



Ministry of National Education
Republic of Poland

Poland's approach to evidence-based education policy

Empowering Insights: Enhancing Education, Employment and Youth Guarantee Monitoring

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Experience-based approach

My experience before Poland's accession to the EU in 2004:

- member of the **EU Standing Group on Indicators and Benchmarks** (since 2002)
- member of the **OECD/PISA Governing Board** (since 2002)
- first report to the EU on the implementation of the **LLL strategy elements** (2003)

After accession:

- first **national administrative database in education** (System Informacji Oświatowej, SIO 2005)
- participation in the **EU Open Method of Coordination** (good examples of LLL practices)
- first **LLL national strategy** (2013)

In recent years:

- member of the **group of national coordinators** of the European agenda for adult learning
- non-formal adult education, particularly in the **workplace** and in **communities**
- initiating changes in **monitoring of non-formal adult education**

Evidence-based or well-informed policy-making?

In the strict sense of evidence-based policy and practice they should be based on **rigorously established objective evidence**, preferably on randomized controlled trials, rather than on tradition, common sense, ideology, personal intuitions and judgments

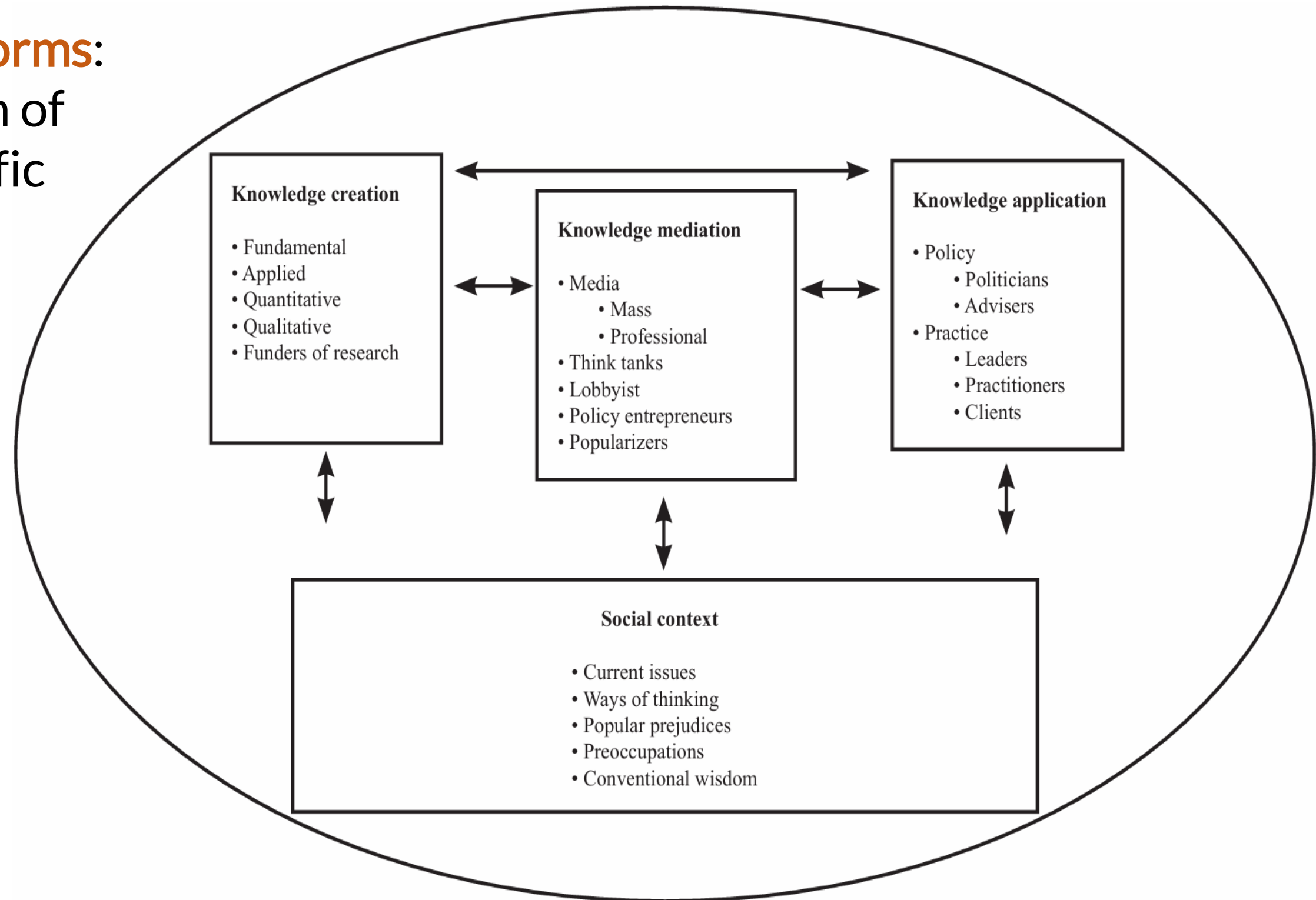
Let's take the **example of the Netherlands**: while the Dutch ministry for education promotes the use of such approach, researchers seem reluctant; one of them (from Radboud University Nijmegen) proves that such an approach **is not implemented** in Dutch education <https://doi.org/10.59400/fes3108>

