have the right to ensure that their children receive moral and religious education in accordance with their beliefs. Religion fostered by the church or another lawful religious association can be taught at school in a manner that does not constitute an abuse of the freedom of conscience or religions practised by other people.

7. The Government Plenipotentiary for Equal Treatment (GPET) was appointed by the Regulation of the Council of Ministers of 22 April 2008. The GPET carries out the following tasks:

- implementation of the government's policy concerning equal treatment, including measures to protect against discrimination, especially discrimination on grounds of sex, race, ethnic or national background, religion or religious affiliation, political beliefs, age, disability, sexual orientation, marital or family status,
- monitoring compliance with the principle of equal treatment in legal and social terms (including assessment of legal acts) and initiating, implementing, coordinating or monitoring actions aimed at ensuring equal treatment and protecting against discrimination in all fields of social life,
- fostering, promoting and disseminating issues relating to equal treatment,
- working on issues related to equal treatment and protection against discrimination together with local government authorities and non-governmental organisations as well as other countries, international and foreign organisations and institutions,
- working on reports and summaries on the implementation of international agreements concerning equal treatment and protection against discrimination which are binding on the Republic of Poland.

The GPET carries out the tasks relating to protection against discrimination on grounds of disability together with the Government Plenipotentiary for Disabled Persons.
At the international level, the Office of the GPET maintains contact with international organisations dealing with establishing standards and monitoring the state of equal treatment and protection against discrimination, specifically with the European Union (European Parliament, European Commission, Agency for Fundamental Rights), Council of Europe (Commissioner for Human Rights, European Commission against Racism and Intolerance, Advisory Committee of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities), OSCE (Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights), United Nations.

For more information about the tasks of the Government Plenipotentiary for Equal Treatment – see paras. 126-129 and 321 hereof.

8. On 1 January 2011, the Act of 3 December 2010 *on the Implementation of certain European Union Regulations concerning Equal Treatment* entered in force. This Act specifies the areas and methods of protection against breaches of the principle of equal treatment on grounds of sex, racial, ethnic or national origin, religion or religious affiliation, belief, disability, age or sexual orientation as well as legal remedies for protection of the principle of equal treatment as well as competent authorities in that regard.
This Act prohibits encouraging or requiring unequal treatment.
This Act applies to natural and legal persons as well as organisational units which are not legal persons and are considered to have legal capacity in accordance with the Act.

The Act defines the following circumstances: direct discrimination, indirect discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment, unequal treatment, principle of equal treatment, services.
This Act applies e.g. vocational education (including further education, professional development, retraining and apprenticeships) as well as access and conditions for using teaching and higher education services.

This Act does not apply e.g. to: educational services related to different treatment on grounds of sex and different treatment in relation to the possibility of and conditions for entering and performing professional activities as well as entering and participating in vocational education, including higher education, if the different treatment is a real and crucial professional requirement for a given natural person, appropriate to achieve a legally acceptable situation allowing to treat such person differently, on grounds of the type or conditions related to the performance of a given profession.
In case of breaching the principle of equal treatment an affected person has the right to seek compensation. All and any cases related to breaching the principle of equal treatment are settled in accordance with the provisions of the Civil Code, while the proceedings related to the breach of the equal treatment principle are conducted in accordance with the Civil Procedure Code.
The proceedings are regulated by the principle of the reversed burden of proof, i.e. it is the defendant who is responsible for proving that the principle of equal treatment was not breached. In this case the claimant has only to prove on the grounds of probabilities that his/her personal interests were breached, and the defendant is required to prove that he/she did not commit discrimination (pursuant to art. 14 of the Act of 3 December 2010 *on the Implementation of certain European Union Regulations concerning Equal Treatment*).
The right to seek compensation in accordance with the Act *on the Implementation of certain European Union Regulations concerning Equal Treatment* does not deprive the person of the right to raise claims based on other regulations. The exercise of the rights vested under the principle of equal treatment can neither form the basis for unfavourable treatment nor cause any adverse effects for the person exercising such rights.
It also designates authorities competent for protection against the breach of the principle of equal treatment. The tasks related to the implementation of the principle of equal treatment have been assigned to the Human Rights Defender and the Government Plenipotentiary for Equal Treatment.

II. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION

A. Access to education

9. **<u>Students are admitted to public kindergartens and schools</u>** in accordance with the Regulation of the Minister of National Education and Sport of 20 February 2004 *on conditions and procedures for admitting students to public schools and transferring them between different types of schools*.

10. Kindergartens and pre-school units of primary schools give priority to children at the age of 6 for one-year pre-school preparation. The second highest priority is given to children of single mothers or fathers, mothers or fathers with significant or moderate disabilities or total incapacity for work and reliance on care in accordance with other regulations, and also children placed in foster families.

11. The first grade of primary school admits children who are to become 7 in a given year and have not been granted a deferment of the obligation of school education, and also children in whose case a decision was made about early commencement of primary school education. The first grade of a public primary school governed by commune authorities or another school which belongs to a system of primary schools designated by commune authorities admits:

1) ex officio – children domiciled in the catchment area of a given primary school,
2) at the request of parents/legal guardians – children domiciled outside the catchment area of a given primary school, provided that the school has adequate capacity.

12. The first grade of a public lower secondary school governed by commune authorities or another school which belongs to a system of lower secondary schools designated by commune authorities admits:

1) ex officio – children domiciled in the catchment area of a given lower secondary school who have completed primary school,
2) at the request of parents/legal guardians – children domiciled outside the catchment area of a given lower secondary school who have completed primary school, if the school has adequate capacity.

13. In the event that the number of candidates domiciled outside the catchment area of a given lower secondary school is greater than the number of places available in the school, children are admitted based on the criteria set out in the school's charter.

14. Winners of competitions organised at the provincial and higher level, the programme of which comprises the total or expanded teaching content of the curriculum for at least one school subject, are admitted to a given lower secondary school regardless of the criteria set out in the school's charter.

Upper secondary schools

15. Graduates of lower secondary school can apply for the first grade of general vocational school, profiled secondary schools, technical secondary schools and special training schools.

16. Candidates to the first grade of general vocational schools, general and profiled secondary schools and technical secondary schools are admitted based on the criteria set out in the school's charter, including e.g.:

- the number of points possible to achieve in the Polish language and three elective compulsory educational classes,
- the number of points possible to receive for other achievements referred to in the lower secondary school completion certificate (specifically in the case of a school certificate with distinction, participation in competitions organised by school superintendents at least at the provincial level, sports or artistic achievements at least at the poviat level),
- the number of points possible to achieve for the results of an examination at the end of the last lower secondary school year.

In the case of equal number of points during the selection procedure, the priority is given to:

1) orphans, children from education and care facilities as well as children placed in foster care,
2) candidates with specific and documented abilities who have been granted an individualised educational or teaching programme,

3) candidates with health problems which limit their educational options on account of their condition as certified by public psychological and pedagogical counselling service, including public specialist counselling service.

17. Winners and finalists of Polish-wide school contests and winners of competitions at the provincial and higher level with programme covering or expanding the teaching content curriculum for at least one subject, are admitted to a selected upper secondary school regardless of the admission criteria.

18. Candidates for bilingual units in lower secondary schools, general and profiled secondary schools can be required to take a test in language skills in accordance with the terms and conditions specified by the teachers' board.

19. Graduates of general vocational schools can apply for the first grade of supplementary general secondary schools and technical secondary schools.

20. Persons who have completed a secondary school can apply for admission to the first semester of a post-secondary school.

21. Candidates applying for admission to the first class or the first semester of an upper secondary school which provides vocational education should have a medical certificate issued in accordance with other regulations to confirm that there are no medical contraindications for a given vocational education.

22. Candidates to sports schools and classes and sports schools of excellence should also have:

- a very good health condition confirmed with a medical certificate issued by a specialist sports medicine physician or another authorised physician in accordance with other regulations,
- completed physical performance tests specified by the school selection and qualification committee, trainer or instructor, and in the case of candidates to sports schools of excellence – completed physical performance tests approved by Polish sports associations cooperating with a given school,
- a written consent of their parents/legal guardians.

While admitting candidates to sports schools and classes or sports schools of excellence, the opinion of a trainer or instructor in charge of sports school activities and the opinion of a physician who issued a medical certificate of health condition of a candidate should be taken into consideration.

23. Candidates who are or will be 18 years old in the calendar year when they start learning can apply to schools for adults .

24. Pupils/Adult learners can be placed in a higher class/a higher semester in terms of the curriculum content in a primary school, lower secondary school or upper secondary school based on:

- a certificate of completion of a lower class in terms of the curriculum content (a record in the learner's registration book confirming the completion of a lower semester in terms of the curriculum content) in a public school or a non-public school with public school authorization and of the same type and a copy of an official grade transcript issued by the previous school of the pupil/adult learner,
- positive results of classification examinations (organised in accordance with the conditions specified in other regulations) for:

a) pupils to be admitted to a primary school, lower secondary school or upper secondary school who fulfil the obligation of school education or the obligation of learning on a non-school basis,
b) pupils to be admitted to a higher class in terms of the curriculum content than that specified in the last school certificate of a pupil who wishes to change the type of school or a subject taught at higher level,
c) pupils/adult learner to be transferred to upper secondary school from a non-public school without public school authorization,

– class completion certificate or confirmation issued by a school abroad and the last school certificate issued in Poland based on the total number of years of the pupil's school education.

The differences in the curriculum for education activities in the class to which the pupil/adult learner is transferred are covered according to the conditions specified by the relevant teachers.

25. If in the class or the semester to which the pupil/adult learner is transferred is taught a compulsory foreign language (foreign languages) other than the foreign language (foreign languages) which the pupil/adult learner studied in the previous school (including art schools) and the timetable of education activities prevents him/her from participating such activities organised for another unit or group in the same school, the pupil/adult learner can choose to:
– study a given foreign language (foreign languages) and cover the differences in the curriculum on his/her own by the end of the school year, or
– continue learning the foreign language (foreign languages) studied in the previous school, or
– join the class with a given foreign language (foreign languages) in another school.

26. Pupils are admitted to public schools and art institutions in accordance with the Regulation of the Minister of Culture and National Heritage of 16 June 2011 *on conditions and procedures for admitting students to public schools and transferring them between different types of schools.*
Admission rules:
1) admission to the first grade of a 1st degree general musical school can be requested by candidates who will be 6 or 5 years old – in the case of an early entry to school – in a given calendar year,
2) admission to the first grade of a 2nd degree general musical school and general school of fine arts can be requested by candidates who will be not be more than 14 years old in a given calendar year,
3) admission to the first grade of a secondary school of visual arts can be requested by candidates, who will be not more than 17 years old in a given calendar year,
4) admission to the first grade of a general ballet school can be requested by candidates, who will not be more than 10 years old in a given calendar year,
5) admission to the first grade of a 1st degree musical school with a 6-year education cycle can be requested by candidates, who will be at least 5 and not more than 8 years old in a given calendar year,
6) admission to the first grade of a 1st degree musical school with a 4-year education cycle can be requested by candidates, who will be at least 8 and not more than 16 years old in a given calendar year,
7) admission to the first grade of a 2nd degree musical school can be requested by candidates, who will be at least 10 and not more than 21 years old in a given calendar year,

8) admission to the first grade of a school of dancing art can be requested by candidates, who will be at least 6 and not more than 16 years old in a given calendar year,
9) admission to the first grade of a school of circus art can be requested by candidates, who will be at least 12 and not more than 20 years old in a given calendar year,
10) admission to the first semester of a post-secondary school can be requested by candidates, who will not be more than 23 years old in a given calendar year,
11) admission to the first semester of a post-baccalaureate school for librarians and culture animators can be requested by candidates, who will not be more than 23 years old in a given calendar year,
12) admission to an art educational establishment can be requested by candidates who will be at least 5 and not more than 22 years old in a given calendar year.

Candidates or parents (legal guardians) of an underage candidate apply for admission to an art school or institution respectively. An art school, depending on the scope of the education curriculum, can request that the application be submitted together with a certificate to confirm that there are no medical contraindications for starting education for a given profession, specialty or specialisation to be issued by an appropriate specialist physician with respect to the scope of education curriculum for a given profession, specialty or specialisation.

27. Candidates to 2nd degree general musical schools, general schools of fine arts, secondary schools of visual arts, 2nd degree musical schools, post-secondary and post-baccalaureate schools have to take an entrance examination in artistic subjects or educational specialisation or specialty respectively.

Candidates to 1st degree general musical schools, general ballet schools, 1st degree musical schools, schools of dancing art, schools of circus art and art institutions have to take an aptitude test to check their musical talents and natural abilities for learning to play a specific instrument, physical or locomotive aptitude, sense of rhythm and musical sensitivity, psycho-physical conditions, locomotive aptitude and sense of rhythm, their talents and aptitude within the scope of the chosen educational specialty.

If the number of qualified candidates is greater than the number of available places, the headmaster of the art school or institution decides to admit a candidate to the art school or institution taking into account additional criteria specified in the charter of the art school or institution.

28. It is allowed that a candidate can request admission to an art school or facility to a grade higher than the first grade (semester higher than the first semester, year of study higher than the first year). Such candidate has to take a qualification examination to check if their aptitude and level of skills correspond to the programme of the relevant grade (semester, year of study) to which the candidate is to be admitted.
In justified cases, in particular when a student has changed his/her place of residence, he/she can be admitted to an art school or facility during the school year.

Curricular differences in educational activities must be covered by the student according to the conditions specified by teachers for given educational activities.

29. Public schools prepare all pupils, regardless of their sex, for the selection of a profession and further education programme in the same way.
In the case of vocational education, access to education is in principle equal for both sexes. However, certain limitations for girls (women) arise from the Regulation of the Council of Ministers of 24 August 2004 *on the list of occupations not allowed for the*

youth and conditions for their employment to perform some of the occupations listed therein which permits that young people at the age of more than 16 be employed for some types of prohibited works, if such works are included in the programme of practical vocational education. Employment for such works may not be carried out as for a permanent job, but is limited to familiarising young people with basic activities, necessary for vocational preparation. In a few cases this permission concerns only boys, which prevents underage lower secondary school female graduates from starting education in such professions as: blacksmith, moulding pattern maker, operator of moulding machines and equipment, operator of metallurgical machines and equipment, operator of plastic treatment machines and equipment, operator of ceramic industry machines, underground coal miner or open-pit miner, which is justified by the particular risk associated with the jobs referred to above in relation to women's health conditions.

30. The classification of professions included in vocational education, similarly as the classification of professions and specialties for the labour market creates an apparent inequality between women and men by the way the names of such professions are written. To simplify the classification traditional masculine names were used, while feminine names are only used for some profession which are mostly associated with women. This should not affect the classification of persons for specific professions.
At the same time, in 2008, the Minister of National Education provided the director of the Central Examination Commission with a recommendation that the name of profession should be written on a diploma confirming professional qualification of a specific person in gender corresponding to this person's sex.

Foreign nationals

31. Pursuant to art. 70 para. 1 of Polish Constitution each and every person has the right to education. The wording "each and every" means not only Polish citizens, but also foreign nationals residing in the Republic of Poland. The right to education for foreign nationals is guaranteed not only at the level of national regulations, but also at the level of international law, e.g. in accordance with art. 28 of the *Convention on the Right of the Child* ratified, also by Poland.
The right of foreign nationals to participate in the Polish education system is detailed in the Act *on Education System*.

32. As a result of the amendments to the Act *on Education System*, as of 1 January 2010 the amendments to art. 94a concerning education of students who are non-Polish citizens have become effective, i.e.:

- the fees for education of students subject to the obligation of learning who are non-Polish citizens at the level of upper secondary schools,
- educational services provided by public post-secondary schools, public art schools, public establishments for teacher training and public institutions can also be used, on the conditions applicable to Polish citizens, by:
  - persons who are seeking to be granted the status of a refugee and their family members,
  - persons granted the status of a refugee, subsidiary protection or consent to tolerated stay and their family members,
  - EU/EFTA citizens with the right to reside in Poland,
  - persons of Polish origin as defined in the repatriation regulations,
  - holders of a valid Pole's Card,
  - holders of settlement permit,
  - persons granted temporary protection,

- persons granted the status of a long-term EC status,
- holders of the right to education according to certain international agreements,
- holders of a fixed-period residence permit in connection with family reunification, status of a long-term resident in another EU country or when a parent of the child has granted such status,

– non-Polish citizens subject to the obligation of school education or the obligation of learning who do not speak Polish or speak Polish at a level insufficient for participation in education have the right to additional Polish language courses on a non-payable basis,
– non-Polish citizens subject to the obligation of school education or the obligation of learning have the right to assistance provided by a person who can speak the language of their country of origin, employed as a teacher by the headmaster of the school (this assistance is provided for a period of 12 months at maximum),
– all students subject to the obligation of school education or the obligation of learning who arrive in Poland from a foreign education system can use additional remedial courses with respect to subjects organised by the school governing body, however, for a period of 12 months at maximum,
– foreign diplomatic agencies or consulates or cultural and educational associations of a given nationality can organise courses in the language and culture of the country of origin for foreign nationals subject to the obligation of school education.

33. Organisational and legal conditions for children of foreign nationals and Polish citizens returning from abroad are regulated by the Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 1 April 2010 *on admission of non-Polish citizens to public kindergartens, schools, teacher training centres and establishments as well as organisation of additional Polish language and remedial classes as well as classes focused on the language and culture of the country of origin*, signed in consultation with the Minister of Culture and National Heritage (it replaced the Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 4 October 2001 *on admission of non-Polish citizens to public kindergartens, schools, teacher training centres and establishments*).

The regulation referred to above specifies:

a) conditions and procedures for admitting non-Polish citizens to public kindergartens, schools, including art schools, teacher training establishments and institutions;

   The most important amendments to the regulation substantially facilitate the procedure of admitting foreign nationals to schools, including e.g.:
   – derogation from the requirement of certificate legalisation and authentication,
   – derogation from the requirement of entrance examinations, knowledge or aptitude tests (or other requirements specified in other regulations) when qualifying for an appropriate class or to an appropriate semester,
   – a possibility of admitting to schools foreign nationals who have no school certificates nor any other documents to confirm completion of a school or another stage of education abroad, based on a written statement about the number of years of the foreign national's school education provided by his/her parent or legal guardian or a foreign national who is of age – admission and qualification to an appropriate class or to an appropriate semester is based on an interview,
   – organising interviews in the native language of the foreign national.

b) the amount of fees for education in public post-secondary schools, upper secondary schools for adults, art schools, teacher training establishments and institutions as well as the method of payment thereof;

Foreign nationals are required to pay a fee of EUR 1 500-4 500 for each year of education depending on the type of school, provided that the fee for the first year of education is increased by EUR 200. If the foreign national is in difficult financial situation, at the request of his/her parent/legal guardian or a foreign national who is of age, the school governing body, teacher training establishment or institution can release the foreign national, in whole or in part, from the payment referred to above.

c) way of organising of additional Polish language education, additional remedial classes with respect to the relevant school subjects and education in the language and culture of the country of origin (applies to persons subject to the obligation of school education or the obligation of learning).
The obligation to ensure the possibility of additional classes lies with the local government unit (school governing body) according to the needs of students attending school.

The number of additional Polish language classes should be such as to make it possible for the student to learn the Polish language to such an extent as to be able to participate in compulsory educational school activities.
Additional education in the Polish language is organised on an individual basis or in groups with at least 2 lesson periods per week. The weekly timetable and the number of additional lesson periods for the Polish language are agreed in consultation with the school governing body, headmaster of the school in which the classes are organised.

The school governing body organises additional remedial classes for a given school subject if the teacher in charge of the educational activities for the school subject finds it necessary that the student should cover the differences in the curriculum. The additional remedial classes for a given subject are organised on an individual basis or in groups, in the form of additional lessons for the school subject, as one lesson period per week.
The weekly timetable of additional remedial classes is agreed with the school governing body, headmaster of the school in which the classes are organised.

The total number of additional lesson periods cannot be greater than 5 lesson periods per week for one student, including 2 lesson periods for the Polish language.

The amount of general subsidies for education for local government units for a given year includes the funds allocated for financial support for education of students who are not Polish citizens.

The regulation also refers to the reduction of the number of foreign nationals (subject to the obligation of school education) in a group for which a foreign diplomatic agency or a cultural and educational association of a given nationality organises courses in the language and culture of the country of origin. In a primary and lower secondary school – at least 7 foreign nationals (before 2010 – at least 15 foreign nationals), while in an art school – at least 14 foreign nationals. The total number of lesson periods for the courses in the language and culture of the country of origin of foreign nationals cannot be greater than 5 lesson periods per week. The school headmaster specifies the weekdays and times when the lesson periods for the courses in the language and culture of the country of origin can take place.

d) the amount of scholarship for non-Polish citizens who use educational activities as holders of a scholarship granted by the minister for education, and the circumstances in which the amount of scholarship can be reduced or suspended;

A scholarship can be granted to a foreign national on a monthly basis in the amount equal to the amount of the scholarship of the Prime Minister. The scholarship can be suspended if the foreign national provides false information as the basis for the granting of the scholarship, if he/she fails to be promoted to a higher class or to a higher semester in terms of the curriculum content, or resides for more than a month outside of Poland at the time other than summer holidays.

34. As part of social assistance the Office for Foreigners provides Polish language courses for children and adults as well as the essential materials necessary to study this language, didactic aids for children attending public institutions, primary schools, lower secondary schools or upper secondary schools.
In each of these establishments there is an employee providing Polish language teaching services for children and adults.

The number of refugee children from centres for foreign nationals who have attended schools as from the 2001/2002 school year – 10% of the total number of students, and since the 2007/2008 school year – 97% on average.

The Roma population

35. The Roma population is an ethnic minority which includes 16 000 Polish citizens as declared during the National Census of Population and Housing in 2011, where 9 000 people declared the Roma nationality to be their only one.
The majority of problems of the Roma community in Poland (unemployment, poverty, social exclusion) is related to a very low level of education (due to e.g. frequent illiteracy), and thus lack of vocational qualifications which generates bad economic situation of the Roma families.

Pursuant to the Act of 6 January 2005 *on National Minorities and on Regional Language* and other internal legislative acts (e.g. the Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 14 November 2007 *on conditions and methods for public kindergartens, schools and establishments to carry out task to enable fostering a sense of national, ethnic and linguistic identity of students belonging to national and ethnic minorities or communities using regional language*, Regulations of the Minister of National Education *on the distribution*, in a given year, *of the general education subsidies for local government units*) the Roma community is provided with full legal protection and state assistance.

36. The major component of this assistance is the „Programme for the Roma population in Poland" adopted by the resolution of the Council of Ministers of 19 August 2003. The Programme is to be implemented in 2004-2013 with a possibility of extending over the subsequent years. The Programme is to function as a tool for ensuring equal opportunities for members of the Roma minority whose bad economic and social situation is an effect of century-long marginalisation of this group. The Programme is coordinated by the Minister of Administration and Digitization (Minister of Interior and Administration until 17 December 2011). The implementation of the tasks under the Programme is supervised by the Minister of Administration and Digitization, province governors (in relation to the tasks implemented in the respective provinces) and the Minister of National Education (to the extent that it is related to education). The Programme is implemented throughout Poland, and its major participants include first of all local government units and non-governmental organisations, including Roma organisations. The Programme is financed from the budget funds in the amount of PLN 10 million per year.

37. The actions undertaken under the „Programme for the Roma population in Poland" are of a complex character and include tasks related to education, improvement of the living and social situation, health, prevention of unemployment, safety, culture and dissemination of knowledge about the Roma population and civil education of the Roma.

Educational tasks are considered a priority − they are also the most successful ones. The number of Roma children who fulfil the obligation of school education increased – in 2006-2010, on average 82-86% of children subject to the obligation of school education attended school (in some provinces all the children subject to this obligation attend school), school turnout improved (about 75% in 2010) and so did the results of teaching Roma students (grade point average increased on average by 0.2-0.3 points in 2006-2010). These achievements are the effects of e.g. the effort of Roma assistants for Roma education employed as part of the Programme ("mediators" according to international terminology) and support teachers for Roma education. In the reporting period there were about 100 assistants for Roma education and a similar number of support teachers throughout Poland. The task of the assistants is to provide Roma children and young people with complex help with both school and non-school activities. Support teachers are especially focused on Roma children, treating them at an early stage of education as foreign-language and bicultural children. Their task is to supervise on an on-going basis their progress in education, provide remedial classes, help in homework, and remain in touch with their families on a permanent basis.

38. An important group of tasks in the field of education consists of educational programmes for Roma parents and children, including psychological and pedagogical counselling as well as non-school and remedial classes. Equal educational opportunities for Roma children and young people are mostly provided by way of corrective and compensatory as well as logopaedic classes. The implemented educational measures also include financial support for the organisation of summer, winter and scouting camps, touristic trips and sightseeing tours, as well as sports and leisure activities.

39. Also financial assistance is provided in addition to the educational tasks. It includes mostly financial support to enable Roma children to participate on a regular basis in pre-school education (e.g. providing pupils who particularly need financial assistance with school textbooks, materials, didactic aids, and also student accident insurance).

40. An important element of the tasks undertaken with a view to integrating the Roma minority and preventing social exclusion of this group are community daily care centres. These daily care centres are designed for both Roma children and young people as well as for non-Roma young people and offer a wide variety of additional cultural, musical, sports and language activities.

41. Furthermore, when implementing the educational tasks under the Programme the Minister of Interior and Administration has entrusted Roma non-governmental organisations with the implementation of a scholarship system for outstandingly talented Roma students at universities and schools. In 2004-2010, support in the form of a scholarship was granted to more than 150 outstandingly talented university students and about 60 school students of Roma origin. Since 2011 also additional scholarships have been granted to Roma students at upper secondary schools.

42. The scope of the Programme includes also infrastructural projects related to Roma housing estates and households and financial projects to cover the costs of services of community nurses and preventive measures. Unemployed members of the Roma

population participate in courses aimed at improving their qualifications and new workplaces are created for them, also as part of the subsidised employment projects.

43. The issues related to the Roma population have also been taken into account in the so-called „Roma component" of the Human Capital Operational Programme (Sub action 1.3.1 Projects for the Roma community − competition projects). The implementation of this component complements the Programme for the Roma community in Poland and therefore includes projects related to education, employment, social integration, health, activation of the Roma population in the area of civil life and knowledge about the Roma community. These projects take into account the "gender" perspective. The funds allocated to the "Roma component" amount to PLN 12 million per year.

44. In contrast to other national and ethnic minorities the Roma population in Poland do not take advantage of the legally guaranteed possibility of learning the native language of national minority. This is related to their cultural system which forbids teaching their language outside their community.

45. The Polish education system has no separate system for Roma students. Although a several dozen of so-called "Roma classes" were created by the end of the 1980s on the initiative of a national Roma priest, however, their objective was to enable older children and young people who had never attended school, to complete primary school. As of 2000, the MI and the MNE have been taking efforts to eliminate these classes, however, as Roma parents simply protested, it was agreed that no students would be recruited to those classes, thus causing their natural elimination. As at 31 December 2011, there are no so-called "Roma classes" in Polish schools.

Students with special educational needs

46. Pursuant to the Act *on Education System* students with special educational needs can attend all types of kindergartens and regular schools – generally accessible schools, integrated schools or special schools, and also schools organised at education system institutions.

Special educational needs are very broadly defined. They mean both particular talents of a child which should be developed in school education as well as chronic disease, disabilities, adaptation difficulties related to the return from abroad or problems of an educational character. The catalogue of needs remains open as it is not possible to enumerate all situations in which a child should be provided with special assistance at school.

47. The Polish education system provides each and every student with special educational needs with developmental support as well as psychological and pedagogical assistance according to his/her developmental and educational needs.
These objectives are fulfilled in relation to children and youth with disabilities e.g. by:

- adapting the teaching content, methods and organisation to psychophysical abilities of students,
- providing psychological and pedagogical assistance and special forms of didactic work,
- providing a possibility of individual education programmes, teaching forms and programmes as well as revalidation activities.

Education of students with disabilities, socially maladjusted and at risk of social maladjustment is organised based on a decision about the need for special education issued by an evaluation board of a public psychological and pedagogical counselling service, including specialist counselling institutions.

48. The regulations unequivocally set out the need for preparation of an individual developmental programme for a child with special educational needs (starting from pre-school education and at all stages of education) which would include educational services, different forms of education, together with alternative options of fulfilling the obligation of school education and the obligation of learning, didactic and educational recommendations, specialist activities as well as suggestions concerning support for the educational and care-giving role of families. An individual approach to students with different types of dysfunctions who need support in the development of their talents and interests or in overcoming difficulties contributes to the greater effectiveness of their education and provides them with psychological and pedagogical assistance according to their needs and as close as possible to their place of education – in kindergartens, schools or education system institutions.

49. From the moment of birth to the commencement of school education children can be provided with early developmental support aimed at stimulating psychomotor and social development of the child − as soon as any disabilities are detected.

Teachers in kindergartens and pre-school units provide pedagogical observation, included in the core curriculum, which is concluded with an analysis and evaluation of a child's readiness to start school education which is called a pre-school diagnosis. Any irregularities in the psychomotor as well as social and emotional development of a child can be detected at an early stage and should be identified by teachers as soon as in a kindergarten. If a pre-school teacher observes a child to have learning difficulties or special talents, the child should be provided with psychological and pedagogical assistance. Information about the functioning of a child in various contexts should be included in the evaluation of the child to start school education. It is then a valuable source of information and guidelines for both parents and teachers at a primary school which the child will attend.

50. Monitoring carried out by teachers and specialist at the first stage of education, in classes 1-3 of primary school, is aimed at detecting in students any risks of specific learning difficulties. As soon as teachers and specialists detect any risk of dyslexia, the relevant students should be provided with assistance during compulsory educational activities or in the form of additional, e.g. corrective and compensatory activities. In the event of persistent and long-term difficulties in learning to read and write, which cannot be eliminated despite additional effort on the part of the student to overcome such problems, and the results are incommensurate with the capacity and effort of the student, this should be an indication that an in-depth diagnosis in a psychological and pedagogical counselling service is necessary at the 2nd stage of education, i.e. in classes 4-6.

51. Educational and vocational counselling plays an important role in lower and upper secondary schools. Both students and his/her parents are provided with support in the form of information about educational services offered by upper secondary schools, professions in demand on the labour market and professions creating the risk of unemployment. Teachers help their students to determine his/her interests and choose the best school or career path, and also to develop competences useful for making decisions concerning further education and profession, which is of particular importance in the case of students with disabilities.

52. Students with special educational needs can participate in education in any type of school (generally accessible schools, integrated schools or special schools). The applicable legal solutions provide uniform conditions for education of students with

disabilities, socially maladjusted and those at risk of social maladjustment, regardless of their place of education. Their education is organised based on an individual therapeutic and educational programme prepared by teachers and specialists who hold classes for them.

53. Pursuant to legal regulations it is possible to hire additional teachers with qualifications in the area of special pedagogy in order to co-organise special education in integration kindergartens and schools and in integration units in mainstream kindergartens and schools (on a compulsory basis), and also in mainstream kindergartens and schools (with the consent of the kindergartens/schools governing bodies), as well as assistants of teachers.

54. Students with disabilities take external examinations organised at the end of education in a given type of school (a test in the last year at primary school, examination in the last year at lower secondary school, baccalaureate examination and examination to test professional competence/examination to test professional qualifications) which are adapted in terms of the conditions and form of the examination to their disabilities.

Adaptation of the conditions governing the examinations referred to above to the type of disability as well as individual developmental and educational needs and psychophysical capacity of students or school graduates involves in particular:

- minimising limitations arising from the disability with the help of appropriate specialist equipment and didactic measures,
- providing appropriately longer time to complete the examination or test,
- ensuring the presence of a specialist for a given disability during the examination or test, if necessary to establish appropriate contact with the student or school graduate, or to have help in operating specialist equipment and didactic aids.

55. An important aspect of education, in the context of early identification of children's special educational needs, is pre-school education. Pre-school education creates favourable conditions for stimulating psychomotor and social development and for teaching children with different physical and intellectual capacity.

As of the school year 2011/2012 5-year-old children have to participate in one-year pre-school preparation in a nursery school, pre-school unit at a primary school or another form of pre-school education. (For more information – see paras. 79-81, 155-156 hereof).

56. To ensure greater dissemination of pre-school education, the Minister of National Education issued the Regulation *on types of other forms of pre-school education, conditions for their establishment and organisation as well as their methods of operation*. Pursuant to this Regulation pre-school facilities and pre-school education complexes are established in addition to kindergartens.

Both pre-school facilities and pre-school education complexes are required to fulfil the entire core curriculum and teachers hired in other forms of pre-school education must have the same qualifications as pre-school teachers. The daily number of classes in such facilities or complexes, as defined by the governing body, cannot be less than the number of lesson periods established for the pre-school education core curriculum. At the same time it is also possible that another form of pre-school education provides "full-time childcare". The daily number of pre-school education classes in such facilities or complexes has to correspond to children's abilities and parents' needs.

57. Communes, as kindergarten governing bodies, are provided with financial support (as part of education subsidies) which allows them to provide children with disabilities with

pre-school education and specialist assistance as close as possible to their place of residence. Thus, it is possible to prevent delayed fulfilment of their obligation of school education. However, if necessary, to ensure better preparation to school education and better effects of education in the future, it is possible for children with disabilities up to the age of 10 (as of 1 September 2012 – up to the age of 8) to participate in pre-school education.

58. The funds allocated to education of students with disabilities are taken into consideration in the amount of the general education subsidies for local government units for a given year and calculated for each local government unit taking into account the number of issued decisions about the need for special education or educational and revalidation activities.

59. From the amount of the general education subsidies a dedicated reserve is extracted, pursuant to art. 28 para. 2 of the Act of 13 November 2003 *on Income of Local Government Units.* According to the criteria for the distribution of this reserve a local government unit in charge of an integrated or special kindergarten, school or education system institution can apply for financial support for refurbishment works (so-called running works) to eliminate access barriers present in kindergarten and school buildings and education system institutions and in their closest area which make it impossible or more difficult for people with disabilities to access and move around the buildings due to technical, structural or use conditions in them.

60. Pursuant to art. 71d of the ESA the minister for education and upbringing provides financial support from the allocated portion of the state budget for school textbooks and additional book aids for special education of students who are blind or deaf and students with mental retardation or visual impairment.

At the request of the Ministry of National Education and from its budget school textbooks and book aids are adapted for blind students (in Braille) and those with visual impairment (large print) and adaptations recommended by schools are printed within the available means and capabilities. Electronic versions of textbooks in Braille are made available to schools and institutions on the website of the Ministry of National Education, in the IT system developed for this purpose, which enables headmasters of schools and institutions to download and print them, in whole or in part, on an on-going basis and according to the individual educational needs of students. The textbooks produced in large print, designed for students with visual impairment, are provided to schools and facilities in hard copy version, according to the requisition order submitted to the Ministry of National Education.
Thus, it is possible to satisfy the needs of students in that regard, irrespective of the type of their school − public, integrated or special school.

For students with mental retardation and for deaf students the Ministry of National Education provides additional funds for textbooks designed specifically for special education. The rules for ordering such textbooks and providing them to schools have been agreed with the Ministry of National Education. Educational publishing houses, which distribute these textbooks, carry out orders received from schools based on completed order forms, approved by the competent regional educational inspectorate. Every order is delivered, if it complies with the criteria specified in the requisition form.

Additionally, for students with hearing or visual impairment, mild mental retardation, as part of the dedicated reserve – Implementation of the National Scholarship Programme, including school starter kit, financial support is provided for purchasing selected textbooks used in a given school for general education to such an extent as to address

needs of these students. As a result every student with hearing or visual impairment or mild mental retardation can receive financial support for a purchase of textbooks, without the need to comply with the income criterion. The financial support provided for these students in the form of a school starter kit enables purchasing textbooks in accordance with recommendations of the teacher for the particular subject, which significantly increases educational opportunities of such students as it does not restrict the teacher's choice of textbooks to those prepared especially for students with disabilities, and students can take advantage of a wide variety of the textbooks available on the publishing market.

61. Each year the Ministry of National Education allocates funds to the implementation of the task called "Providing blind and visually impaired students with magazines designed for children and young people in Braille and large print". The objective of actions undertaken as part of the task is to:

- provide equal educational opportunities for blind and visually impaired students,
- develop talents and interests of blind and visually impaired students based on the didactic content of magazines designed for children and youth,
- support harmonious development of blind and visually impaired students,
- disseminate popular science magazines designed for children and youth among blind and visually impaired students,
- popularise reading among blind and visually impaired students.

62. The Polish education system includes an aid regime for talented students. This system is of a motivational character. It is implemented in the form of a scholarship of Prime Minister and scholarship of the minister for education, scholarship of the minister for culture and national heritage protection, scholarship for school performance or sports achievements. For more information – see paras. 93-103 hereof.

