

Youth Partnership

Partnership between the European Commission
and the Council of Europe in the field of youth



COUNTRY SHEET ON YOUTH POLICY IN POLAND



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Author: Ewa Krzaklewska

Updated by: Ewa Krzaklewska

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1. Context and principles of national youth policy

1.1 Context of national youth policy

Give a brief assessment of youth policy in your country (achievements, problems, obstacles, tendencies ...) and mention determining external factors (if applicable, e.g. post conflict situation, socio-economic crisis).

In 2009 a strategic document report „POLAND 2030” was published, which was trying to identify most important challenges that Poland would face in the next 20 years in different domains and give recommendations on long term state politics. From the youth policy point of view it was vital, as it had become a starting point of a debate on the situation of young people in Poland, initiated by the Office of the Prime Minister. A cycle of debates was summed up in a **report „YOUTH 2011”**, published in 2011. The report Youth 2011 on the one hand classifies and collects the state of knowledge on the young generation, on the other hand, it presents recommendations concerning actions related to this age group. In broader perspective the document is an element of a **long-term strategy „POLAND 2030. THE THIRD WAVE OF MODERNITY”** (available: <http://zds.kprm.gov.pl/raport-polska-2030-wyzwania-rozwojowe>)

As far as mainstreaming the issue of youth policy (which until now was missing from the public discourse), and constructing coherent youth policy are concerned, the report „YOUTH 2011” can be of an important meaning. The fact that it was prepared by the government and is related to other strategic documents, is vital, as it shows that youth policy is treated as an important element of the state policy, coherent with other areas. Report Youth 2011 did not result in constructing a specific strategy for young people in Poland it rather remained the importance of this group for strategic planning in all domains. Report Poland 2030 asked how to speed up Poland development basing also on the strengths of a new generation, which slowly is substituting the “Solidarity” generation on the power positions.

One of the aims in the general strategy is to **create proper conditions for a good life of the young generation** (from the second demographic boom after the war), which now is entering adult life. The generation is seen a motor of change which has capabilities to tackle demographic challenges through its dynamic economic activity. This generation was shown as the one which has gone through the experience of radical change in Poland: change of the political system, educational explosion, entrance to EU and consequent wave of migration, opening to other cultures, decomposition of social status of their parents, information revolution and – recently – global economic crisis on the large scale.

The most important challenges towards youth in Poland today are, most of all, transition from education to the labor market and further toward independent living. Their often precarious job situation, non-permanent job contracts disallow them from further investment in housing or

family. Childbearing decisions depend a lot also on the situation of women at the labor market as well as lack of mechanism for reconciliation of the family and work (mostly lack of care facilities). It was also stressed in the strategy that we need to aim at empowering women, which due to their intensive investment in education, are yet underused potential for development. Other important aim in the light of strategy is preparation for a foreseen immigration to Poland as well as return of the migrants who have left Poland after EU accession.

Summing up, the strategy recommends to create **complex system supporting entrance to autonomous living by the young generation**, in a way that the period of insecurity is reduced and young people potential used (creativity, openness, flexibility).

Increasing attractiveness of freshmen employment, it should give to employers that employ people to their first job special tax reduction

Encouraging changing contracts from temporary to permanent

Increasing amount of practice hours at education levels such as vocational, upper-middle and higher

Equalizing process of learning among young people by identifying deficits in the young people development (health, social, psychic) and providing proper intervention

Increasing amount of money in housing politics, and reorientation of it towards housing for renting

Indicators measuring the progress in this area would be:

Percentage of young people living with their parents (now K: 30,4% M: 44% should be K: 15% M: 30%)

Medium age of entrance to the labor market (in 2007 - 22, should be 21)

Percentage of NEET (now 10,8% (2010), should be 5%)

Percentage of non- permanent employment contracts in the age group 15-24 (now 66,1% (end of 2010) , should be <40%)

Percentage of non-permanent employment contracts in the age 25-49 (now 25,6% (end of 2010), should be <20%)

The main challenges in the implementation of these goals remain as follows (also pointed out in the strategy): deficit in the public finances which can cause lack of investments in the areas needing it such as child care system, difficult situation at the labor market which can negatively influence economic stabilization of a new generation and cause migration decisions, unstable situation of enterprises which would not be willing to give permanent contracts to employees. Another point stressed mostly in the Youth 2011 report is unequal development of some regions of Poland and some groups of young people, while some young people are effectively adapting to new social and labor market conditions, the others are "left behind". Crucial actions therefore should be taken that aim at equalizing chances and integration of those who have more difficulties to adapt to new social realm.

The report and the strategy discussed show the shift that has taken place concerning youth policy in Poland. In the last decades education has been a main domain of youth policy and youth was defined more as a group of those in education (pl. młodzież – relating mostly to

adolescents). The prolongation of youth phase and the precarious situation of young people at the labour market after leaving higher education, which at first did not get any response in policy, now constitute the most crucial policy challenges.

