



Poland

## Trends, Recent Developments, “Feeding in” and “Feeding out”

A Study of National Policies

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# 1. The feeding in and feeding out analysis of the Implementation Report of the National Reform Programme for Growth and Jobs

## 1.1. Summary

The National Reform Programme Implementation Report 2007 (further referred to as the IRNRP) was prepared at the time of a radical improvement of the economic situation and improvement of the labour market. The rapid economic growth, noted since the start of 2006, had a substantial contribution to a drop in unemployment (to 9.6% in the second quarter of 2007) and employment growth. The drop in unemployment was noted in all age groups and also was similar in terms of gender<sup>1</sup>. Although there has been a drop in the number of long-term unemployed, still more than every second unemployed person searches for job for more than 12 months.

Although there is an account in the IRNRP of the impact of certain fields of the national Lisbon Strategy on OMC, the relations between the economic and the social strategy have not been presented clearly and consequently. The presentation of measures described in the IRNRP is one-sided and no sufficient consideration has been given to the need for balancing the economic and the social dimension. No reference has been made at all in the NRP Report 2007 to the social inclusion process. Still, IRNRP includes many implicit references to the process of social inclusion in Poland, which could indicate a growing awareness of the impact which the inclusion process has on economic development and advances in employment. The serious problems are the delays in the implementation of the NRP, particularly in such areas as reforms of social protection and long-life learning.

In some areas IRNRP 2007 indicates progress in accommodating the social inclusion perspective in efforts addressing economic growth and employment. The measures envisaged in the area of employment policy take more account, than so far, of the needs of people exposed to a high unemployment risk or far from the labour market. However, the range of these measures as concerns the groups farthest from the labour market, is insufficient and their effectiveness needs to be improved.

Advances in ensuring higher success rate in reaching the objectives connected with social inclusion on the labour market may be expected from actions reflecting the recommendation highlighted in the 2006 Annual Progress Report to finalize the reform of public employment service, which should improve the effectiveness of its operation and allow for a more individual, addressed servicing of the unemployed. Beneficial, from the perspective of increasing employment of persons at risk of exclusion (e.g. persons with low qualifications), is progress in carrying out the Lisbon recommendation to reduce the tax wedge, of which phase one was put into effect in June 2007.

The recommended in the 2006 Annual Progress Report actions regarding modernizing the system of vocational education and training from the perspective of labour market requirements should contribute to reducing the risk of unemployment for persons completing their vocational

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<sup>1</sup> Similarly, a reduction of the risk of poverty in the most exposed groups should be noted, however, this issue is not touched upon in the NRP Report 2007.

schooling. Misalignment between the vocational schooling system and the structure of labour market demand is one of the critical factors behind structural unemployment. We can see the progress in this field, however, the lacking cooperation between Ministry of Labour and Social Policy and Ministry of Education can limit the effectiveness of the already undertaken efforts. Concern is raised by lack of efforts to increase the participation of adults in life-long learning programmes.

There are evidently serious delays in implementing actions linked to the recommendation on consolidating public finance and keeping tabs on public finance sector deficit. This holds in particular for efforts in the area of social security system reforms. What is more, the proposed changes fail to take sufficient account of the need to strike a balance between the efforts to ensure long-term financial sustainability of the social protection system and of the adequacy of the benefits and gender equality.

A significant new departure under NRP, linking the issues of increasing employment with efforts to ensure social inclusion, is represented by the announced actions conducive to reconciling work with family responsibilities. Increasing the employment of women could contribute to reducing the high poverty risk among children. The present cultural and structural barriers to employment of women raising small children lead to their withdrawal from the labour market, prolonged economic passivity and unemployment once the children get older<sup>2</sup>.

Construction of IRNRP is not subordinated to the national recommendations and points to watch highlighted in the 2006 Annual Progress Report. The report refers explicitly to only some of the national recommendations, such as consolidating public finances or treating cohesion policy as an element bolstering structural funds. Rather, in that document one can discern more implicit references to the recommendations and points to watch, though of a more general and far from exhaustive character. It is not clear, how actions in the specified areas are to be more forceful. There is no clue as the extent to which the objectives specified in the recommendations, such as ensuring greater effectiveness of social services, applying ALMP measures to larger numbers of unemployed persons, in particular older persons and youth, or increasing the participation of older people in life-long learning, are to be achieved by applying the planned measures or actions. IRNRP also does not provide a complete answer as to the reasons behind the delays in carrying out certain NRP projects, such as developing a strategy for life-long learning or reforming the system of social insurance.

In keeping with the Guidelines for preparing the 2007 second semester report, IRNRP was reviewed from the perspective of recommendations and points to watch highlighted in the 2006 Annual Progress Report<sup>3</sup> for Poland. Additionally, an analysis was carried out of 2 selected key

<sup>2</sup> Vide: Kotowska, I.E. Sztanderska, U. Wóycicka, I. Aktywność zawodowa i edukacyjna a obowiązki rodzinne w Polsce w świetle badań empirycznych [Employment and educational involvement versus family duties in Poland, in the light of empirical studies (*in Polish*)], Warsaw, 2006.

<sup>3</sup> Recommendation 1: pursue its action to step up fiscal consolidation and supplement the nominal state budget deficit "anchor" (deficit ceiling) with an expenditure rule, in order to contain overall expenditure growth; Recommendation 2: improve competition in network industries and in the financial sectors, including through a review of the role of regulators; Recommendation 3: in order to boost R&D and innovation, pursue the reform of the public research sector and introduce policies to better attract and maximise the benefits of medium and high-tech foreign direct investment; Recommendation 4: complete the reform of public employment services in order to increase the level and efficiency of active labour market policy to cover a larger share of unemployed, especially older persons and youth;

policy initiatives. These concerned actions to reconcile work and family responsibilities, and to streamline the process involved in paperwork for construction projects.

## 1.2. The “feeding out” aspects

### *Promoting both social cohesion and economic growth*

The recommendation regarding fiscal consolidation refers in part to reforms of social protection systems, so as to ensure long term financial sustainability of these systems. In the areas concerning the reforms (early retirement, old-age and disability pension system and health care), an imbalance can be seen between the macroeconomic goals, such as long-term financial stability and the social objectives, such as adequacy of benefits.

The disability pensions reform stipulated in IRNRP aims at ensuring consistency in calculating work disability pensions with annuities calculated under the new retirement pensions system. The proposed reform, following up on the 1999 reform of the retirement pensions system, is to relieve the pressure to receive disability pension entitlements and reduce the budget spent on such benefits. Although the objective itself raises no objections, the proposed new regulation regarding the formula for setting disability pension amounts in the longer term presents the risk of increased poverty among households supporting themselves out of such benefits. Government simulation accounts show that the replacement rate of disability pensions paid out under the new formula will systematically decline in relation to wage levels. In the long term, the replacement rate will become much lower than that specified in International Labour Office Convention 102 on the Social Security (Minimum Standards). This question needs to be closely monitored, particularly considering that already now the households supporting themselves with disability pension benefits are exposed to much above average risk of poverty<sup>4</sup>.