Furthermore, pursuant to the Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 17 November 2010 *on rules for providing and organising psychological and pedagogical assistance in public kindergartens, schools and establishments,* psychological and pedagogical assistance to students in kindergartens, schools and educational facilities involves recognising and meeting individual developmental and educational needs of students as well as recognising individual psychophysical abilities of students, related to e.g. particular talents, and is provided in the form of talent development activities. These activities are organised for outstandingly talented students and conducted with the use of active working methods. The maximum number of activity group participants is 8. Talent development activities are conducted by teachers and specialists with qualifications corresponding to the type of activities.
Teachers, tutors for educational activities and specialists in kindergartens, schools and educational facilities carry out pedagogical actions aimed at recognising individual developmental and educational needs as well as psychophysical abilities of students, including outstandingly talented students, recognising their interests and talents, including outstandingly talented students, and planning support related to the development of students' interests and talents.

<u>Projects co-financed from the EU funds</u>

63. In 2009, a system project titled „Improvement of the core curriculum for pre-school education and general education in different types of schools in terms of its compliance with knowledge-based economy" was implemented, which covered e.g. preparation of the draft version of the core curriculum for special education.

64. As of 2009, a number of projects have been implemented as part of the competition "Development and pilot implementation of innovative teaching programmes for students with special educational needs using modern diagnostic and therapeutic methods for students with disabilities". The target group as part of the competition was comprised of schools and educational facilities providing educational services for students with special educational needs. Their objective is the development and pilot implementation of innovative teaching programmes for students with special educational needs using modern diagnostic and therapeutic methods for students with disabilities. Until the end of 2011 a total of 58 teaching programmes were developed, including 12 related to entrepreneurship, mathematics and natural sciences as well as technical sciences. The programmes have been implemented in 257 schools and educational facilities. A total of 834 teachers were prepared for the implementation of these programmes, and 5 819 students were provided with support.

65. In 2010-2011, a system project titled „Improving the effectiveness of education for students with special educational needs" aimed at:

- preparing management and pedagogical staff in schools and education system facilities, pedagogical supervisor, representatives of local government units and other founding bodies of schools and education system facilities to ensure e.g. students with disabilities with support and individualised assistance in accordance with the objectives of the new legislation,
- supporting the groups referred to above in correct implementation of changes, in particular by informing, training and providing materials to facilitate the understanding of the essence of the changes and their practical application.

As part of the project referred to above more than 52 000 teachers throughout Poland were provided with trainings related to new models of working with children with special educational needs, including the implementation by schools of tasks related to the organisation and providing psychological and pedagogical assistance.
Also information and training meetings were conducted for the managing and pedagogical staff of schools and facilities, pedagogical supervisors and school governing bodies so that the cooperation of all entities providing children with individualised assistance and support is as effective as possible.

Also an information and communication platform was launched as part of the project to provide information about recommended changes, available for all beneficiaries of the education system. Headmasters and teachers could download from the platform and the website of the Ministry of National Education training materials with guidelines on how to work with children with special educational needs, including children with different types of disabilities. Training materials were also provided to kindergartens and schools.

66. As of 2010, a project titled „Individualisation of the education process for students in grades 1-3" has been implemented at the regional level with the aim of increasing the effectiveness of working with children at the first educational stage. The project provides financial means for all primary schools in Poland. The objective of the project is to individualise the educational process for students of grades 1-3 of primary schools, in particular in the context of the implementation of a new core curriculum for general education.
The project enables:

- providing each and every child at the 1st stage of education with educational and preventive services in accordance with his/her individual needs as well as educational and developmental abilities,

- increasing the extent and scope of application of activating teaching methods in schools,
- providing greater availability and quality of psychological and pedagogical support and assistance provided to children, in particular children with special educational needs,
- ensuring greater quality of support provided by schools to parents of children in education at the 1st stage of education and intensifying cooperation and parents' involvement in the school's activities.

Furthermore, schools can provide additional equipment for their didactic resources in the form of specialist aids (e.g. dedicated software, packages for diagnosing and correcting developmental dysfunctions and dissonances, such as speech defects, dyslexia, posture defects, and coordination disorders).

67. As of 1 February 2010, a system project titled "Development and implementation of a complex system for working with talented students".

The project covers:

- Examination of the existing support system for talented students, i.e. a complex analysis of system-wide solutions for working with talented students, including in particular good practices applied both in Poland and abroad.
- Development of objectives for the support system for talented students, i.e. preparation of suggested legislative amendments, in particular of an organisational and financial character. As part of this action four pilot school contests were organised with the aim of improving the organisation of the other contests supported financially by the Ministry of National Education.
- Facilitation of the implementation of a system for working with talented students, i.e. dissemination of good practices for supporting outstandingly talented students, publication of handbooks for students and people involved in the process of talent development in children and young people and organisation of meetings about how to work with talented students.
- Promotional and information activities, i.e. conferences, development of the website about talent development, disseminating promotional and information materials about the project.

The actions undertaken as part of the project referred to above resulted in e.g. legislative changes related to talented students, introduced into the Polish education system. As part of the project it is also planned to prepare a group of people involved in the process of development of talents in children and young people (e.g. talent teachers-leaders from the Talent Hunter Schools and Talent Hunting Places, teachers-consultants from professional development centres for teachers who deal with the issues related to education of talented students, and also representatives of local government units, universities and higher education schools tackling the issues related to education of talented students as well as regional and trans regional programmes dedicated to talented students) to conduct activities for building system-wide solutions for this group of students in schools and facilities. These people will be tasked with e.g. inspiring exchange of experiences and good didactic and organisational practices among schools and facilities with the aim of appropriate identification of students' talents and creation of suitable conditions for their development. There are also actions under implementation with a view to drawing the attention of students' teachers and parents to the special educational needs of outstandingly talented children. The project will be implemented in cooperation with e.g. teachers, headmasters of schools and education system facilities, parents, representatives of school governing bodies, non-governmental

organisations dealing with the issues related to education of talented children, psychological and pedagogical counselling services, professional development centres for teachers, school superintendents. The project will be continued to 31 December 2014.

B. Implementation of the Programme „Education for All" (EFA)

Care and education at the infantile stage

68. The priority task of the social policy is to provide system-wide support for families, especially in the first years of childcare, including actions related to health, aimed at meeting social and educational needs, and also to build a system to support in combining parenthood and professional aspects of life.

69. The rules for organising and functioning of childcare for children aged up to 3 years old, conditions for the services provided, qualifications of care-givers, rules for financing of childcare services as well as supervision over the conditions and quality of childcare services are set out in the Act of 4 February 2011 *on Care of Children up to the Age of 3.* This regulation is aimed at contributing to conditions favourable to the development of different forms of care of small children and improvement of functioning standards of facilities providing care-giving services in relation to children up to the age of 3, and support for parents, also in the process of raising children.

70. Pursuant to the Act referred to above care-giving services for children up to the age of 3 can be organised as a nursery or children's club, and also provided by a daily care-giver or nanny. Care-giving services include educational and care functions.
Care-giving services in nurseries are designed for children above the age of 20 weeks.
Care-giving services in children's clubs are designed for children above the age of 1 year.
Nurseries and children's clubs can be established and run by commune authorities, natural or legal persons and organisational units without legal capacity.
Care-giving services in a nursery or children's club can be provided by qualified nurses, midwives, baby-carers, and teachers for pre-school and early school education or education and care pedagogues.
Care-giving services in a nursery or children's club can also be provided by persons who completed at least secondary education and has at least two-years' experience in working with children at the age of up to 3 years old or completed a 280-hour training as a care-giver in a nursery or children's club prior to their employment.
A care-giver conducting activities in a nursery or children's club cooperates with parents of the children participating in the activities, especially by way of consultations and providing childcare advice to parents.
Parents of children attending a children's club can participate in the activities organised for children in the club.

71. Care-giving services in the form of a nursery school or children's club belong to regulated activities as defined in the Act of 2 July 2004 *on Freedom of Economic Activity* and must be entered into the register of nurseries and children's clubs. The register is kept by a commune head, mayor or president of the town/city competent with respect to the location of the nursery or children's club. Before the nursery or children's club is entered into the register, a commune head, mayor or president of the town/city visits the premises to determine if the provided conditions for education and care of children comply with safety and hygiene requirements.

72. Pursuant to the Act of 4 February 2011 *on Care of Children up to the Age of 3*, a daily care-giver is a natural person hired by the commune authorities based on a services agreement. The commune head, mayor or president of the town/city keeps a list of daily care-givers with whom they entered into an agreement.
A daily care-giver takes care of children above the age of 20 weeks.
A daily care-giver can take care of a group composed of five children at maximum, and if there is a child under the age of 1 year in the group, a child with disabilities or a child who requires special care, of three children at maximum.
A daily care-giver can use services provided by volunteers when providing care-giving services.
A daily care-giver conducting activities for children in his/her care cooperates with their parents, especially by their help and assistance in taking care of children during the activities as well as organising consultations and giving advice to parents on working with children.

73. Pursuant to the Act referred to above a nanny is a natural person who provides childcare services based on a services agreement. An activating agreement is concluded in written form between a nanny and parents or a single parent. A nanny takes care of children above the age of 20 weeks.

74. The commune head, mayor or president of the town/city competent with respect to the location of a nursery or children's club or to the place where childcare services are provided by a daily care-giver supervises the nursery, children's club and daily care-giver in terms of the conditions and quality of the care-giving services.

75. Entities providing care-giving services for children up to the age of 3 are required to:
- support the individual development of children by providing care and safety and guaranteeing home-like conditions, enabling them to learn the basics of personal hygiene, preparing them for kindergarten and providing care-giving services according to their needs,
- develop the child's personality by educating him/her in the closest community circle and expanding it to include contacts with the surrounding environment,
- work together with the family, providing support in education and childcare and achieving such level of psychophysical development as necessary for the transfer to a kindergarten,
- to conduct methodical and didactic activities, taking into account the need to ensure appropriate psychomotor development corresponding to the age of the child.

Support for children and their families in the local community

76. As of 2005, by way of a pilot programme „Daily Care Centre, Work and Training – sociotherapy in rural environment", the Minister of Labour and Social Policy has supported initiatives of commune governments and non-governmental organisations oriented towards establishing sociotherapeutic daily care centres (clubs). These daily care centres are considered a place to organise activities for children and young people from dysfunctional families, but also a place to organise various forms of subsidised employment (e.g. training courses, socially useful works and public works). In 2006, the initiative was included in the task and budget plan of the Minister of Labour and Social Policy in the category of social assistance and support. As of 2008 the programme has been implemented under the name „Daily Care Centre, Work and Training – sociotherapy in commune environment".

In 2006-2010, as part of the Programme, the Minister of Labour and Social Policy each year granted subsidies, on a competition basis, for establishing sociotherapeutic daily care centres or purchasing additional equipment for the existing ones. In 2006, granted subsidies were used for opening 38 daily care centres with about 1 440 participants (children and youth), in 2007 – 115 daily care centres with about 3 450 participants (children and youth), in 2008 – 50 daily care centres were opened and 70 daily care centres received financial support, about 3 600 children and youth participated in the activities, in 2009 – 51 daily care centres and about 1825 participants (children and youth), in 2010 – 63 daily care centres and about 1750 participants (children and youth). Each year the task budget of the Minister of Labour and Social Policy allocated the amount of PLN 800 000 for implementation of the tasks referred to above as part of social assistance and support.

77. In 2010, a summary of the effectiveness of the programme was drawn up as the basis for its continuation. Strengths of the programme include e.g.:

- inspiring local partnership cooperation between social assistance institutions and employment services in social and occupational activation of unemployed persons who use social welfare benefits,
- contributing to the creation within the limits of communes, especially rural communes, establishments providing sociotherapeutic activities for children and youth which constitute measurable educational support for a number of families and also help to create new jobs,
- contributing to the dissemination of various forms of social integration and education, especially in dysfunctional families.

At the same time it was indicated that some adjustments are called for, e.g.:

- it is necessary to provide a possibility of opening organisational forms of children support other than sociotherapeutic daily care centres within the limits of communes such as: educational groups, interest groups, community daily care centres, youth clubs, and at the same time organise also sociotherapeutic activities,
- include in the programme educational and integration actions (e.g. organisation of school trips, so-called "green schools"), with the participation of parents and other family members, which bring positive effects in the context of a pro-family social policy pursued in the local community.

78. With regard to the above the Minister of Labour and Social Policy decided to make substantive adjustments to the Programme which in 2011-2015 was functioning under the name *Programme "Daily Care Centre – Children – Work" for supporting children and families in the commune* in 2011-2015. The objective of the programme is to inspire commune governments and non-governmental organisations to create, rebuild and maintain activities of community daily support centres for children and young people, and in particular:

- educational groups and interest groups for children and youth (organising sociotherapeutic activities),
- community daily care centres (with sociotherapeutic programmes or activities related to sociotherapy) and sociotherapeutic daily care centres,
- youth clubs (with sociotherapeutic activities or programmes).

Activities for children and youth are organised taking into account:

- diagnosis of individual needs of children and youth and their families based on information from social workers in social support centres,

- application of sociotherapy in accordance with the existing needs which are determined based on plans of support activities or individual educational and therapeutic programmes respectively, developed for every child in kindergarten, school or education system facility, related e.g. to organising groups for working with children with educational, developmental or emotional problems, organising corrective and compensatory activities as well as interpersonal activities related to functioning in a group, difficulties in establishing relations with other people, and also organising developmental activities to stimulate interests and motivate creative attitude,
- cooperation between the staff of daily care centres, clubs or educational groups with school pedagogues – specialists from specialist counselling service, social workers from social support centres and the police, medical centres within the limits of a given commune,
- accessibility of services for children and young people at times and on days corresponding to the recognised needs, and also the possibility of spending non-school free time, i.e. during summer holidays, winter holidays and other non-working days,
- possibility of guaranteeing access to school materials (books for required reading, textbooks), computer equipment (under supervision of the class tutor), and also additional meals during activities.

In 2011, as part of the competition opened under the Programme referred to above, 20 daily care centres providing activities of a sociotherapeutic character received subsidies in the amount of PLN 40 000 each. These daily care centres provided specialist support for about 900 children and youth. The tasks were carried out in 20 communes in 11 provinces. The general amount of subsidy was PLN 800 000 allocated from the funds of the Minister of Labour and Social Policy assigned for this purpose in 2011 in the task budget (part 44 – social security).

Monitoring of the fulfilment of the obligation of one-year pre-school preparation

79. Pursuant to art. 14 par. 3 of the ESA a child at the age of 5 is required to complete pre-school preparation in a kindergarten, pre-school unit at a primary school or another pre-primary institution.

80. Pursuant to art. 14b par. 1 of the ESA, parents of a child subject to the obligation of one-year pre-school preparation are required to:
- carry out any acts necessary to register the child in a kindergarten, pre-school unit at a primary school or another pre-primary institution,
- ensure that the child attends school classes on a regular basis,
- inform, by 30 September each year, the headmaster of a primary school or a lower secondary school, in whose catchment area the child is residing, that the child attends a kindergarten abroad or at a diplomatic agency of another country in Poland and thus fulfils the obligation of pre-school preparation,
- provide the child with the learning conditions specified in the relevant permit if the child fulfils this obligation outside a kindergarten, pre-school unit or another pre-primary institution.

81. Pursuant to art. 14b par. 2 and 3 of the ESA it is the task of the headmaster of a primary school to control if the child residing in the catchment area of the school fulfils the obligation of one-year pre-school preparation. At the same time the headmasters of public and non-public kindergartens and primary schools in which pre-school units are organised as well as teachers in other public and non-public pre-school institutions are

required to inform the headmaster of the school in whose catchment area the child is residing that the child fulfils the obligation of one-year pre-school preparation in a kindergarten, pre-school unit or another pre-school institution respectively as well as about any changes in that regard.

Monitoring of the fulfilment of the obligation of school education

82. Pursuant to art. 16 par. 5 of the ESA the obligation of school education is considered to be fulfilled when a child attends a primary school and lower secondary schools, either public or non-public.

83. Pursuant to art. 18 of the ESA parents of child subject to the obligation of school education are required to:

1) carry out any act necessary for registration of the child in a school,
2) ensure that the child attends school classes on a regular basis,
3) provide the child with conditions which enable preparing for classes,
4) inform, by 30 September each year, the headmaster of a primary school or a lower secondary school, in whose catchment area the child is residing, that the child attends a school abroad or a school at the diplomatic agency of another country in Poland and thus fulfils the obligation of school education.

Parents of a child who fulfils the obligation of school education outside school are required to provide the child with the learning conditions specified in the relevant permit.

84. Pursuant to art. 19 of the ESA headmasters of public primary schools and lower secondary schools are required to control if the children residing within the catchment area of these schools fulfil the obligation of school education.

85. Pursuant to art. 16 par. 6 and 6a of the ESA headmasters of:

– non-public primary schools and lower secondary schools,
– public primary schools and lower secondary schools,

and also headmasters of:

special schools, youth education centres, youth sociotherapeutic centres, special school and education centres, special education centres for children and youth who require special organisation of learning, methods of working and education, centres enabling children and youth with profound mental retardation as well as those with mental retardation and multiple disabilities to fulfil the obligation of school education by way of educational services provided by natural or legal persons, which are not local government units and which have not been assigned catchment areas, are required to inform the headmaster of a public primary or lower secondary school in whose catchment area the student is residing that he/she has been admitted to school and fulfils the obligation of school education on a regular basis.

The solution described above applies respectively to headmasters of public primary schools and public lower secondary schools with a defined catchment area who have admitted a student residing in the catchment area of another public school.

Monitoring of the fulfilment of the obligation of learning

86. Pursuant to art. 19 of the ESA it is the task of communes to control the fulfilment of the obligation of learning by youth residing within their limits.

87. Pursuant to art. 16 par. 6b of the ESA the commune head (mayor, president of the city/town) must be notified that all and any lower secondary school graduates under the age of 18 fulfil the obligation of learning by:

a) headmasters of public and non-public upper secondary schools,
b) headmasters of public and non-public continuous education establishments and practical education establishments as well as further education and professional improvement centres which offer non-school educational services and have been accredited,
c) natural or legal persons providing educational services in accordance with the Act of 2 July 2004 *on Freedom of Economic Activity* for which they have been accredited,
d) employers who hired a lower secondary school graduate for vocational preparation.

At the request of the head of the commune (mayor, president of the city/town) in which a child is residing, parents of the child subject to the obligation of learning must inform him/her about the form of fulfilling the obligation of learning by the child and about any changes in that regard.

88. Non-fulfilment of the obligation of one-year pre-school preparation, the obligation of school education or the obligation of learning is subject to enforcement in accordance with the administrative enforcement procedure regulations (art. 20 of the ESA).

Financial assistance for students

89. Pursuant to art. 90b of the ESA students are entitled to financial assistance from the funds allocated for this purpose in the state budget or the budget of the appropriate local government units.
Financial assistance is granted to students with a view to reducing the differences in the access to education, enabling them to overcome barriers to the access to education due to their difficult financial situation and also supporting education of talented students.

90. Financial assistance is available to:
1) students of public schools and non-public schools with public school authorization for youth and adults, as well as to adult learners of public colleges for teachers, for teachers of foreign languages, and for social services workers − until the termination of education, however up to the age of 24 at maximum,
2) residents of public and non-public centres which enable children and youth with profound mental retardation and those with mental retardation and multiple disabilities to fulfil the obligation of school education and the obligation of learning – until the obligation of learning is fulfilled,
3) students of non-public schools without public school authorization for youth and adults – until the obligation of learning is fulfilled,
4) students of non-public colleges for teachers and teachers of foreign languages – until the termination of education, however up to the age of 24 at maximum.

91. Financial assistance is of a social or motivational character. One student can be granted financial assistance of a social and motivational character at the same time.

92. The **National Scholarship Programme** (adopted by the Council of Ministers as of 28 September 2004) forms the basis for the state's policy for providing equal educational opportunities and designing actions aimed at compensating differences on grounds of social background of students and supporting education of students with learning difficulties. The National Scholarship Programme provided the basis for the policy of financial assistance to students whose financial and life situation can give rise to early school leaving, limited educational aspirations or non-participation in higher level education. The National Scholarship Programme supports also outstandingly talented children and youth.

Pursuant to the Act of 16 December 2004 *on Amendments to the Act on Education System and to the Act on the Natural Persons' Income Tax* as from 1 January 2005 the regulations provided for under Chapter 8a of the ESA have been effective and introduced into the Polish education system an idea of external motivation for students by financing or co-financing their expenses on education which is also a long-established practice in other countries.

Financial assistance for strictly educational needs is provided as follows:

1. *Scholarship of the Prime Minister*

93. The procedures for scholarships of the Prime Minister are laid down in accordance with art. 90h of the ESA and the Regulation of the Council of Ministers of 14 June 2005 *on scholarships granted by the Prime Minister, minister for education and upbringing and minister for culture and protection of national heritage*.

94. A scholarship of the Prime Minister is granted for a period from September to June in a given school year to one student from a given school who was promoted with distinction and at the same time had the highest grade point average in the school or showed outstanding talents in at least one area of knowledge and achieved the best results in this area and at least good results in the other areas. Candidates are selected by the board of students (or a committee composed of 3 to 5 students elected by all the students of the school – if there is no board of students) which submits applications for a scholarship of the Prime Minister to the school board or to the pedagogical council if there is no school board.

95. The school superintendent is required to provide the Prime Minister, through the Minister of National Education, with a list of approved candidates for the scholarship at latest by 31 July of the year preceding the school year when the scholarship shall be granted. The amount of the scholarship of the Prime Minister is PLN 258 a month. About 4 100 students are awarded the scholarship each year. A total of PLN 11 million each year is allocated to scholarships.

2. *Scholarship of the minister for education and upbringing*

96. The procedures for scholarships granted by the minister for education and upbringing are laid down in accordance with art. 90i of the ESA and the Regulation of the Council of Ministers referred to above.

97. The scholarship of the minister for education and upbringing can be granted to students of public schools for youth or non-public with public school rights:

- winners of an international contest or winners and finalists of nation-wide single-subject contests or tournaments,
- winners of contests for the best scholarly thesis organised by a scientific institute or association,
- upper secondary school students with the best results for school work according to an individual education or teaching programme,
- participants of university courses according to the programme of study in accordance with the study regulations concerning the requirements for participation of outstandingly talented students in courses provided for in the programme of study,
- students with very good results in sports competitions at the national or international level.

98. The scholarship of the minister for education and upbringing is granted in the form of a one-off cash prize. In 2010-2011, the amount of the scholarship was PLN 3 000.

Candidates are selected by the school shortly after the termination of education courses by submitting applications to the educational inspectorate on an individual basis. The school can submit any number of applications. About 300-320 students are awarded the scholarship each year.

3. *Scholarship of the minister for culture and protection of national heritage*

99. Pursuant to art. 90j of the ESA the scholarship can be granted to students of art schools providing education in artistic professions who had a very good point grade average for art and vocational subjects at the end of the period (semester) or to winners of an international or national art competition.

100. **The** scholarships cannot be granted prior to the end of the first year of education at a given type of art school and not more than once a year.

101. The minister for culture and protection of national heritage publishes the number and amount of scholarships to be provided in a given year on the website of the appropriate ministry.

4. *Scholarship for school performance or sports achievements*

102. Pursuant to art. 90g of the ESA a scholarship for school performance can be granted to students with high grade point average within a period (semester) preceding the period (semester) for which the scholarship is granted, and a scholarship for sports achievements can be granted to students who have achieved very good results in sports competitions at the interschool level at minimum.

103. The scholarship is granted by the school headmaster based on the funds allocated for this purpose in the school budget by the school governing body.
To this end, the school headmaster appoints a scholarship committee, which sets the required grade point average in consultation with the pedagogical council and student board. An application for a scholarship for school performance or sports achievements is submitted by the class tutor to the scholarship committee, which forwards the application, together with the committee's opinion, to the school headmaster.
In colleges for teachers, teachers of foreign languages or social services workers, an application for a scholarship for school performance or sports achievements are submitted by students.

5. *Financial assistance of a social character*

104. It is the task of communes to provide financial assistance of a social character to students and communes receive funding for this purpose from the state budget (art. 90p and 90r of the ESA).
Financial assistance of a social character includes:
1) a school scholarship,
2) a school allowance.

105. A school scholarship can be granted (pursuant to art. 90d of the ESA) to students in difficult financial situation due to low income per person in their family, especially in the case of families suffering from unemployment, disabilities, severe or long-term disease, alcohol or substance abuse, families lacking the ability to carry out educational and care-giving functions, large families or single parenthood, and also in the case of unforeseeable adverse circumstances.

A school scholarship can be granted to pupils/adult learners in the form of:

1) total or partial payment of the costs of participation in educational courses, including remedial classes, which go beyond the courses organised in school in accordance with the curriculum, and the costs of participation in non-school educational courses,
2) in-kind assistance of an educational character, including in particular a purchase of school textbooks,
3) total or partial payment of the costs related to attending educational courses outside the place of residence (applies to pupils of upper secondary schools and adult learners of public colleges for teachers, for teachers of foreign languages and for social services workers),
4) cash benefits, if the authority granting the scholarship decides that a scholarship in one of the forms referred to above would not be possible or appropriate.

A school scholarship can be granted as one or more types of scholarships at the same time.

A school scholarship is granted for a period of at least one month and at most 10 months in a given school year, and in the case of students of colleges for teachers, teachers of foreign languages or social services workers – for a period of at least one month and at most 9 months in a given school year.
If necessary, a school scholarship can be granted on other than a monthly basis or as a one-off scholarship.

106. A school allowance can be granted (pursuant to art. 90e of the ESA to students who are temporarily in difficult financial situation due to unforeseeable adverse circumstances.

A school allowance can be granted in the form of a cash benefit to cover the costs related to the educational process or in the form of in-kind assistance of an educational character, once or more times per year, regardless of any granted school scholarships.

107. Pursuant to art. 90f of the ESA a commune's council adopts the rules of procedure for providing financial assistance of a social character to students residing within the limits of the commune, including in particular: the calculation of the amount of school scholarship, types, conditions and procedures for granting school scholarships, types and procedures for granting school allowances according to unforeseeable adverse circumstances.

Financial assistance of a social character is granted:
1) at the request of a pupil's parents or an adult learner,
2) at the request of a headmaster of the school, college for teachers, for teachers of foreign languages or for social services workers, respectively, or a director of a centre which enables children and youth with profound mental retardation, and also those with mental retardation and multiple disabilities to fulfil the obligation of school education and the obligation of learning.

Financial assistance of a social character can also be granted on an *ex officio* basis.

108. To fulfil the task of providing financial assistance for students in the form of school scholarships and school allowances, the Minister of National Education uses the funds available under the dedicated state budget reserve called "Financial Assistance for the National Scholarship Programme" which allows increasing the budget allocated to financial assistance by communes. The funds referred to above can be mobilised subject to the adoption of a budget act for a given year, and then consent of the Minister of National Education to the breakdown of the funds into specific tasks set out in the *National Scholarship Programme*.

This assistance is provided to about 520 000 students each year, i.e. about 12% of all children and youth in education. The budget funds allocated to school scholarships amount to PLN 380-450 million each year.

109. Furthermore, Poland has a system of local government scholarships which are paid in accordance with the Act of 8 March 1990 *on Commune Government* and the Act of 5 June 1998 *on Poviat Government* as well as scholarships paid by non-governmental organisations.

110. In 2006-2008, the „**Government programme for equal educational opportunities for students from families of former workers of state agricultural enterprises**". The programme was designed for pupils attending upper secondary schools in which it was possible to obtain a baccalaureate certificate and residing in rural areas or towns with a population of 20 000 at maximum. The objective of the programme was to enable students from areas previously occupied by state agricultural enterprises to continue their education despite the difficult financial situation of their families. Pupils received scholarship until the date of completion of upper secondary school.

The scholarship was granted to pupils for a period of 10 months in a given school year and to graduates for a period of 8 months in a given school year with the aim of partially or totally covering the costs related to education, including in particular the costs of:

- meals in a school canteen, a canteen operated by a special school and educational centre, boarding school, student's hostel or another entity,
- accommodation in a boarding school, student's hostel or private accommodation,
- transport to school,
- purchase of textbooks and learning aids,
- purchase of necessary clothes and footwear,
- foreign language courses and other educational activities both in school and outside school,
- school trips.

The programme was financed from a dedicated state budget reserve designed for financing the National Scholarship Programme. A total of more than 47 000 pupils were awarded the scholarship. The amount of granted scholarships totalled nearly PLN 77 million.

The programme fulfilled its objectives. According to the information provided by School Superintendents the major results of the programme are as follows:

- facilitating, and in many cases making it possible to obtain education at the level of secondary school, obtain secondary education completion diploma and continue education in a selected higher education facility,
- levelling disproportions between students by participation in school trips, providing textbooks and necessary clothing,
- motivating students to greater life activity and in particular promoting the ability to move on the labour market and change in the attitudes among the young people from the areas of former state agricultural enterprises.

111. As from 2002, the Minister of National Education has been also implementing an assistance programme titled "**School Starter Kit**" for pupils with the aim of providing financial support for school textbooks. For a few years following the launch, the programme was only oriented towards students beginning school, i.e. first-graders at primary schools and 1st degree general musical schools. At that time, a total of PLN

11 million was expended for the programme. In 2007-2008, the programme was extended to include support for second- and third-graders at primary and at 1st degree general musical schools in the total amount of more than PLN 120 million. Having introduced in 2009 a new general education curriculum, the Ministry of National Education also extended the programme „School Starter Kit" to include another group of pupils who were not able to use second-hand textbooks on account of the changes in the curriculum. In 2009, this group included first-graders at lower secondary schools, 2nd degree general musical schools and general art schools as well as fourth-graders of general ballet schools. In 2010, this group included second-graders at lower secondary schools, 2nd degree general musical schools and general art schools as well as fifth-graders at general ballet schools. Also the amount of financial resources allocated to the programme was increased to ensure an adequate level of financial support for textbooks. This amount totalled more than PLN 207 million in 2009-2010.

At the same time, since 2010, apart from pupils in difficult financial situation, the programme has also included pupils whose families can hardly afford school textbooks for economic, family-related or social reasons.

Since 2010 financial support under the „School Starter Kit" programme has also been available for pupils with visual or hearing impairment, mild mental retardation, multiple disabilities if one the disabilities is one of those referred to above, awarded a certificate of special educational needs.

In 2011, financial support under the programme was granted to first-, second- and third-graders at primary schools and 1st degree general musical schools, third-graders at lower secondary schools, 2nd degree general musical schools and general art school as well as fifth-graders at general ballet schools and students awarded a certificate of special educational needs. The programme was allocated a total of PLN 115 million.

112. As part of the system of family benefits, there are **supplements to family benefits** with the aim of e.g. partially covering the costs related to children's education. Pursuant to art. 8 of the Act of 28 November 2003 *on Family Benefits* the supplements referred to above, available for a mother or father, actual or legal guardian of a child, and also to learning persons are granted for education and rehabilitation of a child with disabilities, at the beginning of a school year and at the time of admitting a child for a school outside the place of residence. To be eligible for such supplements, it is necessary to be entitled to a family benefit which is granted to persons who meet the statutory income criterion.

Supplement for child education and rehabilitation – pursuant to art. 13 of the Act referred to above the supplement is paid on a monthly basis with the aim of covering the greater costs of rehabilitation or education of a child aged:

- up to 16 years old, if he/she was awarded a medical disability certificate,
- more than 16 years old up to the full age of 24 years old, if he/she was awarded a medical certificate of moderate or significant disability.

Supplement at the beginning of school year – pursuant to art. 14 of the Act referred to above the supplement is paid on an annual basis with the aim of partially covering the costs related to the beginning of a new school year. The supplement is also available to children who start a one-year pre-school preparation.

Supplement for children starting education in school outside the place of residence – pursuant to art. 15 of the Act referred to above the supplement is available:

- when the child resides at the location of upper secondary school or art school which the child attends and in which he/she receives teaching services, and also at the location of primary or lower secondary school in the case of a child or learning person who was awarded a medical disability certificate or certificate stating the degree of disability,
- when the child needs to commute from the place of residence to the location of school in the case of upper secondary school or art school which the child attends and in which he/she receives teaching services within the scope corresponding to the curriculum of upper secondary school.

The supplement is paid for 10 months per year during the teaching period from September to June of the next calendar year.

113. Among the programmes implemented by the National Fund for the Rehabilitation of Disabled (PFRON), the so-called „educational programmes" play an extremely significant role. Their launch (pursuant to art. 47 par. 1 sec 4 (a) of the Act of 27 August 1997 *on Professional and Social Rehabilitation and Employment of Disabled Persons*) aims at preparing people with disabilities to compete on the open labour market by making it possible for them to acquire high professional qualifications:

1) „PUPIL IN THE RURAL AREAS [*UCZEŃ NA WSI*] – assistance for disabled residents of rural communes and rural-urban communes to reach the end of upper secondary level education" – a pilot programme implemented in all the communes throughout Poland from 1 September 2007 to 30 June 2010.

   The objective of the programme was to provide equal opportunities for disabled pupils residing in the communes referred to above to reach the end of upper secondary level by:
   - improving the conditions of their education,
   - enabling them to participate in classes aimed at improving their mental and physical performance,
   - eliminating transport barriers that hinder or prevent them from participating in education.

   The granted financial support could be used to cover the costs of:
   - purchasing aids to facilitate or enable learning,
   - participating in activities aimed at improving physical or mental performance (including rehabilitation summer camps),
   - obtaining access to the Internet (installation and subscription charges), excluding the costs of computers,
   - additional training courses related to the school curriculum or language courses (financial support could also be used to cover the costs of transport, board and accommodation in the case of courses organised outside the student's place of residence),
   - trips organised as part of school activities.

   In the case of upper secondary pupils the financial support could also be used to cover the costs of:
   - tuition (school fees),
   - accommodation (if teaching services were provided outside the pupil's place of residence),
   - transport to school.

2) „PITAGORAS 2007 – assistance for persons with hearing impairments" – the programme was implemented throughout Poland from 2007 to 18 July 2012.

The programme was designed for universities and post-secondary schools and oriented towards deaf persons and persons with impaired hearing, including the deaf-and-blind and deaf-and-partially-sighted students, post-secondary students and participants of preparatory courses to university entrance examinations who had been granted a medical disability certificate and requested the services of a sign translator or the need to use hearing aids or other aids, including those adapted to the capabilities and needs resulting from the hearing or hearing and visual dysfunctions, during classes and examinations.

The programme covered financial support for the services of a sign translator providing services for the programme participants.
In the case of universities or post-secondary schools the programme covered:
- financial support for purchasing and installing hearing aids for the programme participants,
- financial support for purchasing dedicated hardware and electronic equipment, software and specific components for their expansion in justified cases,
- financial support for purchasing dedicated electronic Braille equipment and specific components for their expansion in justified cases,
- financial support for purchasing lector devices,
- financial support for purchasing a Xerox machine,
- financial support for purchasing a fax machine.

3) „STUDENT II – continuous education for students with disabilities" – the programme was implemented throughout Poland as from 1 January 2008 as continuation of the programme "STUDENT – continuous education for students with disabilities" implemented in 2002-2007.

The objective of the programme is to provide equal opportunities for persons with disabilities to reach the end of upper secondary education and to prepare them, by improving their qualifications, to compete for employment on the open labour market.
The programme was also designed to create such conditions as to mobilise persons with disabilities to continuous education.

The programme was oriented towards persons with certified significant or moderate disability (or holders of an equivalent medical certificate) who were:
- BA or MA students or students admitted on a uniform master's programme at universities and higher education schools,
- holders of university or higher education diplomas enrolled on a post-graduate programme at universities, higher education schools or other institutions certified to provide post-university educational services in accordance with other regulations,
- participants of doctoral studies at universities, higher education schools or other institutions certified to provide doctoral educational services in accordance with other regulations,
- students at colleges for social services workers, colleges for teachers or colleges for teachers of foreign languages,
- post-secondary school students,
- students at foreign universities,

– students placed on an internship abroad under European Union programmes, enrolled on a full-time or a part-time basis.

The programme was also designed for persons with certified significant or moderate disability (or holders of an equivalent medical certificate) admitted into a doctoral programme, but not enrolled at university.

Financial support under the programme is granted in the form of financial assistance to cover the costs of teaching services provided for the applicant, including in particular the costs of:

– tuition (school fees),
– accommodation – in the case of teaching services provided outside the place of residence,
– transport,
– obtaining access to the Internet (installation and subscription fees),
– participation in classes aimed at improving their physical and mental performance,
– purchasing aids to facilitate or enable learning, including software, USB flash drives, optical discs (e.g. CDs) and diskettes,
– trips organised as part of school activities.

The amount of the financial support granted depended on the financial situation of the applicant, degree of disability, amount of school fees, type of household (one-person or family household) and school grades.

114. Furthermore, pursuant to the Regulation of the Council of Ministers of 23 August 2011 *on detailed conditions for providing assistance to children and students in the form of emergency benefits for educational purposes in 2011*, in the 2011/2012 school year support in the form of emergency benefits for educational purposes was granted to children in the course of obligatory on-year pre-school preparation and to pupils attending all types of schools (excluding schools for adults), provided that their families were awarded a designated benefit in accordance with art. 40 of the Act of 12 March 2004 *on Social Welfare* to meet any necessary subsistence needs in relation to the losses suffered in 2011 due to storms or other weather conditions, in particular hailstorm or flood.
The support referred to above was also available to children and pupils from farming families whose farms or special branches of agricultural production suffered damage before hurricanes and violent rainstorms of 2011. A total of PLN 12 million was expended in 2011 for these benefits. In 2010, similar financial assistance was granted to about 264 000 children – i.e. a total of PLN 26.4 million was expended.