1.2. Principles of national youth policy

Please define national youth policy by referring to its conceptual basis (view of young people)

New politics concerning the country development are based on the nine integrated strategies, additionally to these only national programmes are being set up giving more structure to actions in the particular field. Youth policy has a **transversal and cross-sectoral character** and it is dealt with within each domain (e.g. labour market) by adequate actors (e.g. Ministry for Labour and Social Policy). A very peculiar trait of youth policy in Poland is the apparent existence of a movement contrary to that of most European countries. Government bodies and other structures concerned with youth policy are trending to be abolished rather than set up. There are no plans to develop a new national youth strategy (or programme) after the strategy 2003-2012 came to an end, as the issues of youth are dealt with in other more general strategies such Poland 2030 or Development of Social Capital. Also the national report "Youth 2011" did not result in constructing a specific youth policy or strategy, but is considered a basis for strategic planning in the different policy fields.

In the last year, combating youth unemployment remained the most important challenge for youth policy in Poland, with the most important task to introduce Youth Guarantee. It was included also in other sectorial policies (e.g. programmes concerning youth work and youth activism, as well as social inclusion strategy). Interesting initiative is opening of a new position of Graduates Ombudsman, whose main job is easing the transition from education to the labour market of growing number of higher education graduates.

Seeing young people just from the point of view of their employment situation or their employability (which is a general trend in many European countries, as well as in the European youth policy) in the long term can be limiting for the development of the youth policy. The young people in education and already in stable employment would end up being outside the interests of youth policy makers. It should be encouraged to develop in parallel policies targeting social, civic and political rights of young people, encouraging them to be active citizens, or take part in political decisions at different levels (through local to national).

On 12 October 2012, the Board for Public Benefit Activity (consisting of public authorities representatives as well as non-governmental organisations representatives), working within the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy convoked the special ad-hoc working group which deals with youth policy. The tasks of the working group are:

*Contact and collaboration with NGOs, including most of all organizations working with young people and representing youth;
Contact and collaboration with the Ministry of National Education, the Parliament Commission in charge of youth issues (Commission of Education, Science and Youth), as well as with those dealing with youth issues at the local level;
Consultancy and opinions on laws and regulations linked to public benefit activities concerning young people.*

The team has recently conducted public consultations (online questionnaire) concerning the more critical needs and issues of youth policy in Poland and the result of this work was the draft programme Active Youth aimed at activation of young generation in their social participation, mostly at the local level. This is a good step in order to complement existing tools concerning youth employment. The programme is in preparation phase.

the main target group (age group, specific groups of young people):

“The State Strategy for Youth for 2003 – 2012” defined young people as a group aged from 15 to 25, including teenagers (15-19) and young adults (20-25) – thought to include mostly those people in education. Still, the report Młodzi 2011 embraced also older groups of young people so those who have already completed higher education and now are in the process of labor market transition and family formation. The recent projects concerning the employment of young people from 2012, target young people up to 30 years old, which indicated that age limit of youth is being postponed.

The legal age, eligibility for marriage and active voting right is obtained at 18; similarly, the youth under the age of 18 is in Poland subject to compulsory education. Young people under age 16 are not allowed to be employed.

Specific groups of young people: young people with disability, marginalized young people, students, graduates, “dis-behaving” youth (at risk of addictions or addicted, in reformatory), unemployed youth. In strategy Poland 2030 also: NEET (not in education employment, nor training), young people living with their parents, those with non-permanent contracts, freshman at the labor market, young couples.

- the political organisation of youth policy (territorial organisation, share of competences): at national level, shared by different Ministries, at local level – local self-governments (usually in departments dealing with education and youth issues)

2. Statistics on young people

Number and Percentage of young people in global population

8,072,857 persons age 15-29, 21% (by 31.12.2012, GUS – Polish Statistical Office Demographical Yearbook)

Age range	Numer of persons	Percentage in global population
15 - 19	2,218,662	5,8
20 - 24	2,697,005	7,0
25 - 29	3,157,190	8,2

Number and Percentage of young people (15-29) by gender in global population

Women: 3,961,536 (20% among women)

Men: 4,111,321 (22% among men)

Any other relevant figures

Youth (18-24) unemployment in Poland: 27.4% (BAEL, GUS – Polish Statistical Office 2013).

Young people facing problems entering the labour market (NEET) -11,6% (Eurofund 2012)

Young people (0-18) at risk of poverty and social exclusion – 29,3% (Eurostat 2012)

Young people (18-24) at risk of poverty and social exclusion – 31,2% (Eurostat 2012)

Employed young people (15-24 or 25-29) faced with in-work poverty risk – 12% (Eurofund 2010)

3. Actors and Structures

3.1 Public authorities

3.1.1 National public authorities:

Ministry in charge of youth: Ministry of National Education <http://www.men.gov.pl>

Minister: Joanna Kluzik-Rostkowska

Duration of mandate: November 2013-autumn 2015

Youth Department in the Ministry: does not exist as a separate body

Youth issues are situated within three different departments. Domains of which each department takes care are (selected those directly connected to youth):

Strategy and International Cooperation Department (pl. Departament Strategii i Współpracy Międzynarodowej) established within the Ministry of National Education as of 8 February 2013:

collaboration with youth organisations and other organisations in the area of education and learning

implementing strategies and laws

developing non-formal education of youth

developing system of information such as Eurodesk and Ploteus

collaboration with international and European bodies dealing with youth issues

youth mobility and youth exchange.

