

THE REFORM OF SCHOOL EDUCATION AND  
HIGHER EDUCATION AND ITS INFLUENCE ON  
SCALE OF UNEMPLOYMENT AMONG POLISH  
YOUTH AFTER THE POLITICAL  
TRANSFORMATION OF 1989

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MEXICO CITY  
30 AUGUST 2011



# Introduction

Unemployment is one of major economic and social problems in the world. In Poland, due to the socialist system prevailing after the Second World War, it emerged only after the system changes from 1989.

# Introduction

The clash with the reality of market economy took place after the reforms of 1989. The principle of full employment ceased to be applied, and the inefficient economy started to generate ever new masses of the unemployed. With virtually zero unemployment the level rose to 14.9% in 1994 and then to 19.6% in 2003.

## The unemployment rate in Poland in the years 1992-2009

<b>1992</b>	<b>1993</b>	<b>1994</b>	<b>1995</b>	<b>1996</b>	<b>1997</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2000</b>
13,7	14,9	13,9	13,1	11,5	10,2	10,6	15,3	16,0
<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>
18,5	19,7	19,6	19,0	17,7	13,8	9,6	7,1	8,2

# Introduction

Year	Unemployed aged						
	15-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-44	45-54	55 - >
1992	36,4	26,1	16,9	13,1	11,3	9,1	5,9
1993	42,9	27,9	17,6	14,8	12,9	10,1	6,0
1994	45,3	27,6	16,3	14,7	11,2	8,6	5,0
1995	44,1	27,1	14,5	13,4	10,8	8,2	4,9
1996	35,0	23,9	12,6	11,8	9,7	7,4	4,4
1997	31,7	21,2	10,6	9,9	8,9	6,5	4,0
1998	34,5	21,0	11,1	10,1	9,1	7,5	5,3
1999	45,6	29,7	16,9	14,3	12,2	10,8	9,2
2000	41,8	32,4	16,9	15,3	13,2	11,4	8,4
2001	46,8	40,0	20,1	15,6	16,0	13,3	7,1
2002	50,2	42,5	22,6	17,1	15,8	15,3	8,0
2003	42,8	43,1	23,0	17,5	16,3	15,2	9,4
2004	35,2	41,5	22,7	16,0	15,3	15,6	9,7
2005	30,7	38,5	21,2	15,3	14,1	15,2	9,5
2006	30,8	29,6	15,3	11,6	11,3	11,7	7,3
2007	22,2	21,6	10,6	8,2	7,2	8,3	6,1
2008	20,1	16,9	8,2	5,9	5,2	5,8	4,8
2009	27,2	19,8	9,8	6,5	5,9	6,5	5,6

One of the social groups most affected by these market reforms were young people aged up to 24, i.e. those graduating different types of schools. Therefore, an important role in the problem of unemployment among youth plays the education system - primary, secondary, and tertiary. Depending on the choice of educational path, graduates can come into contact with different problems, taking up their first work in their life.