115. A variety of actions are taken under the Human Capital Operational Programme (HC OP) with a view to preventing discrimination in the education system. The Action 9.1 *Equalising educational opportunities and ensuring high quality of educational services provided in the educational system* under the Priority no. 9 of the HC OP "Development of education and competencies in the regions" was in its entirety was oriented towards supporting the area referred to above.

As part of the Sub-action 9.1.1 *Reducing inequalities in the degree of dissemination of primary education*, there are competition projects under implementation which involve creating and/or supporting the existing kindergartens in communes with the lowest degree of dissemination of pre-school education in the region.

As part of the Sub-action 9.1.2 *Equalising educational opportunities of students from groups who have limited access to education and reduce differences in the quality of educational services*, there are developmental programmes under implementation, oriented towards providing pupils with equal educational opportunities and reducing the disproportions between their educational achievements as well as improving the quality of the educational process. Such programmes include e.g. additional didactic, remedial and specialist classes, counselling, pedagogical and psychological support for pupils with learning difficulties (e.g. support for pupils from rural areas, pupils with disabilities, prevention of addictions or social pathologies.

As part of the Sub-action 9.1.3., it is possible to apply for financial support in the form of a scholarship, designed for highly talented students whose disadvantageous financial situation is a barrier to their educational development. The scholarship is provided based on the grade point average on school certificate and financial situation of students.

116. As of 1 April 2009, the assessment of requests for financial support is carried out based on the so-called minimum standard in the case of all projects implemented under the HC OP in order to guarantee compliance with the principle of equal opportunities. This means that projects provided with financial support must satisfy at least two of the following requirements:

- the project contains an analysis of women's and men's situation in the project intervention area and/or catchment area which indicates unequal opportunities on grounds,
- the analysis of women's and men's situation contains quantitative data which indicate that there are no unequal opportunities in the project intervention area and/or catchment area,
- the data according to sex as used in the analysis of women's and men's situation refer to the project intervention area and catchment area,
- the solution planned to be developed and/or actions correspond to inequality on grounds of sex which exist in the project intervention area and/or catchment area and/or allow differentiating actions (forms of support) aimed at women and men,
- results are given according to sex and/or show how the project will influence the situation of women and men in the project intervention area and/or catchment area,
- the project shows how management based on equal opportunities would be ensured.

117. Given the low level of children's participation in early education, the Long-Term National Development Strategy is particularly focused on the creation of generally accessible early education and care-giving services of high quality, oriented towards supporting parents raising children aged 0-5 years old.

118. Furthermore, in connection with the actions aimed at creating mechanisms with a view to eliminating digital exclusion in Poland, the Long-Term National Development Strategy provides for a universal digital education programme for citizens, which includes:

- building digital competence of people who provide teaching services,
- creating modern network infrastructure and educational resources,
- implementing digital education as part of the core curriculum with the use of modern communication and information technologies as didactic tools during all educational classes at school,
- creating modern educational network infrastructure in the form of educational platforms to provide public and open access to educational services and resources,

- providing schools and other institutions which implement digital education tasks as well as learning persons with network infrastructure and ICT equipment to ensure equal educational opportunities and modernisation of the educational process,
- creating decentralised digital education programme for adults, based on a network of institutions, organisations and enterprises which provide adult digital education services (according to the model of lifelong learning, including non-formal, non-school learning, etc.) as a key mechanism aimed at eliminating digital exclusion of adults,
- supporting cooperation, at a local and nation-wide level, between entities involved in different forms of digital education – especially between schools and other public institutions and non-governmental organisations.

For more information about the actions implemented as part of long-term strategies – see para. 150 subpara. 2 hereof.

Support to people most vulnerable to exclusion and discrimination

119. Pursuant to the ESA the educational system provides e.g. the possibility of attending all types of schools for pupils and youth with disabilities, socially maladjusted or at risk of social maladjustment, taking into account their individual developmental and educational needs as well as their capacity.

All and any public schools are required to provide pupils with psychological and pedagogical assistance which should involve recognising of their individual psycho-physical capabilities and satisfying their individual developmental and educational needs (pursuant to the Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 17 November 2010 *on rules for providing and organising psychological and pedagogical assistance in public kindergartens, schools and establishments*).

120. In the educational system, there are establishments which provide care and education to pupils during the period when they are provided teaching services outside their permanent place of residence. This makes it possible for pupils to start education outside their place of residence and to eliminate barriers preventing free access to education, especially for pupils from small towns and rural areas.

At the same time, pursuant to the Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 12 May 2011 *on types and detailed methods of operation of public establishments, conditions for the residence of children and youth therein as well as the amount of payments and rules for charging parents for the residence of their children in such establishments*, authorities in charge of an establishment may release parents, in whole or in part, from the obligation to pay for board and accommodation in a student hostel if the family financial situation is particularly difficult or in duly justified exceptional cases.

121. Support in the access to education for people with the most economically disadvantaged background and from socially marginalised groups or groups most vulnerable to exclusion is provided for under Chapter 8a of the ESA (for more information – see paras. 89-114 hereof).

122. Occupational education according to the classification of occupational education professions for people with disabilities is offered based on the general rules applicable to occupational education and the educational curriculum for specific professions.

An exception is granted to professions in the case of which occupational education is reserved for people with disabilities. Pursuant to the Regulation of the Minister of

National Education of 26 June 2007 *on classification of vocational education occupations* specific education for the following professions is provided:

- sound technician, sound engineer, typhlo-IT specialist – for the blind and partially sighted;
- massage technician, qualified office worker – for the blind and partially sighted at the level of technical secondary school,
- hotel operations assistant – for people with mild mental retardation.

The Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 23 December 2011 *on classification of vocational education occupations*, which is to become effective as of 1 September 2012, provides also for the professions referred to above in the case of which occupational education is reserved for people with disabilities, except for the profession of sound technician which was removed from the classification at the request of the competent minister.

123. The Ministry of National Education continues works on implementation regulations to the Act on Education System which should read as set out in the Act of 19 August 2011 *on Amendments to the Act on Education System and to Certain Other Acts* which will become effective as of 1 September 2012.
The regulations under preparation are aimed at preventing discrimination and segregation on grounds of disability and making it possible for adults, whatever their age, to improve their general and vocational education.
Changes to the vocational education system include specifying for each profession single qualifications comprised of specific knowledge and skills. Provided that all qualifications relevant to a given profession are confirmed by way of an external examination and the level of education corresponding to the learned profession, it is possible to be granted an appropriate professional qualifications diploma. However, it is also possible to use a single qualification certificate when seeking employment. The division of professions into qualifications contributes to the greater flexibility of occupational education and makes it possible to adapt it to the individual needs and abilities of all learners, including people with disabilities.

124. Students with disabilities take examinations to confirm professional qualifications in conditions and form adapted to their type of disability (pursuant to the Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 17 November 2010 *on conditions of organising education, upbringing and care for children and youth with disabilities or socially maladjusted at generally accessible or integration kindergartens, schools and units* and the Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 17 November 2010 *on conditions of organising education, upbringing and care for children and youth with disabilities or socially maladjusted at special kindergartens, schools, units and centres*.

125. The project referred to in the document „Human Capital Development Strategy" to be implement the Long-Term National Development Strategy and Mid-Term National Development Strategy includes actions aimed at e.g.:

- increasing the accessibility and quality of pre-school education, especially in rural areas,
- developing non-financial support for families with disabled children – access to services, compensating dysfunctions,
- differentiating the forms of activities and further individualisation of the teaching process,

– strengthening the social and early interventional function of school by providing greater support oriented to compensating insufficient access to public services which can be offered by school and return to the preventive role of school,
– achieving greater participation of children and young people with disabilities, if possible in terms of their disability, in generally accessible education.

For more information about the actions under long-term strategies – see para. 150, subparas. 4, 5, 10, 11 hereof.

126. In 2008, the Government Plenipotentiary for Equal Treatment appointed the Group for prevention of discrimination of children with chronic diseases. The Group is composed of representatives of the GPET, Minister of National Education, Minister of Health, Director of the Centre for Education Development (former Centre of Methodical and Psychological and Pedagogical Support), National Consultant for Paediatrics, National Consultant for Psychiatry of Children and Youth, President of the Management Board of the College of Family Physicians. The tasks of the Group were as follows:

1. analyse the situation related to the exclusion of children with chronic diseases from kindergartens and younger grades of primary schools,
2. develop rules for cooperation between family physicians and children's care-givers in kindergartens and schools,
3. develop a proposal for an agreement (authorisation) between parents, care-givers and teachers in the field of care of children with chronic diseases in kindergartens and schools,
4. develop a draft proposal for information publications about chronic diseases,
5. develop proposals and initiate educational and information campaigns related to dissemination of knowledge about chronic diseases among children.

The results of the Group's works included e.g. publications under one title "They are Among Us". They were prepared as part of the governmental programme "Safe and Friendly School" at the request of the Minister of National Education, in cooperation with the Minister of Health and the GPET. Each of the information publications contains detailed information about how to handle a child suffering from a chronic disease in schools and kindergartens, familiarises teachers, parents and pupils with specific problems related to the functioning of children with chronic diseases, and also shows directions and methods for solving any potential problems.

1st series of the publications "They are Among Us" (edition of 35 000)
– "A child with a chronic disease in school and kindergarten"
– "A child with haemophilia in school and kindergarten"
– "A child with asthma in school and kindergarten"
– "A child with diabetes in school and kindergarten"
– "A child with epilepsy in school and kindergarten"

2nd series of the publications "They are Among Us" (edition of 120 000)
– "A child with tic disorders in school and kindergarten"
– "A child with depression in school and kindergarten"
– "A child with psychotic disorders in school and kindergarten"
– "A child with ADHD in school and kindergarten"
– "A child with autism and Asperger syndrome in school and kindergarten"
– "A child with nutrition disorders in school and kindergarten"
– "A child with anxiety disorders in school and kindergarten"

These publications were provided on a non-payable basis to all schools and facilities as well as published on the websites of the MNE, Ministry of Health, the GPET and Centre for Education Development (ORE).

127. The Group has also defined the scope of information to be included in medical certificates for children prior to their admission to an education facility in the event of a diagnosed chronic disease in the course of treatment. It was agreed that in the case of a child diagnosed with a chronic disease in the course of treatment his/her parents/legal guardians are required to provide a medical certificate containing the following information: diagnosis of the chronic disease, assessment of the child's ability to attend a regular kindergarten or school, information for the class tutor in kindergarten/school on how to handle and deal with the child and any necessary recommendations for the child's residence in the facility, information about any necessary actions in the event of exacerbated symptoms, any possible restrictions and recommendations for the child's participation in activities.
Pursuant to the Act of 27 August 2004 *on Healthcare Services Financed from Public Funds* such certificate is issued on a non-payable basis at the request of the child's parents or legal guardians.

128. The GPET, together with the Minister of National Education, organised also interministerial meetings aimed at presenting issues related to education of children of different racial and cultural background as well as formulating recommended actions in that regard which would enable protecting against discrimination and isolation of such children in schools and at same time would contribute to their effective education. Also representatives of the National In-Service Teacher Training Centre (presently ORE), Mazovian Education Authority, Ministry of Interior and Administration and Office for Foreigners (apart from representatives of the Ministry of National Education and the Office of the GPET) were involved in the works of this group. Meetings of the group were of exploratory nature and one of the stages for creating conditions for a wider debate on education of children of different racial and cultural background which would also involve practitioners and social partners. The group's works involved e.g. presentation of the Centre for Education Development of the results from the report titled "Children of foreign nationals in Polish educational establishments – from the school perspective" and the final report of the European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education titled "Multicultural Diversity and Special Needs Education". The tasks specified by the Group focused on e.g. the need to disseminate the results of the report titled "Children of foreign nationals in Polish educational establishments – from the school perspective" and also to analyse the demands and conclusions referred to therein in order to formulate recommendations necessary for improving the situation of children with different racial and cultural background in Polish schools.

129. With regard to the implementation of a new core curriculum as defined in the Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 23 December 2008 *on the core curriculum for pre-school education and general education in different types of schools*, as well as new textbooks, the GPET requested the Minister of National Education to provide a group of experts working on new textbooks the recommendations specified during an analysis of these textbooks in terms of equal treatment or protection against discrimination on grounds of sex, racial background, ethnic or national origin, religion or religious affiliation, political beliefs, age, sexual orientation, marital or family status. In March 2009, a "Letter to Experts" was posted on the website of the MNE in which the Ministry of National Education informed about the need to analyse the content provided in textbooks in terms of equal treatment and protection against discrimination.

Education through sport

130. Bearing in mind that sport, as one of the most crucial social, cultural and economic phenomena of the 21st century, plays an important role in contributing to an open society based on democratic values and human rights, and most specifically to building mutual respect and respectful approach to diversity, the Ministry of Sport and Tourism is strongly focused on the tasks arising from the social dimension of sport and considers them to be a priority. In 2006-2011, the MST was implementing its statutory tasks by providing financial support from the state budget and national special-purpose funds for the initiation, organisation, coordination and supporting actions aimed at developing Polish sport and comprising its social, economic and organisational dimensions. The lines of development and development policies were consistent with the objectives of the „White Paper" concerning sport, "Pierre de Coubertin Action Plan", "European Union Physical Activity Guidelines" as well as the "Strategy of Sport Development in Poland to 2015" in which *Active and Physically Fit Society* is a top priority.

The tasks related to "equal opportunities", integration and prevention of exclusion in sport and through sport, which fall within the scope of this report, included e.g.:

- organising sports activities for children and youth as well as organisation activities for sports divisions composed of children and youth with disabilities,
- popularisation of sport in various social groups,
- training young people with outstanding sports skills in public and non-public schools of sports excellence,
- organising school and non-school sports competitions,
- promoting sport for children and youth as well as people with disabilities,
- implementing educational projects for children, youth and training instructors (teachers, trainers, animators and volunteers),
- providing financial support for sports equipment necessary for the implementation of the above-mentioned tasks.

131. The tasks referred to above were implemented e.g. as part of the programmes titled "Sports Activities for Students" (allocated financial support in the amount of PLN 84.6 million which allowed to involve more than 1.44 million children and youth in the activities) and the "All Children's Sport" which has included since 2008 the project called "Prevention of Aggression and Pathologies among Children and Youth through Sport" (an interministerial project aimed at improving physical fitness, reduce the level of aggression and prevent pathologies among children and youth). Financial support is provided as part of the „All Children's Sport" programme from the Fund for the Development of Physical Culture for e.g. promotional and educational campaigns, organisation of sports activities, events and camps designed for youth at the risk of social exclusion, including those residing in youth correction centres and juvenile shelters. A total of nearly PLN 64 million was allocated for this project in 2008-2011.

132. Additionally, the MST carries out projects aimed at expanding functionalities of sports facilities and promoting physical activity such as "Animator – My Football Pitch – Orlik 2012", "Sports Animator for Children and Youth" and "Sports Organiser for Children and Youth in the Rural Environment" which have been allocated a total of more than PLN 86.4 million from the Fund for the Development of Physical Culture in 2006-2011.

133. Support is also provided as part of the "School Sports Competition System" to e.g. provincial finals of the School Youth Olympics, provincial competition finals for upper secondary school students and participation of Polish national school teams in the

system of international competitions. A total of more than PLN 21 million was allocated to this purpose in 2006-2011.

134. As regards the development of sports infrastructure, the Polish government launched in 2008 a programme titled "My Football Pitch – Orlik 2012" to support the construction of modern sports field complexes. More than 2012 complexes have been released for use by the end of 2011. This programme includes also the Pilot Seasonal Foldable Ice Rinks and Permanent Ice Rinks Construction Project titled "Biały Orlik" – 100 facilities received financial assistance in 2010-2011.

Nearly 4 200 animators were employed at the Orlik sports complexes in 2009-2011 and about 9.2 million children participated in the activities organised by them. At the same time another project – titled „ORLIK Academy – Looking for Talents" – was implemented in more than 100 Orlik sports facilities in 2009-2010. More than 3 000 children aged 6-8 years old with outstanding football skills participated in the regular activities. In 2010, the Orlik Nation-wide Football Tournament for Prime Minister Donald Tusk Cup was initiated. The tournament with the finals at Torwar in Warsaw saw a total of about 110 000 participants – children and youth from across Poland – grouped into more than 10 000 football teams. Nearly 150 000 girls and boys, representing as many as 15 000 teams, registered for the 2011 edition of the tournament. In addition, the „Orlik Basketmania" basketball tournament was organised in 2011 with nearly 5 500 participants, i.e. 549 teams. At the same time the „Orlik Volleymania" volleyball tournament took place at 32 "Orlik" sports fields. The tournament was designed for school or class teams, student sports clubs and teams selected by local communities as well as children's and youth organisations. A total of 484 teams, i.e. about 4 000 children and young people, participated in the "Orlik Volleymania" tournament.

Projects supporting the investment programme called „My Football Field – Orlik 2012" will be continued in the following years and expanded with the growing number of facilities released for use. The MST is in the process of preparing a global project with the aim of expanding functionalities of sports facilities, including functions such as social animation, intergenerational solidarity, social and healthcare preventive measures, promotion of physical activity and development of voluntary service in sport.

C. Long-term strategies

Strategy for Continuing Education Development by 2010

135. The task of this *Strategy* was to outline the directions for continuing education development in the context of lifelong learning idea and development of knowledge-based society. The objective of implementation thereof was to enable individual development for every citizen by promoting access to continuing education and improvement of its quality and promoting active attitude to improve one's chances on labour market. The *Strategy* outlined also the tasks for government administration and self-government administration, academic and education institutions and social partners, i.e. organizations of employers, self-regulatory organizations, professional self-governing organizations, trade unions, foundations, associations and other non-governmental organizations. Execution of these tasks contributed to implementation in the Polish reality of European dimension of lifelong learning in short- and long-term horizon.

136. The *Strategy* popularized and targeted activities providing all adult persons, working and unemployed with access to proper conditions for learning, improving qualifications or requalification.

The *Strategy*, emphasizing the role and function of continuing education, referring to the concept of lifelong learning promoted the idea of adult persons education at schools for adults, as well as acquiring and complementing general knowledge, skills and professional qualifications in extramural forms.

137. Various entities involved at local (regional) level in execution of the tasks stemming from the *Strategy* started cooperation, establishing e.g. partnerships supporting local social and economic development by providing adult persons opportunities for improvement of professional qualifications or requalification – according to the needs of local labour market. Reinforcement of cooperation has been observed, including but not limited to inclusion of employers in the process of continuing education.

Activity of the entities involved in implementation of education-related tasks, in the process of supporting region development and adjustment of vocational education to local needs has increased.

138. Inclusion into the governmental programme of the tasks in the scope of, e.g.: development and popularization of distance education, introduction and popularization of the system of accreditation by school superintendent of extramural facilities for continuing education and entities conducting educational activities, introduction of external examinations validating professional qualifications recognised on EU market, providing additional equipment for schools and education institutions – computer devices and techno-didactic equipment, lengthened the odds on implementation thereof.

Thanks to various activities adult persons were provided the opportunity to fulfil their educational needs and ambitions, regardless of age, sex, place of residence, held education and social and financial status, and at the same time improvement of effectiveness and quality of continuing education system was ensured.

139. Also activities aiming at improvement of legal solutions and competencies of the staff exercising pedagogic supervision over continuing education facilities were undertaken. In compliance with the provisions of the Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 7 October 2009 *on pedagogic supervision*, the body exercising pedagogic supervision controls adherence by schools and facilities to the laws in the scope of didactic, education and care activities and other statutory activities of schools and facilities.

More details – see paras. 218-227 hereof

State Strategy for Youth for 2003–2012

140. Major objective of the Strategy is to equalize development-related opportunities for young generation aged 15-25. It is expected that young people who due to health or social conditions have to have state care ensured, should have equal opportunities for start into adult life. Objective of the Strategy is to implement solutions aiming at preventing marginalization of youth and their economic migration, starting activities that inspire local governments to increase benefits for fulfilment of needs of young generation in the scope of culture and sport and exchange and cooperation with youth from other countries, development of consistent healthcare system for youth.

The activities include:

a) in the scope of education: increasing the significance of informal education, supporting creation of entrepreneurial attitudes, taking activities to reduce the number

of students who give up graduation, extending and updating various forms and types of schools preparing the teacher to perform the role of class tutor,

b) in the scope of youth mobility: increasing and facilitating access to youth information, strengthening programmes targeted at youth volunteer services,
c) in the scope of supporting work-life balance: promoting family-friendly forms of organization of young people's work, promoting accessibility of facilities providing care for children and other persons who are dependants of young people, guaranteeing high quality of services,
d) in the scope of employment and social integration: starting research regarding social integration of youth in adverse social situation, supporting activities aimed at reducing unemployment among youth, supporting activities addressed to groups of youth who are most exposed to social exclusion,
e) in the scope of active youth citizenship: creating conditions facilitating increased youth participation in the life of local environments, ensuring support to information activities regarding participation methods, improvement of youth access to information, promotion and strengthening youth volunteer services.

141. One of Poland's obligations based on the Strategy Europe 2020 is extension and promotion of information society. To this end Ministry of National Education developed Action Plan regarding children and youth education as well as operating of school in information society. The concept of e-school is to be one of its most important pillars and substantial driving force. Also improvement of functioning of a school in information society is a priority. In compliance with the assumptions of Lisbon Strategy, by the end of 2013 children and youth should have the possibility of using school's electronic educational platforms, i.e. access to remote education.

142. Implementation of strategy's provisions was performed, inter alia, by way of implementation of the programme Youth in Action which aims at supporting participation of young people in non-formal education. This programme is in Poland the largest and most significant of the offers addressed to youth in the area of non-formal education, and it enables participants' independent activities and development of various competencies, e.g. social, related to communication and entrepreneurship. It focuses on citizenship education of young people and increasing their participation in public life.

143. Establishment of Polish Council of Youth Organizations (pl.: Polska Rada Organizacji Młodzieżowych – PROM) serves similar purposes. In 2010 Ministry of National Education provided financial and logistic support for organization of four meetings of representatives of youth associations, including international meeting, the so called Networking Days, with participation of representatives of European Youth Forum. Process of establishment of Polish Council of Youth Organizations ended in 2011.

144. Also international youth cooperation with states of European Union (exchange of group of students and teachers from Poland and other EU states) was supported, and mobility projects and partnership projects were implemented, aiming at promotion of European dimension of vocational education and training. EU programme "Lifelong learning" supported these activities.

145. In the interest of young people who require social reintegration quality of the operations of youth education centres and youth sociotherapy centres was improved, which will ultimately lead to improvement of the conditions for operations of the facilities and increase in the number of vacancies for students placed by the court in youth education centres. These activities will help to increase effectiveness, and hence speed up the process of social reintegration of young people under supervision of such facilities.

Education Development Strategy for 2007-2013

146. Major goal of the Strategy is improvement of the level of society's education, so that at least secondary education would become more popular and common (70%) in the age group 25-45, and at the same time ensuring high quality education. At the same time this document highlights the need for continuous improvement of qualifications of adult persons, mostly professional and general competencies necessary in order to function in the contemporary society (including, inter alia, fast and flexible adjustment to changes on-going on the labour market).

Human Capital Development Strategy – draft forwarded for social consultations and interministerial arrangements in November 2011

147. Analysis of the situation in main areas that make up the quality of human capital in Poland showed that our country does not take full advantage of its potential. Among identified problems in the area of education, which prevented full utilization of human capital the following were indicated, inter alia: too low level of education system's orientation towards development of key competencies necessary in social, citizenship life and on labour market, gaps in competencies and qualifications of adults, maladjusted to needs of the labour market, outdated and characterised by low prestige model of vocational education, poor promotion and ineffectiveness of the forms of education for adult persons.

Provisions in the draft of Human Capital Development Strategy (HCDS) directly correspond to the objectives of Medium-term Country Development Strategy. Moreover the HCDS is implementation of the decisions and projects that have been outlined in Long-term Country Development Strategy "Poland 2030 – Third Wave of Modernity". Strategy for Human Capital Development will be adopted by the Council of Ministers in 2012 along with other integrated strategies.

The strategic document "Perspective for life-long learning", prepared by Interministerial Team for Lifelong Learning, including National Qualifications Framework, will constitute annexe to the Strategy for Human Capital Development.

Operating objectives of the HCDS, referring to the activities in the area of education, include inter alia:

- Ensuring common access to high quality education and lifelong learning, meeting changing needs of the labour market as well as establishment of effective system of transition from education to employment;
- Effective professional activation of persons who are unemployed and search for a job;
- Increasing spatial mobility of employees and persons looking for a job (including persons with disabilities);
- Popularizing access to institutional care over children under 3;
- Combining the system of care of children under 3 with pre-school system;
- Popularizing access to pre-school education and services supporting children's participation in this form of education;
- Extension of the tools ensuring excluded persons access to public services enabling their return to labour market;
- Mitigating the risk of poverty in particular among children, the elderly and persons with disabilities;
- Strengthening preventive activities addressed to children and families threatened with dysfunction or going through difficult times;
- Support for persons with disabilities and their environment;

- Preventing new types of social exclusion;
- Shaping healthy lifestyle through health-oriented education and promotion, including improvement of the level of society's physical activity;
- Improvement of accessibility and quality of early childhood education, especially on rural areas and for children threatened with social exclusion;
- Levelling developmental/educational opportunities for children and youth from marginalized environments;
- Ensuring proper preparation of schools so that children starting their education therein (6-year-olds) by competent combination of play and learning acquire their first positive educational experiences in a formal system;
- Improvement of the quality of education and training at all levels as well as development of creativity and innovative ideas of students and participants;
- Improvement of the quality of education and training for teachers and other educators (including increasing the social prestige and competitiveness of their profession);
- Improvement in the level of competencies of school-age youth;
- Increasing the level of and adjusting the model of vocational education to the expectations of employers;
- Popularizing adult learning based on practical education (especially on-the-job learning);
- Development of transparent and consistent national qualification system, including the system of recognising the effects of non-formal learning.
- Increase in cognitive and cultural activity of citizens, executed both in traditional forms as well as via new media and Internet.

Tools for implementation of the objectives listed above, provided for in the strategy, have been included in six stages referring to the life cycle/career cycle.

Early childhood

148. In the context of the next twenty years of key importance are the tools oriented towards extension of the offer of various forms of child care (institutional and individual) in order to make it possible to combine the parental functions with professional career continuation and to level social and intellectual deficits of children at the earliest possible stage:

1) Improvement of accessibility and quality of pre-school education, especially on rural areas

Current situation

According to the data of CSO percentage of children aged 3-5 included in the pre-school education system in the school year 2009/2010 amounted to 59.7%. In cities this index amounted to 75.9% whereas on rural areas to 37.5%. In the school year 2010/2011 this index amounted to accordingly – 64.7%, 80.4% and 43.1%. Moreover according to the approximate data prepared in the Ministry of National Education based on education information system (as at 30 September 2011), in the school year 2011/2012 percentage of children aged 3-5 included in the pre-school education system amounts to accordingly – 71.8%, 86.3% and 51.9%.

Undertaken activities aim at increasing access to pre-school education by increasing the number of pre-school education locations. For the purposes of this task implementation also EU funds are utilized (Priority 1 and 9 of OP HC), also the possibility of financial support for local governments from state budget is considered.

Implemented activities

Legislative changes: Act of 19 March 2009 *on Amendments to the Act on Education System and on Amendments to Certain Other Acts,* Act of 5 August 2010 *on Amendments to the Act on Education System* and Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 31 August 2010 *on types of other forms of pre-school upbringing, conditions of creation and organisation of these forms and their manner of operation.*

Encouraging to set up kindergartens and other forms of pre-school education, and disseminating knowledge about the significance of pre-school education for child's development.

Tasks regarding pre-school education are co-financed from ESF under Priority 9 of Operational Programme Human Capital 2007-2013 and cover: establishment of kindergartens (including also launching other forms of pre-school education) on areas and in environments of low level of presence of pre-school education (in particular on rural areas), support to existing kindergartens (including also other functioning forms of pre-school education) in order to enable increased participation of children in pre-school education, establishment of child care facilities in the work place, development of alternative forms of child care, as well as implementation of comprehensive programmes regarding return to work after the break related to childbirth and upbringing.

Planned activities

- Changing regulations to facilitate establishment of pre-school education facilities and equal access to pre-school education for children.
- Development of the system of legal and financial support for local governments setting up and running pre-school education facilities.

2) Promotion of awareness of the educational, not only care-related, function of kindergartens and getting parents involved in pre-school education, hence improving their educational competencies

Current situation

Kindergartens are perceived mainly from the angle of their care-related function. Building among parents, teachers and local governments and non-governmental organizations the awareness of the importance of pre-school education will enable to increase access to pre-school education and increase the level of pre-school education popularization.

Implemented activities

In the MNE systemic project is being implemented, titled "Poland-wide campaigns promoting the model of lifelong learning". First part of the project covers promotion of early childhood education, and hence levelling disproportions in popularization of pre-school upbringing on urban and rural areas. Very important element of the activities listed above consists in overcoming administrative, financial and mental barriers. Information campaign refers to all these three aspects.

Planned activities

- Further information-promotional campaign whose objective is to change social attitudes towards the need of pre-school education on the specific areas. This objective results directly from renewed Lisbon Strategy of European Union.
- Further information-promotional campaign encouraging using the facilitations in the regulations regarding establishment of pre-school upbringing units.

Target situation

– Achievement of pre-school upbringing index at the level of 90% in total country-wide and 80% on the rural areas not later than by 2020.

3) System of non-financial support for families with children with disabilities – access to services, compensating dysfunctions

Current situation

Development of maternal-foetal medicine and intervention treatments performed among children reduces the number of deaths caused by congenital defects. At the same time the lifestyle maintained by significant proportion of population at working age and hazards related to environmental pollution result in increased risk of disabilities among children. Moreover it should also be noted that every year more than 10 thousand children have accidents of various sort. These factors contribute to increase in the number of children requiring support at subsequent stages of life, which results both in increased burden of healthcare system, social support system as well as education system. System of access to rehabilitation for children with disabilities requires to be improved. The absence of its sufficient effectiveness leads to the increase of probability of becoming by the children dependent on support (and unable to function on one's own) in their further life. Early support may lead to complete compensation of developmental disorders in significant number of children.

In the school year 2010/2011, 149 090 pupils with disabilities attended schools of all types and sorts, which constituted app. 3% of overall number of pupils. Pupils with disabilities attended mainstream and integrated schools (66 424 pupils – 45% pupils with disabilities) and special schools (82 666 pupils – 55% pupils with disabilities).

Examples from other countries show that effective healthcare and rehabilitation as well as education systems, ensuring comprehensive and multi-specialist support on possibly earliest stage of child's life reduce the proportion of dependence and dysfunction on further stages of life.

Implemented activities

Early support of child development is conducted from the moment of disability discovery to starting school education, based on the opinion on the need of early support of child development, issued by evaluation board of public or non-public psychological and pedagogical, including specialist, counselling service. The opinion includes recommendation for proper form of assistance and support to be provided to the child and their family, in particular psychological and pedagogical assistance, including speech therapy, according to the needs.

Implemented changes in the scope of organization of psychological and pedagogical assistance provide for ensuring support to the child in their closest environment – in their kindergarten, school and educational facility.

The objective of early support of child development is to stimulate psychomotor and social child development by ensuring specialist assistance as early as possible from the moment of discovery of child's disability, possibly closest to their place of residence.

Applicable educational regulations enable various public (units of local government at different levels) and non-public entities to organize early child development support, ensuring at the same time financing for implementation of this task from state budget.

Funds allocated to education of pupils with disabilities, including organization of early child development support, are included in the amount of education-related part of general subvention for local government units for a given year. Under the criteria for distribution of 0.6% of provisions from this part of general subvention, applying units of local government were provided with funds allocated for co-financing of on-going renovation works performed in schools (facilities), including these aiming at elimination of architectural barriers with reference to pupils with disabilities. At the same time early development support is carried out for children from the moment of disability identification to the moment of starting school education. Financial funds for implementation of early support of children development are provided from state budget to local government units under the education-related part of general subvention based on the opinion on the need of early support of child development, issued by evaluation board referred to above.

Planned activities

– Covering children at risk from disability with early development support classes, from the moment of developmental disorder or disharmony identification and continuing these classes – as it is currently – to the moment of starting school education.

  In the case of damage to child's organism, occurring before, during or after childbirth, basic condition for achieving positive effects of the therapy is possibly earliest commencement of diagnostic, therapeutic and rehabilitation actions, even immediately after childbirth.

  The following reasons support possibly earliest diagnosis of disorders and hazards as well as commencement of rehabilitation, therapy and support of children development:
  - exceptionally high level of plasticity of central nervous system in the early development period and related thereto possibility of disturbed functions correction and deficits compensation,
  - possibility that development of many disorders in progressive form may be stopped, and that even adverse changes may be completely stopped,
  - higher susceptibility of small children to revalidation proceedings and in effect faster progress of improvement,
  - easier generalization by children of developed skills and habits,
  - many disorders increase with age and therapy and education of older children is more difficult,
  - greater involvement of parents of small children in cooperation with specialists and active participation in child's therapy.

  Execution of activities for children who had developmental disorder diagnosed is appropriate and has its purpose, because with respect to substantial number of such children early development support may lead to complete compensation of developmental disorders. In the case of children suffering from more serious developmental disorders, thanks to early support it may be possible to trigger positive developmental potential. Early rehabilitation activities will also prevent deterioration of bio-psycho-social functioning and rooting of negative effects of child's disability.

– Regulations regarding covering children with disabilities with early development support are included in the Act of 7 September 1991 on *Education System* – covering also children at risk from disability with early development support requires amendment to the aforementioned Act.

Target situation

– Improvement of the quality of life of children and their families due to commencement of early intervention, enabling reduction or elimination of dysfunctions that in the case of abandoning specific activities may lead to disability.

School education

149. Education system, due to its universality, constitutes natural mechanism allowing, on one hand, to identify and develop persons of greater potential and at the same time making it possible to level opportunities already at early stage of life. In Poland participation in school education is practically universal, and the index of persons aged 18-24 who early end education (in 2009 – 5.3%, in 2010 – 5.4%) places Poland among the leaders of EU states (average value in EU in 2009 – 14.4%, in 2010 – 14.1%)[2]. This means that in the Polish society there is still the conviction that the higher the level of completed education the easier it is to cope in professional life and improve one's life quality. This fact is used mainly for improvement of education quality at all its levels.

150. Main tasks that are and will be implemented in the area "school education" refer to the issue of its quality and the purposes it should serve. Moreover this area encompasses also the tools from the scope of social cohesion, hence referring to the social, integrating and preventive role of school, as well as from the scope of shaping healthy lifestyle through health-oriented education:

1) Targeting general education at training key competencies, complex skills in addition to simple skills and creativity of students

Current situation

Results of international studies (PISA 2000, 2003, 2006 and 2009) show the continuous increase in developmental potential in the population of Polish students, including also the students with lowest and highest results. This positive effect however does not apply to complex skills (such as independent thinking, hypotheses formulation, scientific reasoning, and ability to see alternative solutions or communication skills). In order to meet the expectations of the contemporary world it is necessary to focus more on development of creative and critical thinking, self-organization, effective communication or team work.

Implemented activities

As of September 2009 new core curriculum for pre-school upbringing and general education in various types of schools has been implemented which places emphasis on development of key competencies. Curriculum reform aims at improvement of quality and learning outcomes. Process is monitored as part of educational studies carried out under systemic project "Quality and effectiveness studies as well as institutionalisation of research facilities".

[2] Data based on the reports of European Commission: „Progress towards the common European objectives in education and training – Indicators and benchmarks 2010/2011" and „2012 Joint Report of the Council and the Commission on the implementation of the Strategic Framework for European cooperation in education and training (ET 2020) – Education and Training in a smart, sustainable and inclusive Europe"
http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/indicators10_en.htm
http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc/joint11/wp_en.pdf

Lowering the age of compulsory pre-school preparation (from 5th year of life) combined with popularization of pre-school upbringing and lowering the age of starting compulsory education (from 6th year of life).

Planned activities

- Development of tools for systemic examination of quality of education in schools at national level, including in particular tools that enable to study development of students' competencies in time; development of national studies enabling in-depth evaluation of the level of youth's and adults' competencies based on international experiences (inter alia studies of PISA and PIAAC);
- Complete implementation and continuation of curriculum reform for general education;
- Constant assessment and, if necessary, correction of core curricula with simultaneously raising expectations regarding the learning outcomes (knowledge, skills and attitudes) obtained by pupils;
- Popularization of team work in learning process;
- Relative reduction of the time of classes conducted in the classroom-lesson system in favour of flexible teaching forms (also in groups with participants from various units) as well as, especially in upper secondary school, definite increase in the time and significance of pupil's own work;
- Reorientation of the evaluation of learners' accomplishments towards more in-depth assessment of problems-solving skills, also in a team;
- More thorough assessment of the learning outcomes in schools;
- Performance of analysis of Polish students' skills and abilities in the scope of English language (especially in juxtaposition city-country) and on this basis commencement of adequate activities in order to ensure universality of English teaching on good level from the first grade of primary school or lower secondary school, in particular by increasing accessibility of good English teachers in the countryside and in small towns. Increasing requirements regarding the effects of English education at the end of lower secondary school (lower secondary school leaving examination) and at the end of upper secondary school (secondary school leaving examination);
- Reducing disproportions in the level of pupils' accomplishments in the area of key competencies in all types of schools, confirmed with results of international studies (PISA, PIRLS/TIMSS);
- Further improvement of Polish pupils' accomplishments in the scope of competencies measured in international studies;
- Increasing among the pupils the level of creative and critical thinking, self-organization, effective communication or team work.

