The Situation of Children and Young People at the Regional Level in Poland

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Analytical report on the situation of children and young people at the regional level

I. Introduction - information about the administrative structure of Poland

In the period between June 1, 1975 and December 31, 1998 Poland consisted of 49 voivodships. The basic units of territorial division were towns and gminas. Since January 1, 1999 a new, three-level system of administrative division has been implemented in Poland with voivodships¹, poviats and gminas as the three types of administrative units. According to the CSO data, on December 31, 2002 the administrative structure of the country was composed of 314 poviats, 66 towns with poviat status, 2478 gminas and 16 voivodships, varying significantly in their area, population number and density, level of urbanisation and industrialisation and number of towns. Voivodship is the basic unit of regional division (see Annex, the map). The analysis has been based on the statistics according to 16 voivodships.

II. Population and demographic changes

Between 1990 and 2003 the Polish population increased from 38183 thousand to 38191 thousand inhabitants (see Annex, chart 1).

An increase in the number of towns² was not accompanied by the urban population growth: 61.8% in 1990 and 61.6% in 2003. The last decade has been characterised by a reduced concentration of the population in agglomerations and the largest Polish cities, but at the same time population outflow from rural areas, particularly of eastern and north-eastern Poland. The highest population density can be noted in strongly urbanised areas – centres of large agglomerations (like that of Warsaw – over 3 thousand people per 1 km², upper Silesia - over 4000 people per 1 km² or Łódź – over 2.5 thousand people per 1 km²). The lowest population density is typical of mountain regions and densely wooded areas, such as Lubuskie voivodship (55 people per 1 km²) and Zachodniopomorskie voivodship (51 people per 1 km²).

¹ Most of the data are available for 1999-2002 or 2003. The information from the past period was calculated in a limited range only as for the new 16 voivodships.
² From 830 in 1991 to 884 in 2003.
In 2003\textsuperscript{3} the highest population decrease as compared with 1990 was noted for strongly urbanised and industrialised areas, and particularly in Łódzkie (by 3.9\%) and Śląskie (by 4.8\%) where the dominant industry was found to be in a crisis. The highest population growth (by 4\% or over) was observed in Małopolskie, Podkarpackie and Pomorskie voivodships.

Between 1990 and 2002 the number of concluded marriages\textsuperscript{4} dropped and the respective rate\textsuperscript{5} was reduced from 8.9 to 6.1 respectively. In 2003 the expected growth to 195.4 thousand concluded marriages was observed (see Annex, chart 2).\textsuperscript{6}

Between 1990 and 2002 the rates of concluded marriages changed in every voivodship but with different intensity: from Lubuskie voivodship (the highest decrease: from 9.4 to 5.4) to Mazowieckie (the lowest decrease: from 8.4 to 6.2). A significant decline was observed in the voivodships with relatively high urban population percentages, such as Lubuskie, Zachodniopomorskie or Warmińsko-Mazurskie. Strongly urbanised regions, such as Mazowieckie and Śląskie were an exception (a decrease by slightly more than 2). A lower decline in the number of concluded marriages was accounted for in voivodships with prevailing rural areas, namely, Małopolskie, Lubuskie and Podkarpackie.

In 2003 the number of live births per 1000 population amounted to 9.2‰. The birth-rate\textsuperscript{7} variation range was marked by the two voivodships, differing by the urbanisation level and population structure, namely, Pomorskie (10.7‰) and Opolskie (8.2‰). The birth-rate was higher in rural areas (10.3‰) than in urban areas (8.5‰) and the minimum values of this indicator (slightly over 8‰) are characteristic of urbanised areas and the largest city agglomerations in Śląskie, Dolnośląskie, Łódzkie and Zachodniopomorskie voivodships.

In 2003 the fertility rate was 35.2\textsuperscript{8} ranging from Podkarpackie (38.8) to Opolskie voivodship (29.7). The highest fertility and generation replacement are typical of farming-related voivodships, such as Małopolskie, Pomorskie or Warmińsko-Mazurskie, which can be in relation to a more favourable age structure of women and fertility patterns, different from those observed in urban areas. The minimum fertility rates are noted for urbanised areas: Śląskie, Dolnośląskie, Opolskie, Mazowieckie. The lowest fertility can be observed in large city agglomerations, particularly that of Wrocław – 26.7 and of Warsaw – 27.1 as well as Silesian conurbation.

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\textsuperscript{3} As of December 31.
\textsuperscript{4} The number of concluded marriages effects the number of children born, especially because a great majority of children (e.g. 85.6\% in 2002) are born in marriages.
\textsuperscript{5} Per 1000 inhabitants.
\textsuperscript{6} These changes can initiate a positive trend in this area. However, it should be noted that a decline in the number of concluded marriages can be determined by demographic changes, described as the second demographic transition.
\textsuperscript{7} Figures for 2001.
\textsuperscript{8} Live births per 1000 females at reproductive age.
In 1990 there was only one voivodship showing a negative natural increase of -0.1, while in 2002 there were six: Dolnośląskie, Lubelskie, Łódzkie, Mazowieckie, Opolskie, Podlaskie). Negative natural increase in Łódzkie voivodship deepened (from -0.1 to -3.2) and it significantly progressed in Mazowieckie (from 2.3 to -0.9). Drastic changes were noted in rural regions, such as Podkarpackie (from 7.8 in 1990 to 1.6 in 2002) and Lubelskie (from 5.5 to 0.8 respectively).

The mortality of children at the age of over 1 year, the young as well as young women and men is much higher in rural than in urban areas. Children from the age group 1-4 years\(^9\) are in a particularly unfavourable situation as compared with their peer group in towns.

