



FIRST STEPS AT SCHOOL

Wielkopolska educational guide
for foreigners

Regional Center for Social Policy in Poznan
Board of Education in Poznan
Teachers' Training Center in Poznan

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Publisher:

Regional Center for Social Policy in Poznan
Education Office in Poznan
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Dear Parents and Students,

We are glad that you have chosen Wielkopolska as a place to live. We have developed a guide for you that presents what is most important in the Polish education system, also in relation to our region. We hope that it will help in adapting to new living conditions, and above all in finding a suitable kindergarten and school for the children and young people who came from other countries.

The guide is intended for parents and students with migration experience who are just starting or continuing their education in our region, but it may also be useful for Polish citizens, whose children studied in schools abroad, and now they will continue their education in our country.

Polish legislation uses the term "foreigner" to refer to every person who does not have Polish citizenship, while a number of bodies, including the Center for the Development of Education in Warsaw, use the term "students with migration experience". Thus, in our study we use the terms "foreigners", "people / students with migration experience" or "people without Polish citizenship" interchangeably.

The guide includes a glossary of frequently cited terms related to Polish education, so that you can understand our education system more easily. There is also a list of the most important legal acts regulating the education of non-Polish citizens in the territory of the Republic of Poland.

The Polish education system includes public and non-public education.

- Public kindergartens, schools and generally accessible facilities are run by the given commune / city / powiat and financed by the state and local government.
 - Non-public kindergartens, schools and institutions may be run by foundations, associations, natural persons, companies; they have their own recruiting rules and often charge fees.
- Thus, all types of kindergartens, schools and institutions described in the guide can be both public and non-public.

Local prints that present the most important aspects of education, upbringing, and care in individual subregions of Wielkopolska are the most important part of the guide. The information contained therein is a specific indication of a place or institution that will help parents find a kindergarten or school for their child.

We wish everyone who came to Wielkopolska that our region would enable them to develop personally and professionally, and let the children spread their wings.

Editorial team



Glossary of terms used in the guide

vocational education center - conducts extra education and training for adults in out-of-school forms enabling the acquisition and supplementation of knowledge, skills, and professional qualifications

classification of occupations in sectoral education - occupations defined in 32 sectors of the education industry

day-long learning - learning that takes place 5 days a week or 6 days a week

stationary education - education that takes place 3 or 4 days a week

extramural education - education that takes place every 2 weeks for 2 days, and in justified cases - every week for 2 days

education superintendent - a pedagogical supervision body in Poland operating in the region

school board of education - an office subordinate to the school superintendent, its employees supervise (take care of) kindergartens, schools, and institutions in the region

juvenile employee - a student who is 15 years old (exceptionally 14 years old) and who may be employed - in accordance with the Labor Code - by an employer for the purpose of practical vocational training; after signing an agreement with the employer, the student is admitted to the first-degree industry school

compulsory education - applies to young people aged 16-18, because, pursuant to the law in Poland, education is compulsory until the age of 18

compulsory schooling - begins with the beginning of the school year in the calendar year in which the child turns 7 and lasts until the end of primary school

running authority - minister, local government unit (commune, city, powiat), other legal persons (associations, foundations) and natural persons

lifelong learning facility - conducts extra education and training for adults in out-of-school forms enabling the acquisition and supplementation of knowledge, skills, and professional qualifications

core curriculum for pre-school education or core curriculum for general education

- a document in the form of a ministerial regulation containing the goals of education, teaching content, the most important skills that a student should have after completing a specific educational stage

core curriculum for education in vocational education - a compulsory set of learning objectives and teaching content described in the form of the expected learning outcomes: knowledge, professional skills as well as personal and social competences necessary for the profession or a qualification distinguished in the profession