2) Supporting development of digital competencies – digital school

Current situation

According to studies conducted in 2009 every fourth fifteen-year-old pupil in our country has difficulties with searching for necessary information on the Internet, and only every thirtieth pupil from this group freely navigates the Internet.

Diagnosis of Polish schools development in terms of being equipped with modern technologies supporting educational process shows that education system requires high and well-implemented investments.

An important issue is also the need of continuous improvement of teachers' digital competencies, as well as increasing accessibility of multimedia educational contents.

Implemented activities

Introducing in new core curriculum for pre-school upbringing and general education preparation of the pupil to life in information society as one of school's tasks and identifying among the effects of learning the ability to efficiently use advanced information-communication technologies to find and select and critically assess information.

Development of digital base of educational resources available to teachers, executed with reference to the project "Knowledge portal for teachers Scholaris".

Introducing the option of permitting for use at schools of textbooks in electronic form (e-books) and multimedia textbooks

Introducing the option of keeping of electronic registers as the only form of record-keeping by schools (e-register).

Planned activities

- Equipping primary schools with ICT solutions that will be used for teaching in 4-6 grades. Equipment will include portable computers, interactive whiteboards, projectors and devices for data transmission;
- Development of teachers' digital competencies by equipping teachers with portable computers to be used during classes and execution of trainings for teachers with focus on individual needs and skills of teachers of a given subject;
- Increasing accessibility of multimedia educational resources by extension of education portal Scholaris and supporting purchase by schools of educational contents in line with their individual needs;
- Covering all schools with broadband Internet access;
- Creating mechanism that encourages school headmasters and teachers to acquire and improve their skills in the scope of utilisation of new technologies during conducted classes.

3) Upgrading the system of external examinations, adjusted to new core curriculum for general education and oriented towards evaluation of key competencies

Current situation

Introduction of external examinations was a significant accomplishment of the Polish education system. External examinations enable to – in objective manner – measure the level of students' knowledge and skills at the end of specific educational stages, allowing specification of educational added value and providing valuable feedback to student, parents and local communities. Results of secondary school leaving examination fulfil also role of recruitment tool for higher education facilities.

On the other hand the system of external examinations still requires further improvement and professionalization. Results of external examinations should provide possibly most comprehensive information about students' competencies, with special focus on

application of acquired knowledge and skills to solve real problems, encountered in professional and social life.

Considering that external examinations are very significant for students and teachers, it is important to ensure that they are oriented towards these competencies development of which in students is of strategic importance. Well designed and conducted external examinations may be a powerful stimulus to improvement of education methods and results.

Implemented activities

With reference to implementation, as of 1 September 2009, of new core curriculum for general education, adaptation of the system of external examinations after 2nd, 3rd and 4th education stages is necessary. This process was initiated by introduction, as of 1 September 2010, of amendments to Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 30 April 2007 *on conditions and methods for evaluating, classifying and promoting pupils and adult learners as well as test and examination procedures in public schools,* with which the new formula of lower secondary school leaving examination was specified.

Planned activities

– Entry into force of new core curriculum for general education makes it necessary to introduce, as of the school year 2014/2015, new primary school leaving examination and new secondary school leaving examination;

– Targeting external examinations at evaluation of key competencies (examination assignments should be to greater extent analytical, problem-oriented so that a student could demonstrate proper application of acquired knowledge and skills).

Target situation

– Modified system of external examinations with professional tools:
  - will measure the learning outcomes, described in core curriculum, including some of students' key competencies,
  - will measure the level of knowledge and skills of entire population of students after 2nd, 3rd and 4th education stages in the scope of Polish, foreign modern language and mathematics,
  - will test progress in learning with respect to entire population of students,
  - will provide access to its measurements to students, parents, schools and their governing authorities, local and state authorities – in a form adequate to a specific entity and in adequate scope.

4) Diversification of the form of the classes and further individualization of education process

Current situation

In Poland "education individualization" is often associated only with organization of education process for pupils with special educational needs and interpreted as support for children and youth with developmental deficits and particularly gifted students. Meanwhile individualization should be a constant element of schools and teachers' operations and should mean to be interested in the needs of *every* child. Individual predispositions, talents, interests, barriers and difficulties to overcome apply to a greater or lesser extent to every pupil.

The model of psychological and pedagogical assistance is embedded in school's work. However school is not yet fully prepared to create offer adequate to educational needs correlated with pupils' individual development and their psychological and physical abilities.

Implemented activities

Optimisation of organizational and legal solutions in the scope of education of pupils with special educational needs.

More than 52 thousand headmasters and teachers participated in trainings preparing schools and facilities for work in compliance with adopted solutions.

In the school year 2010/2011 103 primary schools and lower secondary schools participated in the pilot of new solutions.

Systemic project under 3rd Priority of OP HC "Development and implementation of comprehensive system of work with gifted pupil."

Pilot programmes under the model of work with pupil with special educational needs.

Planned activities

- Development of tools for identification of pupils' talents;
- Training for teachers in the scope of contents selection, teaching methods, didactics organization forms and educational effects in work with a pupil, taking into account their individual predispositions, including the ability to properly target and guide child's development;
- Ensuring good information flow between various education stages in the scope of pupils' special educational needs;
- Development of the system for exchange of information about available forms of developing pupils' interests;
- Establishing platforms for effective cooperation for a gifted pupil between school, parents and specialists in the field in which a pupil demonstrates talents;
- Establishment of comprehensive system for supporting school in development;
- Rationalization of teacher's working time in favour of increase in the hours allocated in school to individual work with a pupil;
- Education and training of teachers preparing them for work with a pupil with developmental deficits;
- Development and implementation of popular diagnostic tools aiming at supporting teachers in identifying and developing pupils' talents;

5) Development of model for work with exceptionally gifted student

Current situation

Poland has god traditions regarding support for the most gifted ones, however the scale of these actions is too small and they lack stable financial base. System of effective support for institutions and persons already operating for the benefit of gifted persons is required.

Implemented activities

Programme of support for highly gifted children is executed at national level by Polish Children's Fund, non-governmental organization, and provides care to app. 550 persons a year.

At the local level there are non-governmental organizations, local governments, schools and higher education facilities operating, however their activities are not of comprehensive nature and the network of such initiatives is too small.

Under the systemic project implemented by the MNE operates a group of independent experts who develop proposals for systemic solutions.

Planned activities

Solutions proposed by the team of experts include:

- Enriching, at local level (commune, poviat), the offer of classes stimulating and developing interests;
- Creating offer of regional (provincial) classes developing interests and talents, inter alia, in cooperation with higher education facilities and scientific facilities;
- Strengthening and extending Poland-wide programmes addressed to the most gifted persons and enabling them genuine scientific work;
- Building database regarding offer of the classes and forms of support for talents;
- Establishment of e-learning platform enabling remote work with gifted children and exchange of experiences of persons who support gifted students;
- Development of new model for work with gifted pupil, especially in environments that are geographically provincial and economically and socially disadvantaged;
- Ensuring permanent pool of funds allocated exclusively to supporting talents;
- Development of system of grants for conducting classes that stimulate and support talents at all administrative levels. Grants at the first level (poviats, communes) should be low and easily accessible. At further levels, along with increase in funds pool, the requirements towards classes' organizers should be raised as well. Separate pool of funds should be allocated to pupils' grants for the initiatives contributing to development.

6) Development of new model of vocational training and education and promotion of vocational education

Current situation

In Poland selective (negative) nature of vocational education, too closely related to social status, still prevails. Schools executing vocational education (in particular basic vocational schools) are perceived as designated for youth who are less gifted, less interested in education or with behavioural difficulties.

It is believed that the current system of vocational education not effectively enough provides pupils/graduates with competencies and qualifications needed on the labour market.

16-year-olds who attend basic vocational schools achieve dramatically lower results in PISA studies that test general competencies than their peers studying in comprehensive

secondary schools. A special issue is also absence of qualified teachers of vocational subjects.

Implemented activities

Adopting new classification of professions for vocational education, taking into account integration and grouping of professions as well as isolating thereunder qualifications in a profession – new classification enables faster, more flexible and individualized acquisition of professional qualifications.

Development of new core curriculum for education in 200 professions (including 7 artistic professions), along with 252 qualifications included in new classification of professions in vocational education, formulated in the language of learning outcomes, and therefore oriented not towards education process, but rather towards the results thereof.

Preparation of organizational solutions that enable schools, educational facilities and other entities indicated in the act, to execute, as of 1 September 2012, qualification vocational courses in the scope of qualifications identified within professions.

Adjusting vocational examinations to new form of external examinations validating specific (identified) professional qualifications, passed gradually during the education cycle, which should improve their pass rates.

Modifying and making the system of extramural examinations more flexible – to enable broader and fuller acquisition of general education and enable persons who do not participate in lifelong education, but have necessary practice in a profession, to have their professional qualifications validated.

Promoting good practices and examples of cooperation between education organizers and employers.

Restoring the prestige of vocational school, inter alia, by activities of the Ministry of National Education under the project "Vocational school – the school of positive choice".

Amending classification of professions in vocational education, taking into account division of professions according to qualifications.

Publishing the Regulation of the Minister of National Education on the classification of vocational education.

Planned activities

- Ensuring conditions for functioning of year-long examination facilities;
- Support for schools and facilities of education system in implementation of statutory changes, especially in the scope of introduction of new core curriculum for vocational education and new core curriculum for general education;
- Preparation and popularization of sample curricula for the professions included in new classification of professions for vocational education, in compliance with new core curriculum for training in professions;
- Including the schools that execute vocational education into the system of lifelong education – conducting qualification vocational courses as of 1 September 2012 will be one of basic forms of didactic and educational activities of a school;
- Preparing schools, educational facilities and employers to execution of new examinations validating qualifications in a profession;

- Launching a system for validating qualifications and skills acquired under non-formal and informal education;
- Implementation of new model for adult education (only primary school for adults, lower secondary school for adults and comprehensive secondary school for adults and vocational education on qualification vocational courses, and in the case of certain professions also in post-secondary schools). Placing the emphasis on acquisition of personal and social competencies in the education process;
- Increasing effectiveness of vocational education financing – taking into account students participating in qualification vocational courses conducted by schools and facilities for which governing and subsidizing authority are units of local government, according to distribution of the amount of education-related part of general subsidy to local government units for a given year and introducing the principle of subsidizing by local government units of qualification vocational courses conducted by non-public schools after they document positive passing of vocational examination by courses participants;
- Development of model of vocational counselling and integrated system of educational-professional information under OP HC;
- Placing the emphasis on acquisition of personal and social competencies in the education process;
- Increasing the scope of responsibility of local government units in the activities for development of network of schools conducting vocational education;
- Introduction of new legal and financial solutions that will enable profitable cooperation of both parties – schools and employers, using best local practices, e.g. financing transport to employers or costs of accommodation for students from schools that are not located in location of the employer who may offer apprenticeship;
- Addressing the problem of significant deficit of teachers of vocational subjects and their relative detachment from professional practice; development of model of attracting to the profession teachers of vocational subjects with experience in economic practice – in particular considering the possibility of eliminating the limit in the amount of their remuneration to remuneration of certified teacher;
- Development of a model of modern, innovative, attractive vocational school and its pilot implementation in several schools executing education in attractive professions closely related to new directions of economy development – the objective is to overcome negative stereotype of the school conducting vocational education (apart from real level of competencies also perception of a given type of school by the graduates is important: as long as the schools executing vocational education are perceived as worse indeed such will be the situation of their graduates, which is a mechanism of vicious circle).

7) Development of new model of training of teachers and access to teaching profession

Current situation

International comparative studies show that Polish teachers have poorer preparation to the profession that their colleagues in leading countries in terms of educational results. For example: TEDS-M study revealed that mathematics teachers in primary schools achieve lower results in the scope of abstract thinking or non-schematic problem-solving, and

therefore demonstrate the same deficits that later occur in their students. Another study, in turn, showed that majority of Polish teachers admits that their higher education studies failed to provide them with key pedagogical skills, such as the ability to individualize education or enforce discipline in class.

A source of these issues is defective system of pre-service teacher training. Teaching studies are excessively theoretic, and good organization of apprenticeship is not positioned among priorities of academic departments.

Significant supplement of pre-service teacher training is vocational development of teachers, carried out by in-service teacher training facilities. The offer of vocational development is however detached from teachers' needs.

Implemented activities

In February 2012 Regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher Education of 17 January 2012 *on educational standards for teaching profession*, issued in concert with the Minister of National Education, entered into force.

Planned activities

- Postponing the age of choosing teaching educational path to the commencement of level II studies or post-graduate studies (possibly except for pre-school and early school education studies) so that teaching studies would be undertaken by graduates of good subject studies who are mature enough to make the decision on starting teaching career;
- Ensuring compliance of qualification requirements towards teachers with the assumptions of Bologna process (i.e. for example with the possibility of changing the field of study in the moment of transition from I to II level of studies);
- Focusing teachers' education on dedicated, selective forms of education: innovative level II teaching studies of practical profile, offering highest value further subject-related education with focus on work at school and, for graduates of level II subject studies, who did not receive teaching preparation, innovative post-graduate studies/qualification courses conducted by higher education facilities and other entities, e.g. non-academic centres of excellence;
- Increasing significance and quality of practical education on teaching studies of all types;
- Supporting establishment and development, in and outside of higher education facilities, of specialised improvement centres offering innovative programmes of teachers' training;
- Contracting (ordering) teaching studies by public authorities, in the scope justified with forecasted demographic situation in schools;
- Opening and adding flexibility to the path of accessing teaching profession by introducing the right to work in teaching profession, granted to persons who acquired necessary qualifications regardless of the path applied for acquisition thereof (formal or non-formal, in higher education system or outside of it), in line with the assumptions of Polish Qualification Framework;
- Introduction of obligatory accreditation of qualification courses conducted by teachers improvement facilities, based on education effects achieved therein.

8) Increasing attractiveness of teaching profession, improving effectiveness and quality of teachers' work and development of incentives for best teachers to stay in the profession

Current situation

Drop in the impact of the mechanisms motivating teachers to improve work quality, specified in applicable provisions of education law is observed.

Professional promotion in its applicable formula ceases to have motivational nature (already as many as 50% of teachers achieved the highest promotion level).

The current system for compensating teachers provides for incentive element in the form of proper allowance, however it makes the amount of rise depend exclusively on the promotion level and guarantees this rise to every teacher, regardless of quality of their work.

Evaluation of teacher's work in a systemic manner is performed only under the procedures provided for in promotion. There is no obligation to execute cyclical evaluation of teacher's work. This situation makes it more difficult to apply tools motivating for better work the teachers of longer job seniority.

Implemented activities

Involving by the Minister of National Education broad group of representatives of various circles related to education into the works of consultative-advisory team, in order to perform analysis of current system of teachers' professional practice, and in the case of determining the need for changes – to design direction thereof in order to acquire possibly best teaching staff that will take up new challenges and guarantee improvement of teaching quality.

Plan of increasing teachers' remuneration that should achieve the level adequate to the social significance of the profession is being implemented. Within 2008-2012 teachers remuneration will averagely increase by 50%.

Planned activities

- Designing direction of changes, and then detailed solutions regarding legal conditions regulating the professional status of teachers, in order to encourage best teachers to take up work and remain in the profession, in the scope of the system for compensating teachers (promoting work quality irrespective of teacher's job seniority) and the system for teacher's promotion;
- Development of legal solutions strengthening the tools of human resources policy, ensuring employment of the best, in the scope of:
    - teachers' work evaluation – obligatory periodic evaluation of teacher's work, making it easier to dismiss teachers who do not perform well in the profession,
    - mechanism of increasing teachers' remuneration – flexible system enabling promotion of best teachers regardless of job seniority and promotion level;
- Reform of quality control system and schools support system;
- Development of system of support for teachers suffering from professional burnout – development of conditions enabling requalification (by adequate system of trainings, courses, as well as teachers improvement programme).

9) Introducing new system of school support and education quality control

Current situation

Previous system of pedagogical supervision turned out to be poorly adaptable to the pace and scope of society's educational needs and changes and is slightly useful for improving schools' and facilities' work quality. It was commonly believed that pedagogical supervision came down to controlling compliance of schools' and facilities' activities with legal provisions. Supervision system lacked mechanisms that would stimulate development of schools and facilities.

Implemented activities

Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 7 August 2009 *on pedagogical supervision* specified the forms of pedagogical supervision as:

1) evaluation of educational activities of schools and facilities,
2) control of adherence to legal provisions by schools and facilities,
3) supporting the work of schools and facilities and teachers in the scope of their didactic, educational and care activities as well as other statutory activities.

Planned activities

- Mobile evaluator (quality inspector) becomes the central figure in the new system, who executes substantial part of tasks consisting in execution of examination activities directly in the schools and facilities and the remaining part with application of advanced IT technical solutions;
- The next step should be to ensure proper support to schools in utilisation of evaluation results, development of repair programmes and improvement of activities' quality. Therefore it is necessary to isolate from pedagogical supervision the task consisting in supporting schools and facilities in improvement of their work and delegating this task to specialist entities – Education Development Centres;
- Ensuring that the evaluators represent adequate competence level.

10) Strengthening the social and early intervention functions of the school, by increasing support oriented towards compensating deficits in access to public services that may be offered by the school and restoring its preventive function

Current situation

Many studies point out to numerous problems of children and youth that are often identified in school. These include, inter alia, consumption of psychoactive substances (alcohol, tobacco, drugs, designer drugs, and steroids), occurrence of peer violence and aggression, domestic violence towards children, unequal access to medical care, chronic diseases, obesity, developmental deficits, environmental neglect, and adaptive difficulties related to cultural differences and other. Persistent problems may significantly impact progress in development and education achieved by the pupils. In this context school plays an important role of an entity that early identifies occurring problems and develops support offer.

Implemented activities

The Act *on Education S*ystem imposes on the school an obligation to develop upbringing programme (it encompasses all contents and activities of upbringing nature) and prevention programme adjusted to the development-related needs of students and needs

of a given environment (covering all the contents and activities of preventive nature). Furthermore, new core curriculum specifies general and detailed objectives of health, social education and physical education. Signed in 2010 new regulation in the scope of new principles for granting and organizing psychological and pedagogical assistance, organizing special education and psychological and pedagogical support and counselling aims at early identification of student problems and ensuring them support and individualized psychological and pedagogical support in their educational and upbringing environment – in kindergarten, school and facility.

Verification of preventive programmes and activities taken at the level of governmental administration. Carrying out trainings of pedagogic staff and parents in the scope of upbringing and preventive competencies, e.g. under the programme Preventive Intervention (in the cases of consumption of psychoactive substances, aggressive behaviours, violence).

Implementation of pilot version of HEPS project – Healthy Eating and Physical Activity in Schools in schools.

Planned activities

- Increasing the number of teachers prepared to implement Preventive Intervention towards students demonstrating problematic behaviours (consumption of psychoactive substances, aggression, violence), under pedagogical supervision – monitoring implementation of preventive activities in the scope of addictions prevention. Increasing effectiveness in the scope of identification of individual developmental and educational needs of students and providing psychological and pedagogical support. Implementation of new formula for the work of the team of teachers, group tutors and specialists conducting classes with a student, including planning individual educational path, educational-therapeutic path adjusted to identified needs;
- Performing analysis of the possibility of establishing doctor's and dentist's offices in schools;
- Providing conditions for implementation in schools of the programme aiming at preventing students' obesity and overweight.

11) Increasing participation of children and youth with disabilities, whose type and level of disability allows that, in mainstream education.

Current situation

In the school year 2011/2012, 145 664 students with disabilities attended schools of all types and sorts, which constituted app. 2.67% of overall number of pupils. Pupils with disabilities attended mainstream and integrated schools (65 636 pupils – 45% pupils with disabilities) and special schools (80 028 pupils – 55% pupils with disabilities).

Implemented activities

In the MNE organizational and legislative changes have been prepared that enable ensuring adequate support in the education process of students with disabilities, irrespective of the type of school they attend – mainstream, integrated or special. Proposed changes will contribute mainly to extension of the offer on the part of mainstream school, addressed to students with disabilities. Mainstream schools have been obligated to develop individual educational-therapeutic programmes for the student holding special educational needs certificate issued due to diagnosed disability, which means design and execution with respect to such student of individual educational path.

Prepared changes in a special way emphasize the role of student's parents in organization of support for their child. Parents will be able to participate in the meeting of the team composed of teachers and specialists, analysing their child's situation and specifying the areas in which they require support. This will allow more effective organization of education for greater number of students with disabilities in mainstream schools. Funds allocated to implementation of the objective specified above are included in the amount of education-related part of general subvention for local government units for a given year.

At the same time in education system for children at the age from birth, from the moment of disability identification, early development support is carried out to the moment of starting school education.

Planned activities

It is planned to popularize and promote inclusive education, to successively increase the number of children with disabilities who attend mainstream and integrated schools, and to ensure at the same time high quality education and support adjusted to their developmental and educational needs. This shall be achieved by systematic support for schools and facilities provided by institutions designated for this, such as psychological and pedagogical counselling centres or teachers improvement facilities, perceived as long-term process, consisting in execution, in cooperation with kindergarten, school or a facility, of diagnosis of needs, by support in implementation of planned activities, accompanying the entity when a change is being introduced up until joint evaluation with a school of the effects and cooperation by development of conclusions for further work.

It is necessary to build a model in which special schools are designated only for disabled children whose disability degree prevents education in mainstream or integrated school and their parents would decide on education in special facility.

Also issuing psychological and pedagogical decisions as well as system of support for families are significant. Choice of the place of education shall be still based on in-depth analysis of the needs and abilities of a given child. Recommended forms of education that are most beneficial for a child shall be still identified by evaluation boards of psychological-pedagogical counselling centres in special educational needs certificate. Final decision on the form of education, including special education for their children and youth shall be still made by the parents (legal guardians).

It is necessary for the teachers to supplement their qualifications essential for work with disabled children in order to ensure them adequate support.

Target situation

- Every school and educational facility should be prepared to provide pupil with disability with proper conditions for education and psychological-pedagogical support;
- Increase in the number of schools free from architectural barriers and in the number of specialists employed in schools;
- By 2015 the percentage of disabled children attending mainstream and integrated schools shall increase by 10%.

Education at higher level

151. Currently of key importance for higher education are improvement of education quality and better adjustment of graduates' competencies to the requirements of the labour

market. The nearest challenge for higher education facility and public policy will be implementation of higher education reform, introduced with the Act of 18 March 2011 *on Amendments to the Act on Higher Education, the Act on Academic Titles and Degrees, the Act on Academic Titles and Degrees in Art and to Certain Other Acts* as well as science reform introduced with the set of Acts of 30 April 2010 (Act *on National Science Centre*, Act *on Rules for Financing Science*, Act on *Research Institutes*, Act *on National Research and Development Centre*, Act *on Polish Academy of Sciences*). In line with higher education reform, higher education facilities will be, inter alia, obligated to develop education programmes in the language of education effects and to ensure complete transparency of examination systems, enabling to prove that all the students who received a diploma, had really achieved all the learning outcomes provided for in the programme of studies. On the other hand, higher education facilities will be granted freedom of creating fields of study not limited by central standards. In the oncoming years these facilities should learn how to use it in order to effectively control quality of the classes, rationalize fields of study and make education programmes more adjusted to the needs of labour market.

State supports the process of higher education quality improvement, by implementing, already from the first stage of the reform, projects targeted at ensuring complete transparency of the results achieved in higher education. The major projects are:

1) Implementation of effective system of ensuring higher education quality, based on evaluation of education effects

Current situation

According to the situation prevailing before amendment of 18 March 2011 of the Act *on Higher Education*, evaluation of education quality by State Accreditation Committee (as of October 2011 change of the name to Polish Accreditation Committee) was based mainly on formal compliance of education process (e.g. number of hours of specific classes) as well as material and human resources, e.g. minimum library staff complement, with rigid central regulations. This process prevented greatest abuses, but at the same time limited innovativeness of non-standard solutions and on the whole poorly served the purpose for which it was designed.

Due to the amendment to the Act *on Higher Education* as of the academic year 2012/2013 central education standards are abolished. This means that the minister competent for the issues of higher education will not designate mandatory scope of courses with specified numbers of didactic hours. Higher education facilities become obligated to define currently conducted and new programmes with the learning outcomes, specified for individual education areas taking into account levels and profiles of fields of study in compliance with National Qualification Framework for Higher Education. The minister competent for the issues of higher education has also issued regulation on the model learning outcomes that apply to specific fields of study. Higher education facility, preparing the programme, will be able to use this model description or develop own original specification. Basis for programme evaluation, performed by Polish Accreditation Committee, will be proving by unit running the programme, that all the students who received the diploma really had achieved assumed learning outcomes.

The ability to freely create studies programmes will not apply only to the studies that prepare for work in regulated professions, including regulated medical professions, because in Poland regulations of European Union are applicable in this scope that cover also the rules of education process.

Implemented activities

Based on the amendments of 18 March 2011 to the Act *on Higher Education* and amendments to secondary legislation, higher education facilities are obligated to develop internal system for ensuring quality of education. Polish Accreditation Committee (PAC) performs programme evaluation oriented towards assessment of the activities of internal system for ensuring education quality in the scope of education effects analysis. The PAC executes also institutional evaluation of elementary organization unit of higher education facility in which it focuses on assessment of functioning and improvement of the systems for ensuring education quality.

Also important is imposition on the PAC of the obligation to cooperate with national and international institutions and organizations operating in the area of higher education, especially with the ones whose subject matter of operations is evaluation of education quality and accreditation.

In the state budget also earmarked subsidy has been specified for co-financing of quality-oriented activities, from which the funds will be directed to, by way of a competition, inter alia co-financing of basic organization units of higher education facilities holding distinguishing score based on the opinion of Polish Accreditation Committee and co-financing of the activities of basic organization units of higher education facilities in the scope of implementation of education quality improvement systems and National Qualification Framework.

Planned activities

At the moment when legislative changes establishing new model of education quality evaluation, based on assessment of learning outcomes, were introduced, it is necessary to intensify information activities that will strengthen the awareness of the importance and sense of introduced changes in academic circles. In order to ensure that the reform initiates real change in the way of thinking about didactics it is necessary for the minister competent for the issues of higher education to stimulate exchange of information about good practices and exchange of experiences between the leaders in higher education facilities, in the scope of designing education programmes based on learning outcomes and National Qualification Framework as well as in the scope of functioning and improvement of internal quality assurance systems:

- Monitoring implementation by higher education facilities of the provisions of the Act *on Higher Education* in the scope of effective development, implementation and improvement of education quality assurance systems;
- Substantive reinforcement of Polish Accreditation Committee (PAC) so that its members and experts are fully capable of evaluating education quality according to new principles;
- Making PAC obligated to ensure participation of foreign experts in programme evaluations, especially in institutional evaluations and areas;
- Introducing the principle that accreditation granted to Polish higher education facilities (units conducting studies) by foreign/international agencies recognised by international academic environment constitutes a reason for PAC to grant accreditation.

2) Changing the model of financing higher education to the one that rewards offer quality and competition between higher education facilities

Current situation

Current system of financing of higher education from budget funds does not foster implementation of necessary changes oriented towards the effects and high quality of education. It is passive: financing level of a given higher education facility is generally related to the number of its students of full-time courses – and therefore the state has hardly any impact on what studies offer it finances and in what scope it is adjusted to social and economic needs. Such financing system favours the fact that not all public higher education facilities to adequate extent compete with each other with education quality, because every place on free-of-charge full-time studies is financed on the same level, irrespective of education quality.

One should however note that adopted by the Sejm on 18 March 2011 act reforming higher education system includes provisions regarding introduction of earmarked subsidy for co-financing of quality-oriented tasks implemented on higher education facilities. This subsidy corresponds to the area of didactic activities and is designated for:

1) Co-financing organization units that receive the status of National Leading Academic Centres (art. 94b sec. 1 para. 1 of the HEA),
2) Co-financing basic organization units of higher education facilities holding distinguishing score based on the opinion of Polish Accreditation Committee, with respect to education evaluation (art. 94b. sec. 1 para. 2 of the HEA),
3) Co-financing basic organization units of higher education facilities in the scope of implementation of education quality improvement systems and National Qualification Framework (art. 94b. sec. 1 para. 3 of the HEA),
4) financing tasks related to education of participants of full-time PhD courses conducted in non-public higher education facilities (art. 94b. sec. 1 para. 4 of the HEA),
5) financing increase in the amount of PhD scholarships for 30% of best PhD students (art. 94b. sec. 1 para. 5 of the HEA).

Implemented activities

In the competition-based manner, identical for public and non-public higher education facilities funds are distributed for development of best didactic offer, ensuring improvement of education quality.

Planned activities

- Competition-based selection and financing of National Leading Academic Centres from among academic units, organization units of public and non-public higher education institutions;
- Competition-based co-financing of some of the tasks of public and non-public higher education institutions (e.g. implementation of National Qualification Framework) under quality-oriented subsidy;
- Further reinforcement of quality-oriented nature of didactics financing model including performance of the works on the algorithm considering quality-oriented indicators;
- Supporting from state budget studies programmes of highest quality, executed both in public as well as non-public higher education facilities;

– Development of quality-oriented and competition-based channels of distribution of budget funds for education execution.

3) Increasing the number of graduates of science and engineering and technical studies by way of further increasing their attractiveness

Current situation

Currently the economy needs highly qualified graduates mainly in the area of science, engineering and technology and health sciences. Excessive education in the areas of management, social sciences or humanities leads to gradual disappearance of the phenomenon of bonus for education degree.

Implemented activities

Since 2008 the Ministry of Science and Higher Education has been implementing governmental programme of contracted fields of study aiming at increasing the number of students of mathematics, technology or natural sciences. These are the fields of study described as strategic to the development of Polish economy. In 2011 the number of students that continued education in contracted fields of study amounted to nearly 30 thousand. Implementation of the programme specified above enables, inter alia, additional lectures delivered by outstanding scientists, academic travels, classes and internships in companies as well as student scholarships.

Implementation of the programme of contracted fields of study brings notable effects. Among the candidates for higher education studies the popularity of fields of study that are priority to economy development has increased. As many as seven fields from the list of contracted fields of study have been positioned on the list of twenty most popular fields of study, in which the construction studies witnessed highest advance and were placed on the second position among the most popular majors in Poland. Studies on universities of technology become more popular than studies on typical universities.

On the website of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education there is a multimedia map functioning with information about contracted fields of study conducted in Polish higher education facilities: http://www.nauka.gov.pl/szkolnictwo-wyzsze/kierunki-scisle/. Under the project co-financed from the funds of European Union under European Social Fund, special web portal has also been created, dedicated to scientific fields of study, www.studianaprzyszlosc.pl, whose objective is to encourage candidates to take up studies in scientific fields of study.

Planned activities

– Evaluation and continuation of systemic project "Contracted fields of study",

– Continuation of promotional activities encouraging taking up science and engineering and technical studies.

Professional activity, adult learning and parenthood

152. The condition of key importance to flexible responding to the challenges of modern labour market is establishment of common and attractive system of lifelong learning. The following tools are designed to serve this purpose:

1) Popularization of adult learning, especially in its most effective forms (learning in the workplace and in the environment of social involvement, short course forms)

Current situation

In Poland the percentage of persons who learn at the age from 25 to 64 is very low. This percentage in 2010 amounted to 5.3%, whereas in EU 9.1%, and the objective of EU by 2020 is 15%. Adult persons most often choose education at schools for adults, whereas the short course forms do not enjoy adequate interest. Existing provisions insufficiently persuade employers to develop incentives and options to learn in the workplace and outside of it. Also organized system of getting employees engaged in education system is missing. There is no system for recognizing qualifications acquired in a non-formal way, which hampers professional reorientation. There is no possibility of validating, with a nationally recognized document, competencies acquired via informal and non-formal learning, especially in the professions and specializations for which there is no school or craftsmen education path.

Implemented activities

Adopting new classification of professions for vocational education, taking into account integration and grouping of professions as well as isolating thereunder qualifications in a profession – new classification enables faster, more flexible and individualized acquisition of professional qualifications.

Development of new core curriculum for education in 193 professions included in new classification of professions in vocational education, formulated in the language of education effects, and therefore oriented not towards education process, but rather towards the results thereof.

Preparation of organizational solutions that enable schools, educational facilities and other entities indicated in the act, to execute, as of 1 September 2012, qualification vocational courses in the scope of qualifications identified within professions.

Adjusting vocational examinations to new form of external examinations validating specific (identified) professional qualifications, passed gradually during the education cycle, which should improve their pass rates.

Modifying and making the system of extramural examinations more flexible – to enable broader and fuller acquisition of general education and enable persons who do not participate in lifelong education, but have necessary practice in a profession, to have their professional qualifications validated.

The MLSP develops and popularizes (also via Internet) sets of information materials, important for professional career planning and choice of educational paths, including the ones specifying: names and descriptions of professions present on the labour market, competencies expected by employers necessary to work in professions/perform scope of work present on labour market, specification of professions, offer of training institutions, module-based training programmes to be used by educational institutions. Labour market programmes contributing to competences improvement are promoted.

The project of Polish Agency for Enterprise Development titled Family Business Initiative is a very successful example of building among the companies the awareness that participation of companies' owners and employees in learning process is in their best interest.

The MSHE takes various activities aiming at informing about and preparing academic staff for implementation of lifelong learning policy in the scope of higher education. For the Act of 18 March 2011 amending the Act *on Higher Education,* the Act *on Academic Titles and Degrees,* the Act *on Academic Titles and Degrees in Art and Certain Other*

Acts, has introduced regulations in the scope of lifelong learning. Information and training activities apply in particular to implementation into higher education system of National Qualification Framework.

Trainings and consultations:

1) Executives of the MSHE participated in nearly 60 meetings with the senates of public higher education facilities and selected non-public higher education facilities, during which both the ideas underlying introduction of the reform as well as detailed solutions implemented thereunder were presented;
2) All over Poland 48 training seminars were organized regarding National Qualification Framework, in which nearly 4 000 persons participated;
3) Also 16 information-promotional meetings were organized in which almost 500 persons participated;
4) Seminars regarding National Qualification Framework for Higher Education are also organized by the Foundation for the Development of the Education System under the works of Bologna Experts Team;
5) Specialist trainings for newly appointed Polish Accreditation Committee are organized;
6) Individual consultations for projects of original education programmes.

The MSHE issued two publications regarding implementation of National Qualification Framework for Higher Education:
1) Guidebook – "Ramy kwalifikacji dla szkolnictwa wyższego" (in English: National Qualification Framework for Higher Education);
2) Publication: – "Jak przygotowywać programy kształcenia zgodnie z wymaganiami Krajowych Ram Kwalifikacji dla Szkolnictwa Wyższego?" (in English: How to prepare education programmes according to National Qualification Framework for Higher Education?).

The MSHE performs also works on creating possibility of validating learning outcomes achieved in a different than formal manner (non-formal and informal learning). They aim at increasing accessibility of higher level education, including for persons with disabilities.

Planned activities

- Popularization of the initiative of lifelong learning, as well as increasing awareness of learners and employers that learning outcomes are of key importance, rather than the very fact of learning. Thus the significance of learning in a different than formal manner increases. Implementation in development policy of the document titled "Perspective for life-long learning" which diagnoses the situation of lifelong learning in Poland and also proposes activities contributing to popularization of lifelong learning;

- Ministry of Science and Higher Education prepares assumptions for amendments to the Act *on Higher Education* and accompanying implementing legislation in the scope of regulations for certifying the learning outcomes achieved in a different than formal manner and for enabling persons who will participate only in selected courses to use the didactic offer of higher education facilities.

- The Ministry of Economy works on development of the system of incentives for entrepreneurs encouraging to create for employees the conditions for acquiring qualifications in the workplace and outside of it;

- Advanced national system of qualification, based on learning outcomes, whose important elements will be Polish Qualification Framework and national qualification register, will account for greater diversification of ways of acquiring qualifications, under formal, non-formal education and in result of informal learning. Placing emphasis on achieved education outcomes, and not on the way of achieving them, will strengthen the role of learning in various life situations, also outside the system of formal education;
- Profession-related information will be developed, including the set of standards for competencies required by employers;
- Due to high level of regional diversity in the scope of access to institutions offering instruments in the field of adult learning it is necessary to create additional infrastructure, which will enable to ensure equal access to education in this form;
- Polish adaptation of European Skills, Competences and Occupations taxonomy (ESCO) will be prepared with specification of skills, competencies and qualifications necessary to work in several thousand jobs.