# Introduction

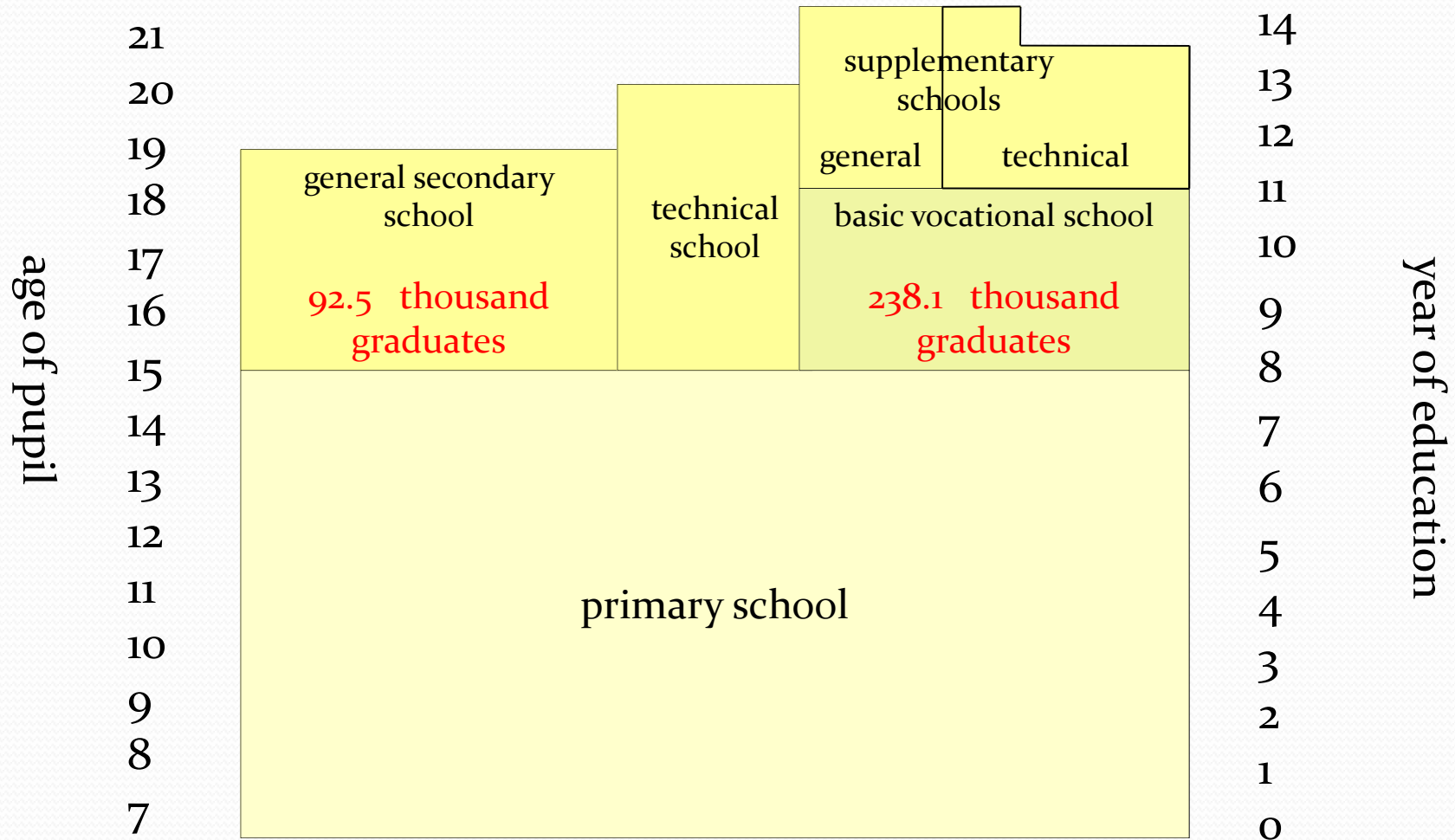
In the school year 1985/1986 in the age group 19-24 years only **16.3%** of the people were taught in schools.

This situation had its effect of Poland's entering the reform period with very low level of public education rates and it later contributed to the popularity of various forms of supplementing education.

In the school year 1990/1991 a total number **238.1** thousand graduates finished the basic vocational schools, and general secondary schools only **92.5** thousand.