Department for Structural Funds within the Ministry of National Education:
collaboration with National Agency of Youth in Action programme 2007-2013 and Erasmus+ 2014-2020.

Educational Opportunities Department within the Ministry of National Education:
tourism of youth
youth vacations and free time.

Number of people who work in this ministry in the youth department: 4

Director responsible for Youth in the Ministry: Director of the Strategy and International Cooperation Department, Ms Urszula Martynowicz

Contact persons in the youth department competent for European youth policy: Ms Joanna Mazur, Strategy and International Cooperation Department

Other national public bodies who are directly involved in youth policies

Children Ombudsman (pl. Rzecznik Praw Dziecka) <http://www.brpd.gov.pl/detail.php?recid=53>

Graduates Ombudsman (pl. Rzecznik Praw Absolwenta)

<http://www.rgnisw.nauka.gov.pl/rzecznik-praw-absolwenta/>

Other Ministries:

Ministry of Labour and Social Policy: <http://www.mpips.gov.pl/>

Ministry of Science and Higher Education: <http://www.nauka.gov.pl/home/>

Ministry of Sport and Tourism <http://www.msport.gov.pl/en>

Ministry of Health <http://www.mz.gov.pl>

Offices:

Educational Opportunities Department, in the Ministry of National Education (pl. Departament Zwiększania Szans Edukacyjnych)

Quality of Education Department, in the Ministry of National Education (pl. Departament Jakości Edukacji)

Department for Structural Funds, in the Ministry of National Education

PARPA (The State Agency for the Prevention of Alcohol-Related Problems) <http://www.parpa.pl>

National Bureau for Drug Prevention <http://www.narkomania.gov.pl>

FRSE (Foundation for the Development of the Education System) <http://www.frse.org.pl/>

Parliament commission in charge of youth issues: Commission of Education, Science and Youth (pl. Komisja Edukacji, Nauki i Młodzieży), and sub-commission on youth issues;

name of chair of the Commission: Piotr Paweł Bauć

role and competence (concerning youth): education of all levels, adult education, teacher training, youth tourism, free time and vacation, sport of children and young people, student and pupil councils, realization of young generation's aspirations, social and labour market integration of young people.

<http://www.sejm.gov.pl/Sejm7.nsf/agent.xsp?symbol=KOMISJAST&NrKadencji=7&KodKom=EN>
[M](#)

3.1.2 Regional public authorities with competencies in the youth field

Describe the structure of authorities on the regional (or federal) level (existing institutions and their competencies and mandate; relation with national authorities in charge of youth and with EU institutions).

Competencies in the youth field at regional level (voievodship, pl. województwo) mainly consider fields of education, culture and social policy. They are held by bodies placed in the structure of Marshall's Offices (Marshall – pl. Marszałek – is the title of the head of voievodship's parliament) in each of 16 voievodships (regions) in Poland. Regional government has a duty to support the education process of citizens, and promote acquiring higher levels of education, as well as act against social exclusion.

Source: isap.sejm.gov.pl/Download?id=WDU19980910576&type=3, access 15.12.11

Additionally in some voievodoships, there exist plenipotentiaries or spokespersons for youth matters (in voievodoship of Świętokrzyskie, Dolnośląskie, Warmińsko-mazurskie). In voievodoship Zachodniopomorskie, there exists the Secretariat for Youth. This movement shows the growing importance of youth policy at the regional level.

More information:

Świętokrzyskie: <http://www.sejmik.kielce.pl/urząd/rzecznik-mlodziezy>

Warmińsko-mazurskie: <http://www.mlodziejowy.info/>

Zachodniopomorskie: <http://www.mlodziej.wzp.pl/>

3.1.3 Local public authorities with competencies in the youth field

Describe the structure of authorities on the regional (or federal) and local level (existing institutions and their competencies and mandate; relation with national authorities in charge of youth and with EU institutions).

Competencies in the youth field at the local level mainly consider fields of education, culture, social welfare policy, sport and health. They are held by bodies placed in the structure of basic administrative units (municipality, pl. gmina). They are usually named as Education, Culture and Sport (departments or offices).

Concerning youth participation in municipality works, as article 5b says: Municipality takes actions to support and promote the idea of self-government among citizens of municipality, particularly among youth. The Municipal Council can agree to create the Youth Council, which has a consultative character. By establishing it, municipal council establishes that statutes of Youth Council and the rules of its functioning. Source:

<http://isap.sejm.gov.pl/Download;jsessionid=F191430D30A9B8096794D9D337B3A51E?id=WDU19900160095&type=3>

Municipality is also obliged to collaborate and support non-governmental organisations and other units effecting public work (as defined in Act of law of April 24th 2003 on Public Benefit and Volunteer Work, article 3, <http://www.pozytek.gov.pl/Law,534.html>).

