

Why is it beneficial to hire an IT specialist from Poland?

EBOOK





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Polish IT industry

In this chapter, you will find out:

- what is Poland's specialization in the IT industry?
- what is Poland's potential for further development?
- how the Polish IT industry looks compared to other countries of Central and Eastern Europe?
- which IT specialists are there in Polish resources?
- where Polish IT staff gets its education?





As a member of the European Union since 2004, Poland has successfully modernized its economy and joined the ranks of Europe's most rapidly developing countries. In recent years, venture capital investments in the ICT industry have skyrocketed and Polish companies have made a splash around the world.

According to the report "Prospects for the development of the Polish ICT industry until 2025", which was prepared at the request of the Ministry of Development and Technology, a state agency that, among other things, promotes the Polish economy, Poland ranks fifth among European countries in terms of the number of registered companies in the ICT sector.

It plays an important role in the country's economic growth and is a source of high-quality jobs. Polish companies account for about 7.6% of all companies operating in this sector in the European Union. The number of Polish ICT companies is still growing, which suggests that Poland's position on the international scene will strengthen. Moreover, the growing number of companies in the ICT sector means an increase in the industry's potential to create innovative solutions of international importance.

Poland's ICT sector is doing well – It's growing at an average annual rate of more than 8.6%. This is the highest growth rate in Europe. In addition, Poland ranks sixth in Europe in terms of the production volume of the ICT sector.

According to Emerging Europe's experts, Poland is an ICT powerhouse of emerging Europe. Strengths of the Polish ICT industry include custom software development and outsourcing services. However, it is the production of computer games that is cited as a Polish specialty. This is evidenced by the popularity of **The Witcher series** (CD Projekt Red), **Sniper series** (CI Games), **Dead Island**, **Dying Light** (Techland) and **This war of mine** (11bit Studios).



It can even be said that in the category of games, Poland has overtaken other emerging markets and is keeping pace with the world's most prominent players. Approximately 500 Polish games are released annually. Companies offering services related to games, such as 3D digital animation, are also strengthening their position.

Another area where Poland stands out on the European scene is its startup ecosystem. Apart from Allegro or CD Projekt, many Polish startups have made a splash on the international scene. According to a recent report by PFR Ventures and Inovo Venture Partners, Poland will see a 70% increase in startup funding to €477 million by 2020. There are dozens of incubators and accelerators for startups in Polish cities. The largest is Reaktor X in Warsaw, but similar ones operate in other major cities.

The "Future of IT" report by Emerging Europe, a company that publishes up-to-date information on business, economics, politics and culture in Central and Eastern Europe, identifies Poland as the largest exporter of ICT services in all of emerging Europe. Exports will grow from just €4.8 billion in 2016 to €8.2 billion in 2020. Poland also has a large talent pool of ICT professionals – 445,750, or 2.7% of the total workforce.

Poland is one of the leading countries in the EU in the area of skilled ICT personnel, and other activities to stimulate the supply of skilled IT professionals are bearing fruit. According to European Commission's data, the number of IT professionals in Poland is expected to rise 18 percent, far faster than in Spain (12 percent) and the United Kingdom (10 percent).

The Polish resource of specialists in the ICT industry constitutes mainly of young and highly educated people.



According to the report "IT Community Research 2022" published by Bulldogjob, a website with job offers in the IT industry operating on the Polish market, people aged 25-30 are the largest percentage group in the IT industry - they make up about 34% of the IT market. Every year more and more people enter the market, mainly IT graduates, the percentage of newcomers in the industry is about 16%. About 73% of ICT professionals have a university degree – most of them with a master's degree. The vast majority (85%) majored in IT or science.

According to the data of the Ministry of Education and Science, in the academic year 2022/2023, almost 430,000 students were admitted to the first year of bachelor's and master's degree programs. Nearly 292,000 students began their studies at public universities, including nearly 72,000 people admitted to graduate studies. Nearly 138,000 candidates were admitted to non-public universities, including nearly 32,000 people admitted to second degree studies.

Other statistics indicate that 11 percent of people aged 20-29 in Poland have recently graduated from university, and 2.2 percent of them are science graduates. Poland ranks fourth in the European Union in this respect.



Technical informatics and telecommunications are among the most popular disciplines chosen by students, and computer science is one of the most frequently chosen fields of study - in the academic year 2022/2023, over 44,000 students will start studying in this field.

The most prestigious Polish public universities teaching computer science are Warsaw University of Technology and Stanislaw Staszic's AGH University of Science and Technology in Krakow.

It is estimated that the vast majority of IT professionals (about 73%) hold higher education degrees, most of them being master's degrees. The vast majority, i.e. 85% of people, chose to study IT or natural sciences.