2) Development of Polish Qualification Framework (PQF) as part of European lifelong learning space and in compliance with European Qualification Framework

Current situation

Absence of modern national qualification system as a system based on learning outcomes in various locations, forms and at various stages of life and related to European Qualification Framework makes it difficult to compare diplomas and certificates with one another. It also does not enable to compare and include in national qualification system the competencies obtained under non-formal education and in the course of informal learning.

This situation not only limits mobility of employees and learners between EU states and economy sectors and extends the recruitment of proper employees and increases the costs incurred by employers, but also constitutes a serious obstacle in lifelong learning – supplementing knowledge, skills and social competencies.

Upon commencement of development of national qualification framework Poland had to take up a broader challenge at the same time, consisting in implementation of systemic solutions in the area of qualification. In result of multidisciplinary activities an advanced national qualification system (NQS) based on learning outcomes will be created. This system will be composed of overall state activities related to formal validation of the outcomes of any type of learning (validation), achieved in very diverse manners during the whole life to meet the needs of labour market, civil society and individual development of the learners. The new system will account for greater diversification of the ways for acquisition of qualifications. NQS is to contribute to increase in the options of inclusion and formal documentation of new competencies acquired in very diverse manners during entire life. Key element of this system will be the Polish Qualification Framework (PQF), constituting common point of reference for all the qualifications.

Implemented activities

From October 2008 to January 2010 expert works under systemic project "Development of the balance of qualifications and competencies available on labour market in Poland and the model of National Qualification Framework" were conducted.

Since July 2007 Educational Research Institute has continued the works on PQF under

the systemic project titled ”Preparation of Substantive and Institutional Assumptions for Implementation of NQF and the National Qualifications Register for Lifelong Learning“, in effect of which the final model of Polish Qualification Framework and institution for national qualification system will be developed.

Amendments of 10 March 2011 to the Act *on Higher Education* enabled to extend autonomy of higher education facilities in development of new education programmes and creation of new fields of study through implementation of National Qualification Framework for Higher Education. Implementing legislation issued to the Act specified above stipulated, inter alia, learning outcomes for eight education areas, in which higher education studies may be conducted and model education outcomes for sample fields of study. Education process was described in the language of education outcomes. Also new process of institutional and programme accreditation, performed by Polish Accreditation Committee, was formulated with evaluation of education outcomes accomplishment.

Planned activities

- Currently works are in progress on the national qualification system, including Polish Qualification Framework that constitutes one of its main elements;
- Popularization of the system of alternative forms of qualifications acquisition with the module for adjusting them to changing economic environment;
- Organization of new trainings and issuing publications in the scope of National Qualification Framework for Higher Education.

3) Development of the system of financial support for adult learning

Current situation

Currently in Poland there is no internally coherent and comprehensive system for financing adult education that would answer the challenges related to very low participation of Poles in this form of education.

Except for the network of public, free-of-charge schools for adults, non-public schools for adults are functioning that hold the entitlements of a public school. These schools obtain subsidies from the budget of local government unit in the amount of 50% of costs incurred by a given unit of local government for every student in public schools of the same type. Remaining costs are covered by education participants. Moreover non-public schools without the entitlements of a public school are functioning, that charge persons receiving education therein relevant fees – however such education is of improvement nature only, without the possibility of validating acquired qualifications. Also public and non-public education system facilities are operating on the market such as: continuing education facilities, practical education facilities and professional development and improvement centres where the education is executed in out-of-school forms. Education in out-of-school forms is also conducted under freedom of economic activity by legal or natural persons.

A very significant element of financing the system of adult education is the funds from European Social Fund. That increased financing however has not turned so far into increased percentage of adult Poles declaring participation in education activities yet. Also questionable quality and effectiveness of trainings and other education activities executed based on these funds have been repeatedly highlighted.

Implemented activities

Performed are works on the mechanisms encouraging entrepreneurs to invest in education of their employees.

Due to amendment to the Act *on Employment Promotion and Labour Market Institutions* since 2009 obtaining funds from Labour Fund for co-financing of employees' trainings has been facilitated for the employers. Also unemployed persons and some categories of persons looking for a job have easier access to trainings and other forms of activation oriented towards qualifications improvement and may apply for greater scholarship support during education.

Amendments to the provisions of the Act of 11 March 2004 *on Goods and Services Tax* introduced, as of 1 January 2011, changes in taxation of services provided by various entities in the area of education. Services provided by schools, higher education facilities, education system facilities, entities that received superintendent's accreditation are exempt from VAT tax. Regardless of the status of trainings organizer also the services in the scope of foreign languages learning and vocational education or requalification are exempt from the tax.

Planned activities

- Increasing effectiveness of trainings co-financed or financed from Labour Fund. Based on international best practices and existing solutions in the horizon of oncoming years a coherent and holistic system of financing adult education addressed to all social groups should be created (it may be based, inter alia, on the so called individual educational accounts, educational vouchers and/or extra payments for education loans);
- At the same time mechanisms encouraging cooperating with schools conducting vocational education will be strengthened and made more flexible.

Old Age

153. The process of population ageing will generate, in the perspective of 2020, challenges related to dynamically increasing number of persons of advanced age. This involves the need to create system that supports such persons in the decision to remain professionally and socially active. The following should serve the aforementioned purpose:

Promotion of professional and social activity of seniors – "silver economy"

Current situation

Demographic changes that gained dynamics in the recent years and will become distinct in the second half of the decade require completely new approach towards the issue of presence and activity of the elderly in the society.

Implemented activities

Since 2008 a governmental programme has been implemented titled "Solidarność Pokoleń. Działania dla zwiększenia aktywizacji zawodowej osób w wieku 50+" (in English: "Solidarity of generations. Activities for increasing professional activation of persons aged 50+"). Under this programme series of legislative changes has been introduced, contributing to increasing attractiveness of employing the seniors, streamlining their activation, popularizing and facilitating improvement of qualifications by these persons and making it easier for them to take up new job, as well as limiting the factors encouraging leaving labour market earlier.

Development of draft of strategic document regarding solutions in favour of development of lifelong learning in Poland, including accomplishment of learning outcomes included in Polish Qualification Framework, encompassing all age groups, with special focus on non-formal and informal learning of the elderly.

Ministry of Interior and Administration (presently Ministry of Administration and Digitization) and Office of Electronic Communications took the patronage over the project: *Coalition of digital inclusion of persons 50+ "M@turity in the Web"* (original name: *Koalicja cyfrowego włączenia osób 50+ „Dojrz@łość w sieci"*). Objective of this initiative is to establish cooperation between non-governmental organizations, offices, institutions and private companies and to prevent digital exclusion of persons above 50 years of life. The Coalition popularizes in this age group knowledge about advanced technologies and undertakes initiatives contributing to improvement of skills at using them.

Planned activities

- Implementation of strategic document regarding solutions in favour of development of lifelong learning in Poland, including learning outcomes included in Polish Qualification Framework;
- Implementation of programmes for professional integration and activation at regional level;
- Promoting learning models for possibly longest maintaining professional and social activity as well as promoting the idea of age management in companies.

D. Right to education

Universal primary education

154. In Poland education is compulsory up to the age of 18. This is ensured under art. 70 of Polish Constitution. Manner of performance of schooling obligation is stipulated by the ESA.

Education in public primary schools and lower secondary schools in the scope of framework education plans is free of charge for every one (art. 7 of the ESA). Non-public schools and non-public schools with public school accreditation may charge students for educational services.

Pre-school education – covers children aged 3-6 years.

155. Based on art. 14 para. 3 of the ESA, a 5-year-old child is obligated to participate in one-year pre-school preparation in a kindergarten, pre-school unit organized in primary school or other form of pre-school education. This obligation starts with the beginning of school year in the calendar year in which the child turns 5. By 31 August 2011 the obligation of one-year pre-school preparation applied to 6-year-olds.

156. According to art. 16 para. 5b the obligation of one-year pre-school preparation may be fulfilled also by attending a kindergarten abroad, including based on international contracts or agreements on direct cooperation, concluded by schools, local government units and governmental administration bodies or under European Union's educational programmes or by attending kindergarten by diplomatic representation of a different state in Poland.

Obligation of school education

157. According to the provisions of art. 15 para. 2 of the ESA obligation of school education starts with the beginning of school year in the calendar year in which a child turns 7 and lasts until graduation from lower secondary school, however not longer than until the person turns 18.

158. According to the provisions of art. 16 para. 5 of the ESA obligation of school education is fulfilled by attending primary and lower secondary school, public or non-public.

Obligation of school education may be fulfilled also by attending a school abroad based on international contracts or agreements on direct cooperation, concluded by schools, local government units and governmental administration bodies or under European Union's educational programmes or by attending a school by diplomatic representation of a different state in Poland. Also participation of children and young people with deep mental retardation in revalidation-educational classes organized in compliance with separate provisions is recognised as fulfilment of the obligation of one-year pre-school preparation, of school education and of learning.

Moreover, at parents' request the headmaster of accordingly public or non-public kindergarten, primary school and lower secondary school to which the child was admitted may allow the child, based on their decision, to fulfil accordingly the obligation of one-year pre-school preparation outside kindergarten, pre-school unit or different form of pre-school education, and of school education outside the school.

159. Obligation of school education for 6-year-old children is planned to be introduced as of the school year 2014/2015. Reduction of the age of starting school education involves many activities supporting this initiative that impact education quality and preparation of schools for accepting 6-year-old children, among others: promotion of pre-school education, individualization of education process and change in teaching methods related thereto, preparation of teachers to new challenges and modernisation of school base. Since 2009 new core curriculum for pre-school education and general education has been successively introduced. This has positive effect on the change in the manner of teaching the youngest pupils, and adjusting teaching requirements and expectations and methods to their age and individual needs. Also a systemic project is being implemented – "Individualisation of teaching and education process for pupils of grades 1-3 in primary schools". Its objective is to support all primary schools in activities related to this area. Also significant is implementation of "Government programme for supporting in 2009-2014 governing authorities in ensuring safe conditions for learning, upbringing and care in the grades 1-3 in primary schools and primary general music school – Happy School". Under this programme in app. 86% of the schools special facilities have been created for leisure and education delivered with active methods for the students of 1-3 grades, equipped with advanced didactic aids. 2 004 outdoor playgrounds have been built.

Education at upper secondary level

Obligation of learning

160. In compliance with the provisions of art. 16 of the ESA, after graduation from lower secondary school it is possible to fulfil obligation of learning by attending public or non-public upper secondary school, attending classes executed in out-of-school forms in public and non-public facilities holding accreditation, by attending classes executed under educational activities conducted by legal or natural persons, performance of practice at the workplace.

Obligation of learning may be fulfilled also by attending a school abroad based on international contracts or agreements on direct cooperation, concluded by schools, local government units and governmental administration bodies or under European Union's educational programmes or by attending a school by diplomatic representation of a different state in Poland.

It is also possible to fulfil obligation of learning outside school, based on the permission issued by headmaster of the school to which the child was admitted.

Also participation of youth with deep mental retardation in revalidation-educational classes organized in compliance with separate provisions is recognised as fulfilment of obligation of learning.

161. Education in the scope of framework education plans in public upper secondary schools is free of charge (art. 7 of the ESA), whereas non-public schools and non-public schools with public school authorization may charge the students for educational services.

Continuation of education in school system

162. All graduates of lower secondary schools may continue education in selected upper secondary schools: comprehensive or conducting vocational training, public, non-public as well as non-public with public school authorization.

163. All candidates applying for admission to a school conducting vocational training submit doctor's certificate of no contraindications to be trained in a given profession.

164. Art schools are publicly accessible to all persons. In public art schools education is entirely free of charge. Conditions for access to such schools are stipulated by the Regulation of the Minister of Culture and National Heritage of 16 June 2011 *on conditions and procedures for admitting students to public art schools and facilities and transferring between different types of schools.* Main criteria, fulfilment of which enables admission to art school or facility are: candidate's age and lack of medical contraindications for starting by them education in a given profession (more detailed information about this subject: see paras. 26-28 hereof).

165. Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development executes educational tasks mostly by running upper secondary agricultural schools. Conditions for access to such schools result from the Regulation of the Minister of National Education and Sport of 20 February 2004 *on conditions and procedures for admitting students to public schools and transferring between different types of schools* and are identical for all other schools executing vocational training.

166. Student, who graduated from upper secondary school before turning 18, may also fulfil obligation of learning by attending higher education facility.

167. Poland has one of the lowest in Europe percentage of persons aged 18-24 who ended their education at lower secondary education level or lower and do not participate in any further education or training. Lowering the age of starting schooling obligation to 6, with simultaneous maintenance of the length of various education periods on further educational stages may result in further reduction of this percentage, because higher than currently number of students will graduate from upper secondary school before turning 18, i.e. before the end of constitutional schooling duty. At the same time higher number of students, due to the obligation of learning indicated above, will take up education in upper secondary schools.

168.Post-secondary schools – execute vocational education both in the professions taught in basic vocational school (labourers' occupations) as well as enable students to acquire the title of a technician. These schools may be attended by persons who graduated from a school giving upper secondary education (in practice the most numerous group of students of post-secondary schools are graduates of comprehensive secondary schools).

According to new classification of the professions of vocational education, post-secondary schools will conduct education in 55 professions.

169. Teacher training colleges and teachers' colleges of foreign languages, functioning in education system, train teachers of kindergartens, primary schools and educational and care facilities as well as teachers of foreign languages and constitute supplement to the education conducted by higher education facilities.

Colleges for social services workers – operate under the ESA, whereas issued under art. 9f sec. 4 of the ESA Regulation of the Minister of Social Policy of 24 March 2005 *on colleges for social services workers* stipulates, inter alia, detailed principles and conditions for establishment, transformation and liquidation thereof as well as organization and principles of operations of these facilities.
Persons who hold secondary education completion diploma and positively pass qualification procedure (identical for all candidates) may start education at these colleges. Individually achieved result acquired in the course of the proceedings decides on admission to the facility.

Colleges for social services workers may charge for entrance examinations and didactic classes, excluding didactic classes conducted under full-time schedule in public colleges, unless they are repeated due to unsatisfactory educational results. Funds for implementation of the tasks related to running colleges for social services workers are included in the amount of education-related part of general subvention for local government units for a given year.

170. Amendments to the HEA introduced under the Act of 7 November 2009 *on Amendments to the Act on Higher Education*, created possibility of transforming public colleges into public facilities of higher vocational education, incorporating them intro the structures of higher education facilities or merging the facilities listed above into public facility of higher vocational education. Agreements concluded by the authorities governing teachers training colleges, teachers' colleges of foreign languages or colleges for social services workers with higher education facilities in the scope in which they enable a graduate, after passing diploma examination, to apply for the option to sit the examination in higher education institution and be granted the diploma and bachelor's degree, expire as of 30 September 2015.

171. Participants of the classes of postsecondary schools and colleges may use financial support granted under the provisions of the ESA. (More information about this issue – see information in paras 90-107 hereof)

Higher education

Conditions of applying for admission to higher education institution

172. In Poland higher education may be obtained in public and non-public higher education facilities. Condition of applying for admission to all higher education studies in all facilities is holding secondary education completion diploma. Admission to higher education studies is performed based on the results of secondary education completion

diploma. Higher education facility may execute additional entrance examinations only if it is necessary to verify artistic talents, physical fitness or special predispositions to start studies in a given field of study that cannot be tested with secondary education completion examination or when a person applying for admission to higher education studies holds secondary education completion diploma obtained abroad. These examinations cannot apply to the subjects covered with secondary education completion examination.

Admitting persons with disabilities

173. Solutions adopted in the Act of 27 July 2005 *on Higher Education* with respect to obtaining financial support also in the case of studying in the systems of extramural studies have beneficial impact on the decisions on starting higher education studies by persons, whose disability prevents them from studying in full-time system, requiring daily presence on the classes. Also the possibility of conducting higher education studies with use of E-learning methods and techniques has been introduced.

174. The Act of 18 March 2011 on Amendments *to the Act on Higher Education, the Act on Academic Titles and Degrees, the Act on Academic Titles and Degrees in Art and Certain Other Acts* introduced many changes in the provisions of the HEA in the scope of increasing access to higher education for persons with disabilities:

- art. 169, sec. 5 of the HEA stipulates that the conditions and mode of recruitment procedure in the case of entrance examinations should account for specific needs of the candidates for higher education studies who are persons with disabilities;
- art. 13, sec. 1 para. 9 of the HEA stipulates that elementary tasks of higher education facility include, among others, creating for persons with disabilities conditions for full participation in education process and academic research. Thus new task was added to the tasks of higher education facility, which clearly defines role of higher education institution in supporting disabled students and PhD students, both in education process as well as execution of academic research;
- art. 94 sec. 1 para. 11 of the HEA indicates that public higher education facility receives from the state budget subsidies inter alia for the tasks related to creating for students and PhD students with disabilities conditions for full participation in education process. In the previous version of the aforementioned provision tasks related to education and therapeutic rehabilitation of disabled students were outlined. Thus flexibility of this provision has increased.
- art. 94 sec. 4a of the HEA stipulates that currently also non-public higher education facility shall be entitled to receive subsidies for the tasks related to creating for students and PhD students with disabilities conditions for full participation in education process, and not as it was previously that only public facilities are entitled to received such subsidies. Thus catalogue of entities in which disabled persons participating in higher level education are provided with proper conditions for participation in education process has been expanded;
- art. 162 para. 6 of the HEA indicates that the conditions that have to be met by the provisions of studies regulations in higher education facilities in the scope of proper execution of didactic process, should account for special needs of the students who are persons with disabilities.

Significant role in eliminating barriers that make it difficult for persons with disabilities to obtain higher education in our country is fulfilled by the structural funds of European

Union. Projects implemented under 13th Priority of Operational Programme Infrastructure and Environment, for which Ministry of Science and Higher Education is the so called intermediate body, aim at creating facilities and solutions that support ensuring equal opportunities, including equal access to higher education institutions.

Extending access to education in higher education facilities

175. In the scope of shaping anti-discriminatory public policy in the area of education, emphasis should be placed also on lifelong learning policy whose goals and principles have been presented in the document "Perspective for life-long learning"[3)] and accompanying initiatives. For it is significant to ensure constant access to education regardless of age or disability, including education conducted by higher education facilities (post-graduate studies, courses and trainings) in order to develop new skills essential on the labour market. Therefore activities aiming at extending educational offer of higher education facilities for persons of the age which is non-standard to studying, are being executed.

176. Development of the network of public and non-public higher education facilities, inter alia, by establishment by higher education facilities of subsidiaries, branch faculties and branch didactic centres, contributed to broader access to education in higher education facilities in Poland. This process enabled young people living outside large academic centres to study near their place of residence. At the same time access to higher education for young people whose family or economic situation does not allow them to leave their family home in the countryside or small town was broadened.

177. Higher education reform which entered into force on 1 October 2011 introduces new principles related to studying in more than one fields of study. Based on these principles 10% of students with best results shall have the right to study free of charge in more than one field of study, ensuring that they will not only complete additional studies started at the expense of the state, but also take full advantage of acquired knowledge. Thanks to this students from the environments for whom it was previously necessary to choose paid forms of studies gain broader access to free-of-charge full time studies. This change will ensure that decision on taking up another field of study will not be made rashly. At the same time students with highest aspirations will keep the possibility to develop their talents free-of-charge.

Artistic education

178. Higher artistic education refers to 19 higher artistic education institutions (8 music academies, 7 fine arts academies, 2 theatre academies, 1 theatre and cinema academy and 1 music and fine arts academy) that teach more than 15 thousand students and employ app. 3 thousand academic teachers. In higher artistic education facilities app. 1.5 % of students are foreign trainees and students from all over the world.

Higher artistic education institutions are important cultural centres, significantly impacting the form of cultural life of the region and the country. Many foreign higher education institutions cooperate with Polish schools, international events (competitions, festivals, etc.) organized by higher education facilities enjoy large interest abroad.

[3)] This document was adopted by Interministerial Team for Lifelong Learning on 4 February 2011 and was approved by Standing Committee of the Council of Ministers on 31 March 2011. Based on the decision of Coordinating Committee for Development Policy of 8 December 2011, "Perspective of life-long learning" shall be an annex to the Strategy for Human Capital Development.

One, common for every candidate, indicator that determines whether they are admitted to a facility is artistic talent and gifts.

Financial support for students and PhD students

179. In Poland for many years systems supporting the poorest persons have been functioning in order to ensure equal access to higher education. The aforementioned systems account for the principle of equality before the law, hence financial support is accessible to students and PhD students regardless of the form of studies (full-time, extramural), legal status of higher education facility (public, non-public) and regardless of whether a student and PhD student pay for the studies or participate in free-of-charge studies. Condition for receiving given type of support is compliance with the criteria provided for in the regulations. Issue of ensuring financial support to students and PhD students is the subject of interest of governmental administration and local governments.

180. As of 16 December 2009, the Act of 5 November 2009 *on Amendments to the Act on Higher Education*, introduced material-legal basis for granting financial support to students and PhD students by local government units (art. 173a and 199a of the HEA) as well as for granting scholarships for academic achievements for students and academic scholarships for PhD students by natural or legal persons who are not state or self-governmental legal persons (art. 173b and 199b of the HEA). Financial support for students and PhD students from the budgets of local government units is exempt from personal income tax under art. 21 sec. 1 para. 40 of the Act *on Personal Income Tax*.

181. The Act of 18 March 2011 *on Amendments to the Act on Higher Education, the Act on Academic Titles and Degrees, the Act on Academic Titles and Degrees in Art and to Certain Other Acts* introduced significant changes to the system of financial support for students and PhD students, that aim at increasing accessibility of social scholarships for persons who are in difficult situation, as well as increasing transparency and simplifying the system of granting the aforementioned support to students and PhD students.

182. The provisions referring to financial support for students and PhD students granted in higher education institutions entered into force on 1 October 2011. Regulations applicable to minister-sponsored scholarships for outstanding achievements (of students and PhD students) as well as financial support for PhD students studying in academic units will enter into force on 1 October 2012.

<u>The most important changes in the area of financial support for students:</u>

1) Change in the catalogue of financial support benefits for students, including but not limited to:

   – replacing social scholarship, accommodation allowance and food allowance with one benefit – social scholarship that may be increased for a student of full-time studies due to accommodation in student hostel or facility other than student hostel (also with unemployed student's spouse or child), if daily transport from the place of permanent residence would prevent or significantly hinder studying,

   – replacing scholarship for academic or sports achievements with the scholarship for best students granted by the rector of higher education institution (for not more than 10% student of every field of study conducted in the institution), at student's request,

   – replacing minister's scholarship for academic achievements and minister's scholarship for outstanding sports achievements for the students with minister's scholarship for outstanding achievements paid on one-off basis.

New catalogue of benefits for the students:
- social scholarship (with the possibility of increasing its amount due to accommodation),
- special scholarship for persons with disabilities,
- scholarship of the rector of higher education institution for the best students,
- minister's scholarship for outstanding achievements,
- allowance.

2) Change in the proportions of higher education institutions' expenditures on social scholarships, scholarships of the rector of higher education institution for the best students and allowance by directing greater funds from subsidy to social scholarships and allowances (increase from 50% to 60%) as compared to scholarships of the rector of higher education institution for the best students (drop from 50% to 40%). This proportion does not apply to utilization of subsidy funds for financial support for PhD students.

3) Increasing by 30% minimum amount of family income per person, ensuring to students social scholarship, as well as, by the same percentage value, maximum income amount by which higher education institution may grant social scholarships (under art. 179 sec. 3 of the HEA).

4) Excluding from the definition of income applied by granting social scholarship additionally, inter alia: scholarships for PhD students as well as scholarships granted to pupils, students and PhD students under:
   - European Union structural funds,
   - non-repayable funds from the support granted by member states of European Free Trade Association (EFTA),
   - international agreements or executive programmes developed for these agreements or international scholarship programmes.

5) Decreasing the amount of income required for the student to obtain the status of financial independence when determining the entitlement to social scholarship, by referring this amount to maximum income amount entitling to social scholarship instead of previous minimum employees' remuneration for work.

6) Introducing the possibility of taking into account, in justified cases, by the body of higher education institution or scholarship committee in the proceedings for granting social scholarship, the opinion of the unit responsible in social assistance system for determining income and financial situation of persons and families.

7) The change of certain scholarship rights of tertiary students, in particular:
   - introducing a possibility to receive simultaneously the rector-awarded scholarship for the best students and the minister-awarded scholarship for outstanding achievements, as well as other financial aid benefits and scholarships awarded by territorial government bodies and employers, as well as coming from structural funds of the European Union,
   - introducing a possibility to receive financial aid benefits in one university programme as selected by the student in a situation when the student is simultaneously enrolled in more than one university programme (previously, the special scholarship for disabled persons as well as the scholarship for academic performance could be received simultaneously in more than one university programmes),

- excluding the possibility of receiving financial aid benefits during subsequent studies after graduating from one university degree programme, except for the situation when a university programme is continued in order to obtain the master degree or its equivalent (previously, it was possible to receive the special scholarship for disabled persons, the scholarship for academic performance and the scholarship for sports achievements as well as the minister-awarded scholarship in each subsequent university programme),
- introducing the obligation for students to submit a statement, in which they confirm that they do not collect financial aid benefits in more than one university programme, using the statement form defined in the university regulation on granting financial aid benefits for students.

The most important changes in the area of financial aid for PhD students:

1) The change to the catalogue of financial aid benefits for PhD students, in particular:
   - replacing the social scholarship, the accommodation scholarship and the boarding scholarship with one benefit – i.e. the social scholarship, the amount of which can be increased in the case of fulltime PhD students staying at hostels or at facilities other than hostels (also with a non-working spouse or child of the PhD student), if everyday travel from the place of permanent stay to the university makes studying impossible or significantly hindered),
   - replacing the scholarship for academic performance with the scholarship for the best PhD students, awarded by the rector at request of the PhD student,
   - introducing the right to apply for a minister-awarded scholarship for outstanding achievements by PhD students.

   The new catalogue of benefits for PhD students:
   - social scholarship (with a possibility to increase its amount based on the accommodation),
   - special scholarship for disabled persons,
   - scholarship for the best PhD students,
   - minister-awarded scholarship for outstanding achievements ,
   - student benefit.
2) Introducing the right to apply for financial aid benefits for PhD students enrolled in PhD programmes in scientific units.
3) The change in the amount of funds that a higher education institution can allocate for financial aid for PhD students – in accordance with art. 103 sec. 3 of the HEA the funds cannot be lower than it results from the proportion of the number of PhD students to the number of tertiary students and not higher than 6% of the total amount of subsidies for financial aid for tertiary students and PhD students (previously it was not more than 3% of the total amount of subsidies).
4) Increasing by 30% of the minimum income per person in a family, that guaranteed to the PhD students that they will be awarded the social scholarship, as well as – by the same % value – the maximum amount of income based on which higher education institutions can award social scholarships (on the basis of art. 179 sec. 3 of the HEA).
5) Excluding from the definition of income used for awarding the social scholarship, inter alia, PhD scholarships as well as scholarships awarded to school students, tertiary students and PhD students in the framework of:
   - the structural funds of the European Union,

- non-reimbursable funds from the aid granted by member states of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA),
- international agreement or implementing programmes developed for these agreements or international scholarship programmes.

6) Reducing the amount of income required to obtain the financial independence status by a PhD student when establishing the right to the social scholarship, by comparing that amount with the maximum amount of income entitling to receive the social scholarship in place of the previous minimum remuneration of employees for work.

7) Introducing a possibility to consider – in justified cases – by the university body or the scholarship commission in the proceedings on award of the social scholarship – the opinion of the unit responsible in the social assistance system for establishing the income and financial situation of individuals and their families.

8) Introducing a possibility to receive simultaneously the rector-awarded scholarship for the best PhD students and the minister-awarded scholarship for outstanding achievements, as well as other financial aid benefits and scholarships awarded by territorial government bodies and employers, as well as coming from the structural funds of the European Union.

183. Tertiary students and PhD students make use also of the possibility to obtain student credit under the Act of 17 July 1998 *on Loans and Credits for Students*. Loans and credits are granted to tertiary students and PhD students on favourable terms. The state treasury pay interests during studies and two years after their completion as well as pays additionally the interests during the period of repaying the credit. There are also other facilities provided, i.e. there is possibility of remission of the credit based on a difficult life situation or good academic performance, as well as long credit periods and low credit instalments are applied. Higher education reform introduces a new surety system, thanks to which also these individuals who were not able to provide banks with the required collateral are now able to get the credit. In the case of students in an especially difficult family or financial situation, the state will provide the surety even for 100% of the credit amount.

Adult Education and Life-long Learning

Supplementing General Education

184. Within the meaning of the provisions of the ESA, the education system provides, inter alia, a possibility to supplement general education for adults. This means that early school leavers, irrespective of their age, can supplement their education by going to schools for adults.

185. Adults who cannot attend school classes can obtain the primary school, lower secondary school and comprehensive secondary school certificate on the basis of an extramural exam, in accordance with the regulation of the Minister of National Education of 18 September 2007 *on extramural exams.*

186. The regulation of the Minister of National Education of 29 December 2009 *on admission rules for persons at the age of more than 16 or 15 years to public or non-public schools for adults* makes it possible to enrol to adult schools, inter alia, minor mothers upbringing a child, who due to duty to take care of a child cannot go to youth school. Such legislation gives minor mothers a chance to fulfil schooling or education obligation, because it offers them a possibility to choose between youth school and adult school,

either full time (3-4 days a week) or part-time (Saturday and Sunday every two weeks). At the same time, the above regulation makes it possible for the following persons to go to schools for adults:

- persons who are late with their educational cycle due to personal circumstances or state of health (e.g. prolonged illness and postoperative care and the necessity to undergo rehabilitation) which make it impossible to pursue or continue education in upper secondary youth school,
- persons above 15 years of age in penal institutions or custody suites with no youth schools.

187. Since the beginning of the 1990s, the number of primary schools for adults has been falling. At the same time, the number of lower secondary schools for adults and the number of students has been rising. Comprehensive secondary schools for adults have been popular all the time.

According to the data from the Education Information System (as of 30 September 2011), in the school year 2011/2012, there are 11 public primary schools for adults and 2 non-public primary schools for adults with public school authorization (and 13 834 primary schools for children and youth), 230 lower secondary schools for adults (and 7 370 lower secondary schools for youth) and 1 463 upper secondary schools for adults (and 14 403 upper secondary schools for youth).

188. Implementation of the Act of 19 August 2011 *on Amendments to the Act on Education System and to Certain Other Acts* shall guarantee adults a possibility to supplement their general education to the level of secondary education and a possibility to acquire and develop their vocational qualifications during qualification vocational courses.

See also information about activities under long-term strategies – Chapter C hereof

Access to Vocational Development Programmes and Courses

189. Amendments were introduced to the regulations in order to guarantee jobseekers, including the unemployed, equal access to active labour market programmes (ALMP). The Act of 3 December 2010 *on the Implementation of certain European Union Regulations concerning Equal Treatment* introduced to the Act of 20 April 2004 *on Employment Promotion and Labour Market Institutions* the rules of art. 2a and 2b which constitute a guarantee of the observance of the rules of equal treatment in the access to and using of labour market services and labour market instruments and the basis for the application of the provisions of the Act of 3 December 2010 *on the Implementation of certain European Union Regulations concerning Equal Treatment* to the equal treatment infringement proceedings.

Introduction of the above amendments strengthened the rule of non-discrimination of clients of employment agencies who are interested in trainings, which is already included in the Act *on Employment Promotion and Labour Market Institutions.* In accordance with art. 40 sec. 6 of the Act, the rule of equality in receiving trainings is applied to sending for trainings, irrespective of sex, age, disability, race, ethnical background, nationality, sexual orientation, political convictions, religion or union membership. New provisions of the above Act (art. 2a and 2b – see the paragraph above) which entered into force on 1 January 2011 make it possible to seek to exercise rights by persons towards whom the rule of equality was infringed.

190. Apart from the regulations specifying the rules of non-discrimination in the access to trainings and other forms of competences development, earlier (with the Act of 19 December 2008 *on Amendments to the Act on Employment Promotion and Labour*

Market Institutions and to Certain Other Acts), on 1 February 2009, amendments to the Act *on Employment Promotion and Labour Market Institutions* were introduced, the aim of which was to guarantee the unemployed and jobseekers greater help in the acquisition, supplementation or development of vocational qualifications, which increases their chances to commence work, as well as introducing changes to make it easier for employers who invest in trainings for their employees:

- the group of persons specified as jobseekers who can be sent for trainings financed by the poviat governor (*starosta*) from the Labour Fund was widened – employees at the age of 45 years and above, inter alia, were included in the group (art. 43 sec. 3 of the above Act),
- the amount was increased up to which the poviat governor (*starosta*) can finance, from the Labour Fund, a training selected by an unemployed person from the offer on the free training services market (art. 40 sec. 3 of the above Act),
- the amount was increased up to which the poviat governor (*starosta*) can finance, from the Labour Fund, costs of exams (art. 40 sec. 3a of the above Act),
- scholarships for unemployed participants of trainings were introduced, replacing a training bonus (art. 41 sec. 1 of the above Act),
- a possibility to finance the whole cost of postgraduate studies for the unemployed (instead of financing 80%) and a scholarship for participants were introduced (art. 42a sec. 1 and 5 of the above Act),
- the amounts of scholarships were increased for continuing education in adult schools and for the unemployed with no vocational qualifications from poor families (art. 55 of the above Act),
- a new development instrument was introduced – vocational preparation of adults (an unemployed person learns from the employer and the education process ends with an exam confirming the skills or vocational qualifications) (art. 53a of the above Act),
- it became easier for employers to receive funds for employee trainings from the Labour Fund – the duty to employ the trained employee for a year was abolished (art. 69 sec. 1 and 2a of the above Act).

191. On the basis of the above amendment of 19 December 2008 to the Act *on Employment Promotion and Labour Market Institutions*, a possibility to reimburse all or part of expenses for travelling for a training was introduced, also when the training takes place in the town of participant's residence (art. 41 sec. 4b of the above Act). Persons participating in the training can also have expenses for accommodation and food reimbursed, if the training takes place outside their residence and a relevant provision was included in the agreement concluded with the training institution (art. 41 sec. 4a of the above Act).

Pursuant to art. 61 of the above Act, a person participating in the training who is a single parent of at least one child below 7 years of age can receive, for the period up to 6 months, reimbursement of the cost of caretaking for the child in the amount not higher than half of the unemployment benefit. The same rules apply to the reimbursement of costs of taking care of a dependent.

Pursuant to art. 43 of the above Act, rights to participate in trainings, postgraduate studies, exams and to receive training loans financed from the Labour Fund were extended to spouses and farmer household members covered by the compulsory farmers' social insurance that are planning to commence work, other gainful employment or business activity in the field other than agriculture.

Continuing Education

192. Support of adult education and continuing education is provided under the Rural Development Fund in the years 2007-2013 as well. The action "Vocational training for persons employed in agriculture and forestry" provides conditions for broadening the knowledge and developing skills which are necessary to run agricultural or forestry business in accordance with the national norms and European Union requirements. The above mentioned trainings lead to restructuring and modernising of agriculture, rise of competitiveness and profitability of agricultural or forestry activity.

193. Numerous projects focused on improving educational offer were supported under the Human Capital Operational Programme (HC OP), including:

a) Support under the Action 4.1 HC OP: adapting programmes of existing university degree programmes to the labour market needs and knowledge-based economy, cooperation between universities and employers in the field of strengthening practical elements of teaching (internships and student apprenticeships) and increasing employers' engagement in the implementation of curricula, better preparation of alumni for entering the labour market, inter alia through the support for academic career offices at universities. Systemic projects aimed at conducting research in the field of university degree programmes which are most needed by employers were supported as well.

b) Under the action 2.3 HC OP, financing the project called *"Vocational training for nurses and midwives under bridging studies"* aimed at developing vocational qualifications of nurses and midwives, which increases the quality of healthcare services provided for the society. After completion of the bridging studies, nurses/midwives supplement their vocational qualifications to the level of BA in nursery or obstetrics, which makes it possible to further develop professionally and continue education/ professional development e.g. during supplementary master studies.

c) Under Priority III (actions 3.3 and 3.4), projects in the field of vocational training, including continuing vocational training, were commenced: "*Improving core curricula as the key to the modernisation of vocational training*", "*Preparation of a model of vocational counselling services and educational and vocational information system on the Internet*", "*System of supporting schools and education establishments which implement module programmes of vocational training*", "*Model system of implementation and popularisation of distance learning in life-long learning*", "*Vocational school as a school of positive choice"*.

194. Under the regional HC OP component, the most important form of support included: actions in order to increase participation in trainings and life-long training, especially through actions aimed at limiting the number of early school leavers, limiting discrimination due to sex, and improving the quality of and access to education and trainings at the primary, vocational and higher level, including for students from rural areas.

The following projects are under way:

– Project "*Improving the core curricula as the key to the modernisation of vocational training*" (01.08.2008 – 31.12.2013). The main aim of the project is the improvement of the quality of vocational training through verification and modernisation of vocational core curricula with respect to their adaptation to the requirements of the knowledge-based economy.