3.2 Youth welfare services (comprising public and/or non public actors)

According to the law on social welfare, the reasons why a person can be a subject of social assistance are: poverty, being an orphan, homelessness, unemployment, disability, long and serious illness, violence in family, motherhood and having many children, refugees or foreigners

having difficulties in integration, addictions, crisis situations, ecological or natural disaster. All those categories might concern young people. The income criteria for receiving social support is income. The help can be received from municipal offices as well as in different institutions, such as crisis intervention center or homeless shelters.

www.isap.sejm.gov.pl/Download?id=WDU20040640593&type=3

The welfare support is mostly directed to families, as well as children within families, which may receive support in form of meals, support for their schooling, and in case the child who lacks parental support or care, a place in a foster family or a social welfare home.

There is a special procedure (art.88 of the Law) to support people aiming at autonomous living (pl. osoba usamodzielniana), who lack personal resources in the process, such as persons 18-year-old with intellectual disability who leave social welfare homes, single mothers from single mother homes, or those leaving a reformatory, educational or socio-therapeutic centers. These people might receive financial or material support, mostly for education, housing, as well as assistance in finding employment. The condition for receiving support is person's commitment to realize the individual plan of becoming autonomous, with assistance of a social worker.

For unemployed youth, the support is given through Employment Services. The person which during the last 18 months worked for 365 days and was receiving at least minimum wage, can receive an unemployment benefit of about 200 euro for a period of 6 or 12 months. Other forms of support for unemployed include internships, trainings, job announcements as well as funding for setting up a business (mostly through EU funds). The new programme for youth at the labour market is being initiated – more details are described further in the document.

Besides the public services, there function high number of non-profit organizations supporting children, those with disabilities, elderly, unemployed, women. Many of them are religious organisations or congregations, who traditionally in Poland support e.g. single mothers, provide food for the poorest, run shelters. The biggest of those is Caritas Poland, who runs several welfare homes, social care houses, daycare centers for children, as well as runs charity projects on the national as well as international scale. You can find the list of some of organisations involved in social services:

http://bazy.ngo.pl/search/wyniki.asp?kryt_typ_instyt_multi=20&szukanie=zaawans1&baza=7&wyniki=1&page=3.

3.3 Non-public actors/structures & youth services with competencies in the youth field

Mention and describe non-public actors/structures who are directly or indirectly involved in youth policies, and have influence in the policy-making process and in the decision making process.

3.3.1 Youth Councils

Polish Council of Youth Organisations PROM (pl. Polska Rada Organizacji Młodzieżowych) <http://www.prom.info.pl/> is a representative of the organisations associated within it for issues related to the needs and postulates of young people, and exists from 2011. The Council aim is to be involved in the e.g. development of the youth policy, promotion of the concept of public involvement of young people, support of collaboration, exchange of information and experiences between youth organisations and youth unions and organisations acting on behalf of youth, facilitation of contact between Polish youth organisations and youth unions. Membership of the Council is open to organisations where minimum 2/3 of members are aged under 35, also the youth town councils may participate in the activities of the council. The Ministry of National Education has supported the process of establishing the Polish Council of Youth Organisations from the very beginning, but it is an organization independent of the state structures and apolitical. The establishment of the Polish Council of Youth Organisations is a step towards the European social dialogue standards, meaning assuring participation of young groups and organisations in policy work and consultation. The remaining challenge is to find ways to cooperate with non-formal youth groups and preparing activities to stimulate increased participation of individuals. Polish Council of Youth Organisations (PROM) is applying to the European Youth Forum as a national council.

The biggest organisations that create first chamber of associations in the PROM are:

Academic Sport Association (pl. Akademicki Związek Sportowy), www.azs.pl

Independent Association of Students (pl. Niezależne Zrzeszenie Studentów NZS) www.nzs.org.pl

Polish Scouting and Guiding Association (pl. Związek Harcerstwa Polskiego) www.zhp.pl

Association of Rural Youth (pl. Związek Młodzieży Wiejskiej) www.zmw.pl

Organisations in the second chamber (smaller) are listed here: http://prom.info.pl/?page_id=58

Other bodies that is important from the point of view of youth policy are:

Student Parliament (pl. Parlament Studentów RP) <http://www.psrp.org.pl> – represent the opinion of all students in Poland and has a right to make proposals in the matters that concern all students, as well as to give opinion on the normative acts concerning. The proposals of normative acts are presented to Parliament by the Minister responsible for higher education. (Law on Higher Education). The representatives of the Parliament participate in the work of many public bodies such as the Council for Higher Education, the State Accreditation Commission, commissions of the Sejm and Senate (lower and upper chamber of Parliament), the working groups of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education.

National Representation of Doctoral Students (pl. Krajowa Reprezentacja Doktorantów) [http://www.krd.org.pl/](http://www.krd.org.pl) is a national body representing the opinion and the will of doctoral students in Poland. The body has a right to voice opinions and give proposals in the matters that concern doctoral students, as well as to give opinion on the normative acts concerning doctoral students and doctoral studies. (Law on Higher Education)

3.3.2 Youth NGOs

Please mention the most relevant youth NGO's which are not members of the national youth council. Please refer to their objectives and give a link to their website (and contact person)

Polish Students Association (pl. Zrzeszenie Studentów Polskich) www.zsp.org.pl

Association of Christian Youth YMCA (pl. Związek Młodzieży Chrześcijańskiej Polska YMCA) <http://www.ymca.pl/>

Scouting Association (pl. Związek Harcerstwa Rzeczypospolitej; second largest scouting organisation in Poland) www.zhr.pl

Catholic Youth Association (pl. Katolickie Stowarzyszenie Młodzieży) <http://www.ksm.org.pl/>

AIESEC Polska www.aiesec.pl

Erasmus Student Network www.esn.pl

AEGEE www.aegEE.pl

3.4 National network(s) for knowledge on youth linking all actors in the field (policy makers, researchers, young people and their organisations, NGOs)?

