



**Fundusze Europejskie**

# Education system in Poland



Fundusze Europejskie  
dla Lubuskiego



Rzeczpospolita  
Polska

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Lubuskie  
Warte zachodu

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## WE PROVIDE FREE SERVICES

### Polish Language Course

at the level: from A1 to B2

### First Contact Assistant Support

concerning: individual issues related to residence and work in Poland: the education system, health, social security including social benefits, transportation, taxes and other matters of daily life in the new country, the rules for the continuation of legal residence in Poland, legal work and employment of third-country nationals.

**Sworn translation of documents**

**Legal advice**

**Professional training**

**Psychological advice**

**Integration meetings**

**Information and adaption meetings**

**Career counseling**

**WE INVITE YOU**



Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are giving you an educational brochure on the rights and obligations of foreigners staying in Poland. This publication was created with the aim of facilitating your daily life in a new country - a place that may be becoming your new home.

The information collected here will help you understand the most important aspects of life in Poland - both formal and legal, social and customary. We hope that the information it contains will make it easier for you to adapt and function in our country on a daily basis.

If, after reading the brochure, you have doubts about the presented regulations or need additional assistance, we encourage you to contact the Center for Integration of Foreigners Zielona Góra (CIC). At the CIC you will receive free and professional assistance from first contact assistants. In addition, at the Center you have the opportunity to use computers and access the Internet, which can be helpful in dealing with official matters or searching for information.

Remember that knowing your rights and responsibilities is key to full integration and comfort in your new environment.

We wish you good luck and success in Poland.

*The team of the Center for Integration of Foreigners Zielona Góra*



# **Education system in Poland**



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## Compulsory schooling

Compulsory education: in Poland there is compulsory schooling and education - from the age of 7 to 18.

### Children aged 0 - 3 years

- **Nursery**

The nursery is open to children starting from the age of 20 weeks until they reach the age of 3.

Children in the nursery can stay up to 10 hours a day. Extension of the child's stay beyond 10 hours, is possible in justified cases.

The nursery provides children with food, nursing care, educational activities, play activities, activities taking into account the psychomotor development of the child.

Payments for the presence of a child in a nurseries are determined by the authority leading the nursery in the city/municipality/ county, while in non-public nurseries the fees are determined individually in the institution. Establishments are divided into public - run by the local government (financed by the city/municipality/county) and non-public - run, for example, by individuals/ foundations/associations.

Recruitment to a nursery - you need to submit an application in electronic or paper form. Deadlines and rules for recruitment to a public nursery are determined by the institution that supervises nurseries in the city or municipality.

Deadlines and rules for recruitment to a non-public nursery are determined by the entity that runs the nursery.

Before enrolling a child in a nursery, you should find out what are the specific terms of recruitment to public and

non-public nurseries, depending on the city, municipality or county.

- **Children's club (aged 1 - 3 years).**

A children's club can accommodate a child from the age of 1 year to the age of 3 years. It is a non-public institution providing care for the child. The children's club provides nursing care, play activities and educational elements. Children in the children's club can stay up to 10 hours a day. Extension of the child's stay beyond 10 hours, is possible in justified cases. Deadlines and rules for recruitment to the children's club are determined by the entity running the facility.

### Children ages 3 - 6 years

- **Kindergarten**

Kindergarten can be attended by children, aged from 3 years to 6 years.

Kindergartens are divided into public and non-public establishments.

Parents/legal guardians choose the institution to which the child will attend - kindergartens are not subject to the principle of districting (regionalization, i.e. the requirement that the place of residence determines admission to kindergarten).

Pre-school education at the age of (3 - 5 years) is optional - it is a voluntary form of child care.

Forms of implementation of preschool education:

- kindergartens,
- kindergarten departments in elementary schools,
- kindergarten education teams,
- kindergarten points.

In kindergarten facilities, children develop social skills, learn the basics of writing, reading, counting, foreign language, as well as music, rhythm, drawing.

Recruitment to kindergarten is done electronically and on paper. It is necessary to find out what are the specific conditions for recruitment to public and non-public kindergartens, depending on the city, municipality or county.

Recruitment to kindergartens usually begins in March for the school year, which starts at the beginning of September.

If you have problems finding a free place in a public kindergarten, you should contact the body that runs the kindergarten.