Despite this, the European Commission's 2007 Staff Working Document „Towards more knowledge-based policy and practice in education and training” proposes an approach that is **closer to reality in many EU countries**, including Poland

Evidence-based policy in the EU (EC SWD 2007)

Evidence can take **many forms**:
experience and evaluation of
practice, results of scientific
analyses, quantitative and
qualitative research,
development of
statistics and indicators

Such evidence is
only one of the factors
contributing to decision-
making and will, in any
case, always be mediated
through complex social
and political processes



Evidence-based policy in Europe

According to 2017 Eurydice report „Support Mechanisms for Evidence-based Policy-Making in Education”, there is a wide understanding in Europe of **what constitutes evidence**:

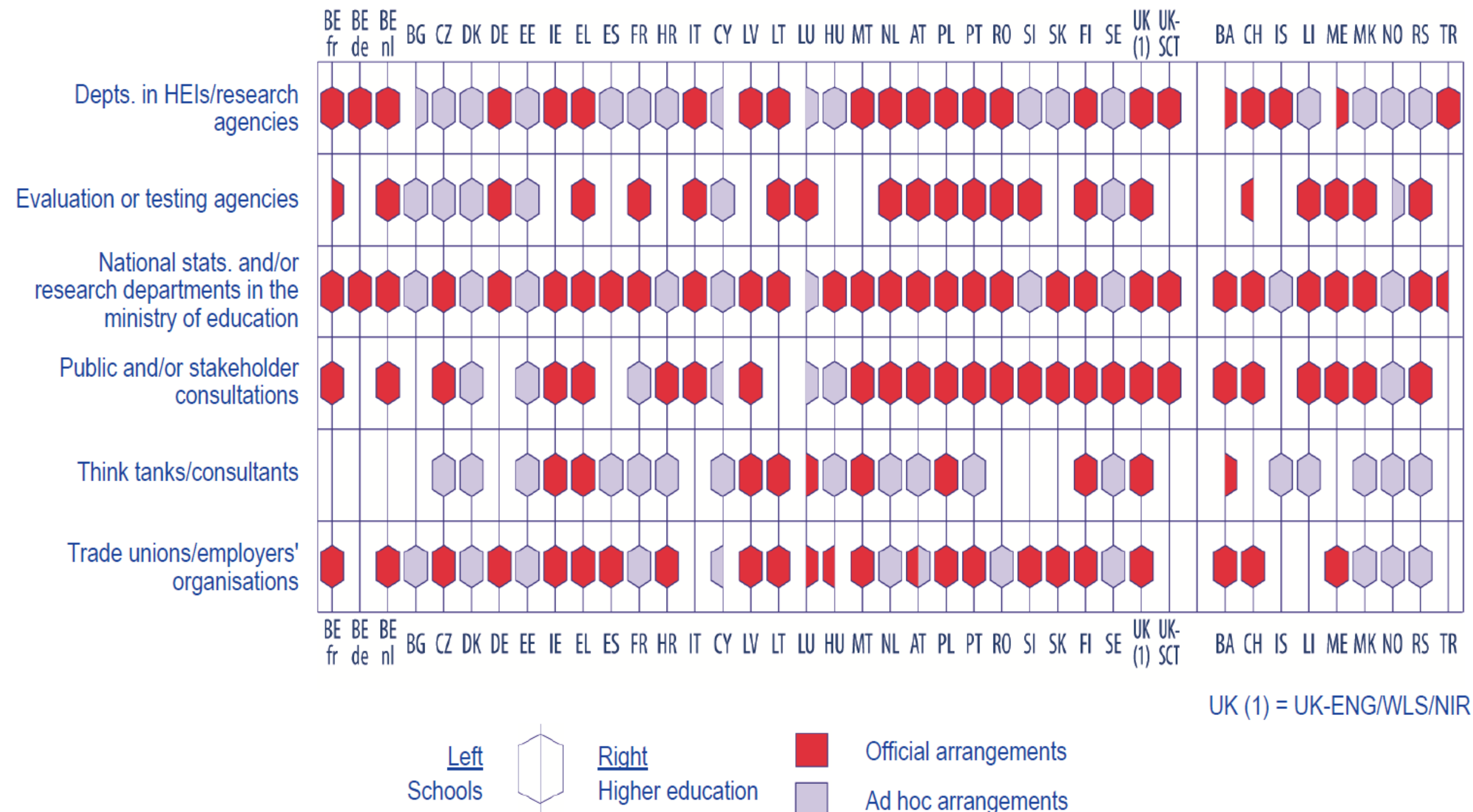
- it considers **information, research and statistics** from government bodies (including data from **national administrative databases**), higher education institutions, as well as other organisations
- **consultations with experts and stakeholders** which aim to produce evidence through dialogue for the policy-making process

