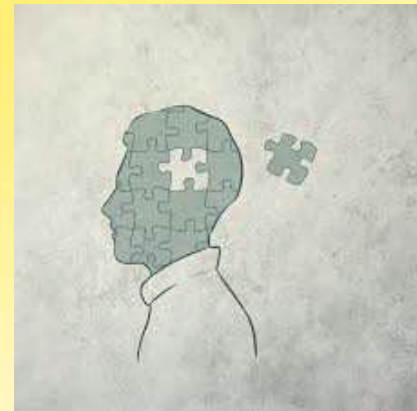


Mental Comfort and Sport

*Research
Polish team*



State of Youth Mental Health in Poland

Challenges

- High rates of suicide attempts and mental health issues (among the highest in Europe).
- Overcrowded psychiatric wards, long waiting times, lack of specialists.
- Long-term underfunding, system focused more on physical than mental health.
- Pandemic and remote learning worsened existing problems.
- Social media overuse and cyberbullying as major risk factors.

Government Response

- Funding for child and youth psychiatry quadrupled since 2018.
- Comprehensive reform launched in 2020.
- New multi-level care system: local counseling centers, specialized clinics, improved hospital conditions.

Future Directions

- More efforts needed to address the crisis fully.
- Stronger focus on prevention and early intervention.

Sport and Physical Activity as Support

In Poland, physical activity is promoted as an important element of supporting youth mental health. This includes mandatory physical education in schools, guidance from teachers, and creating a supportive environment for daily activity. Local governments finance sports and recreation, with growing emphasis on recreational activity rather than only competitive sports. Digital tools such as mobile apps, wearables, and AI-based solutions provide personalized training, mood tracking, and stress reduction features. New technologies like virtual and augmented reality also open promising opportunities for improving youth mental well-being.



Young People's Barriers



- Lack of motivation and low self-esteem.
- Fear of judgment from other teens.
- Heavy school workload and limited free time.
 - Unequal access to sport facilities (urban vs rural areas).
 - Costs of extracurricular activities and sports equipment.

Programmes and Initiatives in Poland

- Active Schools MultiSport (MultiSport Foundation): sports activities in schools and fitness clubs for youth aged 12–19.
- “Sport for All Children” (Ministry of Sport): aims to equalize access to sport and promote a healthy lifestyle.
- Fund for Students’ Sports Activities: supports various activities, e.g., the “I Know How to Swim” program.
- School Sports Club (SKS): additional extracurricular sports activities.
- “Club” Program: co-financing of local sports clubs for children and youth.

European and research projects:

- HOORAY: collects best practices promoting mental well-being through physical activity.
- Education Through Movement (V4Sport Foundation): integrates movement with the learning process.

Thank you for your attention!!