Coordinated actions meant to provide better care over pregnant women, mothers and the newly-born brought out measurable effects in the period between 1990 and 2002, among others reduction of mortality at birth\(^10\) from 19.5% to 8.7% and infant mortality\(^11\) reduction by about 60% - from 19.3‰ to 7.5‰. The mortality of women caused by pregnancy, childbirth and the puerperium also dropped from 70 in 1990 to 19 in 2003\(^12\).

The highest in infant mortality decrease over the reported period was observed in Lubuskie (from 23.1‰ to 7.4‰), Opolskie (from 20.3‰ to 5.3‰), Kujawsko-Pomorskie (from 23.1‰ to 8.5‰) and Zachodniopomorskie (from 21.1‰ to 6.7‰). Infant mortality dropped significantly in the rural areas of Warmińsko-Mazurskie voivodship where the lowest rate of 5.1‰ was noted. The changes turned out to be the least favourable in Dolnośląskie voivodship with the highest rate in 2002 reaching 9.8‰ and one of the smallest improvements as compared with 1990.

The most favourable trends in the population of children under 5 were observed in such voivodships as Opolskiego – decrease by 82.5%, Podlaskie – by 79.0% and Warmińsko-Mazurskie - by 78.9%. Dolnośląskie voivodship did not reveal significant changes and showed the lowest mortality reduction in the population of children under 5, amounting in 2002 to 66.7% as compared with 1990. As for the age group of 5-19 years, the trends regarding the mortality rates varied in their intensity and direction from region to region.

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\(^9\) In older age groups the mortality among the urban population is higher then among the peer groups in rural areas.

\(^10\) Still births and infant (0-6 days) mortality per 1000 life and still births.

\(^11\) Infant mortality per 1000 life births.

\(^12\) Slow down of positive changes is observed. Percentage of low weight births is growing and positive trend in mortality-at birth and infant mortality is stopped, which may be a consequence of deteriorated care over mother and child.
In 2002 the number of families in Poland amounted to 10457.6, which marked an increase by over 230 thousand in relation to 1988. The prevailing type of the Polish family is that of a marriage with children. In 1988 such families constituted 61.8%, but the figure dropped to 56.0% in 2002 in favour of other family types, mainly lone mothers with children. Such trends are typical of urban areas first of all. The percentage of marriages with children proves to be higher in rural areas (60.8%) than in towns (53.2%). There is a significant variation in the number of children according to the region. In urban areas the model of a family with one child is predominant (52.1%), while in rural areas the respective figure is much lower (38.3%). Families with three or more children are more popular in the countryside (25.3%) as compared with towns (11.8%). The highest number of children per family is noted in voivodships with larger rural populations, namely: Lubelskie, Małopolskie, Podlaskie and Podkarpackie (the highest number of children per family – 2.0). The lowest number of children per family is typical of strongly urbanised regions: Dolnośląskie, Łódzkie and Śląskie (slightly above 1.6 children). The situation in Mazowieckie voivodship is a little different: after the new administrative division it was ”replenished” with rural-type poviats showing higher children-per-family indicators, so that its averages got improved reaching 1.74 children per family in 2002.

Significant changes occurred in the Polish population with regard to its size and structure by age. To a great extent, they concerned children and the young. The number of children and the young under 17 dropped and the respective ratio in the total population was reduced from 29.7% in 1990 to 21.9% in 2002.

This decline was noted for every voivodship and proved to be most severe (by over 9 percentage points) in Lubuskie and Warmińsko-Mazurskie, the latter still showing the highest proportion (24.1% in 2003). Relatively high ratios of children and the young aged 0-17 were reported for Dolnośląskie, Opolskie, Pomorskie, Śląskie and Zachodniopomorskie. The lowest figures are typical of highly industrialised regions: Dolnośląskie – 20.1%, Łódzkie – 18.9% (the lowest ratio in the country), Mazowieckie – 20.7% and Śląskie – 20.2%.

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13 With dependent children under 24.
14 Great changes are observed in the productive age groups (males = 18-65 years, females = 18-59 years). Their proportion grew in 2003 up to 62.9%. The highest increase concerned people at immobile age (≤ 44 years). The number and rate of people at retirement age (males = 65 years, females = 60 years) increased from slightly under 13% in 1990 to 15.2% in 2003.
III. Economic structure of the regions

Poland is a country showing significant economic differences between the regions, which is an indirect consequence of the times when Poland was under partition.\(^{15}\) These historically conditioned divergences between south-eastern part, on the one hand, and central and western on the other are still increased by the differences in the development (also in living conditions of the population) between rural and urban areas. In the nineties the differences deepened still when large though ineffective state farms (known as PGRs) got closed down. In the majority such farms were situated in north-western and north-eastern regions of Poland. Unfortunately, a great part of the post-PGR area has not been restructured so far. Large portions of land remain useless and the missing infrastructure provides a serious obstacle to investment.

1. Regional GDP

Since the nineties GDP (at current prices) has been growing, although in 2000-2002 an increase rate slowed down a little (see Annex, chart 4).

The nominal value of GDP and regional GDP in voivodships have been growing too. In 2002, as compared with 1995, the nominal value of GDP increased by 237%, but at the level of voivodship the growth rate varied significantly. The highest increase of GDP in the reported period was noted for Mazowieckie, Wielkopolskie and Podlaskie, while the lowest – in Opolskie, Śląskie, Lubuskie and Lubelskie (see Annex, table 1).