Education abroad is becoming increasingly popular. According to the statistics of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, about 50,000 students study at foreign universities. Polish students most often choose universities in Great Britain, Germany, the Netherlands, Denmark, Italy, the United States and France. The most popular field of study is law, followed by computer science, especially Internet of Things engineering and artificial intelligence.

Not only IT students and graduates find employment in IT companies, but also graduates of technical faculties: econometrics, automation and robotics, and management and production engineering. People specializing in IT often also have legal or business training related to business processes in areas such as accounting, human resources and payroll, or logistics.

ERITS Expert: What industries can IT specialists be recruited from? Is retraining or upskilling a difficult process?

There are several possible opportunities. First, the current economic situation results in creating new candidates who can be introduced to the world of IT solutions. The precarious situation of teachers of scientific subjects such as mathematics, physics, or computer science provides a very good base of future IT specialists with preliminary preparation for such a role.

Another possibility is reskilling of the specialists in the field of data analysis and system operation. This is a good source for creating new system testers and data analysts, which is also an excellent opportunity for further professional development.

Last but not least, it is important to build a new base of specialists. In that case, it is necessary to work closely with universities in order to create profiled courses that will provide knowledge to the new IT professionals. From a strategic point of view, this is the most important direction to take, because what we do today will bear fruit in the long term

And how does ChatGPT answer this question?

Training or retraining – upskilling IT specialists can be a difficult process. It depends on individual learning styles, availability, and company resources. However, many companies recognize the value of having a diverse, multi-skilled workforce and are investing in the professional development of their employees.

There are many online courses, bootcamps, and certification programs that can help IT professionals gain new skills and knowledge. In addition, many companies offer in-house training programs and mentoring opportunities.

It is hard to argue with this statement....

Paweł Olejniczak
Board Member, VP Sales
RITS Professional Services





Availability and competences of Polish programmers

In this chapter you will find out:

- what is the availability of IT specialists in Poland and Central and Eastern Europe?
- what are the strengths of employees from Poland?
- how they supplement their knowledge and improve their competences?



According to the European Commission, only in Poland has the number of IT professionals increased by 15% over the past four years (from 393,000 to 452,000) and will grow by 18% over the next four years, much faster than in Spain (+12%) or the UK (+10%). However, one of the main factors hindering the development of the ICT industry in Poland is still the shortage of qualified employees. Simultaneously, statistics show that there is a shortage of tens of thousands of programmers in the European Union, and this figure is increasing annually.

According to the study "Prospects for the development of the Polish ICT industry until 2025", the most in demand are programmers experienced in Java, .NET, C++, Objective C, HTML, CSS, Javascript, Python. Retraining of a programmer from one programming language to another is definitely easier and cheaper than learning a completely new programming language. However, from the employer's point of view, the situation on the IT labor market will deteriorate in the coming years. The number of students and university graduates is negatively affected by demographic trends. Employers are looking for new, flexible forms of employment that allow them to make better use of freelancers.

The authors of the report "IT Specialists in Central and Eastern Europe" prepared for No Fluff Jobs, a Polish portal providing job offers in the IT industry, argue that individual countries in the region have different resources of specialists. Back-end developers are the largest group - one in five IT professionals in all countries, and over 30% in the Czech Republic. Slovakia and Hungary also have a similar percentage of fullstacks, and Ukraine has the highest percentage of front-end developers in the region (13%), and there are as many testers as fullstacks. Testing is also a dominant category in Poland (3rd place on the podium, higher than front-end), although another phenomenon can be noticed there.

Poland is the only country among those surveyed where, right after the "iron IT four" (backend, fullstack, frontend, testing), there are not admins (as in other countries), but two other, more strongly represented specializations: Project Management and Support.

A large percentage of backend and fullstack IT professionals has a significant impact on technology skills. The most common in Central and Eastern Europe are SQL (on average 43.5 percent of professionals declared knowledge of it), JavaScript (38.9 percent), Java (32.2 percent). On average, 27.6 percent of IT professionals from the region claim to know Python (in Hungary it is 32.7 percent) and its position will only strengthen. As one can observe, the knowledge of technologies in Central and Eastern Europe does not differ from global standards, and even shows certain tendency of specialization in our region. Globally, Python (48.2 percent) is already ahead of SQL (47.1 percent) and Java (35.4 percent), and JavaScript is the most common technology, with almost 65 percent of respondents mentioning it.

RITS Expert: How has the availability of IT programmers in Poland been affected by the war in Ukraine and the resulting population migration?

After Russia's attack on Ukraine, almost 70% of IT specialists moved to western Ukraine and continue their work there. 2% of specialists joined the active defense of Ukraine and about 16% of IT specialists emigrated abroad, which amounts to about 45-46,000 people, mostly women, according to official data compiled by the IT Ukraine Association. How has this affected Poland?