There is no permanently existing network for knowledge on youth linking different actors in the field. There exists a network of sociologists within Polish Sociological Association gathered

within a Network of Youth and Education (pl. Sekcja Socjologii Młodzieży i Edukacji PTS <http://www.pts.org.pl/strona/pl/104/spis-sekcji-tematycznych-pts>). Network exchanges knowledge in the relevant field and organizes conferences on the topics of youth and education.

In creation of the Youth 2011 Report, a multidisciplinary team was involved, composed of experts in numerous fields, several ministries, central offices, and communities working with and for young people; the team used to meet in 2010 and 2011 at the Chancellery of the Prime Minister under Minister Michał Boni's chairmanship.

4. Legislation

Please explain the legal foundations of national youth policy / actions concerning youth.

Constitution of Republic of Poland (<http://www.sejm.gov.pl/prawo/konst/angielski/kon1.htm>):

Article 32

All persons shall be equal before the law. All persons shall have the right to equal treatment by public authorities. No one shall be discriminated against in political, social or economic life for any reason whatsoever.

Article 48

Parents shall have the right to rear their children in accordance with their own convictions. Such upbringing shall respect the degree of maturity of a child as well as his freedom of conscience and belief and also his convictions.

Limitation or deprivation of parental rights may be effected only in the instances specified by statute and only on the basis of a final court judgment.

Article 65

The permanent employment of children under 16 years of age shall be prohibited. The types and nature of admissible employment shall be specified by statute.

Article 68

Public authorities shall ensure special health care to children, pregnant women, handicapped people and persons of advanced age.

Public authorities shall support the development of physical culture, particularly amongst children and young persons.

Article 70

Everyone shall have the right to education. Education to 18 years of age shall be compulsory. The manner of fulfillment of schooling obligations shall be specified by statute.

Education in public schools shall be without payment. Statutes may allow for payments for certain services provided by public institutions of higher education.

Parents shall have the right to choose schools other than public for their children. Citizens and institutions shall have the right to establish primary and secondary schools and institutions of higher education and educational development institutions. The conditions for establishing and operating non-public schools, the participation of public authorities in their financing, as well as the principles of educational supervision of such schools and educational development institutions, shall be specified by statute.

Public authorities shall ensure universal and equal access to education for citizens. To this end, they shall establish and support systems for individual financial and organizational assistance to pupils and students. The conditions for providing of such assistance shall be specified by statute.

The autonomy of the institutions of higher education shall be ensured in accordance with principles specified by statute.

Article 72

The Republic of Poland shall ensure protection of the rights of the child. Everyone shall have the right to demand of organs of public authority that they defend children against violence, cruelty, exploitation and actions which undermine their moral sense.

A child deprived of parental care shall have the right to care and assistance provided by public authorities.

Organs of public authority and persons responsible for children, in the course of establishing the rights of a child, shall consider and, insofar as possible, give priority to the views of the child.

The competence and procedure for appointment of the Children Ombudsman shall be specified by statute.

Other national legislation on youth (selected):

Law on Higher Education

Education System Act

Laws on functioning of public administration and local administration (appointing bodies that deal with youth issues as well as tasks for adequate offices)

Law against violence in family <http://isap.sejm.gov.pl/DetailsServlet?id=WDU20051801493>

Law on Children's Ombudsman <http://www.brpd.gov.pl/detail.php?recid=52>

5. National Policy Programmes on youth

National programmes on youth. Please outline their objectives and duration. If possible provide a link for further information.

Voluntary Labour Corps (pl. Ochotnicze Huce Pracy) <http://www.ohp.pl/en/> is a state organization functioning under the supervision of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy. As we read on the website: “The primary objective of VLC is to create adequate conditions for proper social and vocational development of young people, including special actions that are addressed to disfavored young people who are supported by VLC and such support consists in organization of various forms of going out of poverty, unemployment, and social pathology effects. Actions taken by VLC are addressed to three groups of young people aged 15-25 years.” VLC offers educational model that merges school education and vocational training. While attending public elementary or grammar school, a pupil is trained in a particular profession or acquires occupational qualifications at the level of basic vocational school. Each student signs individual employment contract with an employer, under the terms and conditions applicable to juvenile employees. VLC participants are paid for both work time and study time (employers can have wages paid to students refunded).

Graduate internship programme (pl. staże absolwenckie): It allows graduates to do internship in an institution (esp. public, or a non-governmental organisation), while receiving subsidence money. The subsidence equals 140% of unemployment benefit, additionally the Employment Office pays the social security for the graduate. The employer does not bear any costs. The scheme is available from 3 to 12 months, but access is limited due the limited funds available at each Regional Employment Office.