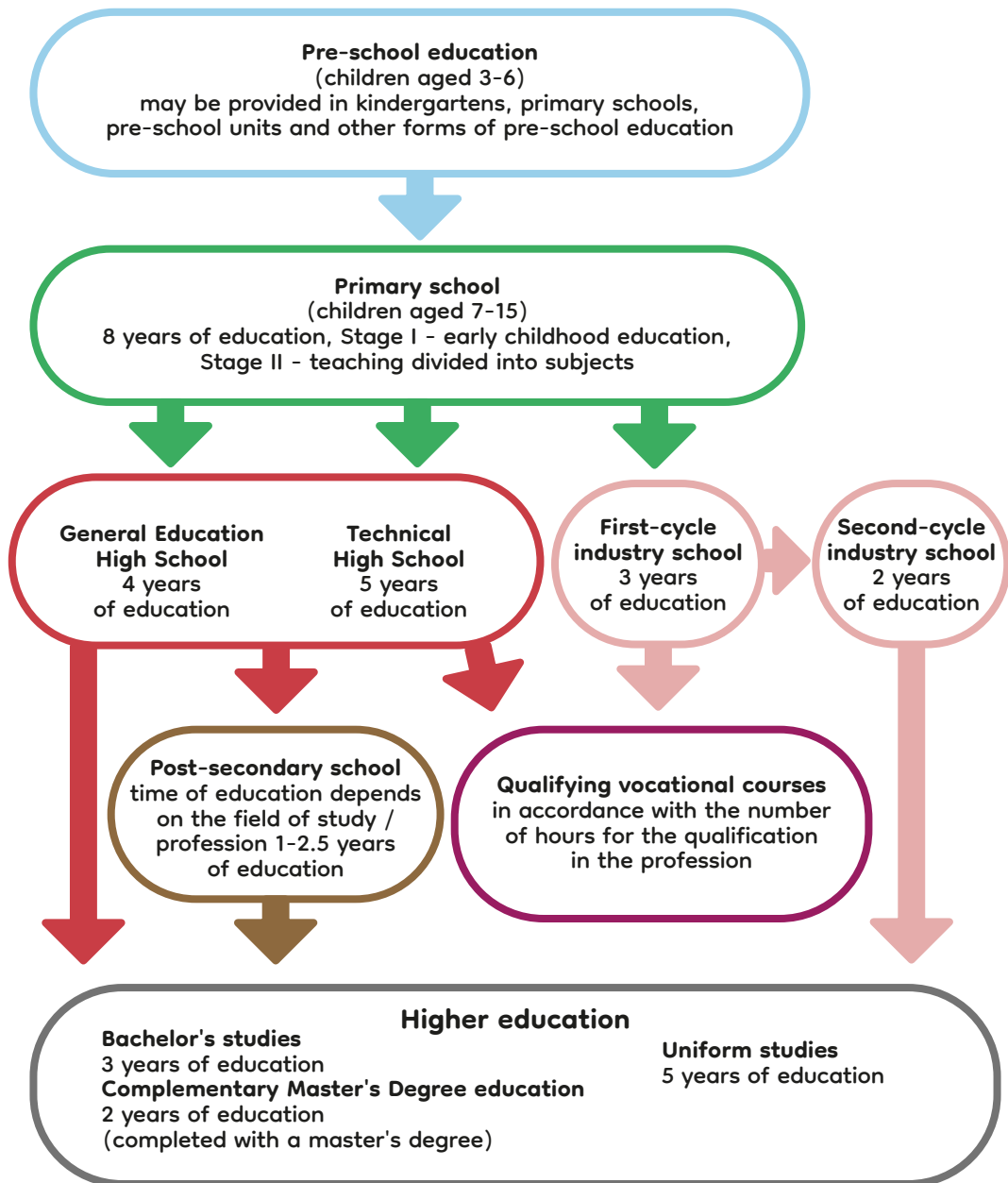
parents - parents or legal guardians of the child and persons (entities) exercising foster care over the child

school statute - the most important document that regulates the internal life of the school and contains information on all areas of its activity; includes, among others detailed rules for in-school student assessment, organization of extracurricular activities for students, forms of care and assistance to students who need it, and ways of cooperation with parents

school for adults - a school with a separate education organization and admission to adults and those who turn 18 in the calendar year in which they are admitted to the school

theoretical training camp for adolescent employees - a form of theoretical vocational training for adolescent employees related to the profession taught in the first-cycle industry school, the curriculum of it considers the core curriculum for education in the given profession

Education system in Poland



NOTES:



Children aged 0–3 years

Care for small children **up to the age of 3** may be provided in a nursery or a children's club.

Nursery

- Nursery care is provided for children from the age of 20 to 3 years of age.
- A child may stay in a nursery for up to 10 hours a day. In justified cases, this time may be extended.
- The nursery provides children with food, nursing care, play activities with elements of education, considering the psychomotor development of the child, according to its age and individual needs.
- The payment for a public nursery along with meals is determined by the body running nurseries in the city or commune. In non-public institutions, fees are set in nurseries.

Nurseries can be:

- public - run by the local government (financed by the state and the commune or city)
- non-public - run by foundations, associations, natural persons (they may be co-financed from the state or commune budget).

Recruitment to nurseries takes place in a continuous system - all year round.

- Applications for admitting children to a nursery can be completed electronically or in paper form.
- Rules and deadlines for recruitment to public nurseries are determined by the body running nurseries in the city or commune.
- Rules and deadlines for recruitment to non-public nurseries are defined by the body running the nursery.
- Detailed information can be obtained from each nursery.

Children's clubs - another option of caring for a small child

- A children's club is a non-public institution with a flexible nature of operation.
- Organization of a children's club considers individual needs of parents and the child.
- Care in a children's club is provided for children from the age of 1 to 3 years of age.
- Such a place provides children with nursing care, play activities with elements of education.
- A child may stay in such a club for up to 10 hours a day. In justified cases, this time may be extended.
- Number of places in a children's club cannot exceed 30.
- Rules and deadlines for recruitment to a children's club as well as fees are determined by the body running the club.