The GDP added value structure\(^{16}\) reflects an increasing share of the service sector and a decreasing one of farming as well as, to a lower degree, of building and industry. In 2003 building and industry produced 23% of added value. The highest contribution to gross added value under this item was provided by Śląskie and Opolskie, but it is also showing a decline since heavy industry in these regions requires restructuring. The lowest industry ratio in gross added value is observed in typically agricultural regions of south-eastern Poland where the development of the service sector is very slow.

\(^{15}\) From the 70’s of 18th century to 1918.
\(^{16}\) Data from CSO Database on Regions available at www.stat.gov.pl
Agriculture produces 3.0% of gross added value (in 1995 the respective figure was over twice as high) and the share of the regions showing the lowest level of industrial development (south-eastern Poland) is the highest. Polish farming (with the exception of Wielkopolskie voivodship) is characterised by over-employment, very small farm sizes, low effectiveness and low marketability of agricultural production.

The service sector provides over 2/3 of gross added value with further strongly increasing tendency. The highest rate was obtained in Zachodniopomorskie, Mazowieckie and Lubelskie, but it remains the lowest in Śląskie (typically industrial) voivodship. The dynamics of added value changes related to the service sector reveals particular significance of this sphere for Lubelskie and Warmińsko-Mazurskie voivodships. The development of services in these regions, known as typically agricultural areas, but advantaged with landscape and ecological qualities, seems very important for the improvement of their economic indicators (GDP growth, unemployment reduction etc.) and the living conditions of the population.\(^\text{17}\)

2. Per capita regional GDP

GDP increase results in higher per capita indicators (see Annex, chart 5).

The analysis of regional GDP over time reveals its significant differentiation which has remained unchanged for the last few years. In 2002 the range of differences in per capita GDP was 1:2.17 (see Annex, table 3). Since 1995 the scale of differences between the highest and lowest indicators has been increasing. The highest level of regional per capita GDP is noted in Mazowieckie voivodship\(^\text{18}\) (in 2002 31.1 thousand PLN, i.e. by 52% higher than the national average), while the lowest – in Lubelskie (in 2002 14.3 thousand PLN, i.e. by 30% lower than the national average. A relatively high GDP level is reported for Śląskie (111% of the national average), Dolnośląskie (104%) and Wielkopolskie (103%), where industry is found to be dominant over agriculture. The regions showing the lowest per capita GDP has been for years the five voivodships situated in the south east and north east of Poland. The position of these voivodships is determined by a lack of remarkable agglomerations which are usually characterised by better economic development\(^\text{19}\), but also predominance of small farms and high unemployment rates.

\(^{17}\) Database quoted above.

\(^{18}\) As was mentioned in the Report on regional policy, the level of the most developed economically Mazowieckie voivodship with per capita GDP at about 70% of EU average is approximately the same as that of four EU regions.

\(^{19}\) In Warsaw agglomeration (Mazowieckie voivodship), per capita GDP in 2002 was 3 times as high as the national average, in Poznań (Wielkopolskie) – twice and in Wrocław (Dolnośląskie) – 1.5 times as high.
IV. Living standard of the population by region

One of the major factors differentiating the situation of the Polish population with regard to access to employment and risk of unemployment and poverty is the place of residence with a distinction between urban and rural areas\textsuperscript{20}.

1. Between 1990 and 2004\textsuperscript{21} unemployment was growing and at the same time the number of the employed was in decline (from 16474 thousand in 1990 to 12803 thousand in 2002 and 13682 thousand in 2nd quarter of 2004). The employment rate among the population at the productive age decreased by up to over 20 percentage points.

In urban areas the employment rate is below the average and amounts to 43.1\% (in 2004), while in rural areas – 45.5\%. According to the employment and unemployment criterion it is possible to distinguish within Poland lack-of-employment voivodships, including Warmińsko-Mazurskie, Zachodniopomorskie, Śląskie, Dolnośląskie and Świętokrzyskie. Before transformation farming was predominant in these regions in the form of state farms. These regions were also traditionally recognised as poor (eastern Poland and Świętokrzyskie). Silesia, on the other hand, used to be one of the most urbanised and industrialised Polish regions before 1989 and now it is undergoing serious changes: restructuring of mining industry and steelworks. The best situation on the labour market is reported for Mazowieckie voivodship with the capital of the country as the centre and satellite, weekly urbanised areas of Siedleckie, Radomskie and Ciechanowskie.

2. Mazowieckie voivodship clearly remains in the leading position as far as the average wages and average incomes. If the national monthly gross average wages in 2002 (full-time employees) are adopted as 100, then Mazowieckie reaches 133\%, Pomorskie and Śląskie 103\%, while the remaining regions – less than 100\%; with the lowest figures for Podlaskie (86.5\%), Podkarpackie, Lubelskie, Łódzkie and Lubuskie (slightly over 87\%) and Kujawsko-Pomorskie (89.8\%).

The map of unemployment and low employment does not fully correspond with the distribution of average wages and incomes of households.

If the average income for the total number of households is 100, then the highest average incomes of households noted for 2001 was achieved in Mazowieckie – 127, Pomorskie – 106 and Śląskie – 105, while the lowest in Lubelskie - 82, Podkarpackie – 82, Świętokrzyskie – 87 and Łódzkie – 88\textsuperscript{22} (see Annex, table A). So the differentiation of regions by income is in agreement with that by wages.