Eurydice report identify:

- actors and institutions involved in **knowledge creation**, e.g. departments in higher education institutions and statistics offices
- **knowledge mediation**, e.g. databases, advisory groups and knowledge brokers
- **knowledge application** - recent examples of using evidence to support policy reform

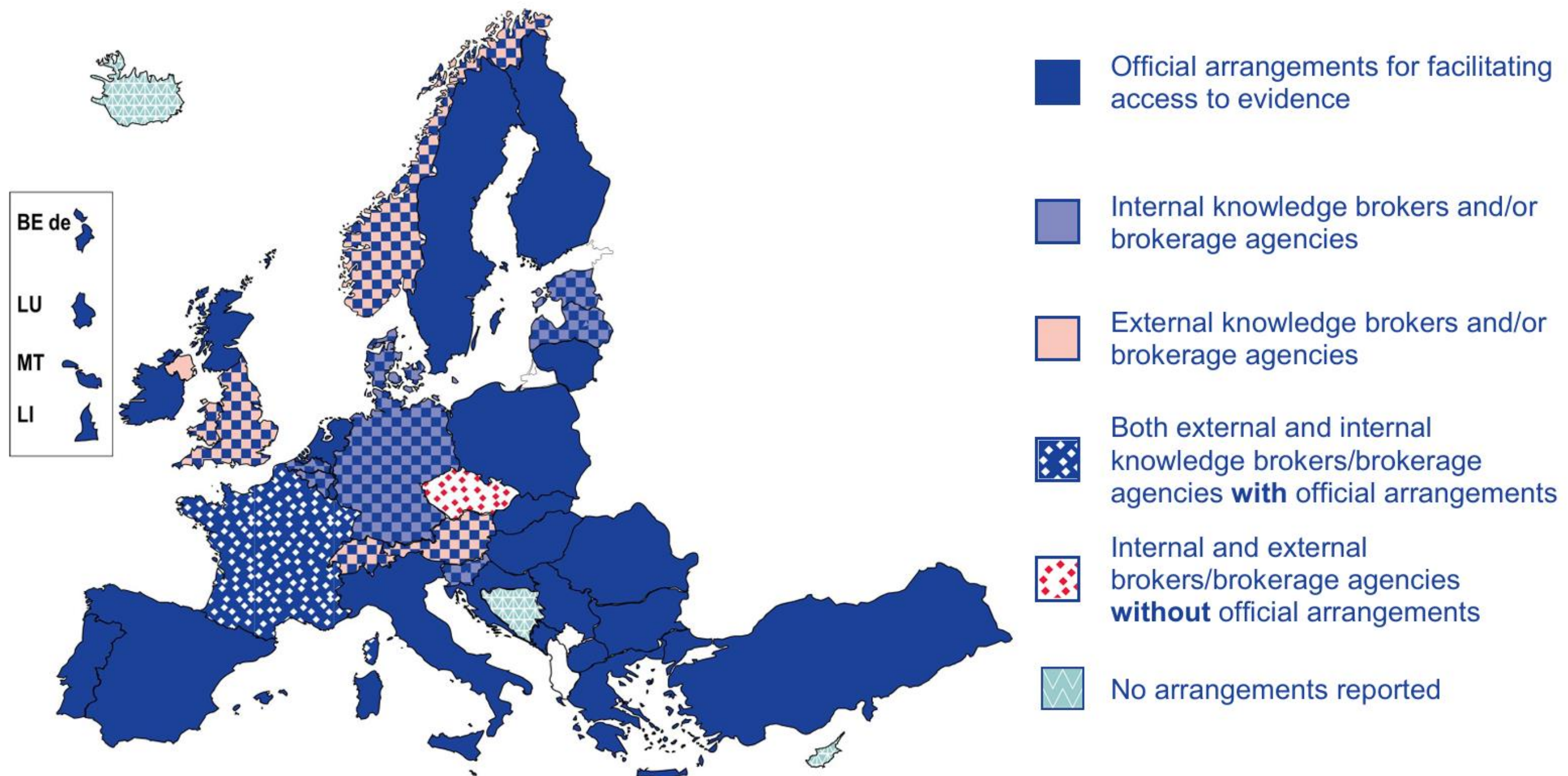
Evidence-based policy in Europe

Sources of evidence used in policy-making in the field of education



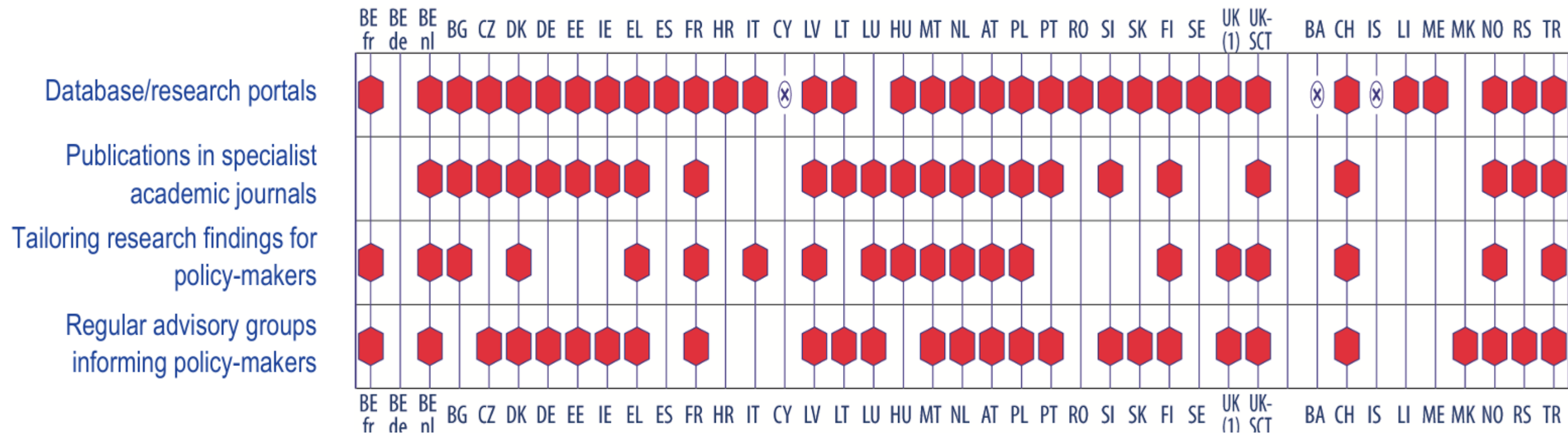
Evidence-based policy in Europe

Facilitating access to evidence and mediation services for education policy-makers



Evidence-based policy in Europe

Arrangements for facilitating the flow of information between evidence providers and policy-makers in the field of education



Evidence-based policy in Poland – legal basis

Poland **legally requires** the involvement of evidence providers for policy-making for every governmental strategies (including areas of education, training, LLL, human and social capital):

- Polish law (Act of 6.12.2006 on the rules for preparing the policy of development) obliges to prepare **diagnosis**
- **to consult it** with local government authorities, social and economic partners (employers organisations, trade unions, vocational self-governments, chambers of commerce, NGOs, research institutions and the Board for Public Benefit Activity) and with the Common Commission of Government and Territorial Self-government (local authorities)
- all involved parties are required to base their reasoning on **rational arguments** derived from the available scientific sources, outcomes of analysis and empirical research

Evidence-based policy in Poland – integrated strategies

Between 2006 and 2012, work was underway to **reduction of government strategies**:

- the previously existing over 400 strategies were reduced to **three categories**:
 - long-term,
 - medium-term
 - other strategies, including first of all **only 9 integrated strategies**
- education, training and LLL were and are till now mostly integrated in the human capital development strategy, also in social capital and productivity development, but are present in all other development strategies to a lesser extent
- since then, there has been **no sectoral strategy for the development of education and training**, let alone subsectors from pre-school to adult education
- exceptions were **the 2013 LLL strategy** (up to 2020) and **the 2019 Integrated Skills Strategy 2030** (prepared with OECD experts), **required by the EC** as prerequisites for the absorption of European funds for the entire scope of education and training in the EU financial perspectives 2014-2020 and 2021-2027

Evidence-based policy in Poland – LLL strategy

For drafting 2013 **LLL strategy**, the Prime Minister established in 2010 the **Inter Ministerial Team for LLL** (including representatives of the National Qualifications Framework body)

- Team cooperated with many institutions, but particularly with the Educational Research Institute (IBE) and the Polish Agency for Enterprise Development (PARP)
- Team used data from different sources, including the Statistics Poland (GUS) and the Polish Academy of Sciences (PAN, particularly the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology)
- due to the involvement of the IBE, there was no need to engage brokerage agencies, since the IBE carried out research on the topics indicated by the Team
- IBE also analyzed and interpreted the research results and reviewed other surveys and reports prepared by other research institutions relevant to the issue