Another aspect of the planned reforms is aimed at ensuring long-term financial viability of the old-age pensions system by limiting access to early retirement and increase the employment activity of older productive age people. Elimination of access to early retirement is also a precondition for full implementation of the 1998 pension reform and increasing the amount of retirement benefits in the future<sup>5</sup>. By the same token, it is also a tool for reducing poverty among future retired populations.

Poland is characterized by very low age of the withdrawal from the labour market and the lowest in EU employment rate of older productive age people (55-64 years old). The real retirement age in Poland is on the average 6 years lower than legal retirement age. Improvement in this respect

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Recommendation 5: lower the tax burden on labour and review benefit systems in order to improve work incentives, while developing policies to increase adult participation in lifelong learning and to modernise education and training systems in view of labour market needs.

Point to watch 1: upgrading transport infrastructure;

Point to watch 2: improving environmental protection;

Point to watch 3: further reducing and redirecting state aids;

Point to watch 4: the full liberalization of energy markets;

Point to watch 5: speeding-up the business registration process;

Point to watch 6: ensuring that cohesion policy instruments underpin the structural measures highlighted in the Implementation Report with a view to contributing to boosting growth, competitiveness, employment and social cohesion.

Point to watch 7: A firm and realistic target for overall investment in R&D by 2010 should be set.

<sup>4</sup> Vide: Pension benefit amounts, Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, <http://www.mps.gov.pl/bip/index.php?idkat=1361#id3690>

<sup>5</sup> In the reformed pension system, retirement benefits are calculated on the basis of paid in contribution and average continued life expectancy at age of retirement.

is expected following adoption of the Bridging Pensions Act. The project of the bill on Bridging Pensions Act accepted by the Council of Ministers<sup>6</sup> calls for gradual phasing out of access to early retirement, leading to complete elimination of such options in 25 years time.

Compared with the initial plan, delays have been encountered in implementing the intended changes. The stipulated entry into force of new regulations has been postponed yet another time, until 2009<sup>7</sup>. This will reflect on delays in attaining the objectives of increasing employment of older productive age people. Still, one should not that due to general increase in employment over the last two years, the employment indicators of pre-retirement age people have improved irrespective of lacking changes in policies, but still remain very low compared with the other EU countries.

The weak point of plans for restricting access to early retirement is the absence of a comprehensive approach which would ensure increased employment of older productive age people. However, achieving this objective requires a cross sector, integrated policy, including access to lifelong learning and ALMP measures. Yet the document fails to recognise the link between the policy of restricting access to early retirement and the policy of employment and life long-learning. The part devoted to employment policy does not specify any planned actions addressing employment activation of older productive age people (such efforts, for reasons unknown, are planned only as regards women), there is also no attention paid to the need for increasing participation of people from that age group in life long-learning. In Poland participation of older employees in lifelong learning is marginal. The Implementation Document of NRP in 2006 envisages a very modest growth of participation of older people (aged 55-65) in lifelong education<sup>8</sup>, whereas the IRNRP disregards this indicator completely.

A significant area of common action of the employment policy and social inclusion are the measures for reconciliation of family obligations with employment. Facilities allowing for easier combining of employment with family obligations would increase the employment of women raising small children and improve their chances on the labour market. By the same token this would contribute to reducing poverty of families raising children. Women in Poland often resign from employment for the time of raising a small child and later face serious difficulties with re-entering the labour market, and this often implies unemployment. Regulations have been adopted last year regarding telework, which allow parents taking care of children to work from home. The 2007 Family Policy Programme<sup>9</sup> includes proposals regarding facilities for combining employment with family obligations. However, the progress in this area is not satisfactory and in particular the problem of lack of access to day nursery and kindergartens has not been adequately addressed. One should note that access to pre-school education is also an important tool of social inclusion policy, ensuring even educational opportunities of children.

Lisbon recommendations call for improvement of competition in network sectors. Poland has been advised to fully liberalise its electric energy market. IRNRP refers to the actions aimed at introducing competition in the electric energy market by resolution of long-term power purchase agreements and legal separation and assurance of independent operation for operator of distribution system in the electricity system. One should note, however, that in the opinion of

<sup>6</sup> Vide: draft of Bridging Pensions Act dated 27th April 2007 Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, <http://www.mps.gov.pl/bip/download/projekt%20ustawy%20z%2027%20kwietnia%2007%20pomostowe.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> Earlier, back in 2006, start of implementation was put off to 2008.

<sup>8</sup> By 0.2 percentage points (to the level of 2.4 for women and 3.8 for men), whereas the envisaged growth of this percentage for younger age groups is much higher. Implementation Document of the National Reform Programme 2005-2008 for implementation of the Lisbon Strategy constitutes. Annex to the National Reform Programme 2005-2008, adopted by the Council of Ministers on 9 December 2006 [www.mg.gov.pl](http://www.mg.gov.pl)

<sup>9</sup> Family Policy 2007-2014, Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, <http://www.kobieta.gov.pl/?1,9,223,200703>

experts on the electric power market, the Programme for Electric Energy Industry<sup>10</sup> drafted by the Ministry will not ensure attaining the objective of introducing competition and lowering the cost of energy supply<sup>11</sup>. Experts predict that freeing electric energy tariffs in Poland will result in higher energy prices, which will reflect negatively on the situation of poorer households, in particular those supporting themselves with social benefits and allowances.

The liberalisation of the network sectors refers also to actions in the telecommunications sector, to institute additional, market and consumer oriented regulatory instruments, which can result in reducing the cost of telecommunication services and improving access to them. Such actions, leading to reduced costs of providing telecommunication service and better accessibility of services, is a substantial premise for improving social cohesion.

### *Ensuring an adequate income from work*

IRNRP basically fails to address the issue of adequate income from work. It needs to be mentioned in this context that high economic growth and shrinking unemployment resulted last year in rapid growth of pay in real terms. In Q2 2007 the real average wage in the economy was 6.5% higher than a year earlier. According to government decision adopted in September 2007, minimum wage is to increase by 20%. The pay increases were additionally fuelled by the 2007 government decision to reduce by 3 percentage points the contribution to social security insurance payable by employees.

Considering initiatives regarding income from work, one should also take account of the gender wage gap which exists in Poland. One of the factors leading to the gender wage gap is the lack of true partnership in the family in sharing household and employment responsibilities, which translates into poorer chances for women in the labour market. For that reason, promoting partnership in families should be an important element in any policy for reconciling work and family responsibilities, which would permit women to earn a more adequate income from work. IRNRP calls for implementing the initiative to facilitate reconciling work and family duties. However, the "Family Policy 2007-2014" document<sup>12</sup>, referred to in IRNRP as the grounds for comprehensive efforts in the area of family policy, fails to give due recognition to this policy aspect. There are no plans for promotion and regulations which could accelerate the process of transforming the economic model of a family in Poland<sup>13</sup>.