\textsuperscript{20} Because of changes in the administrative division of Poland some of the comparable data on households’ condition by region are unavailable.
\textsuperscript{21} 2nd quarter of the year.
\textsuperscript{22} “Living conditions of the population in 2001”, GUS.
3. The territorial layout of unemployment and low employment is strongly related to the incidence of poverty. The unemployment syndrome in Poland involves unemployment combined with low education of the head of household (typical of the rural population but not only), many children in the family, class of locality (small towns and rural areas), particularly in the regions affected by structural unemployment.\(^23\)

As a rule, in rural areas the poverty rate measured with the relative poverty line or subsistence minimum is over twice as high as in urban areas. In 2003 18% of the population in rural areas and 7.5% in urban areas, 17.5% of farmers and 8.6% of employees lived below the subsistence minimum. Changes observed in the range of poverty were parallel to those in unemployment rates: the increase in unemployment brought about the increase in poverty rates. The map of poverty shows a correlation between poverty rates and family income, therefore, the highest poverty rates measured with the use of various poverty lines are reported among the rural population: 2/3 of the poor live in rural areas.

Regional differences between poverty rates are significant and they changed a lot in the time of transition. The analysis of poverty in macro-regions by cause indicates that:

- the greatest effect of unemployment as a poverty generating factor is noted in Warmińsko-Mazurskie, Lubelskie and Dolnośląskie voivodships,
- the greatest effect of a demographic factor on poverty – the number of children in the family is observed in Podkarpackie.

4. One of the important features for the analysis of living conditions of the population is a dwelling condition described by dwelling area and sanitary and technical equipment.\(^24\) As compared with 1988 the average dwelling area increased by 9.5 m. ???(chyba muszą być kwadratowe) The largest dwelling area per person is reported for Opolskie, Wielkopolskie and Podlaskie voivodships, while the smallest – in Warmińsko-Mazurskie and Kujawsko-Pomorskie (see Annex, table A). The dwelling density (number of persons per 1 room) which seems to be the best measure of the dwelling conditions, is higher in rural areas (in 1988 – 1.11, in 2002 – 1.95) than in towns (0.97 and 0.84 respectively). The lowest density is noted in Opolskie (0.83), Śląskie and Podlaskie (0.84), Dolnośląskie (0.85), while the highest – in Podkarpackie (0.96), Małopolskie and Świętokrzyskie (0.94).

\(^{23}\) „Households’ condition in 2003”, CSO.  
\(^{24}\) Data from National Census 2002 which allow for the comparability of figures for 1988 and 2002 by voivodship in the new administrative division.
Since 1988 dwelling equipment with installations has improved a lot. The basic set of installations, including running water, toilet, bathroom, central heating and gas, can be found in every second dwelling. In 4.3% of dwellings there is no running water and in 3.9% - no installations at all. The highest level of equipment with technical and sanitary installations is reported for urban areas of Podkarpackie, Mazowieckie, Małopolskie and Zachodniopomorskie voivodships, while the worst situation can be noted in Podlaskie, Łódzkie and Wielkopolskie. In general, there is no correlation between the dwelling conditions and the map of poverty or incomes of the population.

5. One of the significant factors of living conditions is equipment with durable goods, including cars. In the period between 1990 and 2003 a remarkable progress was been noted in this area: the number of cars per 100 households increased from 26 to 4925. This indicator, however, does not correlated with public road density (length). In 1996 the highest density of hard surface public roads was noted in Katowickie, Kieleckie, Opolskie and Poznańskie, and the lowest in Łódzkie, Chelmnskie and Przemyskie. In 1990-2002 the public road network (both in and outside towns) increased from 218000 km to 250000 km.

6. The quality of life is also effected by access to cultural institutions, such as libraries and theatres. Before and during the transition period libraries functioned as the centres of cultural life in rural areas. In the whole reported period there were more libraries (including library branches and units) in the country than in towns. In 1990 there were over 10000 libraries and 17500 library units of which 6900 libraries and 15000 library units were situated in rural areas. However, as a result of commercialisation of social services and high costs of maintenance the number of libraries dropped to 10700 in 2002 (7200 in rural areas and 3500 in towns). In 2002 the highest numbers of libraries in rural areas were reported for Mazowieckie, Wielkopolskie, Podkarpackie and Lubelskie voivodships, while the lowest – for Lubuskie, Opolskie, Podlaskie and Pomorskie (see Annex, table 6). As for urban libraries the highest numbers can be noted for the towns of Mazowieckie region (525) and Śląsk (515).26

Theatres and music institutions have always been present only in large cities with long cultural tradition. Their number and location remains basically unchanged: in 1991 - 170, in 1996 - 181, in 2000 - 187, in 2002 - 18027. However, the number of spectators in the theatres has been in decline (11411 thousand in 1991, 10197 thousand in 1996, 10533 thousand in 2000, 9849.8 thousand in 2002), which might have been caused by relatively high and still growing ticket prices (on average between 20 and 60 PLN) (see Annex, table 6).

25 „Households’ condition in 2003”, CSO.
26 „Culture in 2002”, CSO.
27 As above and Statistical Yearbook 2003, CSO.
7. In the transition period the number of crimes revealed, particularly assaults with the use of arm, rose significantly. Between 1990 and 2002 the number of crimes stated by completed preparatory court procedures increased from 883.3 thousand (in 1991 - 866 thousand, of which 723.2 thousand in towns and 142.8 thousand in rural areas, in 1995 - 974.9 thousand, in 2000 - 1266.9 thousand) to 1404.2 thousand, of which 1129.8 thousand in towns. Among the regions at the highest risk of crime it is possible to distinguish Mazowieckie with the capital of Poland, Pomorskie and Śląskie. In 1996 the highest number of crimes stated by completed preparatory court procedures by type of crime per 1000 population were reported for the former capital voivodship and north-eastern regions. The number of crimes in urban areas is several times as high as in the country. In 1996 the highest number of crimes (in absolute numbers) was noted for the towns of Warszawskie and Katowickie voivodships, while for rural areas – in Łódzkie and Elbląskie.