Evidence-based policy in Poland – skills strategy

2019 **Integrated Skills Strategy 2030** refers to the framework set by the OECD to develop effective skills policies

- a key elements of ISS are:
 - diagnosis of progress
 - diagnosis of challenges and priorities relating to the development of relevant skills
 - activation of the skills supply in the labour market
 - effective use of skills in economic and social life
 - strengthening the system for the formation and development of skills
- ISS specifies the actions to be taken to achieve the set goals, and also presents the model of implementing and monitoring the ISS together with the institutions participating in these processes
- ISS project was coordinated by IBE
- It was widely consulted on in accordance with Polish and OECD standards

Influence of the EU, OECD on our evidence-based policy

As can be seen from the above description, the **EU and OECD had a significant impact** on evidence-based education policy in Poland

- EU's greatest influence was evident before the 2014-2020 and 2021-2027 EU financial perspectives
- OECD's influence became apparent during the development of national skills strategies modeled on the OECD Skills Strategy

However, we have already made an important reform of the national education statistics **without such influence**:

- since 2005, we have changed traditional education statistics based on paper reporting forms and **only summarizing individual data** into a digital administrative database (**SIO** as was indicated earlier) capable of **individually recording** the most important characteristics of teachers, students and schools
- SIO is used for **schools system management**, not statistics, which is too abstract for most participants in this system
- statisticians **can use data** from the SIO

Development of SIO as a basis for modern educational management and evidence-based policy

SIO launched in 2005 was a postponed part of the **comprehensive state reform** of 1999 preparing for our accession to the EU in 2004:

- two of the four main reforms concerned **administration** (including the creation of new local government) and **education** (including the transfer of schools and other educational institutions to these local governments)
- this created the need for a **new system for the flow of administrative information** between schools, their new governing bodies (local governments) and the ministries of education and of finance (the governing bodies receive a subsidy from the state budget for the maintenance of schools)
- in 1999 we were not yet technically prepared for the **digital flow of information**
- the first rounds of SIO reports since 2005 were carried out on CDs
- now SIO is the **web based application**, data are accurate almost in real time, individual data allow to combine **with other databases** by common identifier – starting with the administrative database of science and higher education (POL-on)