– Project "*Preparation of a model of vocational counselling services and educational and vocational information system on the Internet*" (01.03.2009 – 31.12.2012).
The main aims of the project include:
  - promoting access to vocational and educational counselling services for students from the level of the lower secondary school, through the building of a coherent vocational counselling model adapted to current needs and implementing the idea of life-long counselling;
  - promoting access to reliable educational and vocational information for students, parents, teachers and vocational counsellors through the creation of the Internet Educational and Vocational Information System (IT portal) with information relevant at the national, province and poviat level.

– Project "*System of supporting schools and education establishments which implement module programmes of vocational training*" (01.05.2009 – 31.12.2012).
The main aims of the project are as follows:
  - developing a system of support for vocational schools which are preparing for universal implementation of module programmes, in accordance with new changes in vocational training;
  - creating an integrated IT system which facilitates access to the base of module programmes and educational packages, as well as information about vocational training, especially training based on programmes with a module structure.

– Project "*Model system of implementing and popularising distance learning in life-long learning*" (01.07.2009 – 30.06.2014). The main aim of the project is ensuring smooth functioning of distance learning through the development a systemic solution model. In 2010, a promotional campaign of the project was conducted and the Internet site of the project was created. "Draft model of implementing distance learning in Poland" was developed.

– Project "*Vocational school as a school of positive choice*". The main aim of the project is to prepare and popularise, before the academic year 2012/2013, solutions which improve work quality and attractiveness of vocational schools, and ultimately, to spark interest of students of lower secondary schools in continuing their education in vocational schools.

  Under the project, inter alia, the following actions were planned:
  - assessment of the public vocational education in Poland, including the degree of school preparation to provide vocational training,
  - preparing management and pedagogical staff of vocational schools and establishments for the implementation of solutions resulting from the modernisation of vocational training,
  - strengthening and popularising the cooperation between vocational schools and employers,
  - changing the image of vocational schooling.

Quality of Education

School Management

195. The school or establishment headmaster is chosen through a competitive process. Pursuant to the provisions of art. 36a of the ESA, the governing authority appoints the headmaster for a period of 5 academic years. In justified cases, in concert with the school superintendent, appointment for 1 academic year is possible. Pursuant to the provisions of

art. 37 of the ESA, after consultations with the school board, teachers' board and the governing authority, the headmaster appoints and dismisses a deputy headmaster and other managerial positions in the school or establishment in which the positions can be created pursuant to the charter.

Pursuant to art. 39 of the ESA, the headmaster of the school or establishment is obliged, inter alia, to:

- manage the school or establishment and represent it before third parties,
- provide pedagogic supervision,
- take care of students and create conditions necessary for a harmonious psycho-physical development of students through active, health-oriented activities,
- implement resolutions of the school board and teacher's board,
- manage funds and use them,
- cooperate with universities and teacher education institutions within the scope of organising teaching internships for university students,
- properly organise and conduct tests and exams in the school or establishment,
- in the school/establishment, create conditions for the activity of volunteers, associations and other organisations which conduct pedagogical activity or expand and enrich teaching, educational and caregiving offer of the school/establishment.

At the same time, the headmaster is the manager of a workplace for employed teachers and employees who are not teachers.

196. Teachers' Board – pursuant to the provisions of art. 40-42 of the ESA, it operates in a school or establishment employing at least 3 teachers. It is a collective school or establishment body within the scope of realisation of its statutory tasks regarding teaching, education and caregiving.

The teachers' board, apart from a headmaster of the school or establishment, consists of all the teachers employed in the school or establishment and employees of other workplaces who are instructors of practical vocational training or educate juvenile employees in collective accommodation establishments, for whom teaching and educational work constitutes the core activity. Persons invited by the chairperson of the teachers' board can participate in the teachers' board meetings in an advisory capacity, with the consent or at the request of the teachers' board. The headmaster of the school or establishment is the chairperson of the teachers' board. The headmaster of the school or establishment presents general conclusions resulting from the pedagogic supervision and information about the school activity to the teachers' boarder at least twice a year.

The teachers' board is responsible for:

- accepting a school or establishment working plan, after the school or establishment board expressed an opinion on it,
- adopting resolutions on: students classification and promotion results, students expelled from the list of students, innovations and pedagogical experiments in the school or establishment, after the school or establishment board expressed an opinion on the drafts,
- organisation of professional development for teachers from the school or establishment.

The teachers' board expresses opinions particularly on: the functioning of the school or establishment, including weekly timetable of lessons and extracurricular courses, draft of a financial plan of the school or establishment, proposals of the headmaster of the school

or establishment about the allotment of teaching, educational and caregiving classes, headmaster's applications for distinctions, prizes and other honours for teachers.

The teachers' board can make an application to dismiss a teacher from the position of a headmaster or from other managerial position in the school or establishment.

197. The school or establishment – board functions pursuant to the provisions of art. 50-51 of the ESA.

The school or establishment board, inter alia, participates in the resolution of internal issues of the school or establishment, adopts the charter of the school or establishment, expresses an opinion on the draft of a financial plan, school or establishment working plan, drafts of innovations and pedagogical experiments, on their own initiative assesses the circumstances and the situation of the school or establishment and files applications to the headmaster, the teachers' board, the governing authority and province educational council.

In order to support the statutory activity of the school or establishment, the school or establishment board can collect funds from voluntary contributions or other sources.

The school or establishment board consists of the following persons, in equal numbers: teachers chosen by all the teachers, parents chosen by all the parents and students chosen by all the students (does not apply to primary schools, and in lower secondary schools students' participation in the school board is not mandatory). The board should consist of at least 6 persons.

The manner of choosing members of the school or establishment board is specified in the charter of the school or establishment.

The term of the school or establishment board is 3 years, whereas the school or establishment charter can provide for an annual change of a third of the board composition.

The school or establishment board adopts the rules of procedure and chooses its chairperson. Minutes are taken of meetings of the board.

The headmaster of the school or establishment and other persons (invited by the chairperson with the consent or at the request of the board) can participate in the school or establishment board meetings in an advising capacity.

The creation of the school or establishment board is organised by the school or establishment headmaster on their own initiative or at the request of the parents' board, and in the case of lower secondary schools and upper secondary schools also at the request of the student board.

198. The parents' board – operates pursuant to the provisions of art. 53-54 of the ESA and represents all the parents of the students of the school or establishment.

The parents' boards consist of:

- in schools – one representative of each unit board, chosen in secret voting at the meeting of parents of unit students,
- in establishments – at least 7 representatives chosen in secret voting at the meeting of parents of establishment students,
- in art schools – at least 7 representatives chosen in secret voting at the meeting of parents of school students.

The parents' board adopts the rules of procedure.

The parents' board can file applications and opinions on all school or establishment affairs to the school headmaster, establishment headmaster, governing authority, and governing authority which provides pedagogical supervision.

The parents' board is, inter alia, responsible for: adopting (in concert with the teachers' board): educational programme of the school, prevention programme adjusted to development needs of students and needs of the community; expressing an opinion on the programme and schedule of improvement of teaching and learning and education effectiveness of the school or establishment, expressing an opinion on the draft of a financial plan submitted by the school headmaster.

199. The students' board – operates pursuant to the provisions of art. 55 of the ESA and comprises all students of the school or establishment.

The rules of choosing and functioning of the board bodies are specified in the rules of procedure adopted by all the students in equal, secret and universal voting. Board bodies are the only representatives of all the students.

The board can present conclusions and opinions on all affairs of the school or establishment to the school or establishment board, teachers' board and the headmaster, especially with regard to the implementation of the following rights: to familiarise with the curriculum and its content, goal and requirements, to open and justified evaluation of progress in learning and education, to organise school life in a way which helps to keep the balance between the effort made at school and a possibility to develop and satisfy one's own interests, to edit and publish a school newspaper, to organise cultural, educational, sport and entertaining activities in accordance with one's needs and organisational possibilities, in concert with the headmaster, to choose the teacher who is the board guardian.

Methods of Evaluating Students' and Teaching Results

200. Evaluation details were regulated by the regulation of the Minister of National Education of 30 April 2007 *on conditions and methods for evaluating, classifying and promoting pupils and adult learners as well as test and examination procedures in public schools.*

201. Evaluation of students' knowledge and skills during the academic year is not standardised on the national level and is at teacher's discretion. Evaluation is made on the basis of regular written and oral tests. Students' results at the end of each semester must be confirmed by the teachers' board of the school. Students who did not achieve satisfying results repeat the year, if the teachers' board adopts such a resolution.

202. Evaluation of learning and educational achievements of students takes place as part of an internal school assessment, in accordance with the school internal rules of assessment included in the charter of the school or establishment.

203. General (multi-specialist) evaluations of the level of functioning of a student with disability, social maladjustment or threatened with social maladjustment who has a certificate of special needs education are made pursuant to the regulation of the Minister of National Education of 17 November 2010 *on conditions of organising education, upbringing and care for children and youth with disabilities or socially maladjusted at special kindergartens, schools, units and centres* and the regulation of the Minister of National Education of 17 November 2010 *on conditions for organising education, upbringing and care for children and youth with disabilities or socially maladjusted at generally accessible or integration kindergartens, schools and units.*

204. Effectiveness of psychological and pedagogical assistance provided to the student is subject to evaluation pursuant to the regulation of the Minister of National Education of 17 November 2010 *on rules for providing and organising psychological and pedagogical assistance in public kindergartens, schools and establishments.* Evaluation covers the effectiveness of conducted classes and of psychological and pedagogical assistance provided for the student in the given academic year. At the request of the parents of the student or of an adult student, as well as at the request of the teacher who conducts teaching-leg-up classes or special classes, and in the case of a therapy class at the request of the class tutor, evaluation can be made at any time the assistance is provided.

205. The system of external evaluation under compulsory education covers the following standardised tests and exams:

- at the end of a 6-year long primary school (pupils at the age of 13 years) – universal, mandatory test of skills required in the core curriculum, with no selective function. Taking the test makes it possible to start education in lower secondary school and its results give pupils, parents and both schools, i.e. primary school and lower secondary school, information about pupils' achievement. The test was conducted for the first time in 2002.
- at the end of 3-year long lower secondary school (pupils at the age of 16 years) – universal, mandatory exam, the results of which are presented on the lower secondary school certificate. The exam makes it possible to test capabilities, skills and knowledge from the field of humanities and exact subjects (since the school year 2008/2009 – foreign language as well).

  An external lower secondary school exam was conducted for the first time in 2002. The results of the exam and the final grade of pupils' achievements are decisive for the enrolment to upper secondary schools.

The pupil finishes primary school or lower secondary school if in the final classification, which consists of annual classification grades in mandatory educational classes received in the highest class with regard to the programme and annual classification grades in mandatory educational classes which finished in the lower classes with regard to the programme in the given type of school, they received classification grades in educational classes higher than unsatisfactory, and additionally took, respectively, the test or exam.

206. On the level of upper secondary school, the student is promoted to the next class if they received a satisfactory grade or higher in all mandatory subjects at the end of the academic year. In the case of an unsatisfactory grade, they can write a retake test. The student who did not pass the retake test is not promoted and must repeat the year (the teachers' board can adopt a resolution to conditionally promote the student who received an unsatisfactory grade in one subject, once during the education in a specified type of upper secondary school).

The student finishes upper secondary school, if in the final classification, which consists of annual classification grades in mandatory educational classes received in the highest class with regard to the programme and annual classification grades in mandatory educational classes, which finished in the lower classes with regard to the programme in the given type of school, they received classification grades in educational classes higher than unsatisfactory.

207. After finishing education, all upper secondary schools (with the exception of basic vocational schools) conduct baccalaureate.

The baccalaureate is a form of assessing the level of general education, tests knowledge and skills established in requirements standards forming the basis for conducting the baccalaureate and specified in the regulation of the Minister of National Education of 10 August 2001 *on standard requirements forming the basis for test and examination procedures.*

Alumni of the following upper secondary schools can take the exam: comprehensive secondary schools, specialised secondary schools, technical upper secondary school, supplementary comprehensive secondary schools and supplementary technical upper secondary schools. The baccalaureate is conducted once a year, in the period between May and September. The schedule of the exam is established by the National Examination Board (CKE) and published on the CKE website.

The baccalaureate consists of an oral part, assessed in the school by the appointed subject examination team, and a written part, assessed by examiners entered into the register of examiners, and covers mandatory and additional subjects.

The baccalaureate is not mandatory. The person who wants to take the exam makes a written declaration about the subjects they want to take the exam in. A preliminary declaration must be made until 30th September, and a final declaration until 7th February of the school year in which the person wants to take the baccalaureate.

The person who passed the baccalaureate receives the baccalaureate certificate issued by the District Examination Board (OKE).

Pursuant to art. 169 para. 3 of the HEA, results of the baccalaureate constitute the basis for enrolment to undergraduate or unified graduate studies. The university senate establishes the required exam results threshold for the enrolment to studies.

208. The exam confirming qualifications for a given occupation (in basic vocational schools, technical upper secondary schools, supplementary technical upper secondary schools and post-secondary schools) consists of two parts: a written part which tests knowledge and skills relevant for qualifications in a given occupation as well as knowledge and skills connected with the employment and business activity, and a practical part which tests skills indispensable for working in the occupation.

209. The external evaluation system aims at:
- providing better teaching and learning quality,
- supporting the process of diagnosing student's achievements,
- providing comparability of teaching results on the national level.

210. All external tests and exams are conducted by especially created institutions – eight District Examination Boards (OKE) that are supported and supervised by the National Examination Board.

OKEs are obliged to convey relevant communications about exam results: to CKE, schools, communes and other schools governing authorities, school superintendents and the minister competent for education and upbringing.

Examination board reports make it easier for the above mentioned entities to undertake activities which improve teaching and learning quality.

Education Standards

211. In order to guarantee high quality of education and unify educational standards, the following activities are conducted in the public education system:

1. Pursuant to the art. 22 of the ESA, the minister competent for education and upbringing, by means of a regulation, determines inter alia:
   a) frame teaching plans;
   b) core curricula for:
      – pre-school education,
      – general education in different types of schools,
      – education in different general vocational education profiles,
      – education in different occupations;
   c) terms and manner of evaluating, classifying and promoting students and conducting tests and exams;
   d) the manner in which schools and establishments maintain the documentation of the teaching process, educational and caregiving activities;
   e) terms of conducting innovative and experimental activity by schools and establishments;
   f) requirement standards which form the basis for conducting the exam confirming qualifications for a given occupation.

   Public schools and non-public schools with public school accreditation are obliged to implement frame teaching programmes, i.e. conduct a specified number of classes.
   Core curricula are determined in order to pinpoint teaching and learning and educational standards on different stages of education.
   Within the scope of vocational education, the minister competent for education and upbringing performs the above tasks in concert with the ministers competent for occupations entered into the classification of vocational education occupations.

   Schools which provide vocational education can shape their curriculum at their own discretion, hence is why standards for conducting exams confirming qualifications for a given occupation are needed to guarantee that certificates and public diplomas certifying a certain level of education issued by schools have really the same substantive meaning.

2. Pursuant to art. 24 of the ESA, the minister competent for education and upbringing, at the request of relevant ministers, determines, by means of a regulation, the classification of vocational education occupations, taking into account classification of occupations and specialties of the national economy.

   The relevant minister mentioned above can provide material and organisational assistance for the school and establishment providing vocational education in the form of practical classes and application of modern techniques and technologies in the process of vocational training, depending on the needs of the labour market

3. Pursuant to art. 22a sec. 3 of the ESA, the minister competent for education and upbringing, and in the case of textbooks for art schools, the minister competent for culture and protection of national heritage, by means of an administrative resolution, issues a licence for using, respectively, textbooks and textbooks for art schools, in schools.

   A textbook can be licensed for school use if it received positive opinions from experts selected by, respectively, the minister of education or the minister of culture and national heritage, from the list of experts entered into the list of experts maintained by these ministers.

212. In order to provide high quality of professional development establishments for teachers, work standards were established in the regulation of the Minister of National Education

and Sport of 20 December 2003 *on accreditation of professional development establishments for teachers.* Indices and criteria of granting and withdrawing accreditation for establishments were described. All public and non-public professional development establishments for teachers can apply for accreditation, with the exception of public professional development establishments for teachers on the national scale run by the relevant minister of education. Accreditation is granted on the condition that the following criteria are fulfilled: providing qualified staff, preparation of programmes of professional development for teachers and conducting their evaluation, conducting informative activity, popularising professional development of teachers and providing modern teaching base.

The school superintendent maintains and delivers a list of professional development establishments with accreditation and transfers it to the minister competent for education and upbringing as of 30 June and 31 December each year.

Adult Education Quality

213. Semester exams in mandatory educational classes specified in the school teaching plan constitute the basis for classifying students of schools for adults.

Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 20 August 2010 *amending the regulation on conditions and methods for evaluating, classifying and promoting pupils and adult learners as well as test and examination procedures in public schools* introduced changes to the functioning of schools for adults, which, inter alia, obliged adult learners of the above schools to participate in at least half of all mandatory educational classes (applies to full-time education) or consultations (applies to part-time education). Meeting this requirement and positive grades constitute the basis for admitting adult learners to the semester exam. Participation in mandatory educational classes or consultations serves the purpose of increasing effectiveness of education, motivates to systematic work, makes it possible for students to make up for and verify knowledge gathered on their own. Consequently, it increases chances of adult learners to pass external tests and exams organised at the end of a given educational stage which are universal and mandatory and which are the condition which has to be met to finish the school or exams which are non-compulsory (baccalaureate).

More about external tests and exams – see information in paras. 205 and 207 hereof.

214. Students of schools for adults, like students of youth schools, take external tests and exams conducted by OKE, with exam tasks established by CKE, which are verified by independent examiners. Exam tasks are prepared on the basis of the valid core curriculum of general education, the same for the given type of school.

215. Students of schools for adults which provide vocational training take an external exam confirming qualifications for a given occupation conducted by OKE. This exam assesses knowledge and skills in the field of the given occupation established in standard requirements forming the basis for conducting the exam confirming qualifications for a given occupation specified in the regulation of the Minister of National Education of 10 March 2010 *on standard requirements forming the basis for examinations to test professional competence.*

Vocational exam is conducted in two stages: written and practical. The written part is conducted as a test and consists in solving exam tasks which test the knowledge and skills relevant for the qualifications in the occupation and knowledge and skills related to the employment and business activity. The practical exam consists in performing an exam task which tests practical skills in the field of qualifications in the given occupation.

Vocational exam is conducted once during the school year – in the period between June and August, at the time indicated by the CKE director. The person who wants to take the vocational exam makes a written declaration on taking the vocational exam in the occupation which they learned.

The person who passed the vocational exam receives a diploma certifying vocational qualifications issued by the relevant OKE.

216. Splitting occupations into qualifications is of key importance in the process of raising the quality of vocational education and moving it closer to the labour market, because it creates the basis for making vocational education more flexible and adapted to students' individual needs and capabilities.

Making it possible to separately confirm qualifications singled out in the given occupation during the school education will make it easier for students (and non-credited students) to achieve educational results specified in the core curriculum of vocational education. Hence, it will increase the effectiveness of education and the number of people passing exams certifying vocational qualifications in the occupation.

The new classification of vocational education occupations is of significant importance also for the sake of development of continuing vocational education for adults who are interested in acquiring additional qualifications in order to quickly change their profession or increase their chances on the labour market.

217. Accreditation is good for education quality as well, as it confirms that establishments and centres providing continuing education in out-of-school forms meet certain requirements and ensures high quality of education. Accreditation can cover the whole or part of the education provided.

Pursuant to art. 68b of the ESA, it is only possible to grant accreditation to continuing education establishments, practical education establishments, supplementary education and professional development centres. Accreditation is not granted to schools for adults.

The school superintendent relevant for the registered office of the establishment or centre grants the accreditation by means of an administrative resolution made by a team appointed by the school superintendent to assess the activity of the given establishment or centre and taking into account the results of pedagogic supervision over the establishment or centre.

Pedagogic Supervision

218. Public administration bodies such as the school superintendent or relevant ministers provide external pedagogic supervision. They are supported in the supervision process by the so called assistance apparatus, which for the school superintendent is, in principle, Superintendent of Schools Office, and for ministers – the office serving the relevant minister. Additionally, the Act *on Education System* makes it possible for ministers of culture and national heritage, agriculture and environment to appoint specialised supervision units (art. 32a sec. 1 and la of the ESA) which constitute separate organisational units. However, they do not provide pedagogic supervision on their own behalf; they only perform tasks entrusted with them by the relevant minister.

The minister competent for education and upbringing performs the role of a coordinator of the pedagogic supervision.

219. Structure of the pedagogic supervision in Poland by entities comprises:

1. the minister competent for education and upbringing, through the office serving the minister, provides pedagogic supervision over:
   a) the Centre for the Development of Polish Education Abroad and schools, school complexes and school consulting points at diplomatic missions, consular posts and military representations of the Republic of Poland,
   b) public professional development establishments for teachers on the national scale,
   c) public continuing education establishments on the national scale;
2. the minister competent for culture and protection of national heritage, through a specialised supervisory unit (Centre for Arts Education), provides pedagogic supervision over:
   a) public and non-public art schools and establishments,
   b) establishments providing care and education for art school students in the period of studying outside their place of residence,
   c) professional development establishments for teachers of art schools;

   The Centre for Arts Education was created by means of the regulation of the Minister of Culture of 22 September 2004 *on specialised supervisory unit.*
3. the minister competent for agriculture, through the minister office, provides pedagogic supervision over the following units which it runs:
   a) public schools and establishments of agriculture,
   b) public professional development establishments for teachers of vocational subjects who teach in schools of agriculture;
4. the minister competent for environment, through the minister office, provides pedagogic supervision over forest schools which it runs;
5. the Minister of Justice provides pedagogic supervision through:
   a) district pedagogic supervision teams created at district courts which supervise the following units in the district of the court: youth detention centres, juvenile centres, family diagnostic and consultancy centres and schools in these units and centres;
   b) Central Board of Prison Service supervises schools and establishments at penal institutions and custody suites;
6. the school superintendent, through the Superintendent of Schools Offices, supervises:
   a) public and non-public schools and establishments and professional development establishments for teachers, including non-public professional development establishments for teachers on the national scale on the territory of the given province,
   b) kindergartens and other forms of pre-school education,
   c) in the field of general education: art schools, schools of agriculture, forest schools run by, respectively, minister of agriculture or minister of environment, and schools and establishments run by the Minister of Justice.

   In the case of public and non-public schools of general education in sea and inland shipping occupations, the school superintendent provides pedagogic supervision in cooperation with the minister of maritime economy and the relevant minister of transport, within the scope of implementing the provisions of the International Convention *on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers,* 1978, drafted in London, on 7 July 1978.
7. headmasters of schools and establishments – with regard to teachers employed in these schools and establishments and in schools and establishments providing vocational education, employers who provide practical vocational education and instructors of

practical vocational education.

220. Currently, the basic legal acts describing both goals and tasks and forms of providing pedagogic supervision are: the Act of 7 September 1991 *on Education System* and regulation of the Minister of National Education of 7 October 2009 *on pedagogic supervision.*

Pursuant to art. 33 of the ESA, the pedagogic supervision comprises:

- evaluating the state and conditions of teaching, educational and caregiving activity of schools, establishments and teachers,
- analysing and evaluating effects of teaching, educational and caregiving activity and other statutory activities of schools and establishments,
- providing assistance in teaching, educational and caregiving tasks for schools, establishments and teachers,
- inspiring teachers to pedagogical, teaching and organisational innovations.

The supervision especially covers:

- compliance of teachers' employment with required qualifications,
- implementation of core curricula and frame teaching plans,
- observing the rules of grading, classifying and promoting students and conducting exams, as well laws regarding schooling and education obligation,
- observing the charter of the school or establishment,
- respecting children's and students' rights and popularising knowledge about them,
- providing students with safe and hygienic learning, educational and caregiving conditions.

Pursuant to the above regulation, the pedagogic supervision takes the forms of evaluation, inspection and support.

Evaluation

221. Evaluation which is conducted by a body providing pedagogic supervision is an external evaluation. Evaluation which is conducted by the school or establishment headmaster in cooperation with other teachers is an internal evaluation.

Evaluation includes:

- gathering and analysing information about teaching, educational, caregiving and other statutory activity of the school or establishment,
- establishing the degree of meeting certain requirements specified by the relevant minister of education in the regulation by the school or establishment.

The requirements are included in four areas of school and establishment activity:

- effects of teaching, educational, caregiving and other statutory activity of the school or establishment,
- processes taking place in the school or establishment,
- functioning of the school or establishment in the local community, especially in the field of cooperation with students' parents,
- managing the school or establishment.

Requirements established for the school or establishment do not cover all possible issues connected with obligations of schools and establishments towards students and parents. Requirements established for the school or establishment pinpoint strategic and priority tasks selected in such a way that they help planning the way the school and establishment

works. Analysis of requirements for schools and establishments should not concentrate on a "general" picture, but rather such aspects which can be underlined as the key ones.

Evaluation conducted in the school or establishment aims at establishing the degree of meeting the requirements on one of five levels:
A level − denotes a very high degree of meeting requirements by the school or establishment,
B level − denotes a high degree of meeting requirements by the school or establishment,
C level − denotes an average degree of meeting requirements by the school or establishment,
D level − denotes a basic degree of meeting requirements by the school or establishment,
E level − denotes a low degree of meeting requirements by the school or establishment.

Requirements for D and B level (taking into account the division into different types of schools and establishments) were included in the attachment to the above regulation.

Not meeting requirements on D level by the school or establishment means establishing E level, whereas meeting requirements on the level higher than D, and lower than B, means establishing C level. Meeting requirements on the level higher than described on B level by the school or establishment, means establishing A level.

222. With regard to some problems from a selected activity field of the school or establishment, problem evaluation is considered to be of substantial importance. The body providing pedagogic supervision specifies problems selected from activity fields of the school or establishment which are subject to evaluation, taking into account the scope of pedagogic supervision provided by the body.

223. The body providing pedagogic supervision over the school or establishment makes evaluation in accordance with the procedure specified in the regulation. A team is appointed in the school or establishment for this purpose, from among the persons authorised to make an evaluation. In order to make an external evaluation in schools and establishments in which the pedagogic supervision is provided by more than one body, the bodies can appoint a joint team to make an evaluation.

224. What motivates schools and establishments to pay due attention to work quality is the obligation to take into account results of the internal evaluation made in the school or establishment during an external evaluation, an obligation which is included in the regulation. This means that the team which makes an external evaluation in the school or establishment shall be obliged to familiarise themselves with results of the internal evaluation and compare these results with the results of their own research.

Inspection

225. Inspection is a form of pedagogic supervision which consists in the body providing pedagogic supervision in the school or establishment undertaking activities the aim of which is the evaluation of the degree to which the regulations on teaching, education, caregiving and other statutory activity of schools and establishments are observed.

Inspections are conducted in the form of planned or ad-hoc activities.

School superintendents make planned inspections in accordance with basic recommendations with regard to the implementation of education policy of the state in the field of pedagogic supervision established by the relevant minister of education on the basis of art. 35 sec. 2 point 1 of the ESA.

Planned inspections are made through inspection sheets confirmed by the minister competent for education and upbringing.

The body providing pedagogic supervision makes ad-hoc inspections if a need arises in the school or establishment to undertake actions not included in the plan of pedagogic supervision.

Support

226. One of the tasks of the body providing pedagogic supervision (school superintendent) is to support schools and establishments, inter alia, through:
- preparing and publishing analyses of the results of the pedagogic supervision and examples of good practice on the websites,
- organising conferences and meetings for school and establishment headmasters,
- promoting the application of evaluation in the process of development of teaching, educational, caregiving and other statutory activity of the school or establishment.

227. The task of the school or establishment headmaster consists in organising support for teachers. Especially, organising trainings and meetings in order to raise the quality of educational activity of the school or establishment, supporting teachers' development and inspiring them to introduce pedagogical innovations, motivating teachers to undertake professional development and presenting them conclusions from the pedagogic supervision.

Quality in Higher Education

228. The system of external quality assurance in higher education is based on the rule of universal, mandatory and free evaluation of education quality made by the Polish Accreditation Commission − PKA (between 2002 and 1 October 2011 – State Accreditation Commission) and voluntary and paid accreditation granted by the commissions appointed by academic communities. PKA is a body operating for the good of education quality, covers the whole of higher education (public and non-public).

229. In the process and procedures of external assurance of education quality, results of the internal evaluation of education quality at the given university degree programme made by universities in the process of self-assessment are taken into account, as well as results of PKA experts visits. In the Polish system of education quality evaluation, students' representatives participate in all stages of the evaluation process at universities.

230. In the case of a negative assessment, the relevant minister of higher education adopts a resolution to withdraw or suspend the authorisation to run higher education studies at the given university degree programme and educational level. An assessment with distinction can constitute the basis for granting more funds for the university from the state budget.

231. Pursuant to the Act of 18 March 2011 *on Amendments to the Act on Higher Education, the Act on Academic Titles and Degrees, the Act on Academic Titles and Degrees in Art and to Certain Other Acts,* PKA was granted authorisation to conduct programme and institutional assessment. Programme evaluation includes, inter alia, assessment of education effects assumed by the unit with regard to education effects described in the National Qualification Frames for Higher Education, evaluation of studies curriculum, including the realisation of assumed education effects and the manner of their verification, conditions of running studies at the given university degree programme and educational level specified in the regulation of the Minister of Higher Education of 5 October 2011 *on conditions for running different university degree programmes at different educational levels.*

232. Each university or department can apply for an external assessment and accreditation offered on a voluntary basis and for a fee by so called community (non-state) accreditation commissions functioning under the Conference of Rectors of Polish Academic Schools.

Higher education reform introduced the obligation to create internal systems of education quality at universities too.

233. On 12 July 2007, the Minister of Science and Higher Education issued a regulation *on educational standards for different university degree programmes and educational levels as well as the procedures for establishing and conditions to be met by a university to hold interdisciplinary and multiple major university degree programmes* with a list of university degree programmes and educational standards for different university degree programmes and educational levels.

234. As a result of higher education reform, a ministerial list of university degree programmes and educational standards at different university degree programmes was withdrawn. Introduction of the National Qualification Frameworks for Higher Education gave universities a chance to decide on their own about the creation of new university degree programmes and programmes integrating knowledge from different fields and making it possible for students to choose their future professional career on a flexible basis. The National Qualification Frameworks will make it possible to compare education effects (on the national and international scale). Basic organisational units of university will be able to establish and commence new university degree programmes on their own. Units with authorisation to award the degree of habilitated doctor will be able to do it on their own, others − after the resolution of the relevant minister of higher education adopted following consultations with the minister supervising the university and PKA. A university degree programme will be defined by the education programme, which will include a description of education effects and educational processes which lead to these effects. Education effects for the given university degree programme must be compliant with the description of education effects for relevant education fields described in the regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher Education of 2 November 2011 *on national qualifications framework for higher education.*

235. Reference descriptions of education effects for selected university degree programmes were also prepared (good examples). The university which prepared the education programme can use such a reference description or prepare its own one. The possibility to freely create university degree programmes will not apply only to regulated professions, including regulated medical professions (doctors, dentists, pharmacists, nurses and midwives), because of European Union regulations applied in Poland.

Teaching Staff

National Norms and Standards

236. Legal acts establishing national norms and standards in education in the field of education of teachers and qualification requirements:

1) Act of 26 January 1982 − *Teacher's Charter,*
2) Act of 7 September 1991 *on Education System,*
3) regulation of the Minister of National Education and Sport of 7 September 2004 *on standards for teacher training and education* (since February 2012 replaced by the regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher Education of 17 January 2012 *on educational standards for teaching professions),*

4) regulation of the Minister of National Education of 12 August 1997 *on centres of teachers education,*
5) regulation of the Minister of National Education of 30 June 2006 *on educational standards for teachers in teacher training colleges and teacher training colleges of foreign languages,*
6) regulation of the Minister of National Education of 12 March 2009 *on detailed qualifications required from teachers and on determination of schools and cases at which teachers without higher education or accomplished course of teacher education may be employed.*

The enumerated regulations do not contain provisions which could be considered as discriminatory.

Working Conditions

237. Provisions of the Act of 26 January 1982 – *Teacher's Charter* do not differentiate teachers working conditions with regard to the stage of education, but homogeneously describe them for all teachers in kindergartens, schools and education establishments. Hence, for all teachers of public kindergartens, schools and establishments they take the following form:

Employment

238. The school headmaster enters into employment relationship with the teacher on the basis of, respectively, an employment contract or appointment on the position, compliant with teacher's qualifications and the degree of professional promotion.

Employment relationship is entered into with:
1) a trainee teacher − on the basis of an employment contract for a definite time of one school year,
2) a contract teacher − on the basis of an employment contract for an indefinite time,
3) an appointed and chartered teacher − on the basis of an appointment if the teacher:
   - is of Polish nationality, but this requirement does not apply to citizens of member states of the European Union, the Swiss Confederation or member states of the European Fair Trade Agreement (EFTA) − parties to the European Economic Community agreement,
   - has full legal capacity and enjoys full civil rights,
   - there is no criminal or disciplinary proceeding pending against them, or legal incapacitation proceeding,
   - has not been punished for offences committed intentionally,
   - has qualifications required for the position,
   - it is possible to employ the teacher in the school on a full time basis for an indefinite time.

239. If it is not possible to employ the teacher in the school on a full time basis for an indefinite time, the employment relationship with an appointed or chartered teacher is entered into on the basis of an employment contract for an indefinite time on a non-full time basis.

240. As an exception, if a need arises resulting from teaching organisation or a replacement of an absent teacher, the teacher with any degree of professional promotion can be employed on the basis of an employment contract for a definite time. In such a case, if it is not possible to employ the person with required qualifications, it is possible, after prior

approval of the body providing pedagogic supervision, to employ a teacher who does not have required qualifications for the position.

241. Terminating the employment relationship with teachers is in a special way regulated by the provisions of the Act − *Teacher's Charter* as well. The employment relationship with a teacher can only be terminated in the cases provided in the Act, i.e. inter alia, at the request of the teacher, in the case of an expiry of the temporary incapacity for work due to illness provided by the provisions of law, if a medical certificate issued by the doctor conducting return-to-work health examinations and periodic health examinations states teacher's incapacity for work provided so far, if the teacher turns 65 years of age, if the teacher receives a negative work assessment, by agreement, in the case of complete school liquidation. Additionally, in the case of partial school liquidation or organisational changes which decrease the number of units in the school or change the teaching plan, which makes it impossible to still employ the teacher on the full time basis, the school headmaster terminates the employment relationship or, at the request of the teacher, transfers them into inactive status. Provisions of the Act – *Teacher's Charter* provide for the cases in which the employment relationship of the teacher expires pursuant to the law as well.

Professional promotion

242. The professional promotion system for teachers consists of 4 degrees:
- trainee teacher,
- contract teacher,
- appointed teacher,
- chartered teacher.

Teachers can be awarded another degree of professional promotion provided that: they meet qualification requirements, they have served the internship and their teacher professional achievements were positively assessed, and:
1) in the case of a trainee teacher − they have received an acceptance of the qualification commission after an interview,
2) in the case of a contract teacher − they have passed the exam before the board,
3) in the case of an appointed teacher − they have received an acceptance of the qualification commission after an analysis of the teacher profession achievements and an interview.

The degree of professional promotion, by means of an administrative resolution, is granted:
1) to a trainee teacher − the degree of a contract teacher − by the school headmaster;
2) to a contract teacher − the degree of an appointed teacher − the governing authority of the school;
3) to an appointed teacher − the degree of a chartered teacher − the body providing pedagogic supervision.

Additionally, the chartered teacher who has worked as a teacher for at least 20 years, including at least 10 years as a chartered teacher, with significant and recognised professional achievements, at the request of the Jury of Education Professors, can be awarded the honorary title of the professor of education by the minister competent for education and upbringing.

Remuneration

243. The base teacher remuneration depends on the degree of professional promotion, qualifications and the scope of obligatory duties, and the remuneration allowances

depend on the term of the employment, quality of work provided, performance of additional tasks or activities, position or function held, as well as existence difficult or arduous working conditions.

Teachers' remuneration comprises:
- base remuneration,
- allowances: for seniority, motivation, position and working conditions,
- remuneration for additional classes and ad-hoc replacements,
- rewards and other benefits resulting from the employment relationship, excluding benefits from the employee benefit fund and social allowances.

244. The minister competent for education and upbringing determines, in concert with the minister competent for labour, after prior consultation with the Joint Commission of the Government and Local Government, by means of a regulation, each year, the minimal base remuneration for teachers. The value of other components of the remuneration is established in the rules of procedure by the governing authority of the school which is the local government, for teachers of different degrees of professional promotion, so that average remunerations of teachers on the territory of the local government are equal to, at least, the average remunerations of teachers mentioned in the Act – *Teacher's Charter,* i.e. for:
- a trainee teacher – 100%,
- a contract teacher – 111%,
- an appointed teacher – 144%,
- a chartered teacher – 184 %,

of the base amount, determined for teachers each year in the Budget Act.