### *Targeting job creation at vulnerable groups*

Lisbon recommendations call for the reform of public employment services to in order cover a larger share of unemployed, especially older persons and youth. The 2004 Act on promotion of employment and institutions of the labour market enumerates the groups particularly vulnerable to the risk of unemployment and the instruments to bolster employment of these groups. This refers in particular to young people, the disabled, long-term unemployed; people over 50 and single parents with small children, etc. The public employment service is required to propose

<sup>10</sup> Program dla Elektroenergetyki [Programme for Electric Power Industry – *in Polish*], Ministry of Economy, 2006, <http://www.mg.gov.pl/NR/rdonlyres/BCA05C75-4732-42A0-9E73-B2858319EB92/18485/Programdlael2.pdf>

<sup>11</sup> Opinia Polskiego Komitetu Energii Elektrycznej do Programu Elektroenergetyki, [Opinion of Polish Electric Power Committee on the Programme for Electric Power Industry – *in Polish*]: [http://pkee.pl/files/docs/Opinia\\_do\\_projektu\\_dokumentu\\_Program\\_dla\\_elektroenergetyki.pdf](http://pkee.pl/files/docs/Opinia_do_projektu_dokumentu_Program_dla_elektroenergetyki.pdf)

<sup>12</sup> Family Policy 2007-2014, Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, <http://www.kobieta.gov.pl/?1,9,223,200703>

<sup>13</sup> Vide: Kotowska, I.E., *ibidem*.

employment, other gainful job, trial stage, vocational induction at a workplace or employment on intervention projects or public works to young people, including graduates within 6 months of the date of registration.

The activities envisaged in IRNRP the area of employment policy take more account, than so far, of the needs of people exposed to a high unemployment risk. Last year there was an increase in the number of people from the groups at-risk encompassed by ALMP, which became possible due to increasing the amount of funds designed for ALMP, in the first place as a result of support from the European Social Fund. However, the range of these activities, as concerns the groups farthest from the labour market, is insufficient and their effectiveness needs to be improved<sup>14</sup>. The situation of young people at the labour market improved significantly compared to the previous years and more efforts should be now made at the activation of the persons farthest from the labour market including older persons.

One major obstacle to employment activity of persons farthest from the labour market is the absence of integrated services to ensure labour market activity of these groups and having the current benefits system effectively act as a disincentive to taking up employment. This holds particularly for the long-term unemployed, who due to loss of entitlement to an unemployment allowance have in the vast part become beneficiaries of the social assistance institutions. Lisbon recommendations call for reviewing the benefits systems in order to improve work incentives. Unfortunately, IRNPR does not refer to this problem. In accordance with NAP/Inclusion, active inclusion question is to be addressed by a fundamental regulation of the Social Assistance Act. Nonetheless, no formal provisions in this area have been adopted as yet, and – according to many experts - the proposed bill now in Parliament fails to satisfy the effectiveness criterion<sup>15</sup>.

The labour market standing of disabled people is particularly difficult. The measures introduced, including update of the Act on employment and work rehabilitation of disabled persons, along with implementation of ESF-funded programmes for employment activation of such persons have as yet to yield the expected results. The status of disabled people on the labour market has become even more difficult, despite general improvement of the labour market situation. In 2006 only 12.6% of disabled [persons aged 15 and more] held jobs, compared with 13.7% in 2003. One shortcoming of the current system for supporting employment of the disabled is the absence of effective tie-up of the disability pensions system with the system of vocational rehabilitation and employment of the disabled, in effect detracting from effects of policies for of vocational rehabilitation and employment of the disabled. The actions to ensure employment activation of disabled people, stipulated in IRNRP, could be more effective, if accompanied by appropriate adjustments of the disability pensions system.

Lisbon recommendations call for completing the reform of public employment services in order to increase the level and efficiency of active labour market policy to cover a larger share of unemployed, especially older persons and youth. The low quality of service provided by public employment offices, linked to insufficient number of specialists and lack of service standards, is a major cause of low operating effectiveness of these offices. The new regulations regarding

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<sup>14</sup> As turns out from the NRP Report 2007, in the period 2004-2006, the activating measures, co-financed from the ESF, covered about 27 thousand people from the groups particularly exposed to the labour market risks (people released from penal institutions, homeless, alcohol or drug addicted, single parents with children and receiving social assistance benefits, refugees and young people aged 15-24), as well as 120 thousand of long-term unemployed. Also advancement of these programmes is insufficient. The spending was limited to only 42% of the amount planned for period 2004-2006.

<sup>15</sup> Vide: opinions on proposed Act on Principles on the Impelmentation of Social Policy (*in Polish*): <http://orka.sejm.gov.pl/proc5.nsf/opisy/1548.htm>



standards of the service provided by the public employment offices<sup>16</sup> will lead to better serving of the unemployed, and also allow for more comprehensive treatment of persons at-risk of long-term unemployment and those already long-term unemployed. Among other elements, the regulations call for increasing the labour office staffing with specialists, such as job exchange experts, job coaches, career development advisers, Job Club leaders and EURES consultants<sup>17</sup>. They also enumerate the specific services to be provided by such specialists.

The Lisbon recommendation which, once implemented, could contribute to reducing the risk of unemployment, concerns modernisation of education and training systems in view of labour market needs. Misalignment between the vocational education system and the structure of labour market demand is one of the critical factors behind structural unemployment. Lack of possibilities for accepting the skills acquired outside the system of formalized – school-based or out of school – education, fuzziness of the acquired qualifications, misalignment between offered qualifications and demand for skills, and lacking knowledge about the types of qualifications demanded by the labour market – are all barriers making it difficult to plan continued education, raising qualifications and ensuring labour force mobility.

Work is in progress on modernizing vocational education (adjusted classification of trades and training curricula, introduction of modular training programmes, and introducing an up-to-date system of exams certifying vocational qualifications (including addition of a supplement describing the process of learning and acquired competencies). Particularly important to social inclusion policy will be the planned setting up of a national network of examination centres, which are to provide exams both for school graduates and for persons wishing to certify their vocational qualifications acquired outside the formal school system. Another action connected with this recommendation concerns defining national qualifications standards. Efforts in this area have already resulted in defining qualification standards for 250 vocations. Better defining of qualifications and planning the different paths leading to their acquiring will soften the labour market structural barriers leading to unemployment resulting from misalignment of the educational & skills acquisition system to the actual needs of the labour market.<sup>18</sup>,<sup>19</sup> The activities in this areas are supported with ESF funding.

<sup>16</sup> Ruling by Minister of Labour & Social Policy on Labour Market Service Standards, dated 2nd March 2007 (Official Journal 07.47.314) and on Specific Conditions of Providing Labour Market Services by Public Employment Offices, dated 2nd March 2007 (Official Journal 07.47.315)

<sup>17</sup> In 2006 there was an increase in the number of specialists working for the public employment service  
Headcount in public employment service

Headcount	Status at year end	
	2005	2006
Total employment (persons)	19650	19933
Of which on posts of:		
- job exchange experts	1697	2085
- job coaches	782	872
- career development advisers	250	254
- specialists on programmes	456	663
- Job Club leaders	102	132
- EURES consultants		24

Note: In 2005 there were 28 EURES network specialists (EURES line managers, EURES consultants, EURES regional assistants), \*\* in 2005 the EURES network staff (EURES district assistants) increased to 74.