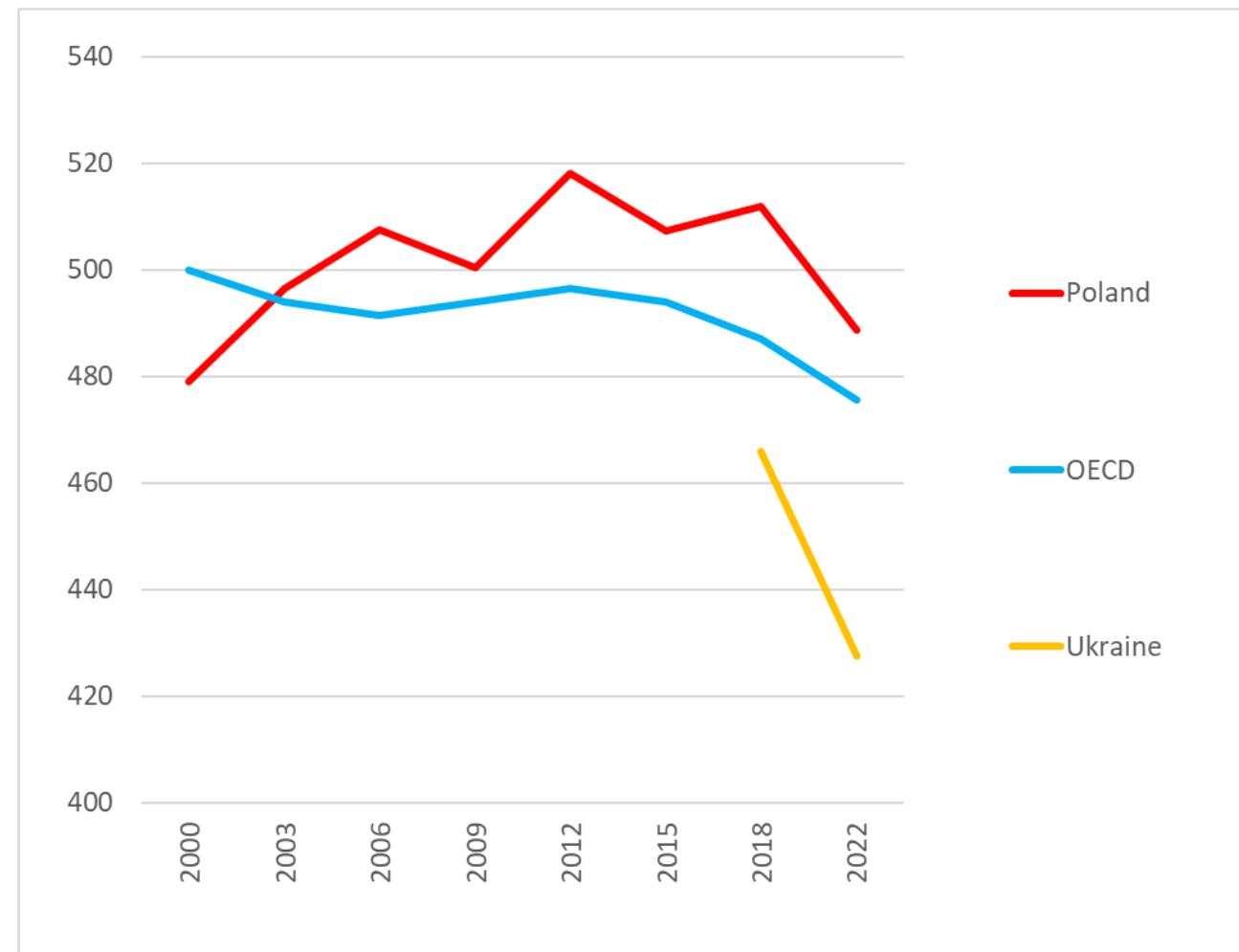
The role of learning outcomes

- For evidence-based policy, it is not enough to develop **modern administrative databases** in education systems, which are primarily applicable to school or academies management
- Above all, data on the mission of education, i.e., the **level of learning outcomes** (competencies understood as a combination of knowledge, skills and attitudes) are needed
- The reference point for competences should not be life in school, but in different contexts after school (**LLL as a reference**)
