

Country Profile Poland



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Health Psychology in Poland

The main national organization of health psychologists in Poland is the Health Psychology Section of the Polish Psychological Association (HPS-PPA) with 58 members (as of May 2006), 9 of them are also EHPS members. The HPS-PPA evolved from the Somatic Patient Section affiliated with the PPA since 1983. A major event for Polish psychologists was the introduction of the *Act on the Profession of Psychologist*, in force since 1 January 2006 – the first national legislation of the profession, now vigorously implemented by psychologists.

Education and Training

Health psychology is on the curricula of many Polish universities, as a specialization during undergraduate studies, an optional course, or as part of post-diploma studies. Health psychology is taught at the following major universities: the University of Warsaw, Jagiellonian University in Cracow, the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznan, The Catholic University of Lublin, the Silesian University in Katowice, the Universities of Gdansk, Wroclaw, Lodz, Opole, as well as the Warsaw School of Social Psychology (SWPS) and its Division in Sopot. The first in Poland obligatory courses in health psychology are to be introduced in SWPS.

Research Areas

Research in Poland covers all major areas of health psychology, including stress appraisal and coping after myocardial infarction, social support, coping and health, spirituality and health, health behavior, psychooncology, post-traumatic stress disorder, meaning of life and health, sense of coherence and other personal resources and quality of life.

International Collaborations

1. A Multicenter Study “Person – Stress – Health” carried out by Czech, German and Polish groups, coordinated by Harry Schroeder from the University of Leipzig (Germany), with Helena Sek, and Mojmir Svoboda from the Masaryk University in Brno.
2. Aleksandra Luszczynska represents Poland in the multi-center research program “Adolescents Across Cultures” headed by Bettina Piko from Hungary.
3. Aleksandra is a Secretary of the IAAP – Health Psychology Division. She was a Visiting Professor at the Freie Universität in Berlin, and presently is a Senior Lecturer at the Sussex University, UK.
4. E. Gruszczynska is chairing the Local Organizing Committee of a strategic meeting of the Central Eastern European Behavioural Medicine Network (CEEBM-NET) to be held in Warsaw, 28 August, 2006.
5. H. Sek and A. Luszczynska collaborate with the Editorial Board of the Journal *Stress, Anxiety and Coping*; I. Heszen is a Consulting Editor to the *International Journal of Psychology* and a PPA delegate to the IUPsyS.

Participation in the EHPS Conferences

All the EHPS conferences are attended by a numerous group of Polish health psychologists, and conference reports are regularly published in Polish professional journals. The HPS-PPA has the honor of co-organizing the 20th Conference of the EHPS “Social change and new challenges for health psychology” Warsaw, August 30th - September 2nd 2006.

National Conferences on Health Psychology

National conferences on health psychology are organized annually by the HPS-PPA alternately in the mountains and at the seaside. Each conference is followed by a collective publication of the best thematic contributions (see below). Moreover, annual meetings of the HPS-PPA are usually supplemented by thematic workshops, and additional thematic health psychology conferences are organized almost yearly by universities or research institutes.