V. Education – differentiation by region

1. In Poland the access of children to education varies, depending on the level of education. Great differences are also determined by the class of locality – urban/rural areas.

2. The first stage of education takes place in kindergartens which provide care and education for children at the age of 3-6 years. From the school year 2004/2005 compulsory education covers children from the sixth, and not 7th as before, year of age. Less than half of the children population at the preschool age attend kindergartens: 389 per 1000 children in the age group 3-6 years (of which 588 in urban areas and 170 in rural areas). Poland is not only characterised by a low enrolment rate in kindergartens as compared with other countries, but also by a significant difference between the countryside and towns, which still increased during the transition. The difference in children’s access to kindergartens between urban and rural areas was in 1990 2.5 times, but in 2000 as high as 3.4 times.

On a national scale in the age group 3-6 years the highest above the average rate of children in kindergartens per 1000 was noted for Opolskie, Śląskie, Wielkopolskie, Mazowieckie, Łódzkie, Dolnośląskie and Lubuskie voivodships. The lowest enrolment was observed in Świętokrzyskie, Warmińsko-Mazurskie, Lubelskie, Podkarpackie, Podlaskie and Kujawsko-Pomorskie (see Annex, table A).

28 Statistical Yearbook 2003, CSO.
29 Statistical Yearbook of Voivodships 1996.
The highest density of kindergartens per 1000 children was achieved by Świętokrzyskie and the lowest – Śląskie voivodship. The best conditions measured by the number of teachers per 1000 children in kindergartens are provided in Opolskie, Śląskie, Mazowieckie and Łódzkie. Relatively difficult conditions are met in Pomorskie, Zachodniopomorskie, Warmińsko-Mazurskie and Kujawsko-Pomorskie voivodships (see Annex, table 7).

3. The compulsory education duty in primary schools is fulfilled by 97.8% of children and it is not fulfilled by 2.2%. It is interesting to notice that the relatively highest percentage of children not attending school (in relation to the number of pupils) could be identified in Opolskie and Warmińsko-Mazurskie, while the lowest – in Świętokrzyskie, Lubelskie and Wielkopolskie.

Accessibility of education determined by the number of schools per 1000 pupils is quite diversified by region: the best being in Świętokrzyskie, Podkarpackie, more difficult - in Pomorskie, Zachodniopomorskie, Śląskie and Dolnośląskie. The number of teachers per 1000 pupils proves to be the highest in Lubelskie, Podkarpackie, Opolskie and Świętokrzyskie voivodships.

The analysis shows that the best access to education is observed in Świętokrzyskie and Lubelskie voivodships, where compulsory education is also complied with at the highest rate (see Annex, table 8).

4. Lower secondary schools are attended by 98.8% of children at the age of 13-15 years. Some 1.2% of children from this age group do not continue education.

Lower secondary schools have functioned in Poland for a few years only (since the school year 1999/2000). The network of lower secondary schools is very small: 3.5 schools per 1000 pupils (in the case of primary schools - 5 schools per 1000 pupils) with the highest density in Małopolska and Mazowsze and the lowest in Opolskie and Dolnośląskie. The number of teachers per 1000 lower secondary pupils is low too, although the rates appear more favourable than those concerning school density. Similarly, they are the highest in Mazowsze and Małopolska and the lowest in Warmińsko-Mazurskie, Zachodniopomorskie and Pomorskie voivodships (see Annex, table 9).

5. Between 1990 and 2002 the number of pupils continuing education in secondary schools was increasing systematically. In the reported period the percentage of primary school graduates admitted to secondary schools rose from 94.3% to about 98%. Significant changes occurred in the structure of the young enrolled in secondary schools by type of school: while in 1990 71.2% of pupils attended technical and vocational schools and 22.8% general education secondary schools, in 2001 the respective figures were 48.9% and 49.8%.
The access to secondary schools by place of residence (class of locality) indicates that among first-form pupils of general education secondary schools 22.3% came from rural areas, but the respective proportion for most urbanised areas was much lower – just a few per cent, while in agricultural voivodships (eastern part of Poland) – amounting to some 40% or more.

The proportion of pupils from rural areas in the first-form pupils population of secondary technical and basic vocational schools is varied too.

6. The greatest changes in access to education were observed at a higher education level. Between 1990 and 2002 the net enrolment rate among the young from the age group 19-24 years rose from 9.8% to 31% and the number of students increased 4.5 times.

Almost 70% of students are enrolled in state-run public higher schools which offer both regular, daily forms of study (tuition free) and other forms provided against payment. All the courses in non-public higher schools are paid for.\textsuperscript{30} Out of the total of 365 higher schools the highest numbers can be found in Mazowieckie, Śląskie, Wielkopolskie, Małopolskie and Dolnośląskie. The highest concentration of higher schools and academic teachers occurs in the capitals of voivodships which are usually the cities of long – many years’ or a few centuries’ - university tradition. In the transition period, since 1995, many non-public higher vocational schools were established in medium size towns. Many public universities and academies also set up their branches in the field. That is why the greatest number of students is reported in Mazowieckie, Śląskie, Małopolskie, Wielkopolskie, Dolnośląskie and Łódzkie voivodships (see Annex, table 10).