NOTES:



Children aged 3-6 years

Kindergarten

- Kindergarten is a care and educational institution attended by **children aged 3 (exceptionally from 2.5 years) to 6.**
- Kindergartens are public and non-public.
- There is no zoning in kindergartens.
- Parents choose a kindergarten according to their preferences, e.g., in the vicinity of their place of residence, workplace or according to other criteria.
- Pre-school education is not compulsory.
- In a kindergarten, children can also participate in a one-year compulsory pre-school preparation (the so-called "zerówka").

One-year compulsory pre-school preparation - "zerówka"

- A 6-year-old child is required to undergo a one-year pre-school preparation.
- It may be carried out in a kindergarten, a kindergarten section in a primary school or in another form of pre-school education.
- A child should start "zerówka" at the beginning of the school year in the calendar year in which they reach the age of 6.
- Annual compulsory pre-school preparation is **free of charge.**

Recruitment / admission of a child to a public kindergarten

- Enrolling a child in a kindergarten may take place through recruitment, it begins at the turn of February and March of a given year. Rules and detailed deadlines for submitting documents are specified by the body running the kindergarten.
- Applications for admitting children to kindergartens should be filled in electronically (if there is one in the commune or in the city) or on paper (the form can be obtained from every kindergarten).

- The head of the kindergarten decides about admitting a child during the school year (after September 1 of a given year).
- If you have any problems with finding a place in a public kindergarten, please contact the body running the kindergarten (directly employees of the city office or commune office dealing with education).

Kindergarten organization

- Kindertartens usually work from 6 am to 5 pm.
- Every day for 5 hours, usually from 8:00 am to 1:00 pm, there are compulsory educational activities to prepare children for school. At other times, fun activities are organized.
- Kindertartens carry out English language classes. There are also classes of rhythmic skills.
- In some kindertartens, children are supported by a speech therapist and / or psychologist.
- The number of children in a kindergarten unit is no more than 25.
- A kindergarten unit accepts children of a similar age, considering their needs, interests, talents, or types of disability.
- Kindertartens **operate throughout the school year**, except for breaks determined by the body running the kindergarten.
- Kindertartens usually close for one month during the year (July or August). At that time, there are duty times at other kindertartens.

NOTES:



Primary school

8-year primary school

- Education in public primary schools is free.
- **7-year-old children start the 1st grade** (6-year-old children may start education if they have the opinion of a psychological and pedagogical counseling center or attended kindergarten in the previous year).
- Primary schools may run the following sections:
 - integration (for children with disabilities)
 - sports (for sports gifted children)
 - bilingual from the 7th grade (for linguistically gifted children)
 - preparatory (for children who do not know the Polish language at an educational level)

Primary school organization:

- The school year runs from September 1 to August 31. Students finish didactic – and educational activities (lessons) on the last Friday of June (this is the so-called end of the school year).
- Classes are held in most schools from Monday to Friday. A lesson lasts 45 minutes.
- Most schools divide the school year into two half-years.
- Holiday breaks are held during the Christmas and New Year holidays and during Easter.
- The winter holidays in January or February last two weeks.
- The summer holidays in July and August last over two months.

School books

- Primary school textbooks and workbooks are **free of charge**. Students receive them at school.
- Textbooks are borrowed and must be returned after one year of study.
- Workbooks are for students (they do not need to be returned to the school library).

Foreign Languages

In primary school, students learn two modern foreign languages:

- the first language (usually English) they learn from the first grade,
- they learn a second language from the 7th grade (e.g., German, Spanish, Russian, French or another).

Common room

- There is a common room in almost all schools. It is a place for students (mainly from grades 1-3 with parents who work) to spend time before or after lessons.
- Such a common room is also a place for recreation, developing interests and integrating with other children.
- In common rooms, children can also do their homework.
- Care in common rooms is free of charge.
- The working time of common rooms depends on the needs of parents, pupils' transport or special organization of a school; the most common hours are from 7:00 am to 5:00 pm or 6:00 pm.
- A child's application to a common room should be individually agreed at the school.

Admission to a primary school

- A public primary school has a defined region / district (list of towns, streets, housing estates).
- Such a school is obliged to admit a student residing in its circuit. Registering a child for school may take place throughout the school year.
- Foreigners are admitted to schools based on the following documents:
 - a school certificate, a certificate or other document confirming graduation from a school or the next stage of education abroad,
 - a school certificate, a certificate or other document indicating the grade or stage of education that the student completed abroad and a document confirming the total student's school years,
 - a written declaration concerning the total student's school years - if it is not possible to determine the total years of education for important reasons - made by a parent of the student or an adult student.
- If a student arriving from abroad cannot submit such documents, he or she is assigned to the appropriate grade and admitted to a public school based on an interview, the age of the student and the opinion of a parent.
- The interview is conducted by the school principal. If a student does not know Polish, the interview is conducted in a foreign language spoken by the student or with the help of a person who speaks the language of the student's country of origin.
- If possible, a child's / student's documents should be translated into Polish, the official language in Poland.

The law does not require that the child's / student's documents be translated by a sworn translator.