# Introduction

## Education system





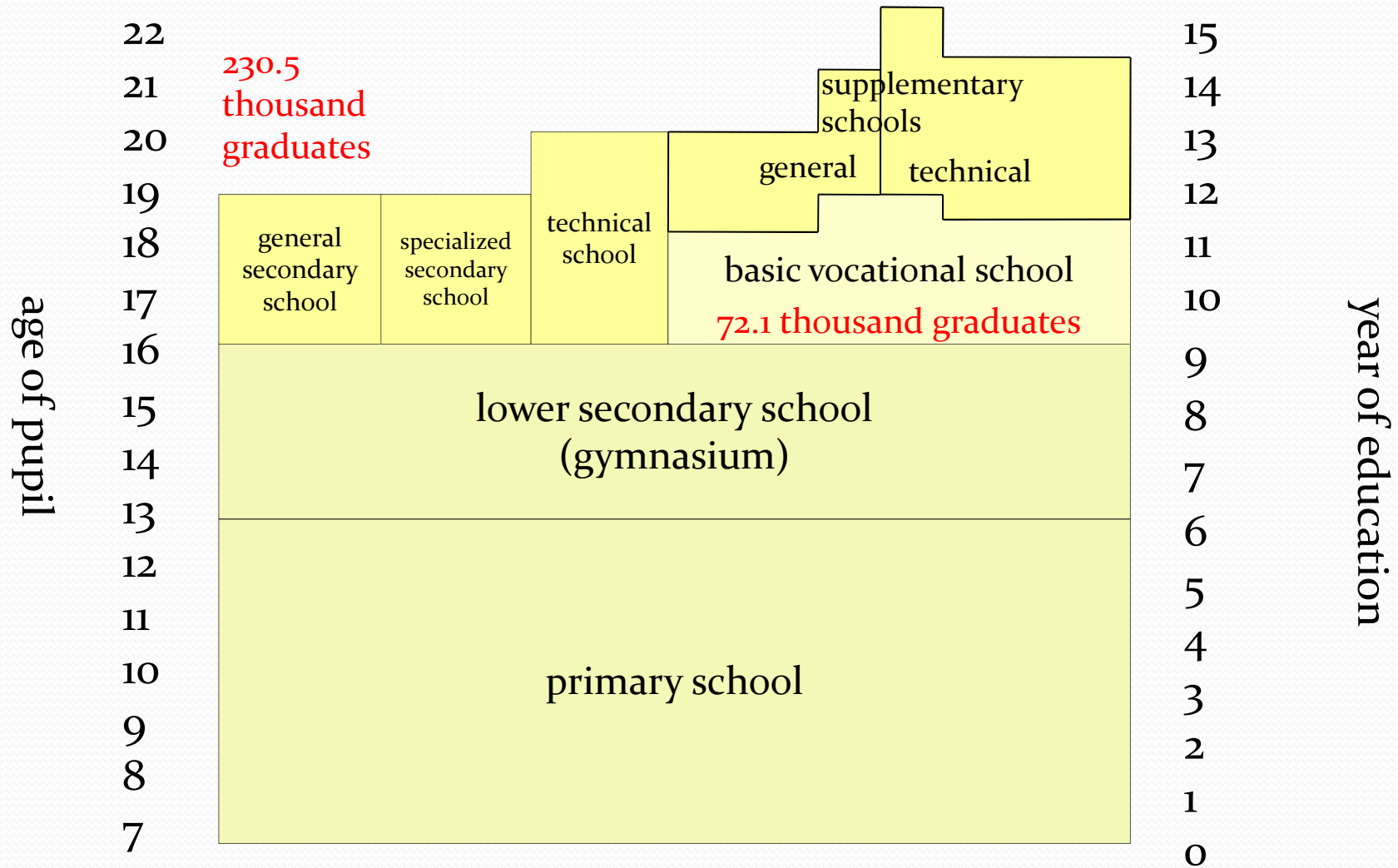
# Education

The reform of primary and secondary education was carried out in 1998.

Primary education lasts for six years now. In the first three classes so-called integrated teaching was introduced. Classes are carried out by one teacher who does not have to divide them explicitly into didactic units.

The following three classes are divided into units of different subjects and conducted by different teachers.

# Education







# Education

Notable in this period is also a decrease in the number of vocational schools graduates to the benefit general secondary schools. In the school year 1998/1999 more than 190.2 thousand students graduated vocational schools, and general secondary schools – 173.9 thousand, while in the school year 2008/2009, these figures were respectively 72.1 and 230.5 thousand.

Even taking into account demographic changes in the first group, the loss is significant. This demonstrates the growing desire for education and shifting away from the socialist stereotype of professional education at the secondary level.



# Education

After the collapse of the socialist system, the fastest changes occurred in higher education.

Marketability of this part of economy resulted in the creation of numerous private colleges supplementing the educational offer provided by monopolistic state universities.



# Education

The main element of these reforms was to divide the unified Master's studies. The Act on Higher Education in 1990 introduced in almost all fields of study, the possibility of three-year vocational studies ending with a Bachelor's degree.

The education could be continued at mostly two-year complementary studies ending with a Master's degree.

Schools also had the opportunity of educating students in the existing unified mode.



# Education

The division into Bachelor's and Master's studies was very quickly utilized by private schools which offered their educational services in this segment. This was caused on the one hand by greater interest of education at this level, on the other, it was simply easier to meet recruitment requirements imposed by law. The result was providing education in the initial period of operation of non-public schools virtually only at Bachelor's level.



# Education

The choice of areas of education offered by non-public schools was mainly determined by market demand and the cost of running the appropriate majors. The latter factor practically eliminated the expensive in maintaining technical majors, contributing to the apparent gaps in the trained engineering staff in the second half of next decade.



# Education

The share of graduates in economics in the total number of graduates at the beginning and end of the last decade exceeded **25%**. The rate was just a little lower in case of teaching professions.

In the academic year 2008/2009 graduates of economical and pedagogical studies accounted for **41.7%** of all graduates.

# Unemployment

The data of Central Statistical Office indicate that unemployment is now highest in the group of up to twenty-fourth years of age. According to the Labor Force Survey in Poland in this age group in the fourth quarter of 2009 unemployment rate was 22.3%. For comparison, in other age groups i.e. 25-34, 35-44, 45-54 and over 55 years of age these rates were respectively 8.7%, 5.9%, 6.5% and 5.3%.

## LFS unemployment rate in the age group of 15-24

Year	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Unemployment rate	32,5	34,1	41,1	43,6	41,1	37,3
Year	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	
Unemployment rate	34,6	27	18,7	17,1	22,3	

# Unemployment

Looking at the opposite, namely the professional activity of this group you will find that, among the total of the professionally active, they constitute the smallest percentage of all of these categories.

**The percentage of workers aged 15-24 in the population of all professionally active**

<b>Year</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>
Percentage of the professionally active	11,3	10,5	9,6	8,9	9,3	9,3
<b>Year</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	
Percentage of the professionally active	9,3	9,7	9,5	9,2	8,6	





# Unemployment

The weight of the issue also recognized by the legislature.