Tuition in kindergartens takes place throughout the year, excluding break periods set by the authority in charge of the kindergarten.

Public kindergartens are closed once a year during the summer vacation for 1 month (July or August). During this time, you can take advantage of on-call services held in other kindergartens.

- **Ground Zero**

A child at the age of 6 is required to complete one year of pre-school preparation (so-called “kindergarten”), since the last period of stay in kindergarten serves to prepare the child for school.

A child’s participation at “kindergarten” is free of charge.

### General information on the organization of the school year in the Polish education system

During recruitment to elementary school, regionalization is in effect, i.e. admission to school is determined by place of residence. The school is obliged to provide a place in school for children residing in the encompassed region. Pupils are admitted to school on the basis of documents, i.e. an application or application form, a statement of the child’s place of residence or confirmation of the child’s registration, a

copy of the child’s birth certificate/passport, the child’s pesel and the identity card of the child’s parent/legal guardian. Depending on the school, other documents may also be required. If a student wishes to attend a school that does not cover his/her area of residence, it is possible to enroll the child in such a school, also on the basis of the above documents, but the school must have vacancies.

Elementary school enrollment is conducted electronically.

### Organization of the school year and schooling

#### 1. School year and organization of activities

- The school year runs from **September 1 to June 30**.
- Teaching classes are held from **Monday to Friday**.
- **One lesson hour lasts 45 minutes**.
- Between lessons, students have breaks, the length of which is usually **10 to 20 minutes** (including lunch break).

#### 2. Food

- Most schools have **school cafeterias** where students can purchase lunches.

### 3. School common room

- Elementary school students, especially grades I-III, can use the **school day-care center**, where they spend their time before or after school, until they are picked up by their parents or legal guardians.

### 4. School fees

- Schools have fees that are paid by the parents or legal guardians of students at designated times.
- Among the most common are:
  - Contribution to the Parents' Council (the body that represents the parents of students in a given school),
  - Child insurance (mandatory in most schools),
  - Class fees (e.g., for the organizational needs of the class, set by the teacher with parents.
- Note that some fees may be voluntary, although schools recommend their payment.

### 5. Involvement of parents in the life of the school

- Parents or legal guardians have the opportunity to **actively participate in the life of the school and the class** their child attends.

- Cooperation should take place in consultation with the class teacher.

### 6. Grading system

- In grades 0 and I-III, descriptive grades are used to show the child's progress in learning and behavior.
- In grades IV-VIII there is a numerical grading scale from 1 to 6 (from lowest to highest):
  - 1 - insufficient,
  - 2 - acceptable,
  - 3 - sufficient,
  - 4 - good,
  - 5 - very good,
  - 6 - excellent.
- Teachers are required to evaluate students' progress on an ongoing basis. At the end of the semester and the school year, **final grades are issued for each subject.**

### 7. Assessment of behaviour

- Students' behavior is evaluated according to the following scale (from the worst to the best):
  - reprehensible,
  - inappropriate,
  - correct,
  - good,
  - very good,
  - exemplary.



## Course of the school year

- 1. Start of the school year** - September 1 (or other day in early September designated by the Ministry of Education).
- 2. National Education Day (Teacher's Day)** - October 14.
- 3. All Saints' Day** - November 1 (a day off from teaching).
- 4. National Independence Day** - November 11 (day off).
- 5. Christmas holidays (winter holiday break)** - from December 23 to January 1.
- 6. Christmas holidays** - December 24-26.
- 7. New Year's Day** - January 1 (day off).
- 8. Epiphany** - January 6 (day off).
- 9. Winter holidays** - two-week winter break (date depends on the province, determined by the Ministry of Education).
- 10. Easter (holiday break)** - several days off during the Easter holiday (March or April traffic holidays).
- 11. Labour Day** - May 1 (day off).
- 12. 3rd of May Constitution Day** - May 3 (day off).
- 13. End of the school year** - in the last week of June (exact date to be determined by the Ministry of Education).
- 14. Summer vacation** - July and August.

## Attention:

A detailed schedule of the school year, days off and holiday break dates can be found on the website of your child's school and in the announcements of the Ministry of Education.