Source: information about institutional servicing of the labour market (*in Polish*), Ministry of Labour & Social Policy, [www.mpips.gov.pl](http://www.mpips.gov.pl)

<sup>18</sup> Vide: Agnieszka Majcher- Teleon: Krajowe Ramy Kwalifikacji i ich rola w realizacji Strategii Lizbońskiej w Polsce [National Qualifications Framework and its role in implementing Lisbon Strategy in Poland (*in Polish*)], Rynek Pracy, special issue 2006.

<sup>19</sup> Vide: OECD 2005. Thematic Review on Adult Learning; Poland Country Note.

Unfortunately, no progress can be seen as regards development of the lifelong learning strategy. The protracted work on Strategy for Life-long Learning and lack of action on improving the quality and reducing disparities in the system of education is a serious drawback of IRNRP. In the educational process school students are not provided with a sufficient base for continuing development and supplementing of skills. What is more, the participation of Poles in life-long learning is very limited, especially among the older and less educated people, which could lead to long-term exclusion from the labour market<sup>20</sup>.

With respect to the recommendation (point to watch) concerning speeding-up the business registration process IRNRP encompasses numerous action areas aimed at facilitating start-up and operation of business. Among other elements, it includes plans for nationwide application by 2009 of one-stop shop for registering business activity. Under the government-formulated Plan for State Switch to Information Technology 2007-2010 there are plans to enable entrepreneurs to electronically file and send registration documents and tax returns. Facilities in registering business activity will increase the accessibility of disabled people to starting and running businesses, particularly for the people with motional dysfunctions. It can also help persons combining business activity with family duties.

#### *Addressing territorial differences and regional gaps*

Poland is characterized by serious geographic disparities, both from the perspective of situations on local and regional labour markets, and from the perspective of living standards. Irrespective of rapidly shrinking unemployment, the level of unemployment in many regions still remains high. There are structural causes for the advancing segmentation of the labour market, in part due to underdeveloped transportation and housing infrastructure.

Actions relating to the recommendation concerning further reducing and redirecting state aids plus support from European structural funds could reduce the regional disparities in living standards, provided that the poorer regions will have sufficient aid absorption capacity. IRNRP informs about adjusted allocation of public funds (shifted from sector assistance to horizontal and regional assistance). The main role in allocation of resources is played by European Union structural funds.

With respect to the recommendation concerning upgrading transport infrastructure INNRP also plans actions to speed up development of transport. Legislation to speed up investment processes, both as regards transport infrastructure facilities (for rail, road and air traffic) and housing construction should improve the accessibility of transport and housing. The existing limitations of access, high cost of transportation and shortage of cheap housing are major reasons behind low geographic mobility on the labour market, consolidating its segmentation and negative circumstances of local labour markets.

Still, a problem in the transportation strategy referred to in IRNRP is the imbalance between development of national and local transportation. The document puts the main emphasis on development of national roads and railways. Yet, a significant problem for local labour markets is also the poor standard and general underdevelopment of regional transportation and both regional and local railways and roads which would link rural communities with their local and

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<sup>20</sup> In 2006 Poland had 4.7% of its adult population (aged 25-64) take part in life-long learning, compared with the European average of 9.6% (27 countries), Eurostat data. The target for 2010 set by the European Commission in the Education & Training 2010 programme is 12.5%.

regional centres of business. This could result in limitation of the impact of the proposed strategy on the development of local labour markets.

### *Assessing the impact on social protection systems*

The recommendation regarding fiscal consolidation relates in part to reforms of social protection systems, including introduction of legislation to complete the 1998 pension system reform, and additional reforms of the health care system.

Actions relating to pension reform consist of drafting legislation to govern the rules for paying out annuities from the second pillar of old-age pension system. However, the proposal of a bill, referred to by IRNPR<sup>21</sup> lacks a sufficient perspective relating to both the measures for protecting against poverty and social exclusion and to the principles of gender equality. Among other things, the draft bill allows for the use of varied, gender related annuities, which can lead to a significant reduction of old age pensions payable for women, as compared with the situation where the annuities would not be varied. Two other proposals of the bill are also controversial, including introduction of voluntary annuities for spouses in place of current survivor pensions, and lack of minimum guaranties to safeguard the value of benefits against inflation. Without changes to the proposed arrangements, all these shortcomings could in the future exacerbate the risk of poverty among the persons drawing annuities from the new pension system, particularly among women.

A series of simulations and projections<sup>22</sup> show that the pension reform of 1998<sup>23</sup> will result in significant deterioration of the replacement rate of future benefits. The danger of low retirement benefits will be particularly marked for women, should the lower retirement age for women (60) than for men (65) continue in the future. Raising retirement age is a must, if we are to avoid the risk of poverty among older women. Yet, while the actions proposed in 2006 seemed too modest and slow<sup>24</sup>, in the IRNRP of 2007 the idea of increasing the retirement age of women was dropped altogether, without any explanation.

Despite increased outlays, the situation of many health service facilities remains financially unstable. Most action points of IMNRP regarding the health service system are meant to strengthen the financial position of health service facilities and raise the effectiveness of their operation. Improvement in access to health services is to be attained in part by designating a core network of hospitals necessary to ensure availability of health services to the population, and introducing a basket of guaranteed health services and procedures. Delays in implementing the plans regarding the health service system are anything but conducive to stabilizing the situation; many hospitals face major financial difficulties, and pay disputes result in strikes of personnel and partial suspension of operations by health service facilities, eroding access to health services. The prolonged indecision on going ahead with reforms exposes numerous patients to serious problems with securing the required health care.

### *Addressing the contribution of fiscal policies*

<sup>21</sup> Cf. draft law on Benefits from the Funds Gathered in Open Pension Funds and Pension Establishments, dated 24.09.2007, Ministry of Labour and Social Policy. [http://www.mps.gov.pl/bip/download/ofe\\_260907.pdf](http://www.mps.gov.pl/bip/download/ofe_260907.pdf)

<sup>22</sup> The projections of the future pensions replacement ratio were made *inter alia* under AWG. The results confirm earlier projections of the Gdansk Institute for Market Economics.

<sup>23</sup> The pension reform imposed a split of the pension contribution into two tiers: the first one, the pay as you go (notional defined contribution system) and the second – capital (nest-egg). As a result of the reform, the amount of future pensions will largely depend on the statistical length of life and the retirement age. The first new pensions will be paid from the beginning of 2009.

<sup>24</sup> Vide: Second Semester Report for Poland 2006.

