

# EDUCATION

# FOR ALL

From the integration  
paradigm to a new  
formula for  
strengthening  
inclusive education  
in Poland

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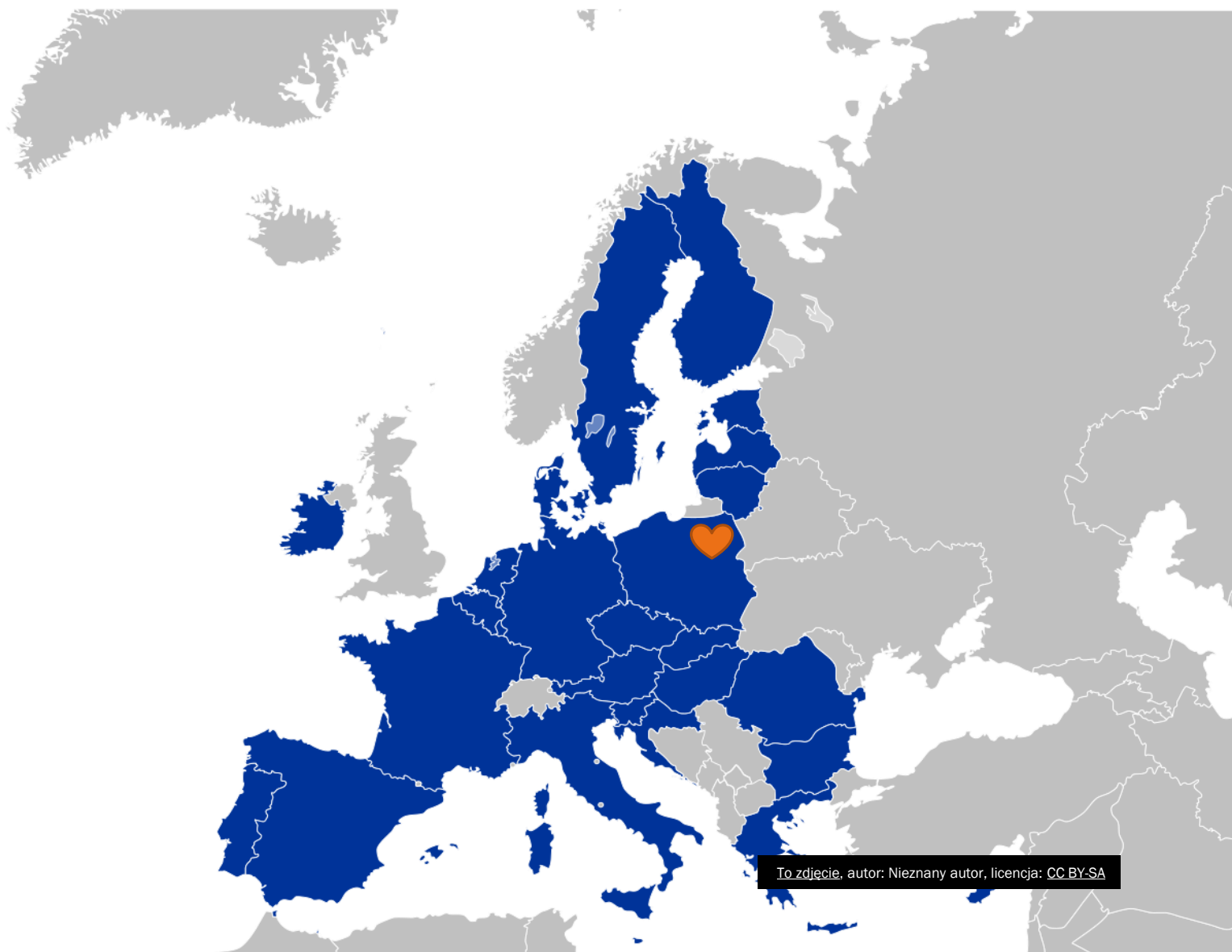


Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union

# Disability Systems Change in Poland

## Context

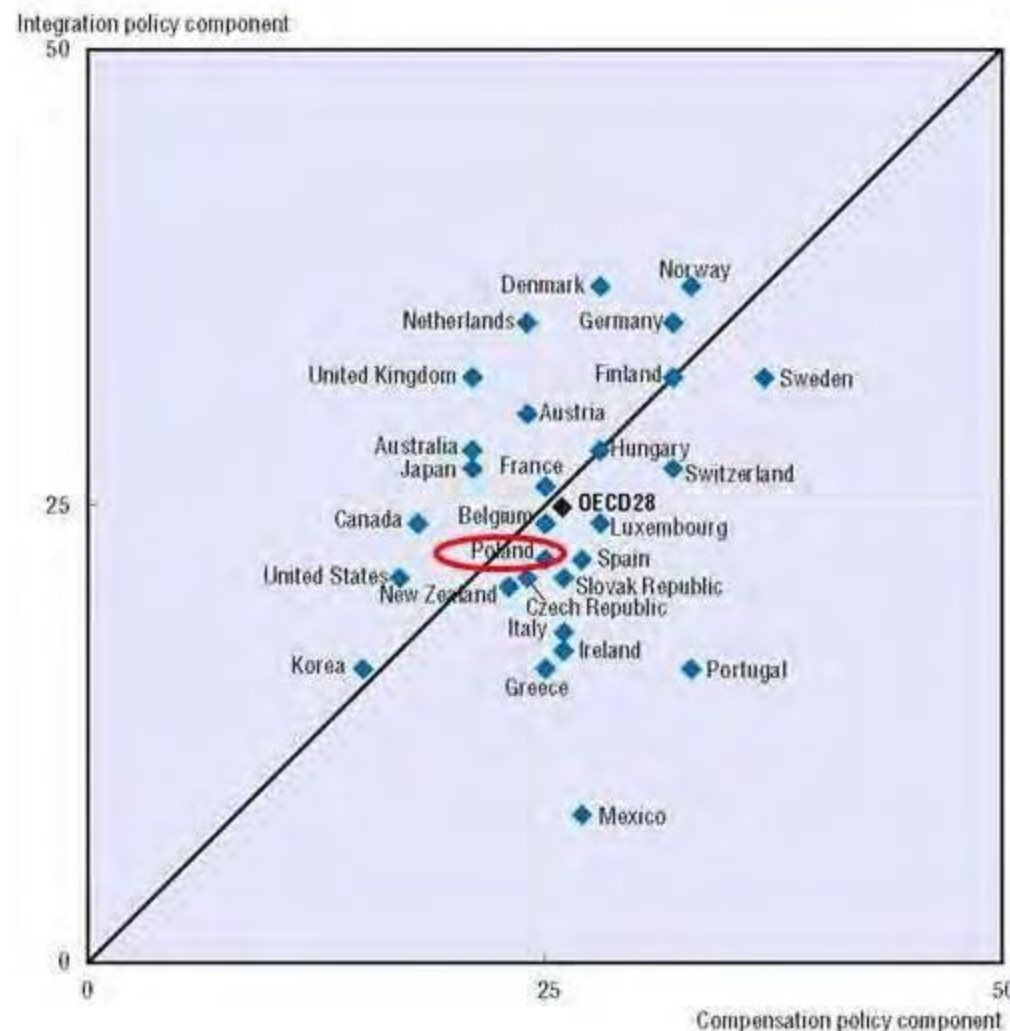
- Current constitution established in 1997
- Became EU MS as part of the 2004 expansion and has been engaged in rapid systems change to implement EU mandates
- State Party to the CRPD since 2012
- Education is funded primarily from public sources. Public funds represent around 91% of funding in school education and around 79% in higher education.



# Variation in Disability Policy Orientation Among OECD Members

## **Integration policy**

is a composite indicator of legal provisions to enhance labour market integration and access to rehabilitation services



## **Compensation policy**

is an indicator of access to and level of cash transfers.