<http://www.psz.praca.gov.pl/main.php?do=ShowPage&nPID=867713&pT=details&sP=CONTENT,objectID,867794>

First Business (pl. Pierwsza Firma): Many European funds has been directed towards programmes supporting setting up first business. The preference in application was given to youth under 25 years old. From 2013 there is starting new programme that will offer the preferential loans to all those who want to set up own company.

Programme “Youth on the Labour Market”: In 2012, the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy started a pilot project “Your career – your choice” to test new tools that would support the employment of young people (aged up to 30) in the new programme “Youth on the Labour Market”. These tools include:

Individual support of an unemployed person from an advisor.
‘Promessa’ for youth (youth guarantee) – tools to be selected with a support of the advisor (Stipend to undergo training, stipend to continue education after higher education on the postgraduate course, stipend to go to vocational school or post-secondary school, stipend

for undergoing internship, subsidy for an employer to offer a job to an unemployed young person).
Financial support for moving to another town to undertake a job.

National scholarship programme (pl. Narodowy Program Stypendialny) – programme aiming at equalizing educational chances through financial support to pupils (aged 6-19) with difficult economic and life situation (in 2010, 460,000 pupils received such scholarship). Additionally, every year most talented pupils receive scholarships from the Minister of National Education (in 2011, 70 pupils).

Scholarship programme for youth artists from Ministry of Culture and National Heritage:

for students of art academies, <http://www.mkidn.gov.pl/pages/strona-glowna/uczniowie-i-studenci/uczelnie-artystyczne/stypendia-dla-studentow.php>,
for talented pupils from art schools: <http://www.mkidn.gov.pl/pages/strona-glowna/uczniowie-i-studenci/szkoly-artystyczne/stypendia-dla-uczniow-szkol-artystycznych.php>

Programme Housing for youth (pl. Mieszkanie dla Młodych): In Poland until last year, families (with the younger person up to 35) could be beneficiaries in the programme concerning support for buying apartments ('Family on its own', pl. 'Rodzina na swoim') - this programme finished last year and now there is a new programme which is called Housing for youth, which supports young people up to 35 both those who are single or in marriage for buying their first apartment. The state will subsidize 10% of up to 50m² of the apartment for couples or single people without children and 15% in case they have children. Additionally, if in the following 5 years the family will have at least 3 children, the additional 5% of subsidy will be available. The programme supports buying the first apartment or building the first house (from the primary market).

Sport promotion programmes. Programmes of Ministry of Sport "Little Champion" (pl. Mały Mistrz) promoting sport activities among children 7-10 years old, "multisport" aiming at arranging after-school sport activities by sport organisations for young people among 9-12 years old, and programme promoting attendance and quality education in school gymnastic and sport classes. All these programmes are directed at promotion of sport and healthy lifestyles of young pupils. The Eaglets (pl. Orliki) programme aim is "to build general-access, free of charge sports fields, called Orlik, with locker rooms and sanitary facilities, in all Polish municipalities. The idea of the Programme is to make modern sports infrastructure available to children and youngsters to allow them to take up regular sports training", as well as "ensure that the citizens are able to practice sports, regardless of their financial or social status".

Ministry of Education programmes: Ministry of Education allocated funds for the following projects in 2013 (institutions and organisations can apply for the grants):

- Open School - programme promoting collaboration between school and non-governmental organisations
- Organisation of camps for young people with Polish origins living abroad, especially Belarus and Lithuania
- Programme for talented young people
- International youth exchange
- Supporting initiatives of cultural and language promotion for ethnic and national minorities
- 'Safe school' - supporting projects within safe school initiatives, which would raise their social and cultural competences
- Providing to young pupils with sight impairment access to magazines and journals in Braille
- Supporting the access to study materials and school books for pupils with sight impairment.
- http://bip.men.gov.pl/images/stories/Plan_zada_zleconych2013.pdf

Action plans i.e. official strategies

Ministry of Education places a special attention to some selected aspects of the education and each year there is a special slogan for the school year:

2012/12 – Year of School with Passion <http://www.szkolazpasja.men.gov.pl/>

2012/13 – Year of Safe School

http://www.men.gov.pl/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=3503%3Arok-bezpiecznej-szkoly&catid=287%3Abezpieczna-szkoa#

2013/14 – School in Motion (promoting sports and health) <http://www.szkolawruchu.men.gov.pl/>

The recommendations included in the **report „YOUTH 2011“** concern virtually every area of young people's life. They answer to issues and challenges of youth policy (demography, education, labour market, housing, culture participation, health). The key recommendations included in the report are (selected):

1. Making **generational dimension crucial to development strategies in Poland** – a complex attitude may be an opportunity to improve life start of young people, while at the same time it might create conditions for activity of older generations and so-called silver economy; (...)
3. Creating conditions **where every young person might access every educational path of their choice**, which requires policy aiming at levelling chances through enabling every child over 3 a participation in public education, and personalization of learning processes.
4. Enabling **gaining digital competences at school** (which requires adequate preparation of teachers, facilities and access to fast, broadband internet at schools).