7. In the period of transition it was possible to note the decentralisation of the education system (which consists in taking over by the local authorities from the state kindergartens, primary and secondary schools) and the development of non-public schools at all levels, providing education against payment (see Annex, table 11). The proportion of pupils in non-public schools at primary, lower secondary and secondary level is just marginal, but in post-secondary and higher schools becoming quite significant. The majority of non-public schools are situated in Mazowieckie voivodship with the concentration of primary, lower secondary and general education secondary schools with paid tuition. The number of non-public vocational secondary schools is much lower both on a national and regional scale, but the highest incidence occurs in Mazowieckie. Non-public post-secondary schools are concentrated in Wielkopolskie, Śląskie, Mazowieckie, Małopolskie and Łódzkie. In general, the highest number of exclusive non-public schools can be found in Mazowieckie voivodship with the capital of Poland as the centre, i.e. in the richest region of the country.

\textsuperscript{30} Data on students’ origin by parents’ place of residence (urban/rural areas, voivodship) unavailable.
8. Because of social or biological orphanhood about 1% of children at the age of 0-17 are brought up in institutions. In 96% of cases the institutional care over children is caused by social and only 4% - by biological orphanhood.

In the period 1990-2003 the number of children under 17 per 1000 brought up outside natural families, i.e. in foster families or institutions rose (see Annex, table 12).

With the growing number of children in foster families that in welfare institutions is falling. Most children cared for by institutions live in Mazowieckie (8.4 thousand), Śląskie (5.7 thousand) and Dolnośląskie (5.8 thousand), while the smallest numbers are reported for Opolskie (1.2 thousand), Podlaskie (1.1 thousand), Lubuskie (1.7 thousand) and Świętokrzyskie (1.9 thousand). Between 2001 and 2003 the number of children in institutions dropped in every voivodship.

About 31% of children are admitted in welfare institutions because of poverty, but poverty is not the main cause of social orphanhood. Drastically inappropriate care of children provided by their parents results mainly from alcoholism, conflicts and violence in the family, the factors frequently related to poverty.

VI. Health care

One of the factors effecting the health condition of the population, including children, is the region and class of locality (rural/urban areas). In these areas children from the age group 1-4 years are the most vulnerable group: they are more seldom hospitalised than their peers from the cities which may be caused by insufficient access to hospital care. There are also significant differences in the quality of health services provided, although this is undergoing certain changes.

Measures taken in the nineties of 20th century to improve care over pregnant women, mothers and infants have brought about positive results. Among others the prematurity rate dropped from 8.4% in 1990 to 5.7% in 200. However, the latest statistics show a slow-down in the favourable trends or even their uphold, e.g. an increase of low weight births or lack of further infant mortality reduction which might result from the deterioration of care over mother and child in Poland.

31 Kolankiewicz M., Szanse i zagrożenia opieki instytucjonalnej nad dziećmi (Opportunities and risks of institutional care of children), Instytut Spraw Publicznych 2004.
32 According to data from the Ministry of Health in 2004 CMJ accreditation standards were admitted to 62 establishments in the country, many of which were situated in voivodships with low hospital bed indicators – such as Świętokrzyskie, Podkarpackie or Warmińsko-Mazurskie
33 Since 2001 financing has been reduced drastically and since 2002 some important national health promotion programs, also those on care of mother and child, have been stopped.
As compared with 1990, in 1999 an increase was noted in the number of hospitalised children and the young, particularly in the age group 1-4 years, but at the same time the time of hospitalisation of patients aged 1-19 years was reduced from 12 to 7 days. Some changes were noted in the cause of hospitalisation of children and the young. From the point of view of public health it is important to point out to a continuing decline in the incidence of infectious and viral diseases, such as hepatitis, however, the reports for 2000 showing a higher incidence of pertussis and diarrhoea among children under 2 as well as food poisonings and tuberculosis in the age group 0-14 cause anxiety.

Prophylactic vaccinations of children under 3 have remained at the same level for many years, so that the percentage of children receiving basic vaccinations reaches over 90%. In 1999 94.5% and in 2003 94.7% of the total population of children under 3 were vaccinated with DPT. Regional differences here are just insignificant (tenths of the percentage point).

During the last decade the number of hospitals in Poland rose by 90 (from 677 in 1990 to 767 in 2003). In spite of this the number of hospital beds dropped from 218 thousand in 1990 to 186 thousand in 2003. The respective rate dropped respectively from 55.4 in 1995 to 49.1 in 2003. Lower numbers of hospital beds are noted in weekly urbanised areas: Kujawsko-Pomorskie, Podkarpackie, Warmińsko-Mazurskie. In 2003, very much like in 1999, the hospital bed rate in these regions did not exceed 45.0, while the highest figure reported for Śląskie voivodship reached 62.0. Between 1990 and 2003 the number of hospital beds dropped sharply by 32.4 percentage points in Pomorskie voivodship and also in Małopolskie (by 4.7), Opolskie (by 5.2) and Dolnośląskie (7.0).

With the total number of hospital beds, also that at paediatric wards is in decline (21 thousand in 1990 as compared with 10 thousand in 2003). The highest number (more than 1000) of hospital beds for children is still noted in Mazowieckie, Śląskie and Wielkopolskie voivodships.