Declining unemployment is doubtless a factor bolstering the process of social inclusion. However, taking into account that unemployment in Poland is in big extent of structural character, more specific measures are needed to utilise good economic performance for reducing the scale of social risks faced by the most vulnerable groups, such as low skilled persons or long-term unemployed. In this context, reduction of the tax wedge through reduction of social contributions in 2007 is a significant advantage of the macroeconomic policy approach from the social inclusion perspective. This measure is very relevant for Poland due to a combination of high unemployment among low skilled people and relatively high tax wedge, which create a barrier to employment of these people. Reducing the tax wedge may be also considered as a measure for increasing the supply of labour of low skilled people and increasing their net wages. All these measures lead to reducing poverty among families with unemployed members, as well as among the working poor. The government reduced social insurance contributions by 3 percentage points in 2007. The target set in IRNRP is to reduce the contributions by 7 percentage points (from 13 to 6 percent), starting in 2008. These actions respond to the recommendation regarding lower the tax burden on labour.

### 1.3. The "feeding in" aspects

IRNRP does not relate directly to EU Social Protection and Social Inclusion Process. It also makes no reference to the challenges of 2007 Joint Report. Still, IRNRP includes many implicit references to the process of social inclusion in Poland, which could indicate a growing awareness of the impact which the inclusion process has on economic development and advances in employment. Particularly evident links between the Lisbon process and the inclusion process are to be seen in the area of labour market policy. This holds in particular for actions to ensure active employment for persons in difficult situation on the labour market. The implicit references to NAP/Inclusion concern the changes made to the regulation governing employment of disabled persons, as stipulated in NAP/Inclusion. The action areas of IRNRP linked directly to implementation of NAP/Inclusion in the field of active inclusion also include the following programmes:

- "Active forms of counteracting social exclusion", to support and promote development of networks of „social economy” entities, such as social integration centres and clubs, initiative of municipality/rural commune authorities organizing socially beneficial work projects and programmes;
- Support for Development of Social Cooperatives, aim at evolving, within the NGO sector, of institutions called social cooperatives support centres, providing consultancy and advisory services plus supplementary funding to persons setting up social cooperatives.

A significant area of common action of the employment policy and social inclusion are the measures for reconciling family and work responsibilities. IRNRP presumes the elaboration of the measures in this field by December 2007. The activities in this field were already announced in NAP/Inclusion.

The programme for setting up social dwellings provides another good example of links between IRNRP and the social inclusion process. Providing social dwellings is treated as an element of the effort to improve geographic mobility of employees and improving the housing situation in

Poland<sup>25</sup>. Such positioning of the programme clearly points to a relation between the Lisbon process and the process of social inclusion.

#### 1.4. Aspects related to governance

##### *Monitoring and assessment of impact of policies*

The system proposed in 2006<sup>26</sup> for monitoring and evaluation of progress in NRP implementation has been modified in the light of experience. Among other things, the earlier general reporting system has been streamlined, plus a separate reporting system was introduced regarding key reforms, the implementation of which is crucial for having Poland meet the national recommendations and the tasks identified in priority areas.

Nonetheless, a regular and detailed reporting system does not, unfortunately, translate into quality of IRNRP. In most cases IRNRP fails to provide a clear picture of the scale of neglect and delays in the process of implementing reforms. The document provides no information about numerous delays in implementation of reforms, no explanations are provided about the reasons for such delays, or the substantiation, where provided, does not always seem plausible<sup>27</sup>.

There seems to be insufficient focus on assessing the impact of actions on attainment of NRP objectives. The set of indicators developed for evaluating progress in implementing NRP actions, attached to the NRP implementation document, has not been updated in full with data for the preceding year.

##### *Involvement of stakeholders*

The draft IRNRP has been consulted in the working group organized by the Ministry of Economy with participation of social and economic partners, Members of Parliament, representatives of Ministries and Central Offices involved in implementation of NRP. Efforts of the working group involved carrying out social consultations, yet discussions on the draft Report did not result in modifications of the substance of the document<sup>28</sup>. The text of the draft Report was also published on Ministry website, but this also did not generate any comments regarding the document.

<sup>25</sup> Development of social dwellings is to take place under the Act dated 8th December 2006 on Financial Support for Establishment of Social Dwellings, Sheltered Housing, Night Shelters and Homes for the Homeless.

<sup>26</sup> The proposed system consisted of:

- An operational database with detailed information on the individual projects implemented by Ministries and Central Administration under specific NRP titles;
- A system of quarterly reporting broken down by specific NPR projects, allowing for identifying risks to NRP implementation. Basing on these reports, the Minister of Economy every three months reports to the Council of Ministers on status of NRP implementation.
- An Inter-Ministry Team for implementation of Lisbon Strategy in Poland, with its Working Group on NRP implementation. Vide: Polish Reform Programme 2005-2008 Implementation Document, [www.mg.gov.pl](http://www.mg.gov.pl)

<sup>27</sup> An example of such substantiation is the explanation given regarding the causes behind delays in designing reform of social insurance for farmers. The document cites the need for carrying out additional analyses. However according to information of the Ministry of Agriculture, yet so far no such work has been commissioned to anyone.

<sup>28</sup> As evident from statement of Ministry of Economy representative, the discussion was of general nature and did not touch directly on the draft Report.

*Coordination and joining up of economic, employment and social policies*

Serious delays in NRP implementation show that the system of Lisbon process governance in Poland is not sufficiently effective<sup>29</sup>. It appears that the solutions defining the system for managing the Lisbon process do not place it in the decision-making focus of the Government and fail to bestow on this document the appropriate rank of a fundamental strategic document for the Government. The Lisbon process is administered by the Ministry of Economy, which cyclically reports to the Council of Ministers on NRP implementation. A middle-level working group has been appointed on administration of Lisbon strategy, composed of NRP Implementation Coordinators in each involved Ministry and Central Office; in addition, the Ministry of Economy organizes meetings of Ministers and Heads of Central Offices involved in implementing NRP projects.

Compared with the report on NRP implementation in 2006, in IRNRP 2007 one notes a degree of progress in joining up economic, employment and social policies. Such coordination is bolstered by the employment and social inclusion programmes co-financed by ESF. Concern is raised by evident lack of coordination in many areas. This holds in particular for reforms of social protection systems, the thrust of which could endanger attainment of objectives in the area of social inclusion. In reforms of social protection systems, an imbalance can be seen between the macroeconomic goals, such as long-term financial stability, and the social objectives, such as adequacy of benefits. What is more, the imbalance between the macroeconomic and the social aspects of social protection reforms indicates a lack of coordination of the social policy field within a single Ministry of Labour and Social Policy<sup>30</sup>.