# 1997 Constitution of the Republic of Poland

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## Article 70

- 1. Everyone shall have the right to education.** Education to 18 years of age shall be compulsory. The manner of fulfilment of schooling obligations shall be specified by statute.
- 2. Education in public schools shall be without payment.** Statutes may allow for payments for certain services provided by public institutions of higher education.
- 3. 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.
- 4. 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.
- 5. The autonomy of the institutions of higher education shall be ensured in accordance with principles specified by statute.**



# Polish Educational Law

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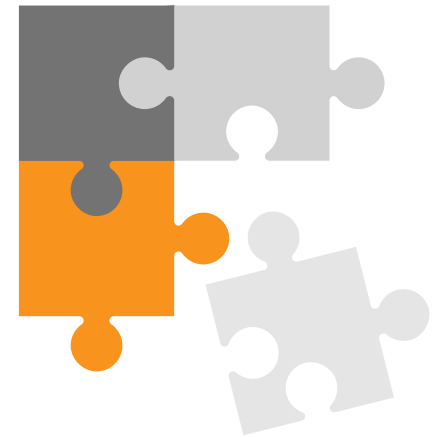
The main Acts concerning school education, covering all levels from pre-primary to post-secondary non-tertiary education, are:

- the Law on School Education and the Provisions introducing the Law on School Education of 2016;
- the School Education Act of 1991;
- the Teachers' Charter of 1982.

# Who do special educational needs apply to?

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- 1. Students with a special education certificate:**
  - with disabilities (specific types of disability),
  - at risk of social maladjustment and socially maladjusted.
- 2. Students with a certificate of the need for individual education, for whom their health condition makes it difficult or impossible to attend school.**
- 3. Students without a special education certificate:**
  - specially gifted,
  - chronically ill,
  - in a crisis or traumatic situation,
  - having educational failures behind them,
  - from neglected environments,
  - adapting to the new environment.