At the same time the number of doctors is growing. Up to 1995 there were over 21 doctors per 10 thousand inhabitants, while in 2003 – 32.1. Differences between urban and rural areas are remarkable. The highest indicators are reported for strongly urbanised areas. The greatest number of doctors is reported for Mazowieckie voivodship (42.5 in 2003 in spite of a decline by 8.5 as compared with 2000), Śląskie and Pomorskie (34.5). The lowest figures

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34 As of December 31. Lack of comparable data allows for the analysis in the period of 1999-2003 only. The figures from 1990 and 1995 have been quoted for illustration.
35 Per 10000 population.
36 High numbers of hospital beds in Śląskie voivodship have an effect on the functioning of the special health care establishments, profiled at occupational diseases typical of mining industry environment.
37 This situation is determined by a special clinic for children known as Centrum Zdrowia Dziecka (Child Health Centre) situated in the agglomeration of Warsaw.
(slightly over 20 doctors) are reported for Podkarpackie voivodship. This is related to the number of healthcare establishments in particular voivodships. Between 2000 and 2003 the number of doctors in Łódzkie voivodship dropped drastically – by over 15.2. Unfavourable changes were also noted in Lubelskie – by 5.2 doctors per 10 thousand inhabitants.

The proportion of paediatricians in the population of specialist doctors is in decline (from 15.8% in 1990 to 7.9% in 2002). In 2003 the extreme rates were found in Kujawsko-Pomorskie – 13.1% and Opolskie – 6.9% (the highest decline).

In the reported period a similar trend was noted for gynaecologist-obstetricians (a decline from 9.5% in 1990 to slightly over 8% in 1995). Since 1995 the figures have not changed much. Regional differentiation is not significant and proportions within this medical specialisation do not drop by more than 1 percentage point.

The numbers of midwives reveal an unfavourable falling tendency (from over 24 thousand in 1996 to over 21 thousand in 2003). The dynamics of changes between 1996 and 2003 was 89.6%. Below the national average are: Dolnośląskie – 81.4%; Lubuskie – 85.4%; Łódzkie – 84.5%; Opolskie – 86.1%; Podkarpackie – 88.2%; Podlaskie – 78.7%; Świętokrzyskie – 86.8%.

VII. Finance

The incomes of the local governments at the voivodship level consist of: own incomes39 of voivodships, subsidies from the state budget40, subsidies from purpose funds41, subventions from the state budget42 and non-budgetary resources assigned to own tasks of voivodships. According to the financial law regional governments cannot create their own tax policy and thus they cannot dispose of any income from taxation. In general, the amounts at the disposal of regional budgets are increasing gradually (a break-down was noted in 2001-2001 as a consequence of an economic decline in the country). In relation to 1999 the highest growth of income was noted in Pomorskie and Warmińsko-Mazurskie voivodships and the lowest – in Dolnośląskie, which after the 2002 crisis did not return to the income level of 2000. Low income dynamics is also characteristic of Lubuskie, Podlaskie, Podkarpackie and Śląskie (see Annex, table 14).

39 Consisting of revenue from share in taxes being the state budget income (income tax from individual and legal persons) and income from own assets (leasing, hiring and other contracts).
40 For both tasks commissioned by government administration and own tasks performed at a regional level according to the law.
41 From Farming Land Protection Fund and Fund on Management of Geodetic and Cartographic Resources.
42 Including subvention on education.
One of the important items of the regional budgets is provided by the so called educational subvention from the state budget, which in 2003 amounted to about 10% of the local budget (see Annex, table 15). The amount granted is proportionate to the number of pupils attending schools on the territory of a voivodship. Thus it cannot be perceived as a measure of support for children from the region, because it happens frequently that children enrolled in schools of a given voivodship come from different voivodships. The greatest share of the subvention in the regional budget is noted for Łódzkie voivodship, where the network of schools is well-developed. The amount of the subvention is also found to be remarkable in Podkarpackie voivodship, while the lowest – in Świętokrzyskie, which is clearly in relation to a low number of pupils and education establishments in this region (compare V).

The analysis of regional budgets indicates that the highest per capita expenditure (in 2003) was reported in Lubuskie, Lubelskie and Warmińsko-Mazurskie, i.e. the voivodships with relatively low incomes. The respective figure for Łódzkie is the lowest (see Annex, table 16). The expenditures on healthcare in this region are among the lowest in the country, although the health service accessibility indicators are quite satisfactory (compare VI). The per capita expenditure, especially on education was also relatively low in Mazowieckie voivodship, which, in view of rather high own incomes of the region, confirms that there are other priorities in the regional budget policy.

Relatively large amounts are spent on education in the regions with low per capita GDP and own incomes (e.g. in Świętokrzyskie, Podlaskie, Lubelskie or Opolskie). This is to a great extent possible due to the state budget subvention on education. On the other hand, the local governments of the regions characterised by low living standards of the population cover a significant part of costs of running education establishments and the funding comes from other resources, such as own incomes, purpose funds, particularly EU funds.

It should be pointed out that although in total per capita expenditure in all voivodships rose as compared with 1999, the real expenditure on education and healthcare in the majority of voivodships dropped. Such voivodships as Dolnośląskie, Małopolskie and Świętokrzyskie cause anxiety. With a relatively low support from the central budget the local authorities in these regions allocate just small amounts of their resources to education.