5. It is necessary to create **good career counselling** in junior high schools and to improve and modernise vocational schools, to correspond to our economy, which would raise its quality and would attract more young people.
6. It is important to improve **effectiveness and quality of higher education** and to develop scholarship system of a simple formula (credits), scholarships for gifted students (also for studies in the best foreign universities) and for doctorate students (letting them support themselves) and post-docs. It is important to support work experience abroad and presence of foreign students in Poland. (...)
8. Programs of Active Labour Market Policies financed from the Labour Fund should not be restricted. They should be made flexible to enable employment of graduates in local governments to carry out task projects, or for students during vocational practices. Parallely, an obligation of employment for a more stable period, to a training at the employer, should be introduced.
11. A model of **innovative entrepreneurship** model should be created, increasing incentives for innovative start-ups, dedicated grants to this aim, so that young micro-entrepreneurs might order research projects and introduce innovative solutions.
13. **Equal treatment of men and women should be promoted**, by consequent execution of law, including settlements on quota participation of women in various forms of representation.
14. Disseminating **new forms of employment and development of women**, more adapted to changeable cycle of family life and various types of education and professional skills (including support of new qualifications gaining of women returning to the labour market, or starting their career without previous experience, through special activation programs of Labour Fund).
16. Increment of practical access to **child care for children under 3**, through equipping legal solutions in financial conditions and developing formula of family support by family assistants.
17. Introducing solutions in educational system to achieve a goal of at least 90% participation of children from every level of the age group 3-5 in pre-school education.
18. Elaboration of a new **child health care support** model at schools, through access to nurses and better health prevention.
19. Introducing **changes in family benefits system**, to increase access to them in the situation of poverty threat, connecting with support to break out of poverty, aiming mainly at families with many children.
20. Analyzing possibilities of concentration of support to promote increment of children born by women, through tax reliefs after three or more children in the family.

21. Promoting cultural and mental changes, to increase acceptance towards solutions supporting children and relations of persons raising children, regardless the formal relation between the partners.
22. **Making radical changes in disabled children care** to support their potential through adequate education system (from preschool to higher education), enabling independence and finding employment.
23. To **improve housing situation** of young people, a new program should be prepared, with a better offer of flats to rent, and flexible forms of getting a communal flat for people with lower income.
25. Preparing programs **improving access to culture** (books, net of libraries, digitalization of cultural resources) to be introduced. Schools should have cultural education to enhance creativity potential of the society.
26. Creating legal and material conditions to carry out modern public mission in the media, which should favour increment of participation in culture, understanding the world, **participation in public debates**.
28. Disseminating and idea of **creating regional Copernicus Centres**, aiming at promoting knowledge, attractive forms of explaining natural processes and events, supporting innovative education.
29. Creating conditions (if necessary, through legal requirements connected with managing the area) **to start public space in cities and housing estates**, to improve the character of interpersonal relations connected with constructing social capital and to promote various forms of spending leisure time.
30. Improving (in the framework of transport development) **communication and transport between centres of development and peripheries**, to strengthen functional links and reduce civilization differences between regions.
31. Creating mechanisms of **participation and consultations while preparing public decisions**, corresponding with participation democracy (in the local scale, connected with participation budget), using modern communication technologies (nets), constructing open government model –to make young generation step from being observers to actors
32. Creating new conditions for **free civic society actions and institutions** (including various forms of NGOs), supporting them through long-term projects, constructing financial support for endowment funds of these organizations for many years.

33. Elaboration of new ways of functioning **of real representation organization of young people** on different levels and in different areas, giving them feasible tasks and supporting governmental coordination of actions for young generation.

6. Budget / Public expenditure allocated to youth

There is no official calculations concerning youth participation in the budget, as youth policy is transversal is included in the budget lines for diverse Ministries.

7. European Dimension of youth policy

This section should outline how European strategies, policy commitments and programmes are implemented at the national level.

The Department responsible for implementation of European strategies, policy commitments and programmes are: **Strategy and International Cooperation Department** (pl. Departament Strategii i Współpracy Międzynarodowej), in the Ministry of National Education. Department is responsible for the following tasks:

- participation in the works of the EU Council working groups dealing with youth policy, mainly within Youth Working Party and Education Committee;
- participation in the works of the EU Expert Groups (i.e. Expert Group on the Youth Work Quality Systems, representative: Ewa Krzaklewska);
- support for the National Working Groups for the EU structured dialogue with young people – on national level;
- contribution to the implementation of the national plans for European years taking into account youth field: 2012 – The European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations, 2013 - The European Year of Citizens;
- organisation of campaign 'NO HATE SPEECH MOVEMENT'
<http://www.nohatespeechmovement.org/>.

Department for Structural Funds:

permanent cooperation with National Agency of the Youth in Action programme/Erasmus+.

The impact of European strategies and policy recommendations is seen in documents and actions at national level, improving engagement in the youth policy at the country level as well

as strengthening the youth group's importance and presence in different policy areas, not dealt extensively with previously e.g. volunteering. For example, White Paper 2001 "New Impetus for European Youth" was the inspiration for beginning works on the Polish Youth Strategy. The consultations of the White Paper were carried out by the Polish Ministry of National Education and Sport in the year 2002. Another example is engagement of Poland in the European Year of Volunteering. Pursuant to the decision of the Council of the European Union of 27 November 2009 (2010/37/EC), an Intersectoral Working Group for European Year of Volunteering was appointed, which consisted of representatives of the public administration institutions and non-governmental organisations active in the field of volunteering. The fruit of the EYV celebration was Long-Term Policy for Volunteering Development in Poland 2011.