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Eighth grade exam

- At the end of the eighth grade (usually in April), there is an eighth-grade exam. It is a common and obligatory examination; each student must take it to finish school. There is no minimum score a student should achieve.
- The exam covers four compulsory subjects:
 - Polish language,
 - mathematics,
 - a modern foreign language taught at school,
 - one subject to choose from among the following subjects: biology, chemistry, physics, geography, or history.
- The results obtained in the exam and the final grades on the primary school leaving certificate are the basis for undertaking education at the next stage of education in a post-primary school.
- **Foreigners have the right to adjust their forms and conditions based on a positive opinion** of the pedagogical council or the opinion of a psychological and pedagogical counseling center - a separate examination sheet, extended examination time, taking the exam in a separate room, the possibility of using a bilingual dictionary.

- An opinion of the pedagogical council is issued at the request of:
 - a school teacher or specialist,
 - parents.
- Detailed information on the eighth-grade exam is available on the following websites:
 - Central Examination Board:
cke.gov.pl
 - District Examination Board in Poznan:
www.oke.poznan.pl

Note!

During the COVID-19 epidemic, the number of examination subjects was reduced; students did not have the obligation to take an examination in one subject to be chosen.

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Post-primary schools (a.k.a. secondary schools)

General education secondary school for youth

- A general education secondary school is a 4-year post-primary school in which students study in accordance with the core curriculum of general education.
- Education in a general education secondary school in Poland lasts four years and prepares students for their matriculation examination.
- The matriculation examination (matura) is not obligatory.
- A positive result of a matriculation examination (obtaining a secondary school -leaving examination certificate) is necessary to start higher education at a Polish university.
- In general education secondary schools, students learn most of the subjects at the elementary level and choose from 2 to 3 subjects which they will pursue at the advanced level.
- Some schools also have bilingual classes where selected subjects are taught in a foreign language. Students from such classes can take their bilingual exam.
- A general education secondary school graduate may start education in a post-secondary school (it is not required to pass the matriculation examination and obtain a secondary school-leaving examination certificate).
- Graduating from a general education secondary school provides a student with general secondary education but does not provide a specific profession.
- A detailed offer of education in secondary schools can be found on the websites of selected general secondary schools, the Board of Education in Poznan www.ko.poznan.pl (in the tab: Parents and students / recruitment) and school authorities (city / powiat).

General education secondary school for adults

- The 4-year **general education secondary school for adults** is intended for persons who have turned 18 or will turn 18 in the calendar year in which they are admitted to the school.
- The secondary school for adults accepts people who, for various reasons, have not graduated from a school
- for young people, and they intend to complete their education.
- After graduation, students are provided with a secondary school leaving certificate, which confirms their secondary education.
- Education in general education secondary school for adults lasts 4 years (8 semesters) and **prepares students for their matriculation examination.**
- Education may be provided in the full-time or part-time form.

Matriculation examination

- The matriculation examination is not compulsory - each graduate of a secondary school (general education secondary school for youth, technical secondary school, general education secondary school for adults) independently decides whether to take it.
- A student of a second-level industry school is obliged to fill out the initial declaration of taking the matriculation examination by the end of September and the final declaration in February of the school year in which he or she is taking the exam.
- Educational classes in the last year of general education secondary school end at the end of April.
- The matriculation examination is carried out at school in May in oral and written form.
- The exam is carried out in compulsory subjects and in additional subjects.
- **Foreigners have the right to adjust their forms and conditions** on the basis of a positive opinion of the pedagogical council or the opinion of a psychological and pedagogical counseling center - a separate examination sheet, extended examination time, taking the exam in a separate room, the possibility of using a bilingual dictionary.
- An opinion of the pedagogical council is issued at the request of:
 - a school teacher or specialist,
 - parents.
- Detailed information on the matriculation examination is available on the following

websites:

- Central Examination Board: cke.gov.pl
- District Examination Board in Poznan: www.oke.poznan.pl

Technical secondary school

- A technical secondary school is a 5-year post-primary school, students study there in accordance with the core curriculum of general education and the core curriculum for education in the chosen profession of sectoral education.
- After graduating from a technical secondary school, students have professional qualifications, they can start work; they also can take their matriculation examination and undertake studies.
- Graduation from a technical school provides with secondary education in the industry, and thus qualifies to perform a specific profession.
- During their studies, students at a technical secondary school take an external state examination conducted by the district examination board. After passing vocational exams and graduating from school, a graduate obtains the title of a technician (e.g., IT technician, hospitality technician, food technology technician).
- The matriculation examination (matura) is not obligatory.
- A positive result of a matriculation examination (a secondary school-leaving examination certificate) is necessary to start higher education at a Polish university.
- In the technical school, students learn general and vocational subjects.
- Vocational subjects include lessons devoted to theoretical vocational training and practical vocational training. Students also undergo compulsory apprenticeships.
- From the general subjects (taught at the basic level), students choose 1 or 2 subjects to be pursued at the extended level.
- A detailed offer of education in secondary technical schools can be found on the websites of selected technicians, the Board of Education in Poznan www.ko.poznan.pl (in the tab: Parents and students / recruitment) and school authorities (city / powiat).