The migration of Ukrainian IT programmers to Poland has contributed to the dynamic development of the Polish IT market. This positively affects the image of Poland in the European and international arena.

The investors consider our region as one of the most interesting for opening their next SSC (Shared Services Center). On the other hand, it negatively affects the already limited pool of available IT developers in Poland. And this... translates into rising costs for employers.

Michał Jaremek
Board Member,
RITS Professional Services





Knowledge of English is also a strong asset among professionals from Poland. On average, 70 percent of industry representatives from Central and Eastern Europe speak English at least at the communicative level (B2). This indicator is the highest in Poland, where the minimum level B2 is reported by 84.7% of respondents. Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary are also the countries with the highest levels of proficiency. In each of these countries, one out of ten professionals declared their knowledge of English at the C2/Native level.

In addition to universities offering majors in computer science and related fields, informal education is also present in Poland, with coding bootcamps in Warsaw and other major cities. High-level training in programming languages is also available on the education market, both on-site and online.



Rules for employing specialists from Poland and expectations regarding relocation

In this chapter you will find out:

- how IT specialists from Poland perceive work?
- do they want to work for foreign companies?
- how many of them want to work remotely?
- do they consider changing their place of residence in their professional career?
- whether they prefer B2B employment or employment contract?
- what non-wage benefits do they prefer?
- what is the level of salaries in the IT industry in Poland compared to other European countries?





Money, people and development are the three most important aspects of work for Polish IT specialists. As Bulldogjob's "IT Community Survey 2022" showed, the priorities of developers are changing. In 2021, development was the most important in the IT industry (according to 34% of respondents), followed by money, which was confirmed by 24% of respondents. In 2022, money was identified as the most important by 26 percent of respondents. One in ten respondents chose a quiet job, and slightly fewer respondents chose the ability to work remotely and balance work and family responsibilities, as well as stability.

This is related to the factors that IT employees consider when choosing an employer. For years, the most important factors have been salary (82%) and the opportunity to grow (including interesting projects). The third most important factor is the atmosphere at work (mentioned by 52 percent of respondents). However, 91 percent of survey participants believe that it is better pay that motivates them to change jobs, and 25 percent in that case cite opportunities for advancement. The research also shows that 29 percent of respondents are considering changing jobs in the near future. The vast majority of employees value the stability that has been observed in the Polish labor market in recent months, regardless of the industry.

Interestingly, 60 percent of IT professionals are not willing to relocate for another job. 35 percent would consider it, if the offer would be financially attractive, 20 percent if the location would be attractive, and 12 percent are willing to change their place of residence to work on an interesting project. On the other hand, 6.2 percent of respondents said that relocation is not a problem for them, and 2.5 percent of IT workers are very willing to change their place of residence, or even want to relocate.

Which place is considered the most attractive to relocate to? For 34 percent of IT specialists, it doesn't matter. Another 34 percent said a foreign country within the European Union, and 8.6 percent indicated a country outside the European Union. However, interest in relocating to Europe has declined recently. Perhaps this is due to the fact that in recent years more and more international brands have opened their branches in Poland, so it can be expected that the labor market will be dominated by companies with foreign capital.

RITS expert: How to convince an IT specialist from Poland to relocate? Which countries and destinations are the most attractive for Poles?

The relocation of IT professionals is an issue that has been on the minds of both employers and IT professionals for several years. The IT sector has grown rapidly over the years, allowing professionals to continue their personal development and take on new professional challenges. For many programmers, who make up a large part of the IT field, the moment of relocation is the perfect time to grow, advance, and improve their standard of living. It can be a great stimulus to get to know a completely different way of working, new projects, as well as working with the best international professionals in a given technological field.

In addition to all the benefits of relocation, it is important to remember that professionals consider two things as the most important when deciding to relocate – increased income and company support with relocation formalities such as renting an apartment.

Of course, for many people, relocation can also be the beginning of the combination of a professional passion with interests focused on a particular country. In our experience, the most common relocation destinations today are the United States, Sweden, Switzerland and Germany. The main criterion for choosing a location is the financial attractiveness of the position.

Magdalena Szumielewicz
Delivery and Client Success Manager,
RITS Professional Services





Currently, 54% of employees work for Polish companies. 41% of employees work for a foreign company having a branch in Poland. Only 5 percent work for a foreign company that does not have a branch in Poland. Large companies dominate. Companies with more than 200 employees employ about 60% of the workforce. They provide greater stability, job security, professional development and promotion. A good choice for IT specialists are foreign companies setting up their branches in Poland. They offer a friendly working atmosphere, facilitate integration and allow you to build close relationships with colleagues. Most importantly, they offer a good salary and benefits package, the opportunity to work on international projects, and access to clients around the world. Many foreign companies also offer employment in a branch office in another country.