## 2. Key trends and recent developments in poverty and social exclusion

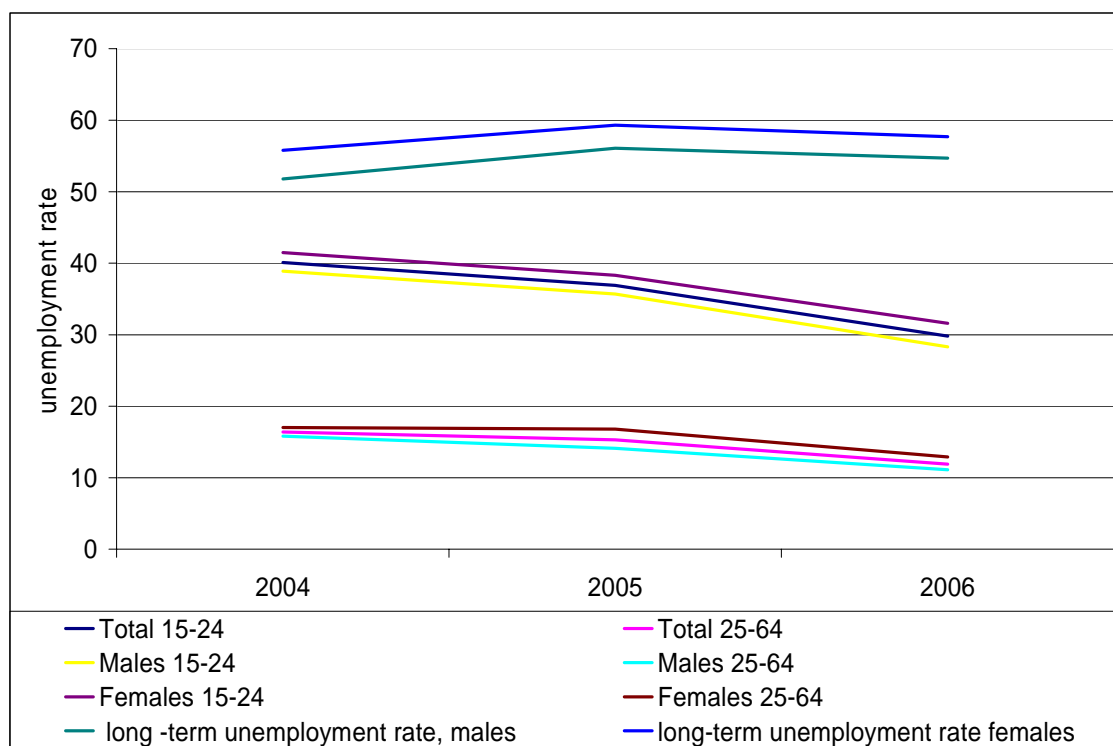
### 2.1. General economic and labour market trends

After a few years of recession, Polish economy has started growing visibly faster. According to the initial estimates by the Central Statistical Office, gross domestic product in 2006 was higher by 5.8% in real terms, as compared to 2005. In 2005, as compared to 2004, GDP increased by 3.5%. For the first two quarters of 2007 GDP growth, estimated by the CSO, was 6.8% and 6.9% in real terms. During the last three years (from the first quarter of 2004 till the first quarter of 2007) volume of employed persons had increased by almost 1.4 million, and the number of the unemployed dropped by 1.6 million people. Employment rate increased from 51.4% in 2004 up to 54.5% in 2006 (55.4% in the second quarter of 2007), while the unemployment rate decreased from 19% in 2004 down to 13.8% in 2006 (9.6% in the second quarter of 2007). Reduction of unemployment level applied to all age groups and was similar for both genders. Also, the number of long-term unemployed people decreased. Nevertheless, the share of the long-term unemployed in the total unemployment is high and it amounts up to 50%. The situation of disabled persons improved only slightly in 2006 (as compared to 2005). Reduction of unemployment among disabled persons was considerably smaller than among regular population, and it was accompanied by a reduction of already very low employment rate in this population group.

<sup>29</sup> IRNRP calls for strengthening the system by appointment in September 2007 of a high level inter-ministerial team. However, the terms of reference for that team concern working out the NRP for 2008-2011.

<sup>30</sup> A similar lack of coordination is also evident in the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy document entitled „National Report on Strategies for Social Protection and Social Inclusion.”

Graph 1. Trends in unemployment 2004-2006



Source: Eurostat

## 2.2. Trends in poverty

Reduction of unemployment and increased employment contributed to positive changes in the area of poverty. According to the newest data from the CSO, based on the HBS results, 2006 was the second consecutive year of a reduction of both relative and subjective poverty.

Table 1. Percentage of poverty endangered population in 2004-2006

	2004	2005	2006
Relative <sup>a)</sup>	20,3	18,1	17,7
Subjective (Leyden) <sup>d)</sup>	27,3	22,5	18,3

Note:

a) 50% of average monthly household expenses per capita.

d) Percentage of households, fourth quarter data.

Source: CSO on the basis of HBS ([www.stat.gov.pl](http://www.stat.gov.pl)).

Improvement of the situation applied to a large extent to those population groups which are in the biggest poverty danger. This risk of poverty decreased more considerably among rural population than among urban one, and first of all among households, which are supported from farming<sup>31</sup> and, and among self-employed people. There was also a significant reduction of the relative poverty danger among families with many children, while the situation of single parents improved only slightly<sup>32</sup> (comp. Table 2).

Regardless of the positive reversion of the tendency, situation of the rural population (mainly farmers) continues to be much worse than that of the urban population. The situation of families with three and more children and of single parents is still very difficult.

Table 2. Relative poverty risk in 2004 – 2006 by household types.

Households	Percentage of people in relative poverty endangered households <sup>a)</sup>		
	2004	2005	2006
<b>Total</b>	<b>20,3</b>	<b>18,1</b>	<b>17,7</b>
Urban areas	14,0	12,5	12,7
Rural areas	30,4	27,0	25,8
<b>Social and economic groups</b>			
Employees	18,7	16,9	16,7
Farmers	31,1	26,4	25,6
Self-employed	13,6	10,2	9,0
Retired	10,9	10,1	11,8
Pensioners	28,5	25,6	25,1
Living on resources other than work	43,0	38,5	40,3
<b>Biological household type</b>			
single person	6,1	4,9	4,9
without dependent children	5,6	4,4	5,3
with 1 child	12,3	9,0	8,9
with 2 children	18,5	17,2	17,2
with 3 children	35,6	31,4	28,5
with 4 or more dependent children	55,9	54,5	49,9
mother or father with dependent children	23,8	20,5	23,0

Note:

a) 50% of average monthly household expenses.

Source: CSO on the basis of household budgets research ([www.stat.gov.pl](http://www.stat.gov.pl)).

<sup>31</sup> Improvement of the situation of farming supported households was influenced by direct subsidies for the agriculture within the framework of the Common agricultural policy. They contributed, most probably, to a considerable improvement of farmers' families condition, as well as to the reduction of the poverty risk among families with many children.

<sup>32</sup> Statistically observed improvement of the situation, in terms of the relative poverty dimensions, does not necessarily translate into extreme poverty tendencies. The 2005-2006 period was characterised by a higher than average dynamics of foodstuffs price increases, what influences the most poor family subsistence expenses. Unfortunately, due to changes in methodology, data presented by the CSO, concerning extreme poverty, cannot be compared with the data for preceding years.