## Methods and tools of communication with the school

Parents/legal guardians of students are invited by schools to actively communicate. In addition to such forms as teacher contact and meetings with students' parents/legal guardians, there are electronic applications that facilitate communication between the school and students and parents/legal guardians. Electronic tools have replaced classic logbooks with students' grades and attendance, and offer remote access to the school logbook. Examples include the Librus e-journal and Vulcan. The systems provide an opportunity to communicate with the teacher and to learn about school news. The systems also allow you to support the learning process by being able to check, for example, the dates and topics of homework assignments, the dates of tests or classes.

The applications provide the ability to monitor the most important elements of learning such as access to the student's grades and attendance, the ability to check the timetable and class number. The apps can be accessed via a computer as well as a mobile device.

## Primary School

Elementary school education is compulsory for children at the age of 7 (while children at the age of 6 may also start elementary school, upon submission of an opinion from a psychological and pedagogical counseling center at the request of a parent/legal guardian).

Elementary school education is divided into 2 stages:

- Grades 1 - 3 (early childhood learning),
- Grades 4 - 8 (learning by subject).

Textbooks in elementary school are free of charge and students receive them at school on a loan basis (they must be returned after completing the class), while exercise books are for the student (not returnable).

In elementary school, students have the opportunity to learn 2 modern foreign languages.

In the eighth grade at the end of the school year there is an **eighth-grade exam**. Every student must take it - it is a prerequisite for graduation from elementary school. The exam includes 4 subjects, which are compulsory: Polish, mathematics, a modern foreign language and a subject of choice: biology, chemistry, physics, geography or history. The results of the eighth-grade exam, together with the grades on the elementary school graduation certificate, are the basis for entering the next stage of secondary school.

## Secondary schools

### High school

#### For young people

High school is a 4-year secondary school, in which learning is carried out in accordance with the core curriculum of general education.

Studying in a general high school prepares the student for the baccalaureate exam. The baccalaureate is not a compulsory exam. A positive result of the baccalaureate exam, is required for a further stage of education - higher education at a Polish university. Completion of education in a general

high school ends with the acquisition of secondary education (without acquiring a specific profession).

### **For adults**

High school for adults is intended for persons who have reached the age of 18 or will reach the age of 18 in the calendar year in which they are admitted to school.

High school education is taken up by those who have interrupted their education at an earlier stage and intend to supplement their education.

Form of education: full-time or part-time.

### **High school final exam**

The exam is not compulsory, graduates of secondary schools independently decide whether to take the exam. The matriculation exam consists of 2 parts: written and oral.

The exam includes compulsory subjects and selected additional subjects.

### **Technical school**

A technical school is a 5-year secondary school, in which learning is carried out in accordance with the core curriculum and the core curriculum for training in a selected industry profession. During the course of

study, the student learns general subjects and vocational subjects. Learning consists of theoretical classes and practical classes in a given profession. Students of the technical school must pass mandatory apprenticeships. After graduating from the technical school, graduates have professional qualifications in the chosen industry and can take up a job, they can also take the baccalaureate exam and have the opportunity to start higher education. During their education, students of the technical school take an external state exam to obtain the title of technician.

### **Professional exam**

The vocational exam consists in a graduate of a technical school obtaining professional qualifications, the number of which is determined by the core curriculum for the profession and in accordance with the qualification of vocational training professions. The professional exam is an external exam and can be held throughout the school year.

### **First-degree vocational school**

In order to enter an industry school of the first degree, it is necessary for a student to have a certificate of completion of elementary school.

The education lasts for a period of 3 years and includes general and vocational education, in accordance with the classification of occupations of industry education.

Practical vocational training can take place at school, with employers in vocational training centers or in continuing education institutions.

Upon completion of the study and passing the vocational or journeyman's exam, a graduate of a first-degree vocational school obtains a vocational diploma or an appropriate journeyman's certificate and basic vocational education.

In order to continue his education and desire to obtain a technician's diploma, a graduate may continue his education at a second-level trade school.

After graduating from a trade school, a graduate can either start work or continue his education at a second-level vocational school.

### **Second-degree vocational school.**

The study lasts for a period of 2 years and is intended for graduates of a first-degree trade school who have passed a professional examination for the first qualification in a profession that is taught at

a second-degree trade school.

Students take an external state examination, conducted by the district examination board. After graduation and passing the vocational exam, the graduate obtains the title of technician, industry secondary education and can take the matriculation exam.