Vocational exam

- The scope of the vocational examination covers one or two qualifications. The number of examinations in each profession depends on the number of qualifications distinguished in the core curriculum for a given profession.

- The examination confirming qualifications in an occupation is carried out within a given qualification distinguished in the occupation in accordance with the classification of occupations in sectoral education.
- The vocational examination is an external examination; may be conducted throughout the school year, and the practical part of the examination - during summer or winter holidays.



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Admitting foreign students to secondary schools

Foreign students are admitted to:

- General education secondary schools - based on documents,
- technical secondary schools, first-degree industry schools, second-degree industry schools and post-secondary schools - based on documents and a medical certificate with a statement that there are no health contraindications for undertaking practical vocational training - if the schools have free places.

If a student does not finish a primary school in Poland (he does not have a Polish elementary school leaving certificate, he / she did not take an eighth-grade exam), he / she **does not participate in the general recruitment** (e.g., does not log into the electronic recruitment system, does not convert the grades from his / her certificate to the Polish system evaluation). Admission to a post-primary school is based on the decision of the school head.

Detailed information on the documents needed to apply for admission to school or the lack of them are included on page 16 of the guide.

Industry school of the first degree

- A student who has a primary school leaving certificate may take up education in a first-degree industry school.
- Education in the first-degree industry school lasts 3 years and covers general and vocational education in accordance with the classification of professions in the industry education.
- Practical vocational training may take place at school, employers (as juvenile employees), vocational training centers or continuing education institutions.
- General education takes place at school, vocational theoretical education at school or theoretical training camps for young employees.
- After graduating from a first-degree industry school and passing the vocational exam or the journeyman exam, a graduate will obtain a vocational diploma or journeyman certificate, respectively, and will also obtain basic industry education.
- A graduate of the first-degree industry school, to obtain a technician diploma, will be able to continue education in a two-year, second-degree industry school.
- A graduate of the first-degree industry school may start work or continue education in the second-degree industry school or general education secondary school for adults.

Second-degree industry school

- The 2-year second-degree industry school is intended for graduates of the first-degree industry school who have passed their professional exam related to the first qualification in the profession taught at the second-degree industry school.
- At the school, students learn general subjects and carry out vocational education on qualifying vocational courses related only to the second qualification distinguished in the profession taught.
- Students take an external state examination conducted by a district examination board. After passing the vocational exam and graduating from the school, a graduate of the second-degree industry school obtains the title of technician.
- A graduate of the second-degree industry school obtains secondary industry education and may take the matriculation examination.



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Support for foreign students at school

Students with migration experience benefit from education and care in all types of public kindergartens and public schools until the age of 18 or post-primary school education under the conditions applicable to Polish citizens.

Extra Polish language lessons

Foreigners subject to compulsory education (primary school) or compulsory education (secondary school) and not knowing Polish or knowing it at a level insufficient to benefit from education, have the right to extra, free learning of the Polish language in the form of extra lessons of Polish. Students with migration experience can use such extra Polish language classes as a foreign language for as long as they need it (there is no time limit). Lessons of Polish as a foreign language:

- are organized at school; they can be individual or group;
- they last a minimum of 2 lessons per week.

Extra remedial classes

Foreign students may also take advantage of extra remedial classes in each subject if the teacher decides that it is necessary to supplement the curriculum differences in this subject. Remedial classes:

- can be conducted for a period of 12 months,
- are conducted individually or in groups,
- in the form of extra lessons in this subject, 1 lesson per week.
- The total number of extra classes of Polish as a foreign language and remedial classes may not exceed 5 lessons per week for one student.

Psychological and pedagogical help

- Each student at school can benefit from the free help of a psychologist and / or educator.
- Such a specialist supports students, among others, if there are school failures, in difficulties related to emotions and interpersonal communication. Students may approach them directly asking for support.
- A school psychologist / educator may also assist parents of the student in supporting their child's development, recognizing, and developing their individual abilities, predispositions, and talents.
- A psychologist / educator may initiate various forms of help in the school and out-of-school environment of students.

A foreign student and a child in a kindergarten have a special rights to psychological –and pedagogical assistance (at the premises of kindergarten and school) aimed at supporting their development potential and creating conditions for active and full participation in the life of the kindergarten and school and in the social environment.

Psychological and pedagogical assistance at school is due to:

- competence deficits and linguistic disorders,
- adaptation difficulties related to cultural differences or a change in the educational environment, including those related to prior learning abroad.

A class teacher

- A class teacher performs the function of a class tutor throughout the entire education cycle for a given educational level; conducts educational and class

integration activities. They support students in various school and life situations.

A student may ask their class teacher directly for help or for a solution to a difficult problem.