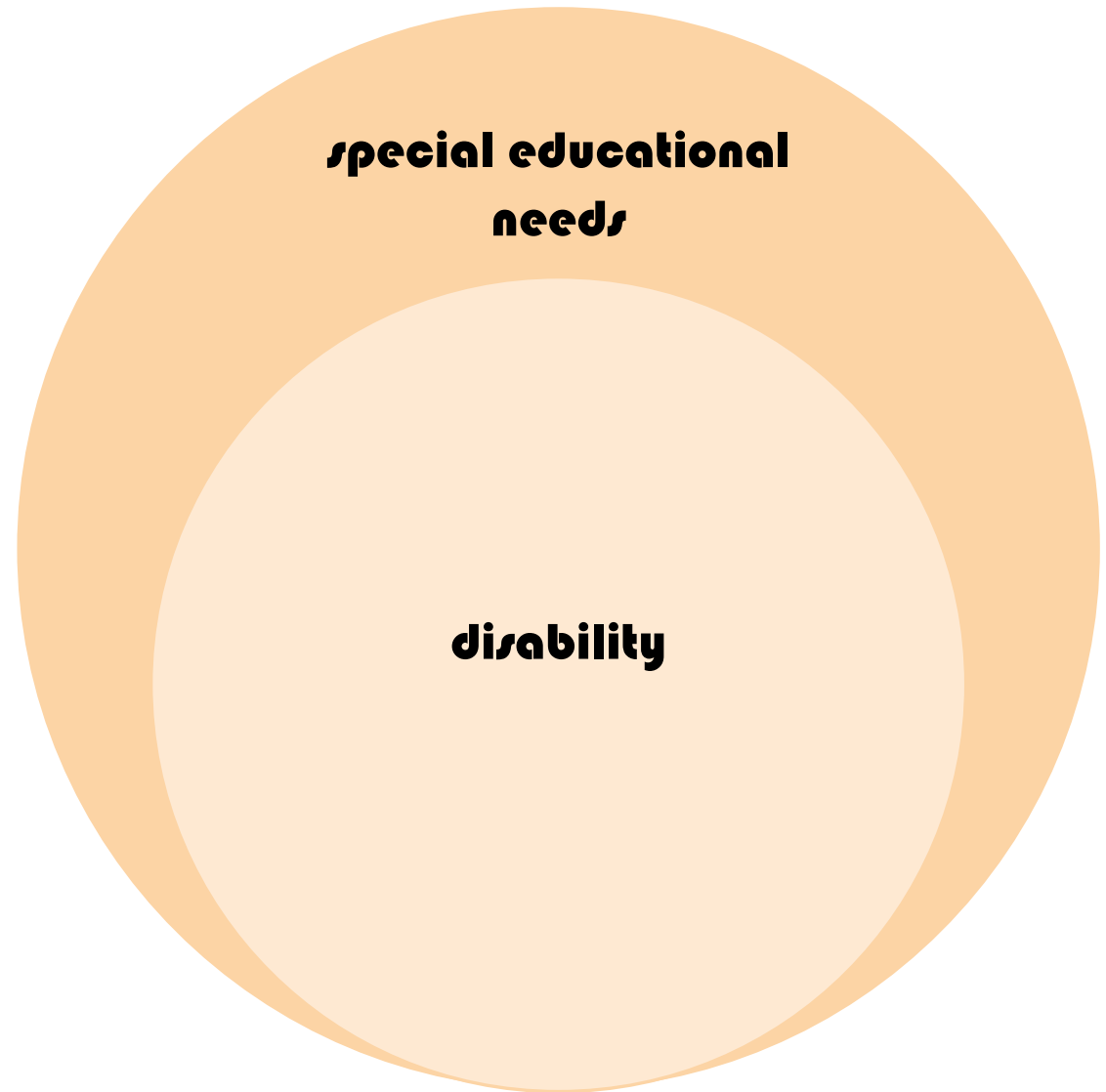


# Special Educational Needs (SEN)

used both in relation to:

-> children who need special conditions during learning, corresponding to their individual abilities and limitations,

-> highly gifted students and their needs that differ from those of children with developmental disabilities.





## **Regulation of 9.8.2017 on the principles for organising and providing psychological and pedagogical assistance in public kindergartens, schools and institutions**

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The need to cover the student with psychological and pedagogical assistance in the kindergarten, school and institution results in particular from:

- 1) disability;
- 2) social maladjustment;
- 3) risk of social maladjustment;
- 4) behavioural or emotional disorders;
- 5) special talents;
- 6) specific learning difficulties;





## **Regulation of 9.8.2017 on the principles for organising and providing psychological and pedagogical assistance in public kindergartens, schools and institutions**

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The need to cover the student with psychological and pedagogical assistance in the kindergarten, school and institution results in particular from:

(...)

- 7) competence deficits and language impairments;
- 8) a chronic illness;
- 9) crisis or traumatic situations;
- 10) experienced educational failure;
- 11) environmental negligence related to the living situation of the pupil and his/her family, leisure activities and community contacts;
- 12) adaptation difficulties related to cultural differences or to a change of educational environment, including those related to previous education abroad.

# Counselling and Guidance Centres (CGCs)

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- helping teachers to identify learners' individual needs and abilities;
- providing support for teachers in solving learners' educational and behavioural problems;
- activities to prevent addictions and other problems for children and young people;
- mental health education for children and young people, parents and teachers;
- providing support for teachers in co-operation with teacher training institutions and pedagogical libraries.

# Primary and Secondary Education in Poland

Typical population: compulsory from ages 5-18, 19, or 20

Children with SEN: compulsory from age 7, available up to age 24 with ID

## Early

Nursery  
age 0-3

Nursery School  
age 3-5  
Length: 3 years

## Primary

Primary  
(stage I) age 6/7-9  
Length: 3 years

Primary  
(stage II)  
age 9-15  
Length: 5 years

## Secondary

Basic Vocational  
age 15-18  
Length: 2 years

Technical School (stage IV)  
age 15-20  
Length: 5 years

General Lyceum (stage IV)  
age 15-19  
Length: 4 years



special



mainstream



integration



# Psychological and educational support

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- classes to develop aptitudes, learning skills or emotional and social competences;
- corrective and compensatory or remedial classes;
- speech therapy classes;
- individualised learning paths or programmes or individual teaching at home for learners who cannot attend school due to their health.