The most common form of employment chosen by programmers is the employment contract. However, over the years it has been observed that the B2B contract is slowly gaining popularity. It even turns out that people in senior, C-level or team leader positions are more often employed on a B2B basis. However, the salary difference between these job levels is only 1,800 PLN net on the invoice. The biggest increase in income is recorded in the case of promotion from a junior to a mid-level position, as the salary increases almost twice. The B2B contract remains an advantageous and often preferred form of employment. Employers often encourage candidates to choose this form of employment by offering them more attractive remuneration than their counterparts under an employment contract.

As many as 84% of IT specialists perform their professional duties remotely, and more and more companies in the IT industry are allowing this form of work. The future of work in the IT industry is, first of all, the ability to choose the place of work. This creates an opportunity for recruitment of Polish IT specialists by foreign companies, even those not based in Poland. The main condition for success is the organization of appropriate support and, above all, efficient communication within the team. Despite the advantages of working remotely, people still need relationships that can be built through interactions with team members, not only as part of business contacts, but also through informal online meetings.

RITS Expert: How did the attitude towards remote work change among Polish IT specialists after the COVID-19 pandemic?

Pandemic has forced a shift to remote work on an unprecedented scale. IT professionals in particular have come to appreciate the benefits of working from home or anywhere in the world, and most of them are eager to maintain this model of collaboration. They have been quick to recognize the opportunities that remote working offers them. They are not limited to working with companies that are already present in the local market. By choosing to work remotely, where location doesn't matter, they can work with companies in remote areas of Poland as well as around the world.

They also point to the benefits of working remotely in terms of maintaining work efficiency and increasing productivity, as there are no distractions. Of course, the time savings associated with the daily commute to the office is also an important element. At the same time, experts say that the ability to maintain remote work reduces the likelihood of wanting to take on a project change.

There is, of course, a group of people in the IT industry who are eager to return to work from an office or hybrid model, but they are far fewer in number. The motivations they mention are mainly the inability to create comfortable space and working conditions at home and the need for direct contact with colleagues.

Aneta Soboń

Professional Services Consultant,
RITS Professional Services





According to Bulldogjob's survey respondents, as many as 50% of employees need good communication with the team. Equally important is the ability to divide time flexibly between work and home responsibilities. IT professionals also expect co-financing of workplace equipment (44%) and utilities, such as electricity, Internet (31%).

Non-wage benefits are also important incentives for employers. The most desired benefits are private health care (64%), vocational training and courses (50%), a car for personal use (32%), and language courses or co-financing of education (32%). In the last year, in comparison to 2021, the interest in private life insurance has increased, while as many as 26 percent of respondents prefer an additional PLN150 to their salary instead of a benefit.

According to the Ministry of Development and Technology, labor costs in the ICT industry in Poland are 45-70 percent lower than in Western European countries. In 2014, Polish companies transferred only EUR1,043 million to their employees. Although this is an increase of 27.9 percent compared to 2010, it is still relatively low. Salaries in Poland account for 7.24 percent of total wages in the German ICT sector, 8.06 percent in the British sector, or 11.1 percent in France. Total wages in the sector, in addition to relevant information about the amount of money flowing from the sector to the economy through people employees, is also the basis for estimating the average level of remuneration in the sector. In Poland in 2014 it amounted to EUR1,043. This is a very low result, as only Bulgaria recorded a lower value among the countries surveyed. At the same time, the average salary in Germany was EUR4,048, while in Norway it was EUR6,084.



The analysis of salaries and salary expenditures in the ICT sector clearly shows that the compensation level in Poland is significantly lower than in other countries. On the one hand, this situation is a significant competitive advantage for Poland, as it leads to a reduction in the costs of companies in the ICT sector. On the other hand, it means that the amount of money transferred from the sector to the Polish economy continues to attract foreign investors, who take advantage of access to qualified employees.

According to the latest data, the salaries of IT specialists are regularly growing – in 2022, the salaries of specialists and managers in this industry increased by 34 percent in comparison to last year. Currently, the average salary of a programmer is PLN18,843 gross, which makes them one of the best paid professionals in Poland. At the same time, there is still a shortage of IT specialists, which will certainly lead to further salary increases in the future.

The website [justgeek.it](https://www.justgeek.it), dedicated to the Polish IT industry, reports that in March 2022 the highest paid employees were specialists in the field of security and architecture at all levels. A junior architect could expect to earn an average of PLN20,000 per month, and seniors could expect more than PLN26,000. Security specialists, on the other hand, earned PLN18,500 (junior), PLN21,785 (middle) and PLN25,914 (senior).



RITS Professional Services

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Sources:

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contact@rits.center

www.rits.center

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