### 2.3. Policies against poverty and social exclusion

#### *Social transfers*

While the economic growth and reduction of unemployment have translated into a limitation of material poverty, political decisions regarding social transfers were not directed to the most poverty-endangered households. In spite of the large scale of poverty among families with children insufficient efforts were made for the improvement of their situation. Among measures directed at poor families with children one should note an increase, in 2006, of the family allowance for the third and subsequent children in the family<sup>33</sup>. On the other hand, tax relief for families with children (they were introduced earlier this year in the low amount of PLN 120, i.e. some EUR 30, annually, and then increased before the early parliamentary election up to PLN 1200, i.e. some EUR 300) will not reach families where the child poverty risk is the highest: farmers' families and people living on social benefits, because these two groups do not pay income tax. Furthermore, newly introduced tax relief will not be fully utilised by families with many children as they usually pay too low taxes.

#### *Access to services*

In spite of serious problems concerning educational inequalities resulting in a high differentiation of student aptitude achieved during education and unequal access of disabled children to education, no efforts were made in 2006 to equalise educational chances of the pupils. Accessibility of educational institutions for preschool children did not improve, and the obligatory education at school starts too late (only at the age of seven). All the time inadequate number of disabled children goes to integration schools and classes, neither any solution were introduced to improve access to integration education and transportation of disabled children and to prepare school teachers to conduct classes with disabled children (comp. First Semester Report).

A significant social problem is constituted by the lack of access to social services of adequate quality, especially in the area of prevention. National Action Plan on Social Inclusion, adopted by the Government in 2006 refers to the local services development programmes. Since many tasks related to the providing of social services remain in the competence of local self-government (gminas and poviats), central administration executes programmes to support local self-government units in implementation of their tasks. It applies to such programmes as:

- Self-government units support programme to build a local child and family care system, which is aimed at assisting dysfunctional families, and an integrated system of care for children deprived of parental care<sup>34</sup>;

<sup>33</sup> Rozporządzenie Rady Ministrów z dnia 18 lipca 2006 r.w sprawie wysokości dochodu rodziny albo dochodu osoby uczącej się stanowiących podstawę ubiegania się o zasiłek rodzinny oraz wysokości świadczeń rodzinnych [Ruling of the Council of Ministers dated 19th July 2006 on the Amount of the Family Income or Income of Person in Education and on the Amount of the Family Benefits – *in Polish*], Official Journal 06.130.903

<sup>34</sup> This programme, implemented as of 2006, provides for:

- development of day support care and education centres in order to prevent sending children to 24-hour care and education institutions,
- development of professional foster families not related to a child,
- adjustment of care and education institutions to the standards provided by the law,
- assistance for foster-children of care and education institutions and foster families in reaching self-dependence, including support for creation of dwellings.

In 2006, PLN 7,7 million, 2007 - 12,4 million were allocated, and the plan for 2008 is PLN 7,5 million.

- Support programme for creation of social dwellings, shelters and night-shelters, implemented in 2004-2006 as the pilot programme, and subsequently pursuant to the Law adopted in 2006. This programme supports local self-government for up to 20%-40% of their expenditure, dependent on the type of investment<sup>35</sup>;
- National programme of counteracting the family violence<sup>36</sup>;
- Government Programme „Club Room, Work and Practice – social therapy in rural community”, aimed at assistance provided to local self-governments and non-government organisations in the development of prevention of social exclusion threat among children and young people from dysfunctional families<sup>37</sup>.

Local self-governments are interested in the programmes, however, financial instability of the programmes and the limits of financial aid provided to the local self-government result in their insufficient impact on the social services development<sup>38</sup>.

During the years 2005-2006 there had been no significant improvement in the access to services functioning within the framework of the social assistance system. Insignificant improvement took place in the access to some of the social services while the access to other services deteriorated. Number of persons using the crisis intervention centres and specialised counselling increased. Increase was noted in the number of children covered by the care of non-related and professional foster families, while the number of children covered by the assistance of day assistance centres and self-assistance clubs, as well as of the day care and education centres decreased (table 3).

<sup>35</sup> The Act of December 2006 on financial support for creation of social dwellings, protected dwellings, night shelters and accommodation for homeless people. PLN 185 million is allocated for the programme implementation in 2007. Government plans for the next 8 years provide that some 100,000 dwelling units and 20,000 places in night shelters and houses for homeless people will be created in Poland in this way.

<sup>36</sup> This programme, adopted for implementation in 2006 pursuant to the Act of 29 July 2005 regarding counteracting the family violence (Official Journal .05.180.1493) and implemented in cooperation of several ministries and central agencies and local self-governments, provides for the following measures:

- systematic diagnosing of the family violence phenomenon,
- increasing the social sensitivity regarding family violence,
- increasing the competence of services dealing with family violence issues,
- providing professional assistance to the family violence victims,
- influence on the family violence culprits.

Scheduled expenditures of the programme amount up to PLN 133 million in the years 2006-2016.

<sup>37</sup> Programme adopted in 2005. Under this programme, 38 club rooms were created in 2006, where 1493 children participated in the activities. PLN 500,000 was allocated for the programme implementation from the state budget (comp. Informacja z wykonania zadań w ramach Rządowego Programu „Świetlica, Praca i Staż – socjoterapia w środowisku wiejskim” w roku 2006., Ministerstwo Pracy i Polityki Społecznej, <http://www.mpips.gov.pl/index.php?gid=1027>)

<sup>38</sup> In particular, this concerns support programme for creation of social accommodation, „Club Room, Work and Practice – social therapy in rural community” programme, and the programme for local system of care for the child and family.

Table 3. Number of persons using selected services provided by local self-governments (gminas and poviats) within the framework of social aid system in Poland in 2005-2007.

		2005	2006	2007 <sup>a</sup> (1st and 2nd quarter)
Social aid centres		85583	84313	80 686
Support centres		98881	93919	93 266
incl.:	community self-assistance centres	15765	17999	16 699
	day assistance centres	22321	20206	22 270
	night shelters, shelters, houses for homeless people	16143	14218	15234
	eating-houses	17603	18122	17603
	self-assistance clubs	3300	3080	3300
	other support centres	23749	20294	18 160
Protected dwellings		1135	1452	1 232
Crisis intervention centres		57915	59870	43 983
Day care and education centres		52882	44773	41 659
Specialised counselling units		55926	62053	39 078
Foster families		59199	61470	58992
	related	46261	46831	45138
	unrelated	9219	9661	9198
	professional	3814	5034	4619

Source: Data on the basis of statistics of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (<http://www.mpips.gov.pl/index.php?gid=954>); for the first and second quarter of 2007 – initial data.

### *Active integration*

Active integration is one of the three NAP/Inclusion priorities. It applies to a large number of people remaining far from the labour market, due to the long-term unemployment often related to low education and other dysfunctions impeding the return to the labour market. Reduction of unemployment and the possibility to use the ESF support allow to more actively undertake the activation tasks regarding this group of people. ALMP outlays have increased visibly, including the programmes directed to people who are farthest from the labour market: persons who are released from penal institutions, addicts after therapy, disabled people, persons who bring up small children, etc. Nevertheless, the number of people covered by these programmes continues to be small as compared to the needs, and the progress in programme implementation is not adequate.