- Competency surveys should take into account the **motivations of respondents**, especially those struggling to navigate the school system, and **avoid stigmatizing** so-called low-achievers and schools and countries with low results

Education in the light of important indicators

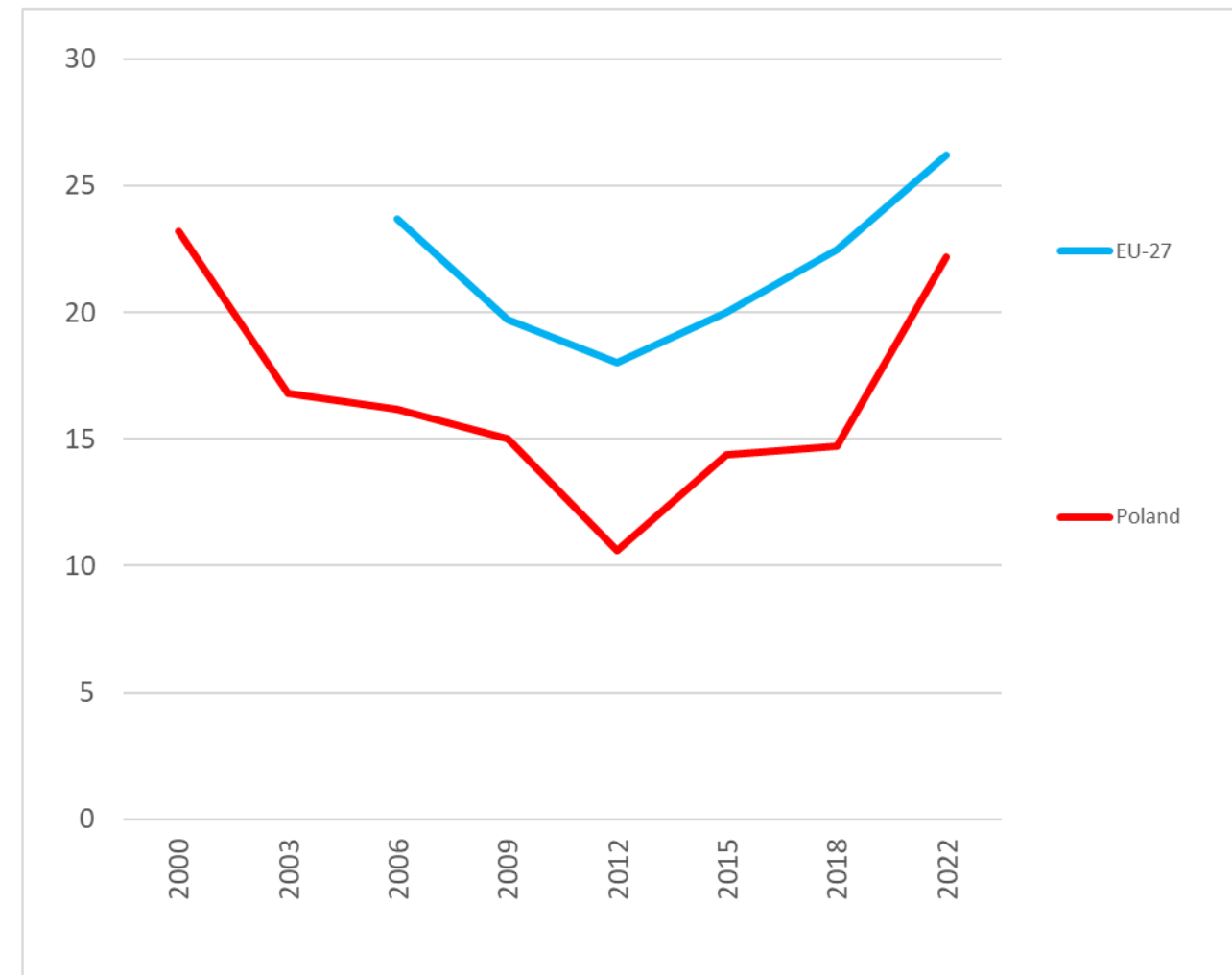
- Despite more than two decades of EU and OECD focus on improving education policy in line with evidence-based principles, **important indicators of education development** do not indicate a parallel improvement
- This applies, among others, to achievements of 15-year-olds in basic skills