- Depending on the student's situation (learning difficulties, not coping with stress, conflict with peers or a teacher, difficult financial situation, health problems, etc.), a class teacher may ask the psychologist / educator / career counselor to provide the student with appropriate help. Class teachers cooperate with parents of students with respect to teaching, upbringing, and prevention.

Help by a person who speaks the foreign language used by the student (the so-called culture assistant).

Foreign students are entitled to assistance provided by a person who speaks the language of the student's country of origin:

- during an interview by the principal of a public school prior to admission to the school,
- during education - for a period not longer than 12 months - assistance is provided by a person employed by the principal of the school as an assistant to the teacher.

Learning the language and culture of the country of origin

A diplomatic or consular post of their country of origin operating in the territory of the Republic of Poland or a cultural and educational association of a given nationality may organize learning the language and culture of the country of origin at school for students who are not Polish citizens, attending a primary school, if at least 7 students apply.

Preparatory section

- The body running the school may organize a preparatory section for students with migration experience who do not know the Polish language, and who require adaptation of the education process to their needs and educational possibilities.
- In such a section (class), students have more lessons of Polish, learn about Polish culture; they take part in integration activities with Polish students. At the same time, students in such a section pursue their education in accordance with the core curriculum of general education.
- Education in the preparatory section lasts until the end of the school year. This period, depending on the student's learning progress and educational needs, may be shortened, or extended by no more than one school year.
- The preparatory section may have no more than 15 students.
- Educational activities in the preparatory department are conducted by teachers of individual educational activities, they may be assisted by a person who speaks the language of the student's country of origin.
- In the preparatory section, within the weekly number of hours, Polish is taught according to the curriculum developed based on the framework program of Polish language courses for foreigners, not less than 3 lessons a week.

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Psychological and pedagogical counseling

- There are institutions that provide psychological and pedagogical help to children (from birth) and adolescents and support them in choosing their field of education and profession. They also support parents and teachers in solving educational and upbringing problems.
- One of the main tasks of such units is to diagnose children and adolescents. Psychological, pedagogical and speech therapy tests are aimed at clarifying the mechanism of the student's functioning in relation to the reported problem, as well as at indicating ways of solving it.
- If a student has learning difficulties, diagnostic tests conducted by counseling specialists may be helpful in adjusting educational requirements to individual developmental and educational needs as well as psychophysical abilities of a student.
- A result of such a diagnosis may be the issuance of an opinion or decision with recommended conditions and forms of support for a child / student in a kindergarten and school, as well as providing the child / student and their parents with direct psychological and pedagogical help in the unit in the form of therapeutic classes, family therapy, support groups, workshops, advice, and consultations.

- Psychological and pedagogical counseling centers are divided into public and private.
- Using the help of public units is **voluntary and free of charge**.
- **Public units** operate within districts, it means that a written application for an opinion or certificate is submitted by the child's parent or an adult student to the unit operating around the kindergarten or school attended by the child / student. If children do not attend a kindergarten or school, assistance is provided by a counseling center appropriate for the child's place of residence.
- **Public psychological and pedagogical counseling centers have the exclusive right to issue:**
 - jurisprudence on the need for special education,
 - jurisprudence on the need for compulsory one-year individual pre-school preparation and individual teaching,
 - jurisprudence on the need for revalidation and education classes organized in accordance with the provisions on mental health protection,
 - opinions on the need to include the child in an individualized path of compulsory one-year pre-school preparation and an individualized path of education,
 - opinions on the need for early support for the child's development.

Opinions on other matters specified in the law may also be issued by non-public psychological and pedagogical counseling centers.

The list of public psychological and pedagogical counseling centers is available on the website of the Board of Education in Poznan: www.ko.poznan.pl in the tab: Parents and students / psychological and pedagogical help.

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Special education

The basis for a child / student being subject to care and special education is a decision on the need for special education issued by a public psychological and pedagogical counseling center.

Education system includes:

- special kindergartens,
- special primary schools,
- special secondary schools,
 - four-year general education secondary schools,
 - five-year technical schools,
 - three-year first-degree industry schools,
 - three-year special schools preparing for work,
 - two-year second-degree industry schools,
 - post-secondary schools for people with secondary education or secondary industry education.

Special kindergartens are organized for children with disabilities:

- with moderate or severe intellectual disability,
- deaf and hard of hearing,
- blind and visually impaired,
- with motor disabilities, including aphasia,
- with autism, including Asperger's syndrome,
- with coupled disabilities.

Special kindergartens are not organized for children with mild intellectual disabilities.

Special schools are organized for children and adolescents who have been certified as needing special education:

- with disabilities:
 - with mild, moderate, or severe intellectual disability,
 - deaf and hard of hearing,
 - blind and visually impaired,
 - with motor disabilities, including aphasia,
 - with autism, including Asperger's syndrome,
 - with coupled disabilities,
- socially maladjusted,
- at risk of social maladjustment.

Three-year special schools preparing for work are intended for students:

- with moderate or severe intellectual disability,
- with coupled disabilities.

