**Education in Poland**

Compulsory [**education**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Education) in [**Poland**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Poland) starts at the age of five or six, per the Reforms of 1999,[[1]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Education_in_Poland#cite_note-BARIE_archive-1) from the "0" class kindergarten ([Polish](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Polish_language) *przedszkole*, literally pre-school) and, from six-to-seven years of age, for the 1st grade of [primary school](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Primary_school) ([Polish](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Polish_language) *szkoła podstawowa*). Compulsory education lasts 9 years. After the first 6 years of primary education, pupils join the gymnasium for 3 years (lower secondary education) and at the end, take another compulsory exam.[[2]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Education_in_Poland#cite_note-buwiwm-System-2)

Polish Ministry of Education established by King [Stanisław August Poniatowski](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stanis%C5%82aw_August_Poniatowski) in 1773 was the first ministry of education in the world,[[3]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Education_in_Poland" \l "cite_note-Meer2002-223-3)[[4]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Education_in_Poland#cite_note-ND-4) and the traditions continue. The international [PISA 2012](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/PISA_2012) praised the progresses made by Polish education in Mathematics, Science and Literacy; the number of top-performers having increased since 2003 while the number of low-performers decreased again.[[5]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Education_in_Poland#cite_note-PISA2012-5) In 2014, the Pearson/Economist Intelligence Unit rated Polish education as 4th best in Europe and 10th best in the world.[[6]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Education_in_Poland#cite_note-6)

There are several alternatives for the upper secondary education later on, the most common being the three years of a [*liceum*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Liceum_og%C3%B3lnokszta%C5%82c%C4%85ce) or four years in a [*technikum*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Technikum_(Poland)). Both end with a maturity exam ([matura](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Matura" \o "Matura), quite similar to French [baccalauréat](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Baccalaur%C3%A9at)), and may be followed by several forms of upper education, leading to Bachelor: [*licencjat*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Licencjat) or [*inżynier*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Engineer) (the Polish [Bologna Process](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bologna_Process) first cycle qualification), Master: [*magister*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Magister_(degree)) (the Polish [Bologna Process](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bologna_Process) second cycle qualification) and eventually PhD: [*doktor*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Doktor) (the Polish [Bologna Process](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bologna_Process) third cycle qualification). The system of education in Poland allows for 22 years of continuous, uninterrupted schooling.[1]

**Compulsory education**

**Primary school**

Since 2012/2013, primary school usually starts at 6 year old instead of 7 previously.[[7]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Education_in_Poland#cite_note-IBE-7) Primary school is divided into 2 cycles of 3 years. The first cycle is "integrated", with one teacher handling alone all the subjects, while the second cycle offers a subject-based teaching.[[7]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Education_in_Poland#cite_note-IBE-7) At the end of primary school, pupils write a compulsory international competence test. If completed, the examination grants a primary-school leaving certificate. This certificate is however not needed to enter Gymnasium.[[7]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Education_in_Poland#cite_note-IBE-7)

**Gymnasium**

Gymnasium covers lower secondary education and ends general basic education. It lasts 3 years. Subject taught are: Polish language, History, Civic Education, Foreign Language, Mathematics, Physics and Astronomy, Chemistry, Biology, Geography, Fine Arts/Music, Technology, Information Technology, Physical Education, Religion or Ethics.[[7]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Education_in_Poland#cite_note-IBE-7) At the end of the curriculum, pupils are evaluated based on their continuing results and on an examination in Humanities, Science and Foreign Languages.[[7]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Education_in_Poland#cite_note-IBE-7)

**Upper secondary education**

The [upper secondary](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/High_school) education begins at the end of full-time compulsory education, preparing students for entry directly into the [labour-market](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Employment) and/or tertiary (i.e. higher) education. Upper secondary education takes many forms.

General education can be pursued in general secondary schools (liceum): after 3 years, students can pass the "Matura", which grants access to higher education.[[7]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Education_in_Poland#cite_note-IBE-7) Vocational and technical education is mainly provided by Technical schools (*technikum*) and/or basic vocational schools (*zasadnicza szkoła zawodowa*). Technical schools last 4 years and lead to the Matura. Their primary goal is to teach occupations and trades, the most popular being: accountant, mechanic, electronics specialist, and salesperson.[[8]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Education_in_Poland#cite_note-UNEVOC-8) Basic vocational schools also provide a vocational education lasting 2 years and grant a certificate of competence in various fields, the most popular being: shop-assistant, cook, gardener, automobile mechanic, hairdresser and baker.[[8]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Education_in_Poland#cite_note-UNEVOC-8) Graduates from basic vocational schools can pass the Matura after an extra-curriculum of 2 years in a general secondary school, or, since 2004, of 3 years in a Technical school.[[7]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Education_in_Poland#cite_note-IBE-7) Profiled general secondary schools (*liceum profilowane*) provide a vocational education in 3 years, but only in fields described by the Polish Classification of Activities (PKD).[[8]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Education_in_Poland#cite_note-UNEVOC-8) In addition, mentally and/or physically handiccaped students can join special schools (*szkoła specjalna*) which prepare to the Matura in 3 years.[[8]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Education_in_Poland#cite_note-UNEVOC-8)

**Tertiary education**

**Overview**

[](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:O_i_Z_UL.jpg)

[University of Łódź](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/University_of_%C5%81%C3%B3d%C5%BA), Faculty of Management

Poland follows the Bologna scheme and most of its tertiary level programmes are made of two cycles: a three year bachelor degree followed by a two year master degree.[[7]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Education_in_Poland#cite_note-IBE-7) Some master degrees are however granted after a unique long-cycle programme, lasting between 4 and 6 years (Ex: 5 years for pharmacy, 6 year for medicine).[[7]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Education_in_Poland#cite_note-IBE-7) Doctoral programmes are achieved in 3 or years in general. The diploma of primary school teachers requires 3 years of study within a teacher training college.[[7]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Education_in_Poland#cite_note-IBE-7) Vocational education is handled by post-secondary school(szkola policealna) with programmes lasting two and a half years.[[8]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Education_in_Poland#cite_note-UNEVOC-8)

**http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Education\_in\_Poland**