

Poland

Country Overview

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Country name

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Introduction

In the 20th century, the political system, and the form of the government of Poland was changing constantly, which lasted into the early 21st century. Presently, the educational system of Poland is characterised by a certain dualism, which can be observed in other countries as well, but interestingly, this division reflects the assumptions of the financing, infrastructure, the conditions of the employees, as well as the supervising organs. In Poland, nurseries (żłobki) and kids' clubs (kluby dziecięce) offer care and education for children under 3 years of age, and who are at least 20 weeks of age. As it can be seen in practise, very few children below 1 year of age enter nursery care. These institutes are being overseen by the Ministry for Family, Labour and Social Policy, and the local communes. There are several very strict conditions and requirements for anyone wishing to run or head a nursery. Kindergarten points offer care and education for children from 3 to 6 years of age. In Poland, children are supposed to go to elementary school by 7 years of age, unless the parents want to have an early admission for a child who is 6 years of age, and has undergone at least one year of kindergarten as preparations.

Since February 14th, 2017, the legal act (Dz.U. poz 977, ze zm.) that regulates the base of the kindergarten educational programme was implemented by the Ministry of Education. Decree on the base program for kindergarten education, mentions in two points goals regarding to social-emotional competences, namely;

1. shaping emotional resilience in children so that they can rationally cope with new and difficult situation, including a capacity to ease up handling of stress and failure;
2. developing social competencies that are necessary for children to establish appropriate relationships with adults.

The law in Poland deals separately with the youngster's social and emotional methodologies and directives. The directives read as follow: shaping emotional resilience in children so that they can rationally cope with new and difficult situation, including a capacity to ease up handling of stress and failure; developing social competencies that are necessary for children to establish appropriate relationships with adults; shaping children's sense of social belonging (to family, peer group and national community) and a patriotic attitude.

Development

We do not know about a prevention and intervention programme developed or adopted at the national level to develop social and emotional skills or learning.

In 2016, the Polish government launched the programme "Rodzina 500+ (Family 500+)", with the understanding that the investment into the early childhood education system and by providing support for families, especially those from socially disadvantaged groups, will increase the demographics in these aforementioned areas. Within the framework of this programme, many families received financial support. According to the European Platform for Investing in Children (EPIC) evaluations, the Family 500+ Programme boosted birth rates in Poland, and in addition to this, contributes to the improvement of better living conditions of large families, and by that, reducing child poverty.

In the formal education system, the ART, Aggression Replacement Training Programme, was successfully adapted in Poland and conducted by the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznan, as well as in the school inspectorate of Wielkopolska. During this programme, about 1000 kindergarten principals took part in training that was focused on the role of social emotional skills development in the preschool system.

To make the implementation of the ART more successful, the programme was implemented further in Warsaw by the Amity Institute Train the Trainers, who also trained the Polish Municipal Guard Officers.

In the Newsletter of European Platform for Investing in Children (EPIC) informs us, that as a part of international programme, Zippy's Friends Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) programme was conducted in Poland.

Zippy's Friends is a programme that aims to help children between 6 to 8 years of age cope better with everyday adversities and prevent psychological problems (EPIC, 2021). This SEL programme includes 24 meetings on different themes such as: feelings, communication, relationships, conflict resolution etc.

Assessment

The above mentioned programmes, Zippy's Friends and ART, have been measured in the long term effectivity in other countries, however, they have not been measured in Poland as of yet (Bowles et al. 2017).

Bowles et al. (2017) pin-pointed the following facilitators and barriers to the delivery of SEL programmes in Poland:

Barriers:

the general crisis of education in Poland: the people questioning the organisation of the education system or the mission and the status of the teaching status;

the value of SEL Programmes is not yet understood by authorities;

the lack of an integrated and holistic vision of education.

Facilitators:

increasing consciousness for the importance of SEL among the parents and professionals.

According to the Bowles et al. (2017), recommendations for the future of SEL Programs in Poland to develop the social-emotional competencies will be challenging since "the environmental factors and patterns of activity introduced by global pop culture are not optimal conditions for social-emotional development".

Intervention

Bowles et al. (2017) urged, planned and controlled the intervention of SEL, through the mainstream education system, the explicit definition of the importance of SEL into the national curriculum, and further training for teachers and conducting more scientific research in this field is also necessary.

References

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