The Employment and Unemployment Counteraction Act specified among the unemployed a separate category of a graduate (unemployed aged under 25 years of age and the unemployed, who in a period of 12 months from the date of completion of higher education is under 27 years of age).

# Unemployment

## Registered unemployed and unemployed graduates

Year	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Total of the registered unemployed, in thousands	2349,8	2702,6	3115,1	3217	3175,7	2999,6
The unemployed registered within 12 months from graduating, in thousands	149,8	167,9	180,7	166,8	157,9	-
Year	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	
Total of the registered unemployed, in thousands	<b>2773</b>	<b>2309,4</b>	<b>1746,6</b>	<b>1473,8</b>	<b>1473,8</b>	
The unemployed registered within 12 months from graduating, in thousands	139,7	102,4	72,2	77,9	120,3	

It may be noted that the percentage of this category of the registered unemployed in general is fairly constant and varies around 5%, but in absolute terms one can speak of a declining tendency in unemployment among graduates.



# Unemployment

Since 2005, we are given data on registered unemployed within twelve months after completion of a higher education institution. Their share in the years 2005-2009 among all registered graduates is 23%, 25%, 29%, 30% and 28%.

These figures were difficult to assess due to lack of data on the structure of education of the graduates going to labor market. However, it is clear that in this short period when the share of all unemployed graduates was constant, the share of this group underwent an increase. This means that in relative terms, labor market demand for this category of graduates in Poland in recent years has diminished.

# Unemployment

## LFS unemployment rate by type of education

Year	Education				
	Higher	Post secondary and secondary vocational	General post secondary	Basic vocational	Local secondary, primary, incomplete primary
1999	4,8	24,5	19,2	18,4	19,2
2000	4,8	13,6	19,6	19,2	20,2
2001	6,4	16,1	22,9	22,4	22,6
2002	7,5	33,8	24	23,8	25,4
2003	7,7	33,7	22,9	23,5	26
2004	6,9	32,4	20,4	22,4	24,8
2005	7,3	29,2	21	20,6	25,1
2006	5,8	10,9	16,1	14,5	18,8
2007	4,5	7,6	11,5	10	13
2008	3,6	6,5	9,6	7	11,4
2009	5	8	10,3	9,3	15,9

Similar conclusions one may draw from an analysis of data compiled in this table.

The lowest unemployment prevails among people with higher education, however, in recent years major positive changes could be seen in all other categories. Particularly noticeable is the decreasing unemployment rate among people with basic vocational education, which taking into account the decreasing number of graduates from these schools, may be an evidence of a slow improvement of the demand for the position of blue collar workers.



# Conclusions

After the period of transformation Polish labor market was characterized by a large structural mismatch. Inherited from the previous system, overstaffing, particularly among blue collar workers in unprofitable branches of heavy industry, resulted in increasing unemployment. The changing value system and the reform of education and higher education led to increased interest in youth education at the tertiary level. This led on the one hand to moving the time of entering the labor market, on the other hand increased the skills of the younger generation. It correctly reflected the labor market needs.



# Conclusions

Having this in mind, the changes in education in the ninety-nineties are to be assessed positively. The educational level of society was raised, and structural mismatch in the labor market has been alleviated.

# Conclusions

## The proportion of learners aged 19-24 years in Poland in the years 1993 to 2010

<b>Years</b>	<b>1993/ 1994</b>	<b>1994/ 1995</b>	<b>1995/ 1996</b>	<b>1996/ 1997</b>	<b>2000/ 2001</b>	<b>2001/ 2002</b>	<b>2002/ 2003</b>
Percentage of learners	25,4	27,9	30,3	32,8	45,4	47,4	50,7
<b>Years</b>	<b>2003/ 2004</b>	<b>2004/ 2005</b>	<b>2005/ 2006</b>	<b>2006/ 2007</b>	<b>2007/ 2008</b>	<b>2008/ 2009</b>	<b>2009/ 2010</b>
Percentage of learners	52,9	54,4	54,8	55,3	55,8	57,9	56,4

As the most important should be considered a strong increase in the percentage of learners at the age of twenty-four and the reduction in the number of school graduates at the level of basic vocational education.



# Conclusions

However, in the longer term there is a need for solutions to improve the attractiveness of vocational schools graduates. Currently in Poland there prevails education on cheap majors of economy, education, social and legal studies. Nonpublic schools, because of the costs, operate mainly in these areas. This causes an increase in the number of graduates with these skills, which is too large for market needs.





# Conclusions

In recent years, in connection with such a situation, at the level ministry, a list of so-called ordered majors was created. These are trendy majors, the graduates of which are or will be in the near future most sought after on the market. Education in these fields of knowledge is subsidized from additional, separate resources. Currently on the list there is a majority of science and technology studies. Taking into account the duration of training the effects of these measures will be visible only in a few years.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR  
ATTENTION