### **Special schools.**

The basis for the inclusion of a student in the care and special education, is a decision on the need for special education. The decision is issued by a public psychological and pedagogical clinic. Education in special schools is also subject to students with a disability certificate.

The special education system consists of the following institutions:

- special kindergartens,
- special elementary schools,
- special secondary schools (general secondary schools, technical schools, industry first degree schools, industry second degree schools, post-secondary schools).

### **Post-secondary schools.**

Post-secondary school allows people with secondary education to obtain a diploma

confirming professional qualifications. Graduation from a post-secondary school allows a person to obtain a vocational diploma after passing an appropriate exam. Post-secondary schools are divided into public post-secondary schools and non-public post-secondary schools. Education lasts from 1 year to 2.5 years. Students of post-secondary schools will take the same vocational exams as students of trade schools and technical schools.

### Foreigners in Polish schools

Foreigners are admitted to Polish schools on the basis of such documents as:

- school-leaving certificate or other document certifying the completion of a stage of education abroad,
- a written statement on the total number of years of education - submitted by the child's parent/legal guardian or an adult pupil (in cases where the education attended cannot be documented).

The pupil is admitted to the school on the basis of an interview. If a student does not speak Polish, the interview is conducted in a foreign language spoken by the student or with the assistance of a person speaking the

language of the student's country of origin. The pupil's documents should be translated into the official language of the country (no sworn translation is required).

In the case of the eighth-grade examination and the matriculation examination, foreigners are entitled to appropriate forms and conditions for taking the examination. An opinion of the pedagogical board or an opinion of a psychological-educational counselling centre must be obtained (different examination sheet, longer examination duration, possibility of using a bilingual dictionary).

Foreign pupils are admitted to secondary schools on the basis of documents in the case of a general secondary school and on the basis of documents and a medical certificate containing a certificate stating that there are no health contraindications to undertake practical vocational training in a technical school, an upper secondary school, an upper secondary school and a post-secondary school.

A prerequisite for admission to a secondary school is that the schools have free places. The competent authority for the recognition of education obtained abroad is the Lubuski Superintendent of Education.

Detailed information can be found at the School Superintendent's Office in Gorzów Wielkopolski (website <https://ko-gorzow.edu.pl/> tab 'Załatwianie sprawach'):

Foreign students can also benefit from additional forms of support at schools:

### **Additional Polish language lessons:**

Foreigners subject to compulsory schooling or compulsory education can benefit from additional Polish language lessons. Polish language classes are organized at schools and last for a minimum of 2 lesson hours per week.

### **Additional remedial classes:**

Foreigners can benefit from remedial classes if the teacher determines that there is a need to make up curriculum differences in a particular subject. Compensatory classes are

conducted in individual form and in group form. The time dimension of the classes is 1 lesson per week.

### **WHERE TO LOOK FOR INFORMATION ON EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS?**

- **Board of Education in Gorzów Wielkopolski**  
Ul. Jagiellończyka 10  
66-400 Gorzów Wlkp.  
[HTTPS://KO-GORZOW.EDU.PL/](https://ko-gorzow.edu.pl/)
- **Delegation of the Board of Education in Zielona Góra**  
65-057 Zielona Góra, ul. Podgórna 5  
(District starosty building, 3rd floor, room 335)

Practical tips about school facilities should be sought with the help of the following table with useful QR codes:

Recognition of education obtained abroad	Lubuskie Education Board	List of psychological and pedagogical counselling centres	Data about educational institutions	Website schoolainfo.pl
				

# IMPORTANT

**Note: The educational brochure is not a source of law.**

The authors have made every effort to ensure that the content of the brochure is in compliance with applicable laws. However, please note that the publication deals with typical situations and the most common cases, so it may not fully apply to individual cases.

The number and type of documents that may be requested by administrative authorities in the course of proceedings to legalize residence and work in POLAND, health and education cases may differ from those given in the brochure, depending on the specific case.

In case of any doubt, it is recommended:

- contact the relevant administrative body (e.g., Provincial Office, Office for Foreigners),
- familiarize yourself with the law,
- take advantage of the free assistance of the Center for Integration of Foreigners in Zielona Góra.



## DEVELOPMENT:



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W ZIELONEJ GÓRZE



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## EDUCATIONAL BROCHURE

### COPY FREE OF CHARGE

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