245. Funds needed for the average remuneration of teachers, together with remunerations derivatives, funds to be deducted for the benefit fund and funds for financing professional development of teachers, taking into account teaching methods counselling, are guaranteed by the state in revenues of local governments. Governing authorities of schools which are local government units can increase funds for teachers' remuneration, including raising minimal rates of base remuneration. Governing authorities can additionally authorise the school headmaster, in individual cases and within the established financial plan of the school, to establish a higher minimal rate of base remuneration than the one provided for in the regulation of the Minister of National Education or increased by the governing authority.

246. The average remuneration of teachers with different professional promotion degrees in Q2 2011 amounted to (according to the Teacher's Charter and Budget Act for 2011):

trainee teacher	contract teacher	appointed teacher	chartered teacher
PLN 2 447	PLN 2 716	PLN 3 523	PLN 4 502

The average monthly gross remuneration in the public sector in Q2 2011 amounted to (according to the data from the CSO): PLN 3 362.34.

From the comparison of remunerations of the above professional groups results that remuneration of trainee and contract teachers was slightly lower than remuneration of public sector employees and constituted, respectively, 73% and 81% thereof, whereas remuneration of appointed and chartered teachers was higher than remuneration in the public sector and amounted to, respectively, 105% and 134% thereof. At the same time,

it needs to be noticed that the group of teachers with the shortest seniority in this occupation (trainees and contract teachers), on average working up to 6 years, constitute around 20% of all the teachers.

Social Rights

247. Each year a deduction is made for teachers for the employment benefit fund in the amount established as a product of the average number of teachers employed on the full-time and non-full time basis in the given calendar year and of 110% of the base amount, specified in the Budget Act valid on 1 January of the given year. From the deduction for the employment benefit fund, holiday benefit is paid to teachers until the end of August each year. Teachers on retirement, pension or receiving teacher compensatory benefit have a deduction made for the employment benefit fund in the amount of 5% of the received pension, allowance and teacher compensatory benefit.

248. The teacher employed in the rural area or in a town with less than 5 000 inhabitants, who has qualifications to hold the position of a teacher, is entitled to a housing benefit, the amount of which depends on the family situation of the teacher. The amount of the benefit can vary depending on the place where the teacher is employed. The teacher is entitled to a separate benefit in the amount of 10% of the base remuneration as well (so called "rural benefit"). The governing authority of the school can raise the benefit for the teacher employed in the rural area in the case of staff deficit.

249. The teacher who was awarded the degree of a contract teacher within two years after starting the first professional job in life in school and has the qualifications required to hold the position, receives, in the school indicated as the main place of employment, at their own request, a one-time benefit for settling down, in the amount of their 2 monthly base remunerations.

Working Hours

250. Working hours of a teacher employed on the full-time basis cannot exceed 40 hours per week, divided between 5 working days. Consequently, this means that each week of the school year, the teacher must work 5 days and not more than 40 hours. The only exception is teachers, who pursue development courses or perform important social tasks, for who the headmaster can establish a four day working week. Under the established remuneration and working hours not exceeding 40 hours a week, a teacher employed on the full-time basis is obliged to conduct:

a) teaching, educational and caregiving classes, directly with students or for them (obligatory teaching hours),
b) other classes and activities resulting from statutory tasks of the school including educational and caregiving classes, taking into account the needs and interests of students, whereas as part of these classes:
   - teacher in primary and lower secondary school, including special needs schools, is obliged to provide care in an after-school club or conduct classes within the hours given in the frame teaching plans for the disposal of the school headmaster (with the exception of hours earmarked for raising the number of obligatory educational hours) of 2 hours per week,
   - teacher in the upper secondary school, including special needs school, is obliged to conduct classes within hours given in the frame teaching plans for the disposal of the school headmaster (with the exception of hours earmarked for increasing the number of obligatory educational hours) of 1 hour per week,
c) classes and activities connected with preparation for classes, self-development and professional development.

251. A weekly mandatory number of teaching, educational and caregiving classes conducted directly with students or for them (obligatory teaching hours) for most of the teachers was specified in the Act − *Teacher's Charter.* Art. 42 of the ESA allocated the weekly mandatory number of classes of teachers to the position held and the type of school or establishment. In the light of the provision above, obligatory teaching hours for most teachers employed in primary, lower secondary and upper secondary schools amount to 18 hours per week. The only exception are teachers in after-school clubs and teachers-librarians in school libraries, for whom obligatory teaching hours amount to, respectively, 26 and 30 hours per week, as well as teachers working in kindergartens with children below 6 years of age and with children at the age of 6 years, for whom the number of obligatory teaching hours amounts to, respectively, 25 and 22 hours. For some positions, e.g. counsellor, psychologist, speech therapist, professional counsellor, the governing authority of the school establishes the number of obligatory teaching hours.

Holidays

252. The teacher employed in the school the organisation of which provides for summer and winter holidays, is entitled to holidays during summer and winter holidays. Teachers employed in schools the organisation of which does not provide for holidays, are entitled to holidays in the amount of 35 working days in the period established in the holiday schedule.

253. The headmaster grants recuperation holidays for recommended treatment, for a maximum of one year at one time, to the teacher employed on the full-time basis for an indefinite period, after they have worked in school at least 7 years. The total length of recuperation holiday during the whole employment period cannot exceed 3 years.

254. The teacher employed on the full-time basis is entitled to paid holidays for further development and other concessions and benefits related to education. The teacher can receive paid or unpaid holidays for scientific, artistic, educational purposes, and unpaid holidays for other important reasons.

Workplace

255. The governing authority of the school is obliged to provide basic conditions for the performance of teaching, educational and caregiving tasks by the teacher. The teacher has a right to such as equipment at their workplace which makes it possible to realise teaching and educational-teaching programme.

256. Teachers of special schools and establishments, pursuant to the list included in the regulation of the Minister of National Education of 31 January 2005 *on minimum base remuneration rates for teachers, general conditions for granting benefits to the base remuneration and remuneration for working on holidays* are entitled to the benefit for difficult and arduous working conditions.

257. Teachers in special schools and establishments have guaranteed a possibility to develop professionally and the funds for it pursuant to art.70a of the Act of 26 January 1982 − *Teacher's Charter.*
More information − see Eurydice data base − "National Education System in Poland" − http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/eurybase_en.php

Activities for Improvement of Life and Professional Conditions of Teachers

258. One of the priorities of the Polish government in the field of education is to improve the professional status of the teacher profession, which significantly influences the teaching quality. It has been assumed that one of the ways to achieve the above goals is, inter alia,

to provide a consistent rise in teachers' remuneration and, at the same time, rise in state expenditures on education, and to implement solutions which are aimed at strengthening the motivational nature of professional promotion and system of teachers' remuneration. In connection with the above statement, in 2008 a process of a consistent rise in teachers' remuneration was commenced. A significant rise of teachers' remunerations, especially teachers who start working in this profession, was triggered by a change of indices which serve the purpose of calculating the average remuneration and annual rises of the base remuneration for teachers introduced on 1 January 2009. The average teachers' remuneration in different promotional groups rose significantly more than the average remuneration in the national economy. Increase of remuneration in 2011 in relation to 2007:

- for trainee teachers 69%
- for contract teachers 50%
- for appointed teachers 39%
- for chartered teachers 38%
- in the national economy 25% (instruction of the Minister of Labour and Social Policy of 15 December 2010 *on limit amount of the annual contribution assessment basis for retirement and pension schemes in 2011 and the amount of the projected average remuneration, established to calculate such limit amount*).

259. Additionally, in art. 30a of the Act – *Teacher's Charter*, a mechanism was introduced which makes it possible to control the implementation of the annual average remunerations for teachers by the statutory obligation of local governments to analyse each year expenses incurred for teachers remunerations and to pay supplementary benefit if they do not reach average remunerations.

260. Irrespective of the above, the MNE recognises the need to change current laws regulating the professional status of teachers. Teachers, as a professional group which performs work of special importance, deserve to have their professional status described in a clear way, which is adequate to the challenges faced by the Polish education. Regulations should guarantee teachers due rights and support for those who are engaged in their work the most. We need a dialogue with partners for whom the professional status of the teacher is important. The Minister of National Education of the previous term appointed a Team the aim of which is to prepare proposals of assumptions of a document on the professional status of teachers. The Team consists of, inter alia, representatives of local, scientific, non-public education and trade unions communities. Research has been commenced on working hours of teachers and analysis of legal regulations within the scope of professional promotion and disciplinary liability of teachers. Results of the research and completion of the work of the Team will make it possible to assess the scope of possible changes of regulations.

261. With regard to schools run by the Minister of Culture and National Heritage, it must be underlined that efforts are constantly made to improve, first and foremost, venues of art schools, and, consequently, working conditions of teachers.

262. Teachers of schools of agriculture run by the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development are subject to universally binding regulations included in the Act – *Teacher's Charter.* This applies both to working conditions and remuneration of teachers.

The Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, as part of their competences specified in the Act *on Education System,* set up, in the year 2007, an establishment of professional development of teachers called "The National Centre of Agricultural Education in Brwinów", the aim of which is to support teachers of vocational subjects in

all schools of agriculture in Poland. The establishment has, inter alia, the following tasks: preparation of professional development programmes for teachers and development of educational materials, initialising and supporting programme changes in schools of agriculture in a substantive way, diagnosing and analysing the effects of teaching vocational subjects in schools of agriculture.

Non-public education

Establishment and operation of non-public education facilities

263. Non-public schools and facilities operate on the basis of art. 82 of the ESA, according to which legal and natural persons can establish non-public schools and facilities upon registration in the register kept by a territorial government unit obliged to operate an appropriate type of public schools and facilities.

264. In the case of an upper secondary school applying for authorization of public school as of the day of starting the activity the entry into the register can be made if the person operating such a school or facility presents a positive opinion of the school superintendent and – in the case of a school providing education in occupations for which, according to the classification of vocational education occupations, the competent minister is the minister competent for health issues – also an opinion of this minister, confirming that requirements stipulated in art. 7 sec. 3 of the ESA are fulfilled, i.e.:

- that it provides learning programmes which include the core curriculum of general education and in the case of a school providing vocational education – also a learning programme in a given occupation,
- that it provides educational courses in the cycle not shorter and with number of hours not lower than the total number of hours in the case of compulsory education courses specified in the framework education plan of a public school of a give type,
- that it applies principles for classification and promotion of students and for exams and tests, except for entrance exams,
- that it maintains documentation on the course of learning as established for public schools,
- in the case of a school providing vocational education – that it provides education in occupations specified in the classification of vocational education occupations,
- that it employs teachers of compulsory education courses who hold qualifications as defined for public school teachers.

Non-public art schools

265. Pursuant to art. 82 sec. 1a of the ESA, legal and natural persons can establish art schools upon registration in the register kept by the minister competent for culture and protection of national heritage.

266. The Regulation of the Minister of Culture and National Heritage of 12 August 2010 *on subsidies for non-public art schools* defines the procedure for granting and settling subsidies awarded to non-public art schools with public school authorization which provide compulsory schooling or compulsory education and to other non-public art schools with no authorization of public schools, as well as it defines the manner and scope of control over the regularity of use of these subsidies.

The basis for calculating the amount of subsidies for schools are running expenses per one student as established for art schools of the same type operated by the minister competent for culture and protection of national heritage as well as the actual number of students at a school.

An application for a subsidy is submitted by a legal person or a natural person operating the school. The subsidies are granted by the minister competent for culture and protection of national heritage through the Art Education Centre.

Non-public higher education institutions

267. Pursuant to art. 20 sec. 1 and 2 of the HEA, an application for a permit to establish a non-public higher education institution can be submitted to the minister competent for higher education by a natural person or a legal person who is not a state or local government legal person. In order to establish a non-public higher education institution as well as to obtain the rights by such an institution to provide higher education in a given university degree programme and at a given education level, the permit of the minister competent for higher education is required.

268. The application for establishing a non-public higher education institution should fulfil the requirements specified in the following legal acts:
- the Regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher Education of 28 November 2011 *on the scope of data and information required to be included in the application for a non-public university permit as well as the amount of payments and rules for charging the costs of the consultative proceedings*,
- the Regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher Education of 5 October 2011 *on conditions for participating in different university degree programmes at different educational levels,*
- the Regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher Education of 2 November 2011 *on National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education.*

269. Pursuant to art. 20 sec. 3 and 8 of the HEA, the application specifies the founder of the institution, its name, registered office, university degree programmes and education levels provided, as well as the minimum amount and type of substantial assets that the founder is obliged to provide for establishment and operation of the institution. The permit is given for a defined period.

270. Under art. 20 sec. 4 of the HEA, the minister competent for higher education refuses to grant the permit if from the application for the permit it results that the non-public higher education institution or its organizational units will not fulfil the conditions necessary to provide university degree programmes specified in the said act and in the implementing acts issued on its basis.

271. Pursuant to art. 20 sec. 5 of the HEA, the minister competent for higher education refuses to grant the permit to a natural person who:
- has been convicted by a judgment which has become final for an intentional offence,
- has been entered into the register of insolvent debtors of the National Court Register,
- has due liabilities to the State Treasury.

272. Pursuant to art. 20 sec. 6 of the HEA, the minister competent for higher education refuses to grant the permit to a legal person:
- who has been put into liquidation,
- who has gone bankrupt,
- who has been entered into the register of insolvent debtors of the National Court Register,
- who has due liabilities to the State Treasury,
- if with respect to even one person from among those holding the right of representation at least one of the conditions specified in art. 20 sec. 5 of the HEA is fulfilled.

273. Pursuant to art. 23 sec. 1 of the HEA, once the aforesaid permit is obtained, the founder submits a declaration of will to establish a non-public higher education institution in the form of a notary deed, hereinafter referred to as the "founding deed". The founding deed specifies, in particular, the founder, name, registered office and detailed scope of activity, the amount of substantial assets allocated to establish the institution, including the value of items the ownership of which was transferred to the institution, the date of their transfer and the manner in which the institution will continue to be funded. However, under art. 23 sec. 2 of the HEA, the aforesaid minister withdraws the permit if the founder does not submit the founding deed within three months from the date of the permit or if the founder does not transfer the substantial assets within three months from the date of registration or if the non-public higher education institution does not start to provide education to students within one year from the date of registration.

274. Pursuant to art. 29 sec. 1, 2, 4 of the HEA, the non-public higher education institution acquires legal personality upon its registration in the register of non-public higher education institutions and their associations. The registration is made at the request of its founder. However, if the founding deed or the statute of the higher education institution does not comply with legal regulations or with the permit granted, the minister competent for higher education shall refuse to enter the non-public institution into the register.

275. Pursuant to art. 60 of the HEA, the collective bodies of the non-public higher education institution define its statute. One-person bodies of the higher education institution include its rector and managers of basic organizational units. The manager of a faculty is its dean. The statute of the higher education institution can provide for the existence of another one-person body, apart from the rector. Pursuant to art. 100 of the HEA the non-public higher education institution conducts its own financial management on the basis of an itemized-financial plan approved by the collective body indicated in the statute of the institution, in accordance with the regulations on accountancy and – with respect to management of funds from the state treasury – also in accordance with the regulations on public finance. Within fourteen days from its approval, the itemized-financial plan shall be passed by the non-public higher education institution to the minister competent for higher education.

Religion and moral education

Legal basis

276. Pursuant to the provision of art. 53 sec. 3 and 4 of Polish Constitution, parents have the right to ensure their children a moral and religious upbringing and teaching in accordance with their convictions; however, while the religion of a church or other legally recognized religious organization may be taught in schools, other peoples' freedom of religion and conscience shall not be infringed thereby.

Religious education at request of the child's parents is guaranteed also under art. 12 of the Act *on Education System* and is provided on the basis of the provisions of the Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 14 April 1992 *on conditions and methods of organisation of religion lessons in public kindergartens and schools*.

Public kindergartens and schools

277. In public kindergartens, religious education is organized at the request of parents (legal guardians) in the framework of the kindergarten course plan. In public primary schools and lower secondary schools, religious and ethical education is organized at the request of parents (legal guardians) in the framework of the schools course plan.

278. In public upper secondary schools, religious and ethical education is organized, in the framework of the school course plan, at the request of either parents (legal guardians) or students themselves (once students become adult, they decide themselves about receiving religious and ethical education).

279. Participation or non-participation in pre-school or school religion or ethics classes cannot be a reason for discrimination by any other person in any form.

280. On days free from school classes it is permissible to make classrooms available, free of charge, for the purpose of religion classes to churches and religious associations, including those that do not organize religious education as a part of the education system.

281. Religious education is delivered on the basis of programmes prepared and approved by relevant authorities of churches and other religious associations, presented to the Minister of National Education for his/her information. The same principles apply to handbooks used for religious education.

282. Professional qualifications of teachers providing religious education are defined by the Polish Episcopal Conference and by the respective authorities of churches or other religious associations – in consultation with the Minister of National Education.

283. The persons authorized to visit religion classes are the visitors appointed by diocesan bishops of the Catholic Church and respective authorities of other churches and of other religious associations. The list of the aforesaid persons is provided for information of the authorities exercising pedagogical supervision.

The pedagogical supervision over religious and ethical education with respect to the teaching methodology and compliance with the programme is exercised by the school/kindergarten headmaster and by the pedagogical supervisors, on principles regulated by separate regulations.

Schools at youth correction centres and juvenile shelters

284. Under art. 66a of the Act of 26 October 1982 *on Juvenile Delinquency Proceedings*, a juvenile has the right to perform religious practices and to use religious services as well as to directly participate in church services held in youth correction centres and juvenile shelters on holidays, to listen to church service broadcasted by mass media, as well as to have books, scriptures and items used to perform religious practices.

285. A juvenile has the right to participate in religious education provided in juvenile facilities, centres and shelters, as well as to participate in the charity or social activities of the church or other religious association, and to hold individual meetings with a minister of the church or other religious association to which the juvenile belongs. The aforesaid ministers can visit juveniles at places where they stay.

286. Using the freedom of religion can neither violate the principles of tolerance nor disturb the order established at the youth correction centre or juvenile shelter.

287. Detailed principles concerning participation in religion classes and religious practices are defined in the Regulation of the Minister of Justice of 14 September 2001 *on detailed rules for participation in religion lessons and religious practices, using religious services and organisation of pastoral services in youth correction centres and juvenile shelters*. Participation of juveniles in religion lessons and religious practices, use of religious services and organization of pastoral services at the centre is based on the will of parents (guardians) or considering the will of the juvenile person, expressed in the simplest form of a statement, within the work organization at the centre, while ensuring security rules at

the centre and observance of the juveniles' rights. Religion lessons and other form of religious life are organized at the centre in compliance with the established internal order. The pedagogical supervision over religious education with respect to the teaching methodology and compliance with the programme is exercised by the head of the centre and by the pedagogical supervisors.

Rights of persons from national and ethnic minorities

General schools

288. Pursuant to art. 35 sec. 1 and 2 of the Constitution of the Republic of Poland:

"1. The Republic of Poland shall ensure Polish citizens belonging to national or ethnic minorities the freedom to maintain and develop their own language, to maintain customs and traditions, and to develop their own culture.

2. National and ethnic minorities shall have the right to establish educational and cultural institutions, institutions designed to protect religious identity, as well as to participate in the resolution of matters connected with their cultural identity."

289. Kindergartens, schools and public facilities enable students belonging to national and ethnic minorities as well as communities using regional language to maintain and develop their sense of national, ethnic and linguistic identity pursuant to art. 13 of the Act of 7 September 1991 *on Education System* as well as provisions of the Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 14 November 2007 *on conditions and methods for public kindergartens, schools and establishments to carry out task to enable fostering the sense of national, ethnic and linguistic identity of students belonging to national and ethnic minorities or communities using regional language.* In order to enable students belonging to national and ethnic minorities as well as communities speaking a regional language to maintain and develop their sense of national, ethnic and linguistic identity, including knowledge of their own history and culture, kindergartens, schools and public facilities can teach geography of the country with the area of which a given national minority identifies itself, as well as they can provide art classes or other additional classes.

290. Learning the minority language or regional language in a kindergarten as well as learning the minority language or regional language and learning its own history and culture at a school is organized respectively by the kindergarten or school headmaster at a written request submitted voluntarily by the student's parents (guardians).

291. In kindergartens, learning the minority language or regional language can be organized:

1) in kindergartens or pre-school units in which classes are conducted in the minority language or regional language,
2) in kindergartens or pre-school units in which the classes are conducted in two languages: in Polish and in the minority language or regional language,
3) in kindergartens or pre-school units in which the number of classes conducted in the minority language or regional language amounts to 4 hours per week,
4) in inter-kindergarten centres teaching the minority language or regional language.

292. For children who receive one-year compulsory pre-school preparatory education in kindergartens or pre-school units at primary schools at which classes are conducted in the minority language or regional language, classes are also conducted in Polish language and their number amounts to 4 hours per week.

293. At schools, learning the minority language or regional language can be organized:

1) at schools or their units teaching in the minority language or regional language, at which the educational classes are conducted in that language,
2) at schools or their units, at which educational classes are conducted in two languages: Polish language and the minority language or regional language being the second language in which education is provided,
3) at schools or their units with the minority language or regional language being taught additionally in the form of separate classes, at which educational classes are conducted in Polish language, except for the classes at which the minority language or regional language is taught,
4) in inter-school centres teaching the minority language or regional language.

294. Furthermore, schools can undertake – if required – additional activities aimed at maintaining and developing ethnic identity of Roma students and supporting their education; in particular, schools conduct remedial classes.

295. A school can employ an assistant for Roma education to support the teachers. The assistant for Roma education provides help to Roma students in contact with school community as well as cooperates with their parents and with the school.

For further information on activities for Roma minority see paras. 35-45 hereof.

296. The Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 18 May 2010 *amending the Regulation on conditions and methods for kindergartens, schools and public establishments to carry out task to enable fostering a sense of national, ethnic and linguistic identity among children coming from national and ethnic minorities or communities using regional language* entered into force as of 7 July 2010. Previously, teaching minority languages, regional language, the history and culture as well as geography of the country with the culture area of which a given national minority identifies itself with was carried out on the basis of curriculums and handbooks approved for use at schools by the minister competent for education and upbringing. The amendment to the Regulation includes new principles, according to which curriculums are approved for use at schools by headmasters, while handbooks are approved for use at schools by the minister competent for education.

The definition of the national and ethnic minority as well as the conditions based on which specific groups of Polish citizens are considered to be a national and ethnic minority are specified in provisions of the Act of 6 January 2005 *on National Minorities and on Regional Language.*

On the basis of the aforesaid provisions, the following minority languages are taught at public schools in Poland: Belarusian, Hebrew, Lithuanian, Lemko, German, Armenian, Slovak, Ukrainian and regional language – Kashubian.

297. In the school year 2010/2011, the total of 1 118 schools teaching minority language or in minority language (including kindergartens, pre-school units at primary schools as well as schools of all types) functioned in the Polish education system at all educational levels. More than 54 thousand pupils were taught minority language at the aforesaid schools.

298. Pupils who attend schools teaching minority language or in minority language follow the core curriculum of pre-school education as well as of general education in specific types of schools. Participation of national and ethnic minority student in minority language classes in voluntary.

299. Provisions of art. 70 of Polish Constitution and of art. 82 of the ESA offer a possibility to natural and legal persons representing national and ethnic minorities recognized in Poland to operate schools teaching minority language or in minority language.

Art education

300. As far as art education is concerned, there is a possibility to establish an art school where education is provided by a national minority. Most frequently, this type of educational activity will be connected with cultural distinctiveness and its aim will be to educate the young generation about its cultural heritage. An example of that might be the Miklosz Deki Czureja 1st Degree and 2nd Degree Music School in Poznan, operated by Roma community. The basis for undertaking this kind of activity is the Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 14 November 2007 *on conditions and methods for public kindergartens, schools and establishments ot carry out the task to enable fostering, the sense of national, ethnic and linguistic identity of students belonging to national and ethnic minorities or communities using regional language* as well as the Regulation of the Minister of Culture of 4 June 2003 *on detailed rules and conditions for granting and revoking permits for establishing public art schools by natural persons or legal persons.*

Strategies for the development of education of national minorities

301. The Ministry of Interior and Administration as well as the Ministry of National Education along with national minority organizations prepared and adopted three educational strategies: in 2001 – *The Strategy for the Development of Education of Lithuanian Minority in Poland,* in 2006 – *The Strategy for the Development of Education of German Minority in Poland* and in 2011 – *The Strategy for the Development of Education of Ukrainian Minority in Poland.* The aim of these documents is to analyse the situation of education of national minorities in Poland and to introduce solutions that will enable proper implementation of activities for maintaining national identity of students belonging to Lithuanian, German and Ukrainian minorities. As a part of the said *Strategies*, there is a number of activities conducted in order to solve problems connected with the school network, school programme, school handbooks and their financing, the list of experts, methodological consultancy, as well as assessment and examination systems. In order to monitor *the Strategies*, meetings are held with the participation of representatives of all entities involved in the preparation of new documents. Findings from these meetings are put in the minutes, including detailed commitments, proposals of actions and deadlines for their completion. During the meetings, subsequent implementation stages of *the Strategies* are analysed. It is planned to prepare a strategy for the development of education of Belarusian minority.

302. The Minister competent for religious denominations and national and ethnic minorities (up to 18 November 2011 – the Minister of Interior and Administration, since then the Minister of Administration and Digitization), as the only administrator of funds for supporting the activity aimed at protection, maintenance and development of cultural identity of minorities, implements these actions by means of grants-in-aid (including, inter alia, publication of press, book publications, radio broadcasts via non-public broadcasters in minority languages, implementation of projects in the Internet, organization of festivals, concerts, festivities, art reviews, poetry, declamatory and singing competitions, activities performed by amateur art groups) as well as subsidies for investments (e.g. construction, renovation and modernization of school buildings and facilities, purchase of musical instruments, purchase of equipment for school facilities, etc.). Apart from that, earmarked subsidies were provided to support the statute activity of minority organizations and to finance the replacement of information plaques,

resulting from establishing additional names of localities or physiographic sites in minority languages.

303. Thanks to co-financing received from the state budget in the years 2006-2010 the General Secondary School in Puńsk was built. In 2011, a subsidy was granted to buy equipment and furniture for the school.

304. Starting from 2007, the minister competent for religious denominations and national and ethnic minorities has been supporting the Bishop Antanas Baranauskas Foundation in Sejny with a subsidy to finance the maintenance costs of the building of "Žiburys" Schools, where Lithuanian is used as the language of instructions. Moreover, the Foundation received subsidies for 2012 to buy computer equipment for the schools.

305. In 2011, Przemysl Municipality received subsidies to alter the building of the Markian Szaszkiewicz General Schools in Przemysl, where Ukrainian is used as the language of instruction.

306. Starting from the school year 2004/2005, the Armenian Culture Association in Cracow conducts Saturday classes on Armenian language and culture for school-age children. Mother tongue and Armenian folk dance classes as well as classes on Armenian history and culture are conducted on the basis of subsidies from the minister competent for religious denominations and national and ethnic minorities.

307. In 2011, the Association of Armenians in Poland received a subsidy to operate an Armenian Sunday School. The Armenian Sunday School, established in 2009 and located in the building of the Province Teacher Education Centre in Łódź, is a place of learning and plays the role of the centre for integration of Armenian families.

308. Starting from 2001, the Pedagogical University of Cracow is the only institution in Poland to provide education for teachers of Lemko language as the mother tongue for the Lemko minority. Currently, the two-degree system is being implemented in the course of this programme. As a part of activities undertaken, two groups of students (2^{nd} /3^{rd} year students as well as 1^{st} year students) will be provided with a possibility to receive full philological and cultural education on the basis of Lemko language that is the main area of study in their programme (three-year full –time 1^{st} degree studies). The result of that will be an educated staff with teaching and culture competence, able to work in a professional manner, paying attention to a number of aspects in order to maintain the Lemko identity as well as to preserve and develop Lemko culture and language. Starting from 2009, funds are provided for implementation of the aforesaid activity from the budget of the minister competent for religious denominations and national and ethnic minorities.

309. As a part of the Joint Commission of the Government and National and Ethnic Minorities a working group was established that has developed an ethno-philology model of national and ethnic minorities and of regional language. The said model was provided to the academic community.

310. The organization of learning the language and culture of the country of origin of students who are non-Polish citizens is defined in the provisions of the Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 1 April 2010 *on admission of non-Polish citizens to public kindergartens, schools, teacher training centres and establishments as well as organisation of additional Polish language and remedial classes and classes focused on the language and culture of the country of origin*. A foreign diplomatic or consular post or a cultural and educational association of a given nationality can organize classes on the language and culture of the country of origin of foreigners who are covered by

compulsory education. The headmaster shall determine the days of week and time at which classes on the language and culture of the foreigners' country of origin can be conducted.

III. Dissemination and promotion of the provisions of the Convention.

Country-wide activities

Curricula in formal education

311. Obligatory learning targets and contents, pursued in public kindergartens, primary schools, lower secondary schools and upper secondary schools are determined in the core curriculum of pre-school upbringing and general education.

Since 1 September 2009, a new core curriculum defined in the Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 23 December 2008 *on curriculum for pre-school upbringing and general education in various types of schools*, has been applicable. The curriculum is implemented in stages. In school year 2011/2012, the new core curriculum is applicable in kindergartens, grades I-III of primary schools and grades I-III of lower secondary schools. In grades which have not yet been covered with the curriculum reform, the hitherto core curriculum is still in use, which is defined in the Regulation of the Minister of National Education and Sport of 26 February 2002 *on curriculum for pre-school upbringing and general education in various types of schools.*

Both the so far and the new core curriculum of general education take into account educational contents in the scope of counteracting discrimination. The preamble of the new core curriculum underscores that one of the task of a school is to undertake relevant steps in order to prevent all forms of discrimination. It also indicates that in the process of general education one should put stress on forming attitudes conducive to further individual and social development of students, including the attitude of responsibility, self-esteem, respect for other people, readiness to participate in culture. In social development in turn, one should put stress on forming of civil attitude, respect for tradition and culture of student's fellow countrymen, and also attitude of respect towards other cultures and traditions.

312. Aims and contents of education in the scope of counteracting discrimination were taken into account at each stage of education, and in particular in the core curriculum of such subjects, as: *the Polish language, History, Civics, Culture, History and Society, Geography, Ethics, Philosophy, Upbringing for Family Life.*

Sample provisions contained in the new core curriculum of general education which concern broadly understood counteracting discrimination are following:

In early school education stress is put on such upbringing that the child, based on its capabilities, is prepared to live in harmony and at peace with themselves and other people. The child should distinguish good from evil, be aware of social belonging (to a family, peer group, and national community). Thus, as part of Social Education, the student develops capability of cooperation with others when playing, learning at school and every-day situations, learns how to abide by rules applicable in children community and in the world of adults.

On *Ethics* courses the awareness of student is strengthen that one should not seek for satisfaction of their own wish at the expense of the others, one should not boast with affluence or to pick on children which are brought up in more difficult conditions.

The core curriculum of *the Polish language* provides for the student to master skills in using in informed manner such concepts as tolerance-intolerance, how to discuss existential issues, e.g. otherness, sense of belonging, recognising universal humanitarian values and reflect upon them.

As part of the course of *Civics*, student acquires knowledge and skills in the scope of living in a group, social life, civic attitude, national minorities or the Republic of Poland as a constitutional democracy, including in the scope of basic rights and freedoms contained in the Constitution.

The core curriculum of *Geography* is focused on, inter alia, developing curiosity of the world by evoking interest in child's own region, Poland, Europe, and world, awareness of and feeling responsible for the cultural environment of child's own region and Poland, patriotism and sense of identity with simultaneous respect for other nations and communities – their systems of values and ways of living.

The aims of the course called *Upbringing for family life* include showing respect to other people, appreciating their efforts and work, interpersonal relationships, tolerance towards cultural, ethnic, religious and sexual distinctness.

Global education

313. Global education in Polish school includes issues from the following education fields: development, human rights, sustainable community, peace and preventing armed conflicts, intercultural education.

In 2009-2010, in the Centre for Education Development (ORE), a project was implemented, which was called: "I know, I understand, I act – developmental education in Polish school", which covered all the country which its scope. Materials that came into being as part of the project replenished the pool of existing professional educational materials for teachers and training offers for teachers.

In 2011, ORE implemented a project called "Global education in school educational projects". The aim of the project was to increase the role and importance of global education in school in accordance with the assumptions of the new core curriculum, as well as to motivate teachers and youth to carry out projects in global education, which forms a part of the civics.

314. The MNE conducts activities aimed at strengthening the importance of global education in Polish school:

- Social consultations held (in 2008) in the scope of global education, which initiated a cooperation of MFA and MNE with non-governmental organisations in the above mentioned field;
- The "Open school" competition held (from 2008 on) – which promotes cooperation of schools with NGOs (until 2011, 3 editions of the competition were organised and works are under way on the 4th edition);

  Sample projects among those awarded in 2010-2011:

  - YMSI – *Youth Market of Social Initiatives* project (a lower secondary school in Radawczyk Drugi and Happy Childhood Foundation).
    The project comprised creation of an intra-school communication network, serving the purpose of mutual integration and exchange of information on local youth social initiatives, and also carrying out of common workshops. The project

covered cooperation of lower-secondary schools and non-governmental organisations from Poland, Lithuania and Ukraine.

- A project called *We think globally – we getting to know the world and participate in repairing it* (Prime School no. 2 with Integration Branches in Błonie and For Smile Society).
  As part of the project, a numerous workshops, courses and exhibitions dedicated to developing countries were to be organised. All students of the school took part in meetings with volunteers working in developing countries, and also we employees of embassies and artists from South America and Africa.
- A project called *Knowledge in practice* (Primary School in Święte and the Social Capital Development Foundation).
  The project enlisted 10 schools and consisted in trainings for teachers, creation of course scenarios and school aids related with global education. After training, teachers for the school in Święte implemented a project called "World of child of North and South", as part of which they tell students a couple of words about issues connected with global interdependencies.

- Organisation of the Development Youth Prize, a country-wide competition concerning international development. It is an arts competition organised by the European Schoolnet with a support of the European Commission, Directorate-General for Development. The competition is organised for schools and aimed at sensitizing to the problems of contemporary Africa. From all the European Union countries, Poland submitted most works;
- In 2009, as part of Global Education Network Europe (GENE), a partner review of global education in Poland took place. In result of the review, a report was drafted whose presentation took place in 2010. The report, aside from description of the condition of global education in Poland, contains also a number of recommendations in the scope of development and cooperation of all entities and institutions for strengthening and promoting activities in the field of global education;

  GENE is a European, informal network comprising representatives of ministerial departments and national agencies responsible for shaping policy in the scope of global education and for supporting, coordination and funding of activities in this field. GENE has been operating since 2001 and it presently assembles 11 states (Poland joined in 2004), and its aim is to rise the quality of global education in Europe and to provide support for the existing and emerging national structures responsible for global education.
- ORE has carried out training courses for teachers in the scope of global education aiming at:
  - systemic support for groups that multiply developmental education, providing them with knowledge and skills necessary to perform tasks connected with implementation of systemic educational solutions swiftly and creatively,
  - long-term substantive and methodical support for teachers and groups multiplying developmental education at schools and in local environment,
  - delivery of new educational materials in the scope of global developmental education;

  In 2011, ORE implemented a project called "Global education in school educational projects". Activities covered with the project included:

- training for regional coordinators of global education,
- educational activities coordinated and carried out by regional coordinators,
- competition for the best project for schools that constitute the network of global education,
- carrying out e-learning training for teachers,
- distribution of educational materials developed as part of global education projects and other materials useful in every-day work of a teacher for schools taking part in the project,
- management of the website www.edukacjaglobalna-ore.pl containing global education materials.

315. The project called "This world is also yours" is an initiative aimed at dissemination of knowledge related to global education and sustainable development at schools, as well as knowledge in the scope of human rights – in the spirit of peace, mutual understanding and respect.

The 2010 edition of the project aimed at making the youth aware of benefits stemming from active participation in social and political life of local communities. A seminar and workshops were carried out for students, and the Week of Global Education was celebrated.
The project is carried out by the UNESCO Initiatives Centre (a NGO that cooperates with the UNESCO Polish Committee).
The project is subsidized every year from the state budget.

Civic education and human rights education

316. In April 2010, at ORE in Warsaw, a Conference was held, entitled "Education for human rights in work with children", with an aim of initiating a discussion on actions undertaken by educational establishments to propagate respect for law regulations and shaping attitudes of civic responsibility. It was attended by MNE representatives, Educational Authorities, teacher excellence establishments and other educational institutions and organisations.

The Conference provided an occasion to inaugurate regional training courses that prepare teachers to work with children in the field of human rights, tolerance, counteracting discrimination, and racism on the basis of Polish version of the European Council's education package called "Compasito – a manual on human rights education for children". The "Compasito" contains hints how to convey in an accessible way knowledge of human rights and discuss such topics as dignity of individual, respect to oneself and towards others, freedom, equality, tolerance, and solidarity. The subject matter of the course in focused on themes connected inter alia with democracy, discrimination, equality of sexes, family environment, and foster care, education, health and welfare, as well as poverty and social exclusion. 40 course proposals contained in the manual may be used to involve children in practicing of human rights in a manner referring to their every-day life. Such exercises help children to develop the skill of critical thinking and sense of responsibility and fairness, while at the same time teaching how to undertake activities that may improve the situation at the school or within the closest community. The manual contains also practical hints in the scope of its application in the context of formal and informal education.