Education in a special general education secondary school, a special technical secondary school and a special second-degree industry school is for students with **an intellectual standard**: with disabilities, socially maladjusted and at risk of social maladjustment.

There are also special centers in the education system:

- youth educational centers - for socially maladjusted children and adolescents,
- youth sociotherapy centers - for children and adolescents at risk of social maladjustment,
- special school and education centers - for children and adolescents with disabilities,
- special educational centers - for children and adolescents with disabilities and at risk of social maladjustment,
- rehabilitation and education centers:
 - for children and adolescents with severe intellectual disabilities,
 - for children and adolescents with multiple disabilities, where one of the disabilities is intellectual disability.

Education of students with disabilities, socially maladjusted and at risk of social maladjustment may be conducted until the end of the school year in the calendar year in which the student turns:

- 1) 20 years of age - for an elementary school,
- 2) 24 years of age - for a secondary school.

If a parent (legal guardian) of a child decides to choose a special kindergarten or school or a special center as a place of implementation of the child's special education, they apply to the local government unit competent to provide special education in each type and kind of educational system unit, which is:

- commune - when applying for the admission of a child to a special kindergarten,
- powiat - when applying for admission to a special school or center.

If the powiat competent for the child's place of residence does not run a special school or center appropriate for the type of disability, including the degree of intellectual disability, the powiat staroste shall refer the child to the nearest powiat running such a school or center. The starost of the nearest powiat running such a school or center with free places, cannot refuse to admit a child to a school or center.

Principals of primary and secondary schools may issue the child's parents (or adult persons) a certificate (not in the form of an invitation) that the child will be accepted at a specific school, which will make it easier for them to obtain an entry visa to the territory of the Republic of Poland.

NOTES:



Post-secondary schools

- Post-secondary school enables people with secondary education to obtain a diploma confirming professional qualifications within sectoral education after passing relevant examinations in the district examination board.
- The basic condition for admission to a post-secondary school is general secondary education or industry secondary (technical) education - no matriculation exam is required. Foreigners are required to document their secondary education (information on the confirmation procedure is provided below).
- **Post-secondary schools are divided into:**
 - public - run by a commune / city / district / regional self-government - financed by the state and local self-government (with open access, free of charge),
 - non-public - run by foundations, associations, companies, natural persons - with their own recruitment rules, they can have fees.
- Education in post-secondary schools lasts from 1 to 2.5 years, depending on the profession being taught. Education in selected professions may take place online (distantly).

- Some schools have boarding houses (student houses).
- Post-secondary education begins in September of a given school year or in January / February. Classes in a school year are divided into two semesters.
- In post-secondary schools, students are divided into groups depending on the profession taught. Education may be full-time (e.g., medical professions), stationary or extramural.
- Post-secondary schools educate in more than twenty groups of fields of study: arts, economics, and administration, medical, technology, agriculture, forestry and fishery, transport and communication, services and others.
- Post-secondary education includes lessons devoted to theoretical vocational training and practical vocational training. Students also undergo compulsory apprenticeships.

NOTES:



Recognition of secondary education obtained abroad

Foreigners are admitted to a post-secondary school (public or non-public) if there are free places - based on the following documents:

- a certificate or other document issued abroad confirming secondary education in the Republic of Poland or the right to apply for admission to higher education,
- a certificate or other document issued abroad recognized as a document confirming secondary or secondary education in the Republic of Poland,
- a final administrative decision on the confirmation of secondary or vocational secondary education in the Republic of Poland,
- a certificate or other document issued abroad recognized by way of nostrification until 31 March 2015 as equivalent to the secondary school-leaving certificate, general education secondary school leaving certificate, secondary school graduation certificate or technical secondary school leaving certificate.

The Wielkopolska Superintendent of Education is competent for the recognition of education obtained.

Detailed information is available on the website of the Board of Education in Poznan: www.ko.poznan.pl in the tab: **Handling matters / recognition of education obtained abroad.**

The place for submitting documents in this case is:

Board of Education in Poznan

Department for Teachers and School Networks

pl. Wolności 18

61-739 Poznan

telephone number: 61 670 40 86

Legal basis for the recognition of education obtained abroad:

- art. 93-93h of the Act of September 7, 1991, on the education system (Journal of Laws of 2021, item 1915),
- Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 25 March 2015 on the procedure for recognizing a certificate or other document or confirming education or entitlement to continue education obtained in a foreign education system (Journal of laws, item 447),
- Act of 14 June 1960 Code of Administrative Procedure (Journal of Laws of 2021, item 735, as amended)

NOTES:



Qualifying vocational courses

- Qualifying vocational courses are intended for people aged 18 and over, regardless of their level of education.
- The curriculum of the course considers the core curriculum of education in the profession of sectoral education with respect to one professional qualification, and its completion enables taking a vocational examination in the field of the qualification
- A participant of such a course receives a certificate of completion of the course, and after passing the exam - a professional qualification certificate issued by the regional examination board confirming the given qualification.
- They can be organized by public and non-public vocational education schools, as well as public and non-public continuing education institutions and vocational training centers.

