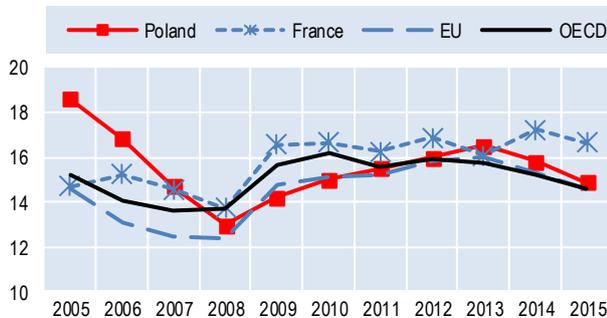


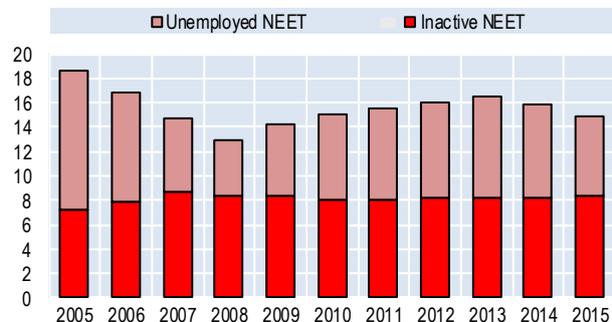
The 2016 edition of *Society at a Glance* examines social well-being and its trends across the OECD. The number of young people not in employment, education or training (NEETs) remains elevated in many countries since the crisis; the report therefore focusses on this group of young people examining the characteristics of those at risk of being NEET along with policies to help meet the challenge. This edition also includes many new youth-specific indicators on family formation, self-sufficiency, income and poverty, health and social cohesion.

The share of NEET youth rose in Poland over the Great Recession but the situation is improving

NEET rate, 2005-2015



NEET rate by activity status, Poland, 2005-2015



Notes: The NEET rate is the share of 15-29-year-olds who are not in employment, education or training. [Figure 1.5]

THE NEET SITUATION

As in many OECD countries, the proportion of young people who are not in employment, education or training (NEETs) rose in Poland from a low 13% in 2008 to a peak of 16.5% in 2013. The NEET rate has been decreasing since 2014. It still remains 2 percentage points above its pre-crisis level and now stands at OECD average (15%). [Figure 1.5].

In 2015, 1.1 million young people in Poland were neither in work nor in education, causing an estimated cost of 1% of GDP (just above the OECD average of 0.9% of GDP) [Figure 1.8].

A breakdown of NEETs into those actively seeking a job (the unemployed NEETs) and those who are not (the inactive NEETs) shows that in Poland the majority (56%) of NEETs are not even looking for work. [Figure 1.4] This is close to the OECD average, but nevertheless represents a challenge to reach out to these youth. [Figure 1.4]

As in all other OECD countries, NEET rates in Poland are higher youth with low education than those with high education. Those with low education levels fare particularly badly in Poland though – 56% of youth who dropped out of school before completing upper secondary school are NEET compared to just 13% of those with a third level degree, one of the largest gaps across the OECD [Figure 1.9].

Fortunately, early school leaving remains particularly low in Poland, where only 7% of men and 4% of women among the 25-34 years-old population do not have an upper-secondary qualification, compared to an OECD average of 18% and 14% respectively. [Figure 1.26]

OVERVIEW OF OTHER SOCIAL INDICATORS

Low skills

Poland reports one of the highest shares of adults with low literacy skills (20%) and with low numeracy skills (23%). However, this is not true for younger generations: Polish youth score around the OECD average on these two skills [Figures 4.7 & 4.8]. The relatively low incidence of early school leaving likely contributes to this improvement across generations.

Poland also reports the highest proportion of persons with low problem-solving skills in technology-rich environments, both among 16-29 youth (17%) and 30-54 adults (28%).

Income is up, inequality is down

The annual median disposable income in Poland per consumption unit - at 13 600 USD - is well below the OECD average of 21 600 USD. While it remained stable between 2007 and 2013, on average, across OECD countries, it did increase significantly in Poland over the same period, by 2.7%. [Figures 3.1 & 3.2].

The ratio between the average income of the richest 10% and that of the poorest 10% of the population was 7.5 in 2013, lower than the OECD average of 9.4. Poland is also one of the very few countries where income inequality declined between 2007 and 2013. [Figure 5.3].

Low fertility

The fertility rate in Poland is the third lowest of the OECD at 1.3 children per woman, well below the OECD average of 1.7. In the mid-2000s fertility increased from 1.2 to 1.4, but it has been declining since the crisis years.

Poland reports the fourth youngest average age of women at first birth. In 2014, it was almost 27 years, up almost three years from 1995. [Figures 3.4 & 3.6]

High male and low female suicide rates

5 933 Polish people took their own life in 2014, representing a suicide rate of 15 per 100 000, slightly above the OECD average of 12. As in other countries, men are more likely to commit suicide than women - seven times more likely in Poland (27 and 4 per 100 000 respectively), the highest gender suicide gap in OECD countries. [Figure 6.6]

Low health spending and life expectancy

Despite recent growth in health expenditures, Poland is still one of the lowest per capita spenders with 1 700 USD. This is about half as the OECD average and almost 6 times less as the top health spender, the United States [Figure 6.9].

Health spending is generally positively correlated with life expectancy: with a life expectancy at birth of about 78 years, Poland is one of 10 OECD countries where people can expect to live less than 80 years. Life expectancy varies by gender and also by socio-economic status (as measured by educational level). This is particularly the case in Poland, where men with a high level of education can expect to live as much as 12 years longer than those with a low level of education, compared with a gap of almost eight years on average in other countries. [Figures 6.1 to 6.3]

Low trust

A cohesive society is one where citizens have confidence in others and in public institutions. Only 23% of Polish report trust in others and the same share of people report confidence in national government. Both rates are below OECD average levels (36% and 42% respectively) and are at similar levels among youth. [Figures 7.4 & 7.5]

Declining criminality and prisoners

The rate of persons brought into formal contact with the police and/or criminal justice system, at 1 100 per 100 000 in 2013, is almost half of the OECD average of 2 100 per 100 000. It has decreased by almost 20% between 2008 and 2013. Among youth aged under 18, this rate declined even further (by almost 50%) during the same period.

The prison population rate, at 188 prisoners per 100 000 people in 2016, is still above the OECD average rate of almost 150 prisoners per 100 000 people. But this rate has been declining from 218 per 100 000 in the 2010s. The prison occupancy rate, at 88%, is now below the OECD average rate of 100%. [Figures 7.10-7.12]

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