317. In May 2011, there was a Conference held in Warsaw, entitled "Education for equality – equality in education". It was attended by representatives of following institutions: Education Department, Municipal Office, Capital City of Warsaw; the MNE; Union of

Polish Teachers; M. Grzegorzewska Academy of Special Pedagogy; Amnesty International Poland.

The Conference was dedicated to discussion of methods and tools of strengthening anti-discrimination perspective in Polish education. Its aim was to identify the possibilities of introducing system solutions, at local, regional, and country-wide level, that contribute to increasing of presence of anti-discrimination issues in formal education.

318. In response to Recommendation CM/Rec(2010)7 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on the Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education of 11 May 2010, ORE commences a project the aim of which is preparation of social competence excellence programme for teachers of all the subjects and education levels.

The programme will be based on the publication of the Council of Europe, entitled "Civic education and education of human rights as a task of all teachers. Description of teacher competences and methods of their development".

Experts with coaching experience were invited to cooperation, whose task will be to develop the programme and to select relevant course scenarios in such scopes, as: citizenship education (CE) and human rights (HR), methodology of teaching CE and HR, cooperation with the educational circles to ensure stability of CE and HR, and evaluation of tasks in the scope of CE and HR.

The programme shall be presented in October 2012 during the conference dedicated to the development of Citizenship Education and Human Rights Education in Poland.

319. Since 2005, as part of on-going cooperation of MNE and the UNESCO Polish Committee, workshops of intercultural education have been organised, called "In the circle of Islamic culture" – an intercultural education project for students and teachers of Polish lower-secondary schools and upper-secondary schools. Initially, the project was addressed only to the students of the Polish Network of UNESCO Associated Schools (ASP net). In 2007, it was widened by workshops for ASP net teachers.

The following courses were carried out as part of the project: 27 daylong workshops for UNESCO Associated Schools (2005-2008), conferences and workshops for Polish teachers (2008), a conference for teachers of the Baltic Region, and a publication containing didactic materials for teachers was published (2007 and 2009), which was then translated into Latvian.

In 2010, a series of regional workshops began, whose recipients are all teachers interested in broadening their knowledge in the scope of multiculturalism (November 2010 – Podlaskie Province, April 2011 – Lubuskie Province, October 2011 – Silesian Province, March 2012 – Sub-Carpathian Province).

Goals of the project: increase awareness of higher and higher cultural diversity in Central and Eastern Europe, help in preparation of Polish education system to accommodate the increasing number of immigrant children in Polish schools, dissemination of human rights education in schools.

The project is subsidized every year from the state budget.

320. The "Democracy at school" Summer Academy – concerns multicultural education, human rights education, and citizenship education. It is held every year in Poland in the beginning of July, at the ORE Training Centre in Sulejówek.

The Summer Academy is attended by three-person teams comprising: the headmaster and a teacher from the same school and a representative of a NGO or parents association that cooperate with the school. These teams are from countries covered with the Eastern

Partnership programme (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova), as well as from Denmark, Finland, Germany, Norway, Poland, Russian, and Sweden.
The Summer Academy is a joint project of MNE, ORE, the Council of Europe and the European Wergeland Centre.
The aim of the Summer Academy is to implement educational materials of the Council of Europe in the scope of intercultural education, citizenship education, and human rights education. Moreover, the Summer Academy initiates and broadens cooperation between participating countries by way of exchange of experiences and examples of good practices in these fields. Trained participants will act as multipliers and will promote principles of democracy and human rights as part of activities undertaken in their respective environments.

The training courses and workshops are based on the following publications of the Council of Europe:
- Democratic Governance of Schools (CoE 2006);
- How all teachers can support citizenship and human rights education: a framework for the development of competences (CoE 2009);
- Compass – A manual for Human Rights Education with young people (CoE 2002);
- Compasito – A manual for Human Rights Education for children (CoE 2007);
- School-Community-University partnership for a Sustainable Democracy (CoE 2010);
- Human Rights Education in the school systems of Europe, Central Asia and North America: a compendium of good practice (CoE 2009).

Promoting equality of opportunities in education

321. Activities aimed at dissemination and promotion of the principle of equal treatment and counteracting discrimination have been carried out since 2008 by the Government Plenipotentiary for Equal Treatment (see also information contained in paras. 126-129 hereof).

In May 2010, at the Chancellery of the Prime Minister, a panel conference was held under the title: "How to bring up children so that they not think in stereotypes?" The conference was a joint undertaking of the Government Plenipotentiary for Equal Treatment, the Minister of Labour and Social Policy, the Minister of National Education, and church organisations and religious associations. The conference was aimed at presenting diverse, proven methods of wise upbringing and teaching of children, thanks to which a young person who does not think in stereotypes will be better prepared to participation in social life.

It was also an occasion to recognise the role played in the educational process, apart from families and schools, also by media and churches, and also an attempt to answer the question how to bring up in order to ensure the best conditions for children to build up their self-esteem, invoking curiosity and developing independent, creative thinking.

Programmes of the European Union aimed at equalisation of opportunities in access to education and vocational excellence courses

322. "Life-long Learning" and "Youth in Action" programmes play a significant role in counteracting discrimination in the field of education and training courses. What is more, they give an opportunity of gaining vocational excellence for persons working with people at risk of social exclusion and early education drop-out. Pedagogues, teachers, psychologists have an opportunity to gain valuable professional experience, exchange of experiences with specialists from other countries and transfer proven method applied in Europe in order to prevent dropping out from school and education, prevent social

exclusion and discrimination in formal, informal, and extra-formal education. And further, the "Life-long Learning" programme contributes to increasing the quality of education programmes at various stages of education, as well as to differentiation of educational offer of Polish institutions that act in favour of young persons from marginalised environments.

"Youth in Action" programme.

323. The programme supports and encourages young people to pursue their passions, develop talents and skills, and acquire new experiences as part of extra-formal education. A participant of the programme may be any young person, irrespectively of their sex, ethnic origin, social status, material condition, etc. The programme is addressed also to persons working with youth and to organisations acting in favour of youth, which would like to increase their qualifications, develop activity or establish international cooperation.

For implementation of the programme in Poland, the National Agency of "Youth in Action" programme is responsible, namely the Foundation for the Development of the Education System (FRSE). Within the programme, language diversification is promoted, and citizens are encouraged to learn foreign languages.

Fixed priorities of the "Youth in Action" programme:

1) Participation of youth – The youth should actively take part in the project at each of its implementation stages as well as in the decision-making process, related to the project, activities planned as part of it, and the young people themselves. In each project subsidized as part of the "Youth in Action" programme, active participation of youth should constitute a pedagogical principle during its implementation;

2) European citizenship – Projects supported financially by the programme should contain elements encouraging the youth to reflect upon European topics and issues, and include the youth in discussion on the direction of development and future of Europe. The projects should also enable youth from different countries to find common values, despite the differences stemming from other country of origin and circles of culture.

3) Cultural diversity – The programme makes it easier for the youth from various social, cultural, religious, and ethnic environments to undertake common actions and its aim is to counteract racism and xenophobia.

4) Inclusion of the youth with lesser opportunities – the programme is supposed not only to provide access to educational offer, but also to serve as a tool widening possibilities of social integration, civic activity, and employment of youth who are in less favourable circumstances that their peers, first of all due to obstacles of social, economic nature, disability, difficulties in learning, cultural differences, health problems, or geographic obstacles.

"Comenius" programme

324. The "Comenius" programme has been extraordinarily popular in Poland and successfully administrated by the FRSE since 1994; it is a sectorial programme included into "Socrates" (1994-1999), "Socrates II" (2000-2006), and "Life-long learning" (2007-2013) programmes. The programme is addressed to students and teachers of schools, education establishments and institutions, and also students of pedagogical faculties and representatives of local government units. General objectives of the "Comenius" Programme are strengthening the quality and European dimension of education.

325. The issue of the role of education in combat against poverty and social exclusion, and also the integrating and including role of the education system relates directly to problems indicated by the beneficiaries of the "Comenius" programme in the diagnosis of implemented projects as key ones.

326. The FRSE, as the National Agency of "Comenius" Programme, in executed promotional activities reaches the groups which are insufficiently represented in the programme. They include kindergartens, vocational schools, and schools and institutions ensuring education to persons with special education needs. Due to their a few per cent share in the programme at the average, it is obvious that there is a need to intensify promotional activities on the part of the National Agency, and first of all due to a substantial need of increasing innovativeness and international dimension of the early education, vocational education, and special education.

327. The "Comenius" programme carries out the following detailed aims: development of knowledge of the diversity of European cultures and languages, and understanding its value among youth and teacher staff, and helping young people to acquire basic skill and life competences necessary for personal development, future employment, and active European citizenship. Assumptions formulated in such way directly address matters related to counteracting discrimination and exclusion. Operational goals of the Programme (improvement of, in qualitative and quantitative terms, partnerships between schools, and mobility that students and teacher staff from various member states participate in; encouraging to learn modern foreign languages and supporting the creation of innovative and ITC based contents, services, and methodology of learning), are of including character and are connected with promotion of attitudes of tolerance for and acceptance of diversity – not only in the process of teaching, but also in the manner of operation of educational establishments and institutions.

328. Since 2007, 1 548 two-year institutional projects (Bilateral and Multilateral Partner School Projects and Partner Regio Projects) have been implemented as part of the "Comenius" programme, and further 1 039 such projects in under implementation. As part of the School Educational Staff campaign, Assistance of Comenius, Preparatory Visits, and Networking Seminars, approx. 4 thousand teachers and students of pedagogical faculties, and also school management staff and local government authorities, participated. Students from 13 schools took part in a new campaign, called Individual Student Trips.

The scale of activities performed as part of the "Comenius" Programme shows of how great importance for the Polish education is initiatives undertaken by participating teachers. Participation in projects and individual trips making it possible to establish contacts with European schools and other educational institution, if for teachers and persons who manage schools an occasion to exchange good practices, also in the field of counteracting discrimination and of including groups at risk of exclusion.

What is extremely important, the correct implementation of the project in the Polish law system is a responsibility of school administering bodies. Thanks to participation of schools and kindergartens in "Comenius" programme, local authorities learn about solutions which are successfully applied in other European Union countries. In that way, changes in educational policy are introduced at the local level – which is particularly visible in communes which started to carry out Regio Partner Programmes aimed at exchange of experiences connected with educational policy in partner countries.

329. As part of activities undertaken by the FRSE aimed at promotion of equal access to education, a conference was held in May 2010 in the Warsaw Technician House of the

Supreme Technical Organisation, which was dedicated to prevention of poverty and social exclusion by way of increasing educational opportunities of children, youth, the disabled, and the elderly. At the conference, a publication was presented which contained examples of good practices in these fields, and representatives of academic circles discussed issues such as global and local mechanisms of emergence of exclusion and poverty, or issues connected with the role of education in preventing poverty and social exclusion.

330. In June 2010, a scientific conference was held at the University of Łódź, entitled "Leaders in Education", organised by the Faculty of Educational Sciences, the University of Łódź, in cooperation with the Management Faculty of the University of Łódź, and the FSED, under the patronage of the Minister of Science and Higher Education, the Minister of National Education and the Polish Academy of Science. The conference was aimed at creation of a platform for broad discussion on theoretical and practical aspects of educational leadership, and also dissemination of good practices and interesting solutions in pedagogical and educational activities.

"Leonardo da Vinci" programme

331. The Leonardo da Vinci programme is a part of an educational programme, called "Life-long learning", and its aimed at supporting activities in the field of vocational education, including counteracting professional and social exclusion by way of making it possible for various recipient groups to gain professional experience (often for the first time in their life), and to get acquainted with organisational culture of enterprises abroad.

The "Leonardo da Vinci" programme promotes innovative approaches to education and professional excellence in such a way so as education system match the needs of labour market in the best possible way. The programme also supports mobility of employees on the European labour market, enabling thereby graduates and employees to gain new qualifications during internships and vocational practices, and to improve their skills in line with modern standards. What is extremely important in this context is shaping of openness and intercultural sensitivity, learning foreign languages, gaining the skill of adapting oneself to the conditions of work and life in different European countries.

The role of the National Agency for the "Leonardo da Vinci" programme was assumed by FRSE. Polish institutions could benefit from the programme from 1998. As the National Agency for it then (until 2006), acted the "Cooperation Fund" Foundation.

The FRSE receives a lot of positive feedback from young people from little localities, or descending from families of low material status, or from the youth originating from difficult environments, for who participation in the projects of the programme has become a unique life-time change to go abroad, acquire new vocational qualifications and to better plan their professional development.

332. A broad range of institutions and organisations involved in development of vocational education take part in the programme, many of which operate in regions with structural unemployment and excluded groups, or people at risk of social exclusion (inter alia people inhabiting areas at risk of unemployment, people with low professional and social competences, people with special needs, immigrants, or national minorities).

333. A frequent criterion of exclusion of young people from the participation in the European path of education is low language competences. For the same reason, elderly people with outdated vocational competences and no command of foreign language are also excluded from the course of the process of obtaining new qualifications and raising existing ones. Too little stress is put on teaching of languages, and insufficient help

as part of language learning is designated, in the programme of Life-long learning, for people who wish to participate in education through mobility. Thus, the National Agency for "Leonardo da Vinci" programme supports the idea of creation of conditions for development and upgrading of key competences for the whole life long, especially taking into account linguistic preparation of young people, as well as adults. Should no specific tools be provided for in this scope, such people will be in result automatically excluded once again, and their poverty, social maladjustment, problems with finding job, social problems, will deteriorate.

334. As part of the "Leonardo da Vinci" programme, approx. 4 thousand young people a year gain valuable professional experience at European companies and employers. Most of people who go abroad represent a very wide range of professions and interest; they are both students of vocational schools (future electricians, chefs, hotel managers, vendors), as well as graduates of various university faculties, workers who improve their professional techniques, and also unemployed persons. They have one thing in common: they are curious and courageous, willing to take the challenge and make use of the lifetime opportunity. Internships at foreign enterprises provide a rare opportunity of obtaining specialist professional competences, increasing one's own self-esteem, independence, and many a time they provide motivation for further learning. Province labour offices operate actively as part of the programme and undertake initiatives aimed at organisation of internships for unemployed people at foreign enterprises, creating thereby opportunities for exiting exclusion and finding a job, and also opportunities for development of personal and language competences.

335. From the perspective of the programme, it is particularly important to ensure equal access to possibilities created for various people, independently of their material status, age, or sex. At training courses in which the beneficiaries take part, particular attention is put on issues connected with transparent criteria of recruitment of participants to the project and for participation in foreign internships, criteria that will not discriminate those who are possibly interested. One may see an increased interest of institutions acting in favour of risk groups in applying for the programme. Also, one may notice higher awareness of people belonging to this group (people with special needs, the disabled) as regards participating in mobility projects, changing the attitudes, and higher openness towards obtaining new knowledge, professional, social, IT skills, and higher openness towards overcoming barriers in human relationships. What is also observed is a greater interest in participation in the projects, and dedication of people who work with risk groups (e.g. troubled youth, the disabled, and the unemployed).

In order to balance availability of the programme, and by that – to equalise possibilities of funding projects for persons belonging to risk groups, the FRSE conducted an informational campaign in less developed and urbanised areas of Poland.

336. The framework of the "Leonardo da Vinci" programme, defined by the European Commission, enables supporting of activities carried out not only by teacher education centres, but also by special vocational schools, which can define specific needs as regards increasing qualifications by the employed vocational teachers and pedagogues. An example of such activities is constituted by the exchange of teachers of the Special School and Education Centre no. 3 in Cracow (*The Gateway Award programme as a form of professional activation of students with mental disabilities of a degree from moderate to severe*). The British programme, called The Gateway Award, is one of the projects implemented by the royal MENCA Foundation, and makes it possible to include people with special educational needs into the local labour market. Teachers who visited

the United Kingdom, learned new methods of work with youth suffering from mental disabilities. New knowledge and experience will not only help to gain maximum possible independence by the students, but they will also make it possible for them to assume professional jobs on the labour market of high specificity, which is a very difficult market for them. A result of exchange of experiences is a set of good practices, prepared in the form of the "TGA Methodology Guide", which constitutes an additional didactic aid for teachers of vocational schools.

337. Partner projects and multilateral projects of transfer of innovations are conducive to mutual understanding, tolerance and openness towards other culture and views also in the aspects connected with vocational learning and training. The experience gained thanks to the "Leonardo da Vinci" programme shows that one of the best ways to equalise opportunities of both students as well as vocational teachers is to organise as many as possible educational mobility facilities by schools and teacher education centres (vocational internships for students, exchange of experiences of teachers). This is because the foreign trips are the best (and often the only) possibility of acquiring professional qualifications and experience, that would be impossible for them to gain otherwise during vocational practices, or when performing every-day professional obligations in Poland. Internships and exchanges do not only increase chances on the labour market, but they also make it possible to learn the labour culture and practices applied in European schools and companies, give an opportunity to learn languages (in particular specialist terminology), increase professional flexibility and self-esteem, and give motivation to further learning. But first of all, they shape the attitude of tolerance and openness towards other cultures. Thus, they constitute a type of support in the process of building up a society open to otherness, which does not only can better understand threats stemming from social exclusion, but is also able to take efficient activities aimed at bottom-up prevention of the occurrence of such phenomena both in the process of vocational education, as well as functioning on the labour market, and also in every-day life.

Examples of projects implemented as part of the "Leonardo da Vinci" programme:

- The project of the Internationaler Bund Polska Foundation of 2007, called "The organisation of vocational education for students who are intellectually disabled-exchange of experiences". The project made it possible to get to know mechanisms operating in the German vocational education system for persons intellectually disabled, methods of social integration, overcoming barriers for participation in social life and overcoming stereotypes;
- The project of the Province Labour Office in Katowice, entitled "The partnership and social dialogue as a way of solving problems of discriminated groups in Spain" – its main aim was to familiarise with methods of activation of persons discriminated on the labour market in Spain;
- A project called "Sweden for Polish blind people – exchange of good practices in the scope of occupational consultancy", implemented by the Polish Association of the Blind. The programme was aimed at using knowledge and experience of Swedish occupational advisors who work with blind and visually impaired persons.

338. A unique value of the "Leonardo da Vinci" programme is constituted by the attempt taken to narrow the gap between the education and its environment. The same aim is supported by cooperation as part of the projects, between organisations of diverse statuses: units representing educational, training institutions, selected fields of economy, services, and social partners.

The FRSE actively takes part in many initiatives that contribute to promotion of horizontal policies and discussing equality principles in educational projects, and also to combating any forms of discrimination, and to counteract social exclusion.

One of such initiatives in participation of the FRSE in the inter-agency project, called "INCLUSION – Supporting of participation of groups at risk of exclusion in the Life-long learning program, implemented by one of the five thematic groups appointed by the European Commission as part of the Thematic Networks of the "Life-long learning" programme. The group is coordinated by the National Agency for the "Leonardo da Vinci" programme, Grundtvig and Transversal from the United Kingdom (ECORYS), and the group includes 14 National Agencies from: the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands, Latvia, Germany, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Sweden, Turkey, United Kingdom, and Italy. The task of INCLUSION project it to examine to what extent the Life-long learning programme is effective as regards inclusion for participation in the process of Life-long learning of excluded groups / groups at risk of social and vocational exclusion (*inter alia* the elderly, the unemployed and people who return to the labour market, including women, groups inhabiting areas at risk of unemployment, the disabled, and immigrants).

There were also projects indicated which may constitute an example of good practice, which are implemented by beneficiaries of the "Life-long learning" programme in all its sectorial programmes as part of centralised and decentralised campaigns. These actions are to help to develop a common strategy, which will make it possible to better adjust the programme profile to the needs of excluded groups and groups at risk of exclusion.

339. Another example of initiatives that were taken was the organisation, in November 2011, of a workshop for representatives of craft chambers and school superintendents acting as Province Contact Points/Coordinators promoting the "Life-long learning" programme. The workshop concerned principles of equality of opportunities as part of planning and conducting promotional activities.

"Grundtvig" programme

340. In 2000-2006, the programme functioned as a part of "Socrates II" programme. Since 2007, it has been one of the main sectorial programmes of the Life-long learning programme. The "Grundtvig" programme is related to non-vocational education of adult persons and supports cooperation at the European level in this field. It is addressed to various types of organisations dealing with non-vocational education of adults, their course participants, and employees. It promotes first of all cooperation in the scope of education of these adult persons, who belong to groups that require special support, such as: the disabled, the elderly, national and ethnic minorities, people with low qualifications, and inhabiting areas with worse access to educational offer for adults.

The "Grundtvig" programme implemented in Poland supports activities connected with non-vocational education of adults in a very broad sense. The support may be granted:

- as part of formal education (e.g. supplementation of secondary education in a comprehensive secondary school that operates independently or within the Continuing Education Centre),
- extra-formal education (in the form of training courses, seminars, etc. e.g. organised by a University of the Third Age, Community Centre, or any other establishment for education of adults),
- non-formal education (e.g. in family, carried out by libraries, museums, and other cultural establishments, media, etc.).

Every year, around 2.5-3 million euro is expended to support international cooperation in this field realised by Polish organisations dealing with education of adults and representatives of staff (e.g. Universities of the Third Age, community establishments, associations, commercial organisations, and public institutions). Many such organisations deal with persons who require special support or with people, whose access to learning is difficult, and many of these activities are aimed at combating discrimination and increasing opportunities for key competences to be obtained. Educational activities addressed to the elderly may be an example here, as well as to intellectually and physically disabled persons, poor people, parents from dysfunctional families, people inhabiting rural areas, detainees. Many of national priorities determined by Poland within this programme are related to the support of education of these very groups of people.

"Erasmus" programme

341. In 2000-2006, the programme functioned as a part of the broader "Socrates II" programme. As of the academic year 2007/2008, it has constituted a part of the Life-long learning programme. "Erasmus" is a programme for universities, its students, and employees. It supports international cooperation of universities and is aimed at improving quality and attractiveness of education, as well as facilitating international cooperation and exchange in the education field. Students of Bachelor's, Engineering, Master's degree, or Doctoral studies, as well as university employees may take part in the programme. Some of the campaigns carried out under it may be attended also by other institutions, organisations, or enterprises that cooperate with universities.

"Erasmus" makes it possible for universities to:

- conduct student exchange covering:
  - sending students for a part of their studies to foreign partner universities and bringing them back,
  - sending students for training to cooperating institutions, companies, and organisations in the countries participating in the programme;
- conduct exchange of university employees:
  - sending academic lecturers to partner universities, to enable them to give lectures there, and bringing them back,
  - sending academic lectures to partner universities and other cooperating institutions, organisations, and enterprises for training purposes (qualification improvement, broadening of knowledge of a given field, participation in training courses, etc.),
  - sending other university employees (for example administration staff) to partner universities in order to improve professional competences by way of participation in training courses and seminars;
- organisation of intense courses – series of didactic courses prepared and conducted by lecturers from various countries for an international group of students;
- participation in multilateral projects – together with a group of universities from other participating countries; such projects may relate to e.g. development of cooperation between universities and enterprises, institutions and other non-academic partners, modernisation of education and institutional solutions at universities, increasing accessibility of universities, tightening connections between education and research, etc.

Poland has been participating in the "Erasmus" programme since 1998. 260 Polish universities (public and non-public) are presently actively participating in the programme). Since the very commencement of Poland's participation in the programme, up to the academic year 2009/2010, more than 94 thousand students of Polish universities

have taken advantage of trips offered as part of “Erasmus”. As regards training trips (in respect of training courses conducted as part of the programme since the academic year 2007/2008), 975 students took advantage of them in the academic year 2010/2011, and in 2010/2011, their number increased up to 2 662.

Legal references

Item	ACTS
1	***The Constitution of the Republic of Poland*** of 2 April 1997 (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] No. 78, item 483, as amended)
2	Act of 3 December 2010 ***on the Implementation of certain European Union Regulations concerning Equal Treatment*** (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] No. 254, item 1700)
3	Act of 26 October 1982 ***on Juvenile Delinquency Proceedings*** (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] of 2010, No. 33, item 1788, as amended)
4	Act of 13 November 2003 ***on Income of Local Government Units*** (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] of 2010, No. 80, item 526, as amended)
5	Act of 8 March 1990 ***on Commune Government*** (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] of 2001, No. 142, item 1591, as amended)
6	Act of 5 June 1998 ***on Poviat Government*** (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] of 2001, No. 142, item 1592, as amended)
7	Act of 2 July 2004 ***on Freedom of Economic Activity*** (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] of 2010, No. 220, item 1447, as amended)
8	Act of 26 July 1991 ***on the Natural Persons' Income Tax*** (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] of 2012, item 361)
9	Act of 11 March 2004 ***on Goods and Services Tax*** (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] of 2011, No. 177, item 1054, as amended)
10	Act of 20 April 2004 ***on Employment Promotion and Labour Market Institutions*** (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] of 2008, No. 69, item 415, as amended)
11	Act of 19 December 2008 ***on Amendments to the Act on Employment Promotion and Labour Market Institutions and to Certain Other Acts*** (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] of 2009, No. 6, item 33, as amended)
12	Act of 27 August 1997 ***on Professional and Social Rehabilitation and Employment of Disabled Persons*** (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] of 2011, No. 127, item 721, as amended)
13	Acts of 27 August 2004 ***on Healthcare Services Financed from Public Funds*** (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] of 2008, No. 164, item 1027, as amended)
14	Act of 12 March 2004 ***on Social Welfare*** (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] of 2009, No. 175, item 1362, as amended)
15	Act of 28 November 2003 ***on Family Benefits*** (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] of 2006, No. 139, item 992, as amended)
16	Act of 7 September 1991 ***on Education System*** (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] of 2004, No. 256, item 2572, as amended)
17	Act of 16 December 2004 ***on Amendments to the Act on Education System and to the Act on the Natural Persons' Income Tax*** (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] No. 281, item 2781)
18	Act of 19 March 2009 ***on Amendments to the Act on Education System and to Certain Other Acts*** (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] No. 56, item 458, as amended)
19	Act of 5 August 2010 ***on Amendments to the Act on Education System*** (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] No. 148, item 991)
20	Act of 19 August 2011 ***on Amendments to the Act on Education System and to Certain Other Acts*** (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] No. 205, item 1206)

21	Act of 26 January 1982 – ***Teacher's Charter*** (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] of 2006, No. 97, item 674, as amended)
22	Act of 27 July 2005 ***on Higher Education*** (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] No. 164, item 1365, as amended)
23	Act of 5 November 2009 ***on Amendments to the Act on Higher Education*** (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] No. 202, item 1553)
24	Act of 18 March 2011 ***on Amendments to the Act on Higher Education, to the Act on Academic Titles and Degrees, to the Act on Academic Titles and Degrees in Art and to Certain Other Acts*** (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] No. 84, item 455)
25	Act of 17 July 1998 ***on Loans and Credits for Students*** (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] No. 108, item 685, as amended)
26	Act of 6 January 2005 ***on National Minorities and on Regional Language*** (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] No. 17, item 141, as amended)
27	Act of 30 April 2010 ***on National Science Centre*** (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] No. 96, item 617)
28	Act of 30 April 2010 ***on Rules for Financing Science*** (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] No. 96, item 615)
29	Act of 30 April 2010 ***on Research Institutes*** (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] No. 96, item 618)
30	Act of 30 April 2010 ***on National Research and Development Centre*** (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] No. 96, item 616)
31	Act of 30 April 2010 ***on Polish Academy of Sciences*** (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] No. 96, item 619)
32	Act of 4 February 2011 ***on Care of Children up to the Age of 3*** (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] No. 45, item 235, as amended)
	REGULATIONS
33	Regulation of the Council of Ministers of 24 August 2004 ***on the list of occupations not allowed for juveniles and conditions for their employment to perform some of the occupations listed herein*** (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] No. 200, item 2047, as amended)
34	Regulation of the Council of Ministers of 22 April 2008 ***on Government Plenipotentiary for Equal Treatment*** (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] No. 75, item 450, as amended)
35	Regulation of the Council of Ministers of 23 August 2011 ***on detailed conditions for providing assistance to children and students in the form of emergency benefits for educational purposes in 2011*** (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] No. 178, item 1062)
36	Regulation of the Council of Ministers of 14 June 2005 ***on scholarships granted by the Prime Minister, minister for education and upbringing and minister for culture and protection of national heritage*** (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] No. 106, item 890)
37	Regulation of the Minister of Justice of 14 September 2001 ***on detailed rules for participation in religion lessons and religious practices, using religious services and organisation of pastoral services in youth detention centres and juvenile shelters*** (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] No. 106, item 1157)
38	Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 10 August 2001 ***on standard requirements forming the basis for test and examination procedures***

	(Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] No. 92, item 1020, as amended)
39	Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 10 March 2010 ***on standard requirements forming the basis for examinations to test professional competence*** (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] No. 103, item 652, as amended)
40	Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 30 April 2007 ***on conditions and methods for evaluating, classifying and promoting pupils and adult learners as well as test and examination procedures in public schools*** (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] No. 83, item 562, as amended)
41	Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 20 August 2010 ***on amendments to the Regulation on conditions and methods for evaluating, classifying and promoting credited pupils and students as well as procedures for test and examination procedures in public schools*** (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] No. 156, item 1046)
42	Regulation of the Minister of National Education and Sport of 20 February 2004 ***on conditions and procedures for admitting students to public schools and transferring between different types of schools*** (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] No. 26, item 232, as amended)
43	Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 15 June 2009 ***on public continuous education establishments, public practical education establishments and public further education and professional development establishments*** (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] No. 99, item 828)
44	Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 18 September 2007 ***on extramural examinations*** (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] No. 179, item 1273)
45	Regulation of the Minister of National Education and Sport of 20 December 2003 ***on accreditation of non-school continuous education establishments and centres*** (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] No. 227, item 2247, as amended)
46	Regulation of the Minister of National Education and Sport of 20 December 2003 ***on accreditation of professional development establishments for teachers*** (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] No. 227, item 2248)
47	Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 12 May 2011 ***on types and detailed methods of operation of public establishments, conditions for the residence of children and youth therein as well as the amount of payments and rules for charging parents for the residence of their children in such establishments*** (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] No. 109, item 631)
48	Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 26 June 2007 ***on classification of vocational education occupations*** (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] No. 124, item 860, as amended)
49	Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 23 December 2011 ***on classification of vocational education occupations*** (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] of 2012, item 7)
50	Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 29 December 2009 ***on admission rules for persons at the age of more than 16 or 15 years to public or non-public schools*** **for** ***adults*** (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] of 2010, No. 2 item 3)
51	Regulation of the Minister of Education and Science of 3 February 2006 ***on non-school establishments for adults to acquire and follow up general education, professional skills and qualifications*** (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] No. 31, item 216)

52	Regulation of the Minister of National Education and Sport of 07 September 2004 ***on standards for teacher education*** (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] No. 207, item 2110) – became ineffective as of 1 October 2011 as a result of the entry into force of the Act of 18 March 2011 ***on Amendments to the Act on Higher Education, to the Act on Academic Titles and Degrees, to the Act on Academic Titles and Degrees in Art and to Certain Other Acts***
53	Regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher Education of 17 January 2012 ***on educational standards for teaching professions*** (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] item 131)
54	Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 12 August 1997 ***on educational and training centres for teachers*** (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] No. 104, item 664, as amended)
55	Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 30 June 2006 ***on educational standards for teachers in teacher training colleges and teacher training colleges of foreign languages*** (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] No. 128, item 897)
56	Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 12 March 2009 ***on detailed qualifications to be met by teachers as well as the specification of schools and cases in which it is allowed to employ teachers without a university degree or teacher training diploma*** (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] No. 50, item 400, as amended)
57	Regulation of the Minister of National Education and Sport of 31 January 2005 ***on minimum base remuneration rates for teachers, general conditions for granting benefits to the base remuneration and remuneration for working on holidays*** (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] No. 22, item 181, as amended)
58	Regulation of the Minister of National Education and Sport of 26 February 2002 ***on curriculum for pre-school upbringing and general education in various types of schools*** (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] No. 51, item 458, as amended)
59	Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 23 December 2008 ***on curriculum for pre-school upbringing and general education in various types of schools*** (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] of 2009, No. 4 item 17)
60	Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 10 January 2008 ***on types of other forms of pre-school education, conditions for their establishment and organisation as well as their methods of operation*** (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] No. 7, item 38, as amended)
61	Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 27 May 2009 ***on types of other forms of pre-school education, conditions for their establishment and organisation as well as their methods of operation*** (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] No. 83, item 693)
62	Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 31 August 2010 ***on types of other forms of pre-school education, conditions for their establishment and organisation as well as their methods of operation*** (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] No. 161, item 1080, as amended)
63	Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 14 April 1992 ***on conditions and methods of organisation of religion lessons in public kindergartens and schools***

	(Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] No. 36, item 155, as amended)
64	Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 4 October 2001 ***on admission of non-Polish citizens to public kindergartens and schools, teacher training centres and establishments*** (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] No. 131, item 1458)
65	Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 1 April 2010 ***on admission of non-Polish citizens to public kindergartens, schools, teacher training centres and establishments as well as organisation of additional Polish language and remedial classes and classes focused on the language and culture of the country of origin*** (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] No. 57, item 361)
66	Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 17 November 2010 ***on rules for providing and organising psychological and pedagogical assistance in public kindergartens, schools and establishments*** (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] No. 228, item 1487)
67	Regulation of the Minister of Education of 17 November 2010 ***on conditions for organising education, upbringing and care for children and youth with disabilities or socially maladjusted at generally accessible or integration kindergartens, schools and units*** (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] No. 228, item 1490)
68	Regulation of the Minister of Education of 17 November 2010 ***on conditions for organising education, upbringing and care for children and youth with disabilities or socially maladjusted at special kindergartens, schools, units and centres*** (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] No. 228, item 1489)
69	Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 14 November 2007 ***on conditions and methods for public kindergartens, schools and establishments to carry out task to enable fostering a sense of national, ethnic and linguistic identity among students belonging to national and ethnic minorities or communities using regional language*** (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] No. 214, item 1579, as amended)
70	Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 18 May 2010 ***on amendments to the Regulation on conditions and methods for public kindergartens, schools and establishments to carry out task to enable fostering a sense of national, ethnic and linguistic identity among students belonging to national and ethnic minorities or communities using regional language*** (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] No. 109, item 712)
71	Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 7 March 2005 ***on types and detailed methods of operation of public establishments, conditions for the residence of children and youth therein as well as the amount of payments and rules for charging parents for the residence of their children in such establishments*** (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] No. 52, item 467, as amended)
72	Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 7 October 2009 ***on pedagogical supervision*** (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] No. 168, item 1324)
73	Regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher Education of 5 October 2011 ***on conditions for participating in different university degree programmes at different educational levels*** (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] No. 243, item 1445)

74	Regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher Education of 12 July 2007 ***on educational standards for different university degree programmes and educational levels as well as the procedures for establishing and conditions to be met by a university to hold interdisciplinary and multiple major university degree programmes*** (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] No. 164, item 1166, as amended)
75	Regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher Education of 28 November 2011 ***on the scope of data and information required to be included in the application for a non-public university permit as well as the amount of payments and rules for charging the costs of the consultative proceedings*** (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] No. 268, item 1584)
76	Regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher Education of 2 November 2011 ***on National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education*** (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] No. 253, item 1520)
77	Regulation of the Minister of Culture and National Heritage of 16 June 2011 ***on conditions and procedures for admitting students to public schools and transferring them between different types of schools*** (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] No. 142, item 831)
78	Regulation of the Minister of Culture and National Heritage of 12 August 2010 ***on subsidies for non-public art schools*** (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] No. 162, item 1091)
79	Regulation of the Minister of Culture of 22 September 2004 ***on specialist monitoring and supervisory unit*** (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] No. 226, item 2292, as amended)
80	Regulation of the Minister of Culture of 4 June 2003 ***on detailed rules and conditions for granting and revoking permits for establishing public art schools by natural persons or corporate bodies*** (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] No. 116, item 1099)
81	Regulation of the Minister of Policy of 24 March 2005 ***on colleges for social services workers*** (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] No. 61, item 544)
	INSTRUCTIONS
82	Instruction of the Minister of Labour and Social Policy of 15 December 2010 ***on the limit amount of the annual contribution assessment basis for retirement and pension schemes in 2011 and the amount of the projected average remuneration, established to calculate such limit amount*** (M.P. [Official Gazette] No. 99, item 1173)
	INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS
83	***Universal Declaration of Human Rights*** (Resolution of the General Assembly of the United Nations no. 217 A (III) adopted and proclaimed on 10 December 1948)
84	***International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights***, opened for signature in New York on 19 December 1966 (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] of 1977, No. 38 item 169)
85	***Convention on the Rights of the Child*** adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on 20 November 1989 (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] of 1991, No. 120 item 526)
86	***Convention against Discrimination in Education*** adopted by the General Conference at its eleventh session, Paris, 14 December 1960 (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] of 1964, No. 40 item 268)

87	***International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers*** (Dz. U. [Journal of Laws] of 1984, No. 39, item 201, as amended)