



Warsaw, 23-09-2024 r.

COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

Marcin Wiącek

VII.7031.21.2023.AT

Mr Niels Fenger

The Danish Parliamentary Ombudsman

Gammeltorv 22

DK-1457 Copenhagen K

Dear Mr Fenger,

I am writing to inform you that for the last two years the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Republic of Poland (RPO) has received complaints from applicants for higher education programmes in Denmark. They have experienced difficulties due to the lack of coordination between the date of the announcement of the results of the matriculation examination and the issuing of certificates, annexes and result information to the examinees, set by the Director of the Central Examination Board (CKE) in Poland, and the application deadline at Optagelse.dk.

According to the notice of the Polish authorities of 20 August 2024 on the eighth-grade examination and the matriculation examination schedule in 2025¹, the situation is similar in the school year 2024/2025. The date of issuing certificates is 8 July 2025, while all documentation must be uploaded into the Danish application website before 5 July, 12 noon. As a result, the Commissioner for Human Rights expects more

¹ <https://bip.cke.gov.pl/arttykul/270/1881/harmonogram-komunikaty-i-informacje-w-2025-r> (access:17.09.2024).

complaints from citizens at the beginning of next year, when high school graduates will be making final decisions on their further education.

In 2023 and 2024, the RPO sent general addresses to the Polish authorities, in which he called for changes and emphasised the rights deriving from citizenship of the European Union, including the right to move and settle freely in the territory of the Member States and the right to educate in any Member State². In response to the Commissioner's first address of 6 February 2023, the Director of the Central Examination Board informed that changing the timetable was not possible, but the CKE offered to issue substitute certificates to those planning to study abroad. The Director of the CKE explained that a number of factors had been taken into account when drawing up the exam schedule. However, they do not include the application deadlines at foreign universities, as these vary.

Last year, the RPO addressed both the Minister of Education and the Director of the Central Examination Board in this regard. It turned out that the district examination boards were not informed that the adopted solution, i.e. information on the result of the matriculation exam, issued at the request of the examinee instead of a proper certificate, had not been recognised by any foreign university. However, based on information received by the RPO, it appears that applying for admission to an English taught higher education programme in Denmark required that Polish candidates take extraordinary measures (e.g. exchanging many e-mails with the chosen university, searching for translation services in the very short time between receiving the certificate and the closing of the Danish admission website). Undoubtedly, it involved a lot of uncertainty and stress. I assume that next year's high school graduates will also be taken by surprise when they realise that their plans to study in Denmark face formal obstacles.

It should be noted that during the admission process, universities in Denmark make exceptions for IB and EB diploma holders, which in 2024 were issued on 8 July. Some universities also set 8 July as the deadline for sending additional documentation. Despite the concessions offered by Danish universities, applicants from Poland may feel uneasy about having to follow complicated and not always clear procedures.

² <https://bip.brpo.gov.pl/pl/content/rpo-matury-termin-wydawanie-studia-zagranica-cke-odpowiedz-kolejne>, <https://bip.brpo.gov.pl/pl/content/rpo-maturzysci-zagranica-rekrutacja-terminy-men-cke-odp> (access:17.09.2024).

In view of the above, I would like to kindly ask you if you have been informed of the problem indicated in this letter. I would also appreciate it if you could let me know whether people from other EU and EEA countries have encountered similar obstacles and whether you as the Ombudsman see any scope for action in order to improve their situation. Any help from you would be greatly appreciated.

Yours sincerely

Marcin Wiącek

Rzecznik Praw Obywatelskich

/- Issued and signed electronically/