# Special education

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based on a decision on special education (SE certificate) issued by a counselling and guidance centre and provided to:

- learners with disabilities, including mild, moderate and severe intellectual disabilities; deafness or hearing impairment; blindness or visual impairment; motor disability, including aphasia; autism, including Asperger's syndrome; multiple disabilities;
- socially disadvantaged learners;
- learners at risk of social disadvantage.

# Education for All

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- The idea of “education for all” first emerged during the formation of UNESCO in 1945.
- Inclusive education is central to the “Education For All” (EFA) and European Union agenda for change.
- EFA does not suggest the inclusion of children with intellectual disability.

# Beyond Integration

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- **Integration** allows students with disabilities to study in mainstream environments
- **Inclusion** gives students the right to a high quality education.
- In **integrated settings**, students need to adapt to the existing curriculum and are at risk for marginalization if they cannot adapt.
- In **inclusive settings**, the curriculum is adapted to respond to student diversity, e.g., Universal Design for Learning (UDL).





# What is Universal Design for Learning (UDL)?

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- Multiple means of **representation** to optimize understanding for all students.
- Multiple means of **expression** to allow students to demonstrate what they know.
- Multiple means of **engagement** to appeal to different learning–styles and motivational preferences of students.
- Views learning differences as **variabilities** rather than disabilities.

(Adapted from CAST, 2012)

# Meeting the Needs of All Students

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Progressing from an integrated to an inclusive education system for students with disabilities requires a transformation of special education from a mainstreaming or integration concept to an inclusive concept.



# Toward Inclusion

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“Inclusive education is still a relatively new and controversial idea of educational awakening. Its revolutionary idea lies in the fact that - in contrast to the concept of segregation, firmly rooted in the mentality and the current practice that students with disabilities require a separate stream of education in special schools - inclusive education implies a fundamental reform of the current system of education. It involves allowing students with disabilities to learn with peers with the ordinary public schools, for valuing and supporting **all students** (and not only those with disabilities, but also the so-called difficult, the pathological, ethnic minority, etc.) and adapting schools to students with diverse needs, not vice versa.”

Firkowska-Mankiewicz, A. [2013]. *Inclusive Education: Road to the Future*,. Available: <http://www.abcd.edu.pl/>

# Summary

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- In Poland, inclusive education is seen as contingent, that is, students with disabilities are educated in mainstream schools if certain conditions are met.
- Special Education serves as an auxiliary and is applicable in those situations in which persons with disabilities cannot attend public schools.
- Special educators refer to types and degrees of disability, as well as other variables to determine the functioning of the student.
- Special education is designed for pupils with moderate and severe intellectual disabilities and those with profound and multiple disabilities – also those with mental illness and with aggressive behaviour.
- Most educators share the opinion, that the possibility of integration is also determined by other personal factors such as level of physical, emotional development, level of psychological resilience, cognitive abilities, motivation.

