

National report for Poland

By Lucyna Kirwil

Contribution to the European report:

Stald, G. and Haddon, L. (2008) *Cross-Cultural Contexts of Research: Factors Influencing the Study of Children and the Internet in Europe*. A report for the EC Safer Internet Plus Programme, 2008.

Universities and Disciplines

There are:

- (1) 18 state universities (PhD studies more than in 6 subjects)
- (2) 15 so called adjective state universities (up to 6 subjects for PhD studies)
- (3) 19 technical state universities of economy
- (5) 11 medical state universities
- (6) 6 state universities of education
- (7) 46 other state high school offering PhD in some fields (arts, theology, agriculture)
- (8) 120 non-public schools with higher education

Thus there are 33 universities labelled "universities", but there are more schools offering education at the university level, including PhD Studies. There are 17 departments of Media Studies. Media is always combined with journalism and called Mass Communication. New Media does not exist as a separate department although there are courses covering some studies related to the internet within Mass Communication

National Data Collected

The Office of Statistics collects data every year. There are no children in this study – it starts with those over 18 years old. Data on the internet are also collected by the Gemius Megapanel for the company "Polskie Badania Internetu" (Polish Research on the Internet). There are occasional studies (with representative random samples) for the whole population over 4 years old (where parents are asked about children: TSN OBOP). Another market research company conducts similar studies on adults having children for those aged 15+ (CBOS). There are no longitudinal studies. There are studies which repeat questions (e.g. the Gemius study).

Institutional processes in applying to conduct research

There are no regulations at the national level. From 2008 every academic research grant proposal directed to the Ministry of Science and Higher Education should include approval by an ethics committee. To conduct research with children in schools one now needs the permission of the principal, the parent, the child and ethics committee from the university or higher school from which the grant proposal originates. In practice you cannot be funded for research as a private person even if you put a proposal in.

The Government order on 22nd January 2008 by the Minister for Science and Higher Education said that academic research grant applications for governmental financing (all fields) should be reviewed by 3 reviewers (content problem, value, estimation of cost of the research) and should undergo a ranking order. (Time for realisation: 2 years. Reported every year plus final report). The order states that academic research may be funded from other sources also if it is to be justified. But until now there is no order in other ministries and governmental institutions that regulate research funding.

Pressures to conduct research

There is pressure to research because to remain a professor you have to publish (if not, one becomes a 'lecturer' (teaching only). Up to now, while the primary role of professors is still teaching the time spent on research is not fixed. Recently in 2008 a new rule was introduced aiming to specify how much time should be spent on research.

There is no pressure in the social sciences to cooperate with industry. Industry sometimes approaches universities for research for example. technical departments are sometimes asked to do this, and also management departments.

The Department of Psychology had a large project on people who live in Warsaw. This was requested by the Mayor of Warsaw. Such cases do not happen often. Journalism and media studies are sometimes asked by the Government for consultation responses.

The National Science Foundation is like a research council – it sometimes specifies an area or research and funds research in this field. It is difficult to get money from companies for research, in part because there are no tax exemptions for such 'donations'. At best a company can get a 1% tax exemption if it funds a registered body so for the companies it is not worth it. That said, Volkswagen paid for workshops on game and violent behaviour in Germany.

National Research Traditions

Quantitative research is well established. Polish bi-national sociological studies started in the 1970s (Słomczyński with Melvin Kohn). For instance, Poland participates in international sociological surveys (WVS, EVS, ESS, PGSS. Polish psychologists took part in bi-national longitudinal researches on socio-economic background of social development of youth (Berlin-Warsaw: 1984-1987) and in cross-national studies on impact of TV on children (1980-1982; follow up 1993). Established in collaboration with Robert Zajonc the Institute for Social Studies at Warsaw University is a sister institution of the Institute for Social Research at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, USA. Qualitative research is visible too, for example, there were in-depth interviews for TV companies. There were many (112) research companies in Poland employing ex-academic or academic sociologists and some psychologists:

1. 405 Consulting POZNAŃ
2. 4P research mix WARSZAWA
3. ABC Research WARSZAWA
4. ABM Agencja Badań Marketingowych WARSZAWA
5. ABR SESTA WARSZAWA
6. ACNielsen Polska WARSZAWA
7. AGB Nielsen Media Research WARSZAWA
8. Agencja Ad Hoc WARSZAWA
9. Agencja Badań Rynku Info3S POZNAŃ
10. Agencja Interaktywna netUnion WROCŁAW
11. Agencja Reklamowo-Marketingowa US STUDIO WARSZAWA
12. ALMARES Instytut Doradztwa i Badań Rynku WARSZAWA
13. AMPS Agencja Marketingowa WARSZAWA
14. amr GROUP BIAŁYSTOK
15. Apero Consulting Group POZNAŃ
16. Arando POZNAŃ
17. ARC Rynek i Opinia WARSZAWA
18. ARTTEL Badania Marketingowe Internetu WROCŁAW
19. ASDIC Badania Marketingowe WARSZAWA
20. ASM Centrum Badań i Analiz Rynku KUTNO
21. BBM Biuro Badań Marketingowych LESZNO
22. BBS Obserwator KRAKÓW
23. BCMM Badania Marketingowe i Szkolenia KATOWICE, WARSZAWA
24. BD Center Consulting RZESZÓW
25. BioStat RYBNIK
26. Biuro Badawczo-Konsultingowe eCentrum JELENIA GÓRA
27. Book Marketing Research ZAWADA
28. Boston International Research Group WARSZAWA
29. BSR-IBROP Instytut Badania Rynku i Opinii Publicznej ŁÓDŹ
30. CBD Conversa Business Development TORUŃ
31. CBOS Centrum Badania Opinii Społecznej WARSZAWA

32. CEM Instytut Badań Rynku i Opinii Publicznej KRAKÓW
33. Centrum Badań Marketingowych INDICATOR WARSZAWA
34. Centrum Badań Marketingowych Test GDYNIA
35. Centrum Badań Stosowanych Ultex Ankieter POZNAŃ
36. CONSUL Centrum Analiz i Doradztwa KATOWICE
37. Creative Marketing Group BIAŁYSTOK
38. DobreBadania RASZYN
39. Dom Badawczy Maison WARSZAWA
40. DP Consulting WARSZAWA
41. ERESTE WARSZAWA
42. Estymator Badania Rynku i Opinii WARSZAWA
43. Expert-Monitor WROCŁAW
44. Favora ŁÓDŹ, WARSZAWA
45. FIELDWORK
46. Gemius WARSZAWA
47. GfK Polonia WARSZAWA
48. h-consulting NAMYSŁÓW
49. HaeReS Research & Consulting Group ŁÓDŹ
50. Holding Profit KRAKÓW
51. HumanGraph WARSZAWA
52. IBP Research KRAKÓW
53. IMAS International WROCŁAW
54. Incognito KRAKÓW
55. inQuiry WARSZAWA
56. Instore Solutions Services Polska WROCŁAW
57. Instytut Badań Marketingowych i Społecznych VRG Strategia KRAKÓW
58. Instytut Eurotest GDAŃSK
59. INSTYTUT GOSPODARKI Wyższej Szkoły Informatyki i Zarządzania RZESZÓW
60. InterActive Agencja Komunikacji Marketingowej KRAKÓW
61. Interaktywny Instytut Badań Rynkowych WARSZAWA
62. Inteuron Badania i Analizy Internetu WROCŁAW
63. Ipsos WARSZAWA
64. IPT WROCŁAW
65. IQS and QUANT Group WARSZAWA
66. KERALLA RESEARCH WROCŁAW
67. Kinoulty Research WARSZAWA
68. KLEFFMANN GROUP POZNAŃ
69. Korporacja Badawcza Pretendent WROCŁAW, WARSZAWA
70. LabCon WARSZAWA
71. LABoratory & Co WARSZAWA
72. LBS Lokalne Badania Społeczne WARSZAWA
73. MandS Centrum Badań Jakościowych WROCŁAW
74. MARECO Polska WARSZAWA
75. MarketPro GLIWICE
76. Market Side WARSZAWA
77. MEDIACOM WARSZAWA
78. Media-tor Badania Rynku ŁÓDŹ
79. MillwardBrown SMG/KRC WARSZAWA
80. Norman Benett Badania WARSZAWA
81. Nowe Motywacje KRAKÓW, WARSZAWA
82. OBSERVER Media & Marketing Research WROCŁAW
83. OPINIA Agencja Badań Rynku WARSZAWA
84. P&P Consulting WARSZAWA
85. PASAD Agencja Badawczo-Informacyjna WARSZAWA
86. PBJ Badania Marketingowe WARSZAWA
87. PBS DGA SOPOT, WARSZAWA
88. Pentagon Research WROCŁAW
89. Pentor Research International WARSZAWA, KATOWICE, POZNAŃ, WROCŁAW
90. Perfect Consulting GDYNIA
91. PMR Research KRAKÓW