Tuition fee

- **Education in public schools for adults, in public post-secondary schools, public art schools and in continuing education institutions in the form of qualifying courses is payable.** A foreign student may be exempt from payment based on a decision of the body running the unit or the principal of the school / facility or as a scholarship holder of the Minister of Education and Science.

- On the terms applicable to Polish citizens, i.e., free of charge, the following can study in the above-mentioned schools and institutions:
 - citizens of the European Union Member States, (...), as well as members of their families with the right of residence or the right of permanent residence,
 - persons of Polish origin within the meaning of the provisions on repatriation,
 - persons who have been granted a permanent residence permit on the territory of the Republic of Poland,
 - persons with a valid Pole's Card, persons for whom such entitlement results from international agreements,
 - persons who have been granted refugee status and their family members,
 - persons with a tolerated stay permit,
 - persons who have been granted permission to stay for humanitarian reasons and their family members,
 - persons who have been granted supplementary protection and their family members,
 - persons enjoying temporary protection on the territory of the Republic of Poland,
 - persons who have been granted a long-term resident's European Union residence permit on the territory of the Republic of Poland,
 - persons who apply for international protection and members of their families,
 - persons who have a residence card with the annotation "access to the labor market", a Schengen visa or a national visa issued for the purpose of performing work in the territory of the Republic of Poland.

Note!

Foreigners - a child, pupil, student, or fosterling - without a PESEL number, use a passport or other document confirming identity in all activities related to education.



Dormitory

- A dormitory is an independent educational institution providing care and education (accommodation, meals) to students while studying outside their place of permanent residence.
- Youth living in the dormitory is under the care of teachers-tutors 24 hours a day.
- Rules and deadlines for recruitment to a dormitory are determined by the body running the dormitory (city or poviat).
- A dormitory is a paid institution.

NOTES:



Assessment in the Polish education system

- In grades 1-3 of primary school, students get mid-year and annual descriptive assessments at the end of a school year, while the students and their parents receive information on the progress in learning and behavior on an ongoing basis in accordance with the system established in a specific school (school statute).
- In grades IV-VIII of primary school and in secondary schools, students are assessed in the form of digital grades on a scale of 1-6. Teachers assess students' learning progress on an ongoing basis, and at the end of each semester and school year, teachers give final grades for each subject and behavior.

Assessment scale:

Behavior is assessed as:

6	excellent	exemplary
5	very good	very good
4	good	good
3	sufficient	correct
2	acceptable	inappropriate
1	not acceptable	reprehensible

6 - the highest grade / 1 - the lowest grade

exemplary - the highest grade
reprehensible - the lowest rating

School certificate

- At the end of the school year, students receive certificates. In grades 1-3 of primary schools, certificates include descriptive assessments of behavior and educational activities, and grades for religion / ethics. In grades IV-VIII of primary schools and in post-primary schools, students receive grades on certificates.
- A school certificate confirms whether students are promoted to a higher grade or graduate from school.

The statute is most important document governing the organization of the work of kindergartens, schools, and institutions, including the school grading system.

NOTES:



Artistic education in Poland

- Art schools in Poland provide general and artistic education or only artistic education in the field of music, art, ballet / dance, circus art.
- Art schools can be public or non-public.
- Artistic education is supervised by the minister responsible for culture and protection of national heritage and creates a separate education system in relation to the general education system.
- Among the types of art schools of primary and secondary level there are schools which provide only arts education and schools where students can also fulfill their compulsory education duty, i.e., general education is also provided there.

Detailed information on the artistic education system in Poland can be found on the website of the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage: www.gov.pl/web/kultura/szkolnictwo-artystyczne-w-polsce

NOTES:



Legal basis for the education of foreigners (as of February 1, 2022)

1. Act of December 14, 2016, Educational Law
(Journal of Laws of 2021, item 1082, as amended) - art. 165.
2. Act of September 7, 1991, on the Education System
(Journal of Laws of 2019, item 1481, as amended) - art. 93 - 93h.
3. Act of October 7, 1999, on the Polish language
(Journal of Laws of 2021, item 672) - art. 4 and 9.
4. Act of February 4, 2011, on the care of children up to the age of 3
(Journal of Laws of 2021, item 75, as amended).
5. Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 23 August 2017 on the education of persons who are not Polish citizens and persons who are Polish citizens who received education in schools functioning in the education systems of other countries
(Journal of Laws of 2020, item 1283).
6. Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 9 August 2017 on the principles of organizing and providing psychological and pedagogical assistance in public kindergartens, schools, and institutions (Journal of Laws of 2020, item 1280, as amended).
7. Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 7 September 2017 on judgments and opinions issued by adjudicating teams operating in public psychological and pedagogical counseling centers (Journal of Laws of 2017, item 1743).

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Safe haven

The sole responsibility for the opinions expressed rests with the authors, and the European Commission and the Ministry of Interior and Administration are not responsible for the use of the information provided.

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