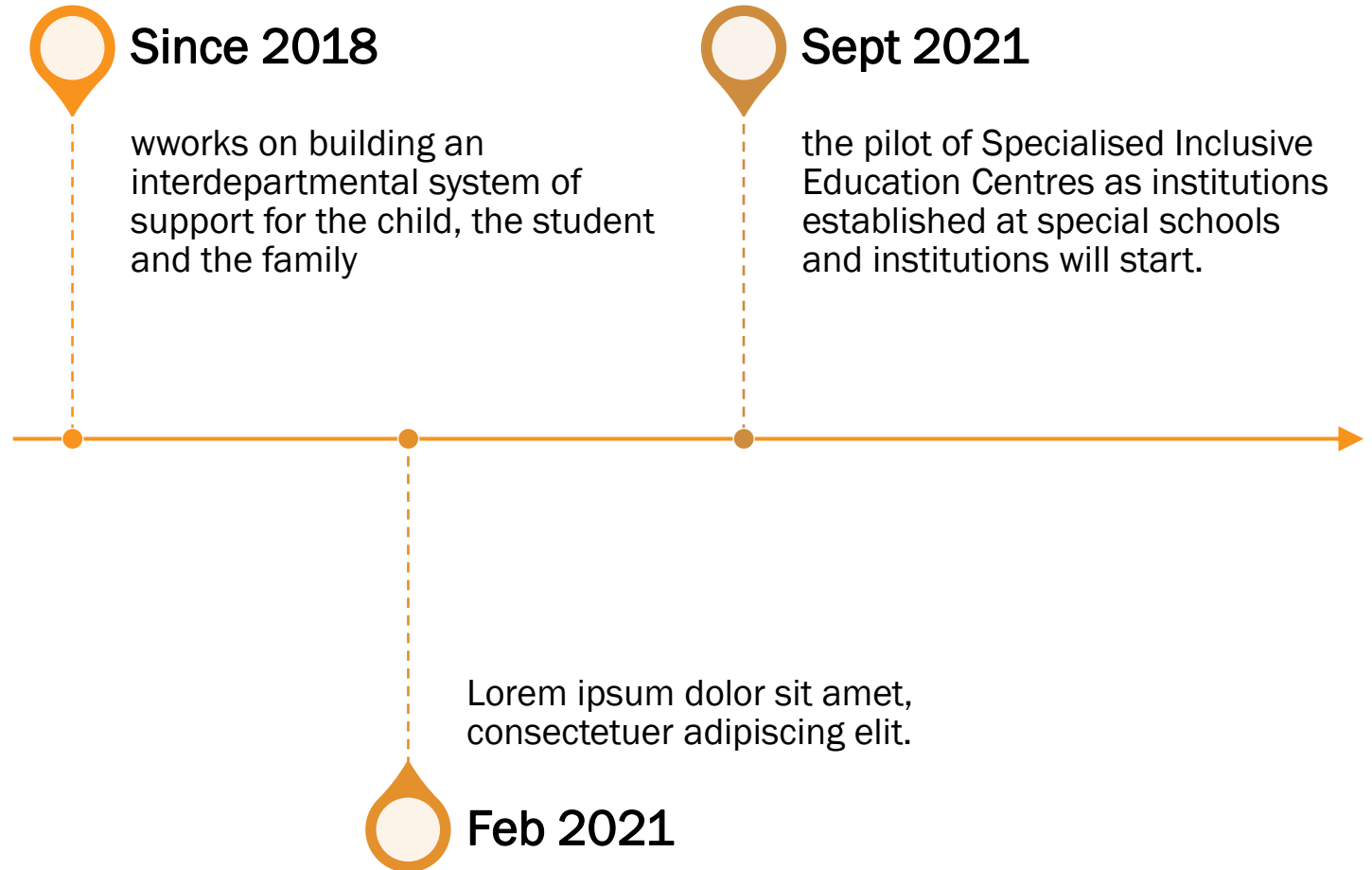
# Why do we need change?

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- Over 2 million pupils (approximately 34%) are covered by psychological and pedagogical assistance.
- Every year the number of pupils diagnosed with the need for special education is increasing every year (currently it is over 200,000, i.e. almost 4% of the school population)
- 80% of persons with autism examined by the Polish Supreme Audit Office (NIK) do not find employment.

**Conclusion:** the need to ensure better preparation for work and independent living.

# Education for All



# Education for all

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1. Strengthening the role of psychological-educational counselling centres and special schools.
2. Comprehensive assistance for each child and student - especially with disabilities - and their families.
3. A new, better formula of support developed by experts and practitioners.
4. Defined standards for the employment of a psychologist in schools and institutions,
5. A defined standard of employing a psychologist, special educator, vocational counsellor and speech therapist in schools and institutions.

# Specialised Inclusive Education Centres

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- Pilot activities from September 2021 - 16 centres across Poland, at special schools.
- Supporting schools in better organisation of inclusive education.
- Providing training and counselling for teachers and parents.
- Supporting teachers in choosing methods of working with students with special educational needs.



# Specialised Inclusive Education Centres

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- Providing specialised activities with children using resources of special schools.
- Supporting a pupil in obtaining adapted textbooks, learning materials and equipment adapted to their needs.
- For parents, opportunities for consultation, counselling, support groups and even therapeutic classes.



**THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION. LET'S STAY IN TOUCH.**

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