43 It is not possible to estimate the expenditure on healthcare from the point of view of priorities in particular regions because the principles of financing from the state and local budgets have been changing significantly during the last 5-6 years.
44 Report on regional policy, p. 129 and next
45 Expenditure priorities in these regions include first of all economic development and restructuring of the region.
VII. Regional policy of the government

The Polish government has developed its regional policy for many years. Such a policy is also required by EU from its members. The strategic goal of the policy of a country is to make the regions competitive and to combat marginalisation of certain areas so as to support long-wave economic development of the country, its economic, social and territorial integrity and integration with the European Union.46

Except for strictly economic priorities, the strategy also involves some activities in the social area and among others:

- the development of human resources – with the postulate of the activity towards the development of the regional economic potential, among others by providing better access to education
- support for the territories requiring activation and those at the risk of marginalisation – mainly those characterised by high structural unemployment and low incomes of the population, e.g. for the areas of former state farms, those with small size, ineffective farms or affected by the collapse of industry. Thus it is recommendable to develop tourism in the regions of northern, north-eastern and eastern Poland (such voivodships as Pomorskie, Warmińsko-Mazurskie, Podlaskie, Podkarpackie or Lubelskie).

Summary. Conclusions

I. One of the main factors differentiating voivodships with respect to their demographic situation is the degree of urbanisation and industrialisation of the region. The least advantageous changes in the demographic features are typical of the voivodships of central and western Poland. The smaller population of children and lower birth-rates with a different fertility pattern are typical of Dolnośląskie, Łódzkie, Mazowieckie and Śląskie voivodships, and vice versa: there are higher proportions of children and higher birth-rates in the voivodships with lower levels of urbanisation and higher numbers of rural population: Podkarpackie and Warmińsko-Mazurskie. These trends are showing some variation in the demographic analysis of indicators relating to mortality. Higher numbers of healthcare establishments, higher per capita rates of medical staff and better medical equipment are the reason why mortality rates among children and infants are no longer directly dependent on the economic development of the region.

46 As above, p. 41-56.
II. The analysis of the majority of factors and indicators determining the economic condition of particular voivodships clearly reveals the most favourable position of Mazowieckie voivodship, situated in the centre of the country with the capital as the strongest metropolis. The other extreme is the so called “eastern wall”, including the voivodships of south-eastern Poland, where farming is a dominant sector showing a low degree of market rule implementation. Average level indicators of economic development can be found first of all in western and south-western Polish voivodships. The above analysis of economic indicators confirms that in spite of the active restructuring policy of the country and a long time distance, there is still a historically determined economic situation of the regions and regional differences in this area.

It is worth mentioning that per capita GDP in the Polish voivodships with the lowest economic development level is estimated at 30-35% of the EU average and this figure is lower than the indicator adopted for the poorest regions of the EU countries (37-44%), which clearly illustrates the economic situation of these Polish regions.

III. Mazowieckie voivodship with the capital of Poland turns out to be the region with the best employment figures. the lowest unemployment, the highest income of the population, the highest wages and the lowest poverty rates.

The regions showing low employment figures accompanied by high unemployment rates are those in the north east (Warmińsko-Mazurskie) and north west of Poland (Zachodniopomorskie) as well as in Silesia (Śląskie and Dolnośląskie).

The map of regional differentiation of incomes, poverty or wages distribution according to regions does not overlap with that of dwelling conditions. The best situation (with respect to dwelling area, density and equipment) is reported for voivodships in the south of Poland.

One of the important factors effecting the living conditions is the class of locality (classified into rural and urban areas). Less urbanised regions with the prevalence of rural areas and farming as an economic activity are relatively poorer. They are situated in eastern Poland (Warmińsko-Mazurskie, Podlaskie, Lubelskie, Podkarpackie).

IV. The period of 1990-2003 was marked by a decline in the quality of life in the aspects of culture (lower accessibility to public libraries and theatres) and public security (increased criminality). The regions of Mazowsze and Śląsk continue to offer the best access to cultural goods, but they are marked by the highest crime rates.
One of the factors differentiating access to education is class of locality: urban/rural area. This is especially obvious in the situation of kindergartens. The most difficult conditions in education (expressed by the number of teachers and schools per pupil) is noted in Warmińsko-Mazurskie, Pomorskie and Zachodniopomorskie voivodships, and the best conditions are reported for the regions of Małopolska and Mazowsze. It is also in Mazowsze where the greatest number of exclusive non-public schools at all levels was established, which is in correlation with the highest average per capita incomes (by voivodship) and wages of the population.

Mazowsze and Śląsk are also the regions of the highest concentration of social orphanhood. It is there that the greatest number of children are brought up outside their natural families – in welfare institutions.

V. As for the healthcare area, the voivodships with the major Polish agglomerations, i.e. Łódzka, Dolnośląska, Warszawska and Śląska conurbation are characterised by a better access to health services, including specialist care. They also employ more specialist doctors to care for children. The situation is different in the voivodships at a lower level of urbanisation. Smaller numbers of doctors and lower density of healthcare establishments, especially hospitals and special wards, do not ensure sufficient accessibility of medical services. It happens frequently that the quality of medical services is not directly dependent on the location of a given healthcare unit in the region. Such factors as financial streams and the managerial staff’s competence to use subsidiary funds are of importance too.\(^{47}\)

VI. The finances of regional governments are characterised by the rigid system of income and expenditure. Own incomes of voivodships, providing the widest possibility to create their regional policy (among others effecting the living conditions and the level of satisfaction of needs), are insufficient. The expenditure on education, to a high degree addressed to the young generation, do not depend on the region’s well-being, but on the paths of regional development and priorities adopted by the local authorities.

The central government has designed its regional policy and - more precisely – a strategy, which has brough about too general provisions of the objectives and development trends. The idea to combat marginalisation of regions has not been translated in this strategy into adequately planned methods of action and principles of their financing.

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\(^{47}\) The equipment of special healthcare establishments, also in rural areas, is highly contributed to by The Great Orchestra of Christmas Charity. Large amounts of money collected every year are spent on high quality medical equipment for children from various age groups.