The engagement in the youth field recently was also strengthened by the **Polish EU Council Presidency**. The actions of Polish Presidency in the field of youth during the second half of year 2011 focused on the Youth and the World priority – one of the fields of action defined in the Council Resolution of 27 November 2009 on a renewed framework for European cooperation in the youth field (2010-2018). More precisely, Polish government focused on promoting youth participation in mobility, mainly as part of non-formal education and voluntary activities, with a particular focus on cooperation with neighbouring countries of the European union – the Eastern Europe and Caucasus.

Concerning implementation of the **European programmes directed to youth**, such as Youth in Action, Grundtvig, and recently Erasmus+, those programmes are very popular among Polish youth and are being rigorously animated.

Additionally, Poland is a member of the **Visegrad Group** <http://www.visegradgroup.eu/>. Poland held Presidency of the Visegrad Group (V4) between July 2012–June 2013. The Visegrad Group (also known as the "Visegrad Four" or simply "V4"), formed on 15th February 1991, is constituted by the Czech Republic (CZ), Hungary (HU), Poland (PL) and Slovakia (SK). The group "reflects the efforts of the countries of the Central European region to work together in a number of fields of common interest within the all-European integration." The Polish Presidency of V4 includes the cooperation in the sector of Education, Volunteering, and Youth. The work within this priority included working meeting "V4 Youth Roundtable" representatives in April 2013, with the participation of directors for youth, experts, youth representatives (from youth councils) and preparation of the report "Visegrad Youth. Comparative review of the situation of young people in the V4 countries" authored by Ewa Krzaklewska. Available at: http://youth-partnership-eu.coe.int/youth-partnership/publications/Vysegrad_report

7.1 Council of Europe.

Youth organisations from Poland are participating in European Youth Foundation programmes. In 2012, 10 organisations received grants from EYF, as well as many take part in the activities organised by the CoE such as trainings for youth workers, study sessions, courses.

7.2 European Union.

7.2.1 Implementation of the Youth in Action programme/Erasmus +

Youth in Action Programme/Erasmus+ in Poland is implemented by Foundation for the Development of the Education System – pl. Fundacja Rozwoju Systemu Edukacji (<http://www.frse.org.pl/>). National Agency is fulfilling all the obligations concerning management and promotion of the programme. The statistics concerning participants, budget and projects funded through the programme are available here:

<http://www.mlodziej.org.pl/program/program-w-liczbach>.

Eurodesk network in Poland coordinated at the national level and it consists of local and regional information centres: <http://www.eurodesk.pl/eurodesk-w-polsce>

7.2.2 Follow up of the EU Youth Strategy (2010 – 2018) on the national level

Please describe if there is a national strategy for following up the EU Youth Strategy (2010-2018).

EU Youth Strategy has been followed through the following initiatives:

- European Year of Volunteering and Long-Term Policy for Volunteering Development in Poland 2011 (mostly volunteering and youth information)
- Strategy for Development of Social Capital (mostly volunteering and participation)
- Report “Youth 2011” (greater understanding and knowledge of youth)
- support to setting up Polish Council of Youth Organisations (PROM) <http://www.prom.info.pl> (participation)
- actions of Polish Presidency in the field of youth during the second half of year 2011 focused on the Youth and the World priority
- in 2012-2013 mostly programmes directed at employment of young people

Poland is engaged into structured dialogue, which is coordinated by the Polish Council of Youth Organisations (PROM) and run in partnership with Ministry of National Education and Foundation for the Development of the Education System. More information is available: http://prom.info.pl/?page_id=279.

8. Further sources of information on youth policy in Poland

Ministry of National Education <http://www.men.gov.pl>

Report Youth 2011. Analytical report.

http://www.premier.gov.pl/centrum_prasowe/wydarzenia/raport_quot_mlodzi_2011_quot_7530/

Package for Youth – response to report Youth 2011:

http://www.premier.gov.pl/centrum_prasowe/wydarzenia/raport_quot_mlodzi_2011_quot_7530/

Study on Volunteering in the European Union. Country Report Poland

<http://www.pozytek.gov.pl/files/Biblioteka/National%20report%20PL.pdf>

Long-Term Policy for Volunteering Development in Poland 2011

<http://erw2011.gov.pl/pl/strony/dlugofalowa-polityka/> (access 7.12.2011)

Młodzi 2010. CBOS. Warszawa. <http://cbos.pl/PL/publikacje/diagnozy.php>

Child and Youth Political Objectives of the Polish EU Council Presidency, Forum 21,

http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/youth/Source/Resources/Forum21/Issue_No17/Forum21_Policy_No_17_en.pdf

Child and Youth Policy in Poland, Forum 21,

http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/youth/Source/Resources/Forum21/Issue_No17/Forum21_Policy_No_17_en.pdf

Krzaklewska Ewa. 2013. "Visegrad Youth. Comparative review of the situation of young people in the V4 countries". Available at: http://youth-partnership-eu.coe.int/youth-partnership/publications/Vysegrad_report