Mean performance in reading literacy of 15-year-olds on the scale of PISA survey 2000-2022



OECD, PISA

Percentage of low achieving 15-year-olds in reading literacy according to PISA survey 2000-2022

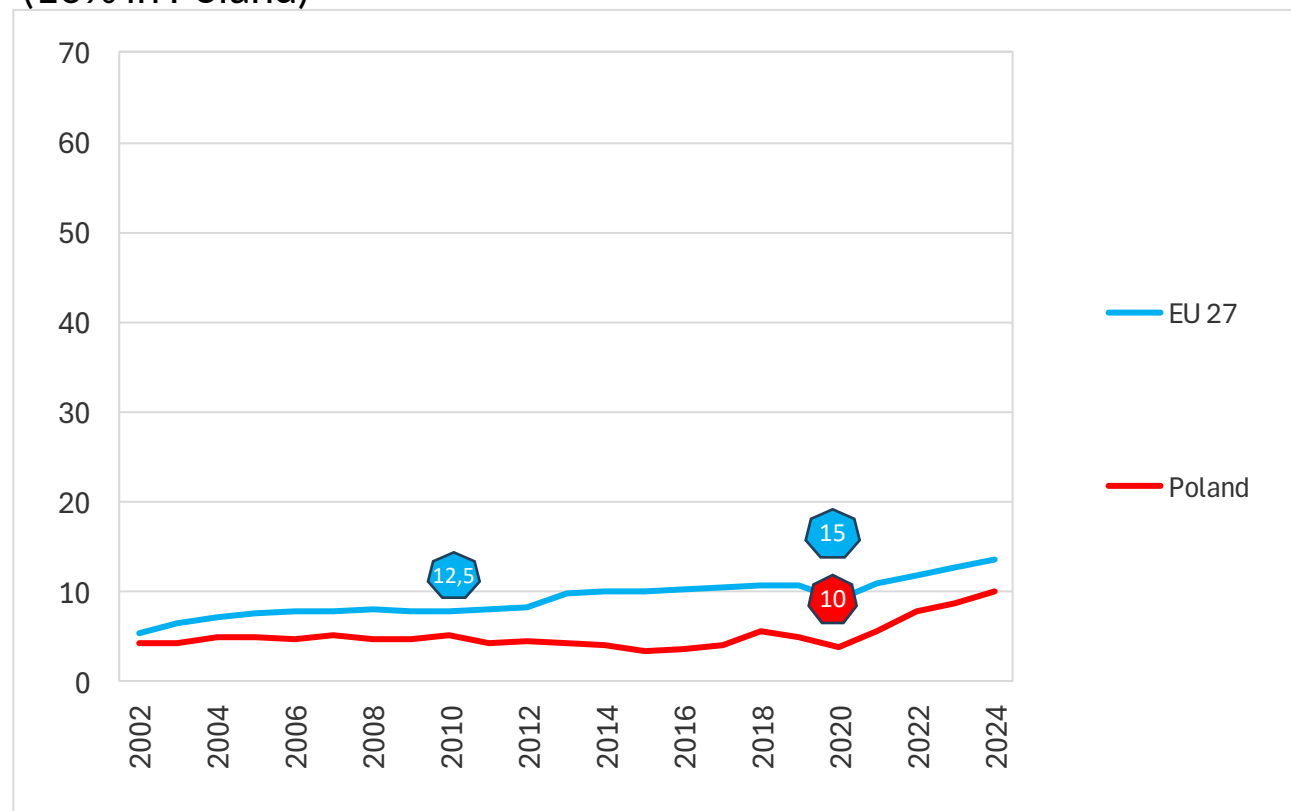


OECD, PISA

Education in the light of important indicators

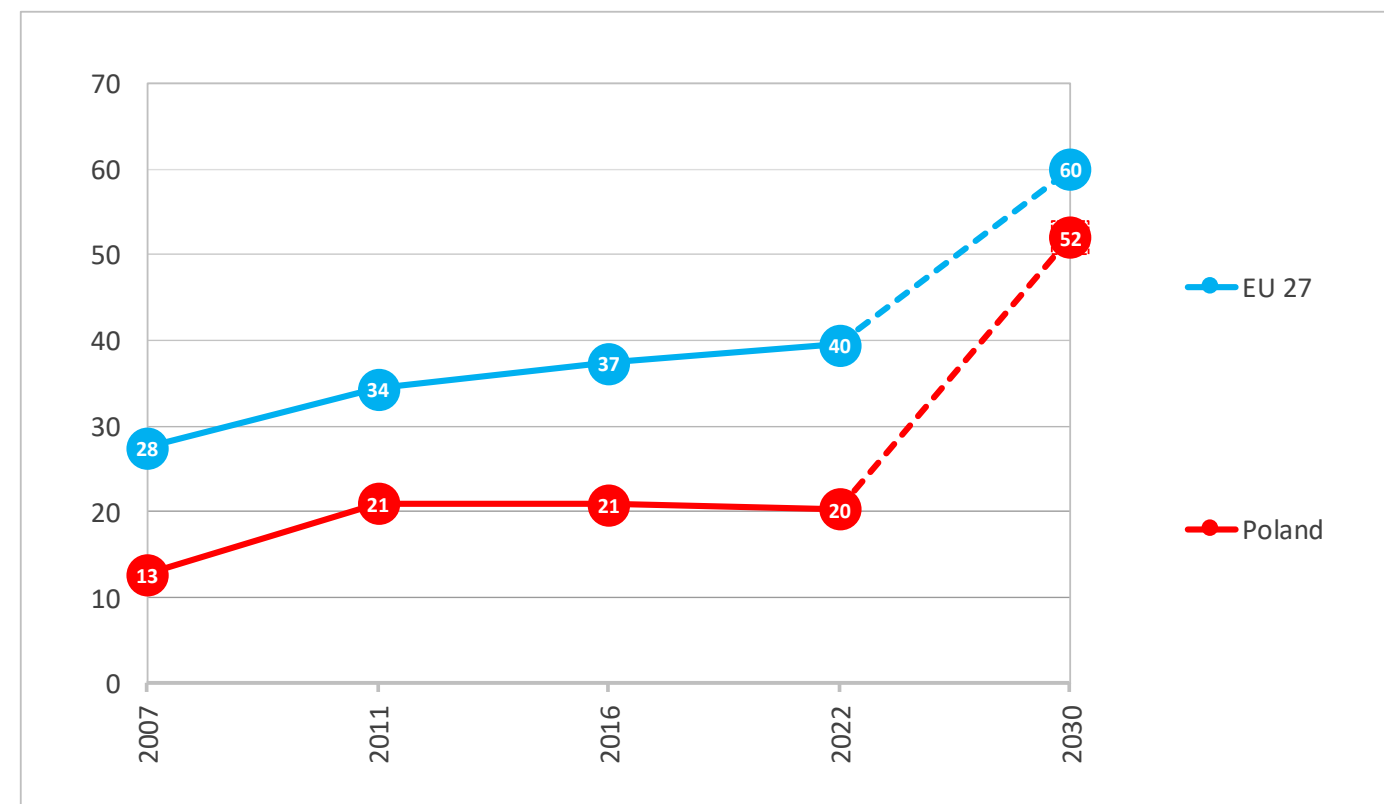
- One of the most important indicators and targets in education today relates to structured **adult learning**; at the 2021 EU Social Summit, the target for implementing the **European Pillar of Social Rights** by 2030 was adopted - it aims to achieve 60% of adults participating in education and training in **last year**
- Previously, for 2010 and 2020, EU targets of 12.5% and 15% of adults participating in education and training in the **4 weeks** before the survey were adopted, what has not been achieved so far
- In this light, achieving the 2030 target is a **significant challenge**

Percentage of adults aged 25-64 participating in education and training in the **last 4 weeks** - 12.5% EU target for 2010, 15% EU target for 2020 (10% in Poland)



Eurostat, Labour Force Survey

Adults aged 25-64 participating in education and training in the **last 12 months** - target for the EU 2030 - 60%, for Poland 52%



Education and Training Monitor 2024, data extracted from Eurostat, Adult Education Survey

Thank you for your attention

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