The development of the measures oriented towards the people excluded from the labour market is supported by the governmental programmes. The Ministry of Labour and Social Policy further supports establishment of the Social Integration Clubs and Centres which provide complex assistance to people farthest from the labour market in order to activate them socially and

vocationally<sup>39</sup>. In 2006, a new programme on support for social cooperatives was introduced<sup>40</sup>. The amendment of the Act on Social Employment allows covering disability persons with the activities of the social cooperatives<sup>41</sup>.

In 2004 new solutions were introduced, which contributed to the development of instruments and institutions carrying out social integration programmes<sup>42</sup>. But the activation measures implemented so far have a limited range. Increase of the effectiveness of activation programmes for people who are at the farthest from the labour market requires an increase of administrative capacities of social services and their coordination and integration. A serious problem, which has to be addressed when it comes to activation, is also constituted by the development of social services directed to people who are at the farthest from the labour market. These problems were addressed in the NAP/Inclusion, nevertheless they have been not solved so far. The number of social workers, employed in the social assistance services grew only slightly in 2006<sup>43</sup>. The Act, whose objective was the introduction of activation services into the social aid services and the development and integration of activation services has not been voted in yet by the Parliament, and its draft raises an extensive criticism by the experts.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Program „Aktywne formy przeciwdziałania wykluczeniu społecznemu” [Programme on active forms of counteracting the social exclusion – *in Polish*], Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, <http://www.mpips.gov.pl/index.php?gid=929>

<sup>40</sup> Program „Wspieranie Rozwoju Spółdzielczości Socjalnej” [Programme on support of development of the social cooperatives – *in Polish*], adopted in 2006, Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, <http://www.mpips.gov.pl/index.php?gid=930>

<sup>41</sup> Ustawa z dnia 15 czerwca 2007 r.o zmianie ustawy o zatrudnieniu socjalnym oraz o zmianie niektórych innych ustaw [Act dated 15 June on amendment of the Act on Social Employment- *in Polish*], Official Journal 07.115.793

<sup>42</sup> These include in particular social contracts, supported employment, social integration centres and clubs and social co-operatives. In addition, under the 2004 law on promotion of employment and labour market institutions, a definition was made of groups of people particularly endangered by exclusion from the labour market and excluded, and special activation instruments were ascribed to these groups, such as intervention works, public works, etc. Also strengthened was the financial support for people excluded from the labour market.

<sup>43</sup> The number of social workers employed in the social assistance services increased in 2006 by some 500 persons, i.e. by 3%. The number of employment agents employed in the labour offices increased only by ca 300 persons (1%).

<sup>44</sup> Compare MPs’ draft of Act regarding the principles of the implementation of social policy, parliamentary paper No. 1548, [www.sejm.gov.pl](http://www.sejm.gov.pl)

## Annex

### List of recent new legislation and key documents

Program polityki rodzinnej [Programme of Family Policy" - in Polish] dated 15th June 2007  
Ministry of Labour and Social Policy <http://www.kobieta.gov.pl/?1,9,223,200703>

Program wspierania jednostek samorządu terytorialnego w budowaniu lokalnego systemu opieki nad dzieckiem i rodzinie [Support Programme for Self-government Units to Build a Local Child and Family Care system, which is aimed at assisting dysfunctional families, and an integrated system of care for children Deprived of Parental Care – *in Polish*], Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, Warsaw 2006, <http://www.mpips.gov.pl/index.php?gid=980>

Krajowy program przeciwdziałania przemocy w rodzinie [National Programme of Counteracting the Family Violence – *in Polish*], Decision of the Council of Ministers dated 25th September 2006, <http://www.mps.gov.pl/index.php?gid=990>

Program „Wspieranie Rozwoju Spółdzielczości Socjalnej” [Programme on Support of Development of the Social Cooperatives – *in Polish*], adopted in 2006, Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, <http://www.mpips.gov.pl/index.php?gid=930>

Program dla Elektroenergetyki [Programme for Electric Power Industry – in Polish], Ministry of Economy, 2006, <http://www.mg.gov.pl/NR/rdonlyres/BCA05C75-4732-42A0-9E73-B2858319EB92/18485/Programdlael2.pdf>

Projekt Ustawy o zasadach prowadzenia polityki społecznej [Draft Act on Principle of the Social Policy Implemenation - *in Polish*], <http://orka.sejm.gov.pl/proc5.nsf/opisy/1548.htm>

Projekt ustawy o emeryturach pomostowych [Draft of Bridging Pensions Act] dated 27th April 2007 Ministry of Labour and Social Policy - in Polish, <http://www.mps.gov.pl/bip/download/projekt%20ustawy%20z%2027%20kwietnia%2007%20pomostowe.pdf>

Projekt ustawy o świadczeniach ze środków gromadzonych w otwartych funduszach emerytalnych oraz o zakładach emerytalnych [Draft law on Benefits from the Funds Gathered in Open Pension Funds and Pension Establishments –*in Polish*], dated 24th September 2007, Ministry of Labour and Social Policy. [http://www.mps.gov.pl/bip/download/ofe\\_260907.pdf](http://www.mps.gov.pl/bip/download/ofe_260907.pdf)

Rozporządzenie Ministra Pracy i Polityki Społecznej z dnia 2 marca 2007 r.w sprawie szczegółowych warunków prowadzenia przez publiczne służby zatrudnienia usług rynku pracy [Ruling by Minister of Labour and Social Policy on Specific Conditions of Providing Labour Market Services by Public Employment Office – *in Polish*] dated 2nd March 2007, Official Journal 07.47.315.

Rozporządzenie Ministra Pracy i Polityki Społecznej z dnia 2 marca 2007 r.w sprawie w sprawie standardów usług rynku pracy [Ruling by Minister of Labour and Social Policy on Labour Market Service Standards – *in Polish*], dated 2nd March 2007, Official Journal 07.47.314.

Ustawa z dnia 15 czerwca 2007 o zmianie ustawy o systemie ubezpieczeń społecznych oraz niektórych innych ustaw [Act dated on 15th June 2007 on Amendment of the Act on the Social Insurance System and some other acts – *in Polish*] Official Journal, 07.115.792.

Ustawa z dnia 8 grudnia 2006 o o finansowym wsparciu tworzenia lokali socjalnych, mieszkań chronionych, noclegowni i domów dla bezdomnych [Act dated 8th December 2006 on Financial Support for Establishment of Social Dwellings, Sheltered Housing, Night Shelters and Homes for the Homeless – *in Polish*], Official Journal 06.251.1844.

Ustawa z dnia 7 września 2007 r.o zmianie ustawy o emeryturach i rentach z Funduszu Ubezpieczeń Społecznych [Act dated 7th September 2007 on Amendment of Act on Old-age and Disability Pensions from Social Insurance Fund –in Polish], <http://www.sejm.gov.pl>

Ustawa z dnia 15 czerwca 2007 r.o zmianie ustawy o zatrudnieniu socjalnym oraz o zmianie niektórych innych ustaw [Act dated 15 June on Amendment of the Act on Social Employment- *in Polish*], Official Journal 07.115.793.