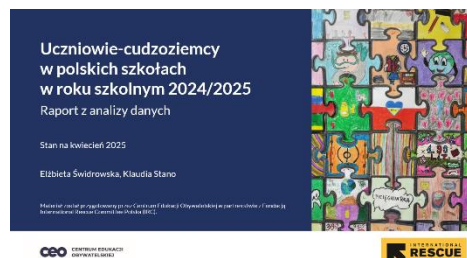


KEY CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

The Polish education system has become nationally and culturally diverse.

Foreign students already account for 5.3% of all learners in the Polish education system. This is 353 thousand individuals, including 237 thousand in schools, 62.6 thousand in preschools, and 53.4 thousand in adult education institutions. They come from 148 countries worldwide. In schools for children and adolescents, there are 237 thousand foreign students (4.8% of all pupils), 203 thousand of whom come from Ukraine. Foreign students are present in 67% of all schools (approx. 14.1 thousand institutions) – including in 89% of technical schools nationwide and 95% of schools in Wrocław.



Most Polish students experience cultural and national diversity at school.

More than 4 million Polish pupils may have daily contact with diversity – they attend schools with foreign students.

In every third class in Poland, there are students from Ukraine (a total of 88.8 thousand classes).

Data inconsistencies do not allow for a clear confirmation of how effectively compulsory education has been implemented, yet the measure appears effective.

The introduction of compulsory schooling for refugee students from Ukraine led to an increase of approx. 14 thousand pupils in schools. Initially the number rose by 18.1 thousand, later it dropped by 3.7 thousand.

The convergence of data from ZUS (Social Insurance Institution) and SIO (Educational Information System) makes it highly probable that:

- around 150 thousand school-age refugee children from Ukraine currently live in Poland;
- almost all children in this group residing in Poland are fulfilling the obligation of schooling;
- almost all children for whom the 800+ benefit is paid are actually attending Polish schools.

However, these facts cannot be confirmed unambiguously, since data from SIO, ZUS, and PESEL have not been cross-verified.

The greatest concern is the dropout of older students.

Although the number of refugee students from Ukraine in secondary schools increased year-on-year, the data show that many do not continue their education – especially between the third and fourth grade of general secondary school, and after the first grade of technical and vocational schools. Up to 35% of a cohort disappears from the system. It is unclear what happens to these young people.

Further challenges for integration include the limited use of Polish as a second language lessons and the functioning of separate foreigner classes.

Although knowledge of Polish is a prerequisite for educational success, only 36% of foreign students attend additional Polish language lessons (among Ukrainian refugee students it is 48%).

There are more than 500 school classes in Poland composed exclusively of Ukrainian students, which, however, are not officially recognized as preparatory classes.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Educational integration as a policy priority.

Supporting educational integration benefits all pupils in Polish schools. Its progress will affect both educational outcomes and the well-being of entire school communities. This requires that educational integration be treated as a priority within state education policy.

2. Cross-verification of SIO, PESEL, and ZUS data.

Comparing data across SIO, PESEL, and ZUS is necessary to verify whether all children in Poland are exercising their right to education and fulfilling compulsory schooling, as well as to assess the effectiveness of broader migration policy measures.

3. Mandatory Polish as a second language.

Given the crucial importance of Polish proficiency for educational success and the limited participation in these classes, attendance should be made compulsory for students who do not speak Polish sufficiently. In addition, efforts must be undertaken to professionalize the teaching of Polish as a second language.

4. In-depth analysis of secondary school dropouts.

A deeper examination is required of the situation of older students who appear in the education system but discontinue schooling before completing secondary education or before the age of 18.