

# **EUROPEAN AGENCY STATISTICS ON INCLUSIVE EDUCATION**

**Poland 2012/2013 and 2014/2015 data  
background information**



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## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

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### How the official decision of special educational needs (SEN) used in the country relates to the agreed EASIE operational definition

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*An official decision leads to a pupil being recognised as eligible for additional educational support to meet their learning needs.*

#### **Pupils' legal entitlements under what legislation**

The entitlements are defined in the Educational System Act (1991, as amended) and its implementing regulations.

#### **How additional support is understood within the country context**

The education system ensures developmental support and psychological and pedagogical assistance to each child attending school, kindergarten or education centres, suitable to meet the child's developmental and educational needs.

As regards children and young people with special educational needs, said objectives are achieved through the following means, among others:

- Adjusting contents and methods and organising education according to pupils' psychophysical abilities
- Possibility of using psychological and pedagogical assistance and special forms of didactic work
- Making it possible for children and adolescents with disabilities to receive education in all types of schools, in compliance with individual developmental and educational needs, and predispositions
- Care of pupils with disabilities, i.e. offering an individual educational process for them to pursue, as well as individual forms and curricula, and rehabilitation classes.

Psychological and pedagogical assistance is provided when a child/pupil has an opinion or decision on the need for special education (both documents are issued by the counselling centre for children and young people), or when their special needs are recognised by a teacher or specialist in kindergarten, school or an education centre. Psychological and pedagogical assistance is performed during work with pupils, in the form of therapeutic activities, workshops, advice and consultation.

Special education is provided for children and young people:

- who have any of the following disabilities:
  - blindness
  - visual impairment
  - deafness



- hearing impairment
- physical disability, including aphasia
- intellectual impairment
- autism, including Asperger Syndrome
- with social maladjustment or who are at risk of it.

In order to organise special education, it is necessary to have the relevant document – a decision on the need for special education, issued by a public Guidance and Counselling Centre at the parents' or legal guardians' request.

## **The criteria for an official decision are**

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### **There has been an educational assessment procedure involving a multi-disciplinary team**

A Guidance and Counselling Centre issues this document following a specialist diagnosis of SEN, which is conducted to gain a qualitative and quantitative profile of the pupil. Consequently, information on the following aspects is important: intellectual capabilities, learning strategies, perception and the process of perception, social relationships, communication, and individual and educational circumstances in life.

Schools and centres develop individual educational and therapeutic programmes for pupils with disabilities, on the basis of which education and fostering of these pupils is carried out. A team of specialists draws up a programme following a multi-disciplinary assessment of the pupil's level of functioning.

### **The multi-disciplinary team includes members from within and external to the pupil's school**

The multi-disciplinary team only includes members external to the pupil's school.

The team comprises: the Guidance and Counselling Centre manager or person authorised thereby as the team leader, a psychologist, an educator, and a physician. The team may include other specialists if their input to the team's work is essential.

### **There is a legal document which describes the support the pupil is eligible to receive and which is used as the basis for planning**

The relevant legal document is the decision on the need for special education. Diagnosis is based on syllabus requirements and development standards for the pupil's age. A psychologist, an educator, a speech specialist and (if necessary) a physical therapist carry out the assessment. The pupil's parents or legal guardians apply for diagnosis and decisions for determining special education organisation and teaching methods.

The decision establishes the individual need for support and is an administrative act based on legal and administrative regulations.

### **The official decision is subject to a formal, regular review process**

The entitlements are defined in the Educational System Act (1991, as amended) and its implementing regulations.



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The decision is issued for the entire education stage or for a particular school year at the request of parents or legal guardians. There is no regular review. Only parents or legal guardians can request a review of the decision on the need for special education.

## **Proxy indicator(s) for the 80% benchmark used for the country's data collection**

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*Placement in a mainstream class implies over 80% or more with non-disabled peers.*

### **Details on what the country proxy is**

Pupils in special classes in mainstream schools and children with severe intellectual disabilities who have a decision on the need for rehabilitation and educational activities have been excluded.

### **Why this proxy was used**

This is the only option to present data about inclusive education.

### **Difficulties in using any proxy**

There were difficulties in excluding pupils who are individually taught or educated at home, so these are counted in the 80% benchmark.

## **Detailed description of what is meant by 'out of formal education' within the country's data collection**

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The 2011 International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) defines Formal Education as follows:

*[...] education that is institutionalised, intentional and planned through public organizations and recognised private bodies and, – in their totality – constitute the formal education system of a country. Formal education programmes are thus recognised as such by the relevant national education or equivalent authorities, e.g. any other institution in cooperation with the national or sub-national educational authorities. Formal education consists mostly of initial education [...] Vocational education, special needs education and some parts of adult education are often recognised as being part of the formal education system. Qualifications from formal education are by definition recognised and, therefore, are within the scope of ISCED. Institutionalised education occurs when an organization provides structured educational arrangements, such as student-teacher relationships and/or interactions, that are specially designed for education and learning (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2011, *International Standard Classification of Education ISCED 2011*, p. 11).*



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### **Information on pupils considered out of education (i.e. those not in formal education as per the ISCED definition)**

Education is compulsory until the age of 18. Full-time compulsory education (to be received in public or non-public schools) covers children and young people aged 6 to 16 years, whereas part-time compulsory education (to be received either in school or non-school settings) concerns young people aged 16 to 18 years. Full-time compulsory education includes the final year of pre-primary education, six years of primary education and three years of lower-secondary education. Children with severe intellectual disabilities fulfil their compulsory education through individual or group rehabilitation and educational activities. Children with multiple disabilities (including intellectual disability) or with severe intellectual disabilities can be educated in rehabilitation and education centres. They are still assigned to a class in their registry schools (except for those with severe intellectual disabilities). Being out of formal education means that the child is not in any of the forms of educational provision mentioned above.

### **Country definitions of formal, non-formal and informal education**

According to Polish law, individually taught pupils (i.e. gifted children or children with SEN with an official statement issued by a public Guidance and Counselling Centre) and children educated at home (with the agreement of the school's director) are in formal education.

### **Sources of data from non-educational sectors – i.e. social, justice, health**

Schools maintained by the justice sector are part of formal education provision.

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## **Provision of data on private sector education**

The data collection covers all sectors of education, including numbers for the pupil population in the private sector.

### **Private sector education in the country**

Formal education in Poland includes non-public schools that possess public schools' rights, which means that they apply the same curricula, organisational arrangements for the school year and rules for assessing and promoting pupils and conducting tests and examinations as public schools.

Public schools are free, but some financial contribution from pupils and their families is often required at each education stage. Non-public schools charge fees. Many schools offer various types of fee waivers to exceptionally gifted pupils and those from disadvantaged families.

### **Pupil population counted for each relevant question**

All pupils in non-public schools.



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## **Pupil age ranges**

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Usual pupil age ranges in the country at ISCED level 1: 7 to 12

Usual pupil age ranges in the country at ISCED level 2: 13 to 15