92. Polskie Badania Czytelnictwa WARSZAWA
93. Pracownia Badań i Doradztwa Re-Source POZNAŃ
94. Pracownia Badawcza BSM WARSZAWA
95. Pracownia Badawcza RESPON MIĘDZYBRODZIE BIALSKIE
96. Public Profits POZNAŃ
97. QUERY WARSZAWA
98. Researcher by Call Center Poland WARSZAWA
99. Semiotic Solutions Polska WARSZAWA
100. Sequence HC Partners WARSZAWA
101. Setron Consulting WARSZAWA
102. START POINT RESEARCH WARSZAWA
103. Stowarzyszenie ConQuest Consulting WARSZAWA
104. Synerko Mystery Shopping Team KRAKÓW
105. Synovate WARSZAWA
106. Syntetos. New Market Research POZNAŃ
107. Target Group WARSZAWA
108. Target Marketing Group POZNAŃ
109. Target s.c. KRAKÓW
110. TNS OBOP WARSZAWA
111. VISION SecretClient WROCŁAW
112. WebMining.pl KRAKÓW

Mass media studies of journalism has existed for a long time. Systematic research on radio audiences can be found since the end 1956, systematic research on television audiences since 1958 (Center of Public Opinion Research in Warsaw). Another research institution (Center for Press Research in Cracow) run studies on Press. Mobile phones have been in Poland since 1991. Marketing research on fixed phones users began perhaps in the 1990s. Some studies on users of mobile phones include, for instance, 2001 (CBOS survey), 2006 (Acxiom Polska). One study on the fixed phone took place in 2006, march (TNS OBOP); One study on users of mobile phones, fixed phones and the Internet 2008 was IMAS International, Wrocław. The first study on the Internet Polish users was in October 1996 (ordered by NASK). The second one was in 1997 (source: <http://www.winter.pl/internet.html>).

On 3 August 2000 the company "Polskie Badania Internetowe" ("Polish Research on the Internet") was founded by Agora, Presspublica, Interia.pl, Poland.com and Wirtualna Polska (greatest portals and newspapers issued at the Internet). It aimed at research on the Internet, creating standards for Internet research and dissemination of findings (source: <http://www.winter.pl/internet.html>).

Sources of Funding for Research

Funding for basic independent research within the social sciences can come from Government and research councils, and commercial companies fund research too at times. Research on children and the Internet is funded mostly by Foundation "Nobody's Children", the EC funds for the Safer Internet projects (risks).

Some surveys have been conducted on parents, who respond about their children's Internet use – there were funded by the Government. Surveys on the Internet users run by Gemius are funded by companies-producers of goods, services, advertising agencies etc.

- (1) In general academic "independent" research is funded in Poland by the Ministry of Science and Higher education
- (2) Public opinion research is funded from the government budget
- (3) Studies on telemetry and television and radio content are funded by television and radio themselves.
- (4) Research on public opinion and some social problems are sometimes funded by media (press concerns, for instance: local press (Media Regionalne) and groups of publishers "Media Press", most read newspapers ("Gazeta Wyborcza", "Rzeczpospolita") and magazines creating public opinion ("Polityka", "Wprost").

(5) One recent initiative is Polish Association of Social Psychology together with the company Polish Internet Research and portal Agora.pl funded two projects related to users of the Internet that won at a competition for young academic researchers of Internet (24.11.2008).

Funds are very limited: on average in 2004 EU was 1.75% of GDP, while in Poland it was only 0,3% of GDP.

(source: http://pryzmat.pwr.wroc.pl/Pryzmat_197/197trendy.html; retrieved on 24 Nov 2008).

In recent years there has been less interest in funding social research, communication research or psychological research, and more interest for funding technology problems, biology, chemistry, biotechnology, agriculture.

Political initiatives influencing research

The Government spokesman for Children Rights started addressing the problem of risks of the Internet at the conference in the Polish Parliament on December 9, 2002. It ordered a survey on patterns of the Internet use by children and exposure to pornographic content (content risk). The Government ordered a survey in 2004 with a national sample to learn what parents think about Internet risks and Internet usage by their children (aged 7 to 19) (CBOS).

The Government supports the programme "Interklasa" prepared by the foundation of Grażyna Staniszevska. The foundation provides schools with the computers with the Internet access, where the Ministry of Education, Parliamentary Commission of Education, Science and Youth cooperate to provide the website Interklasa with educational materials and trainings for teachers. These programmes teach teachers how to use informatisation techniques in children's education at school. The project has provided 70,000 computers for schools. By 2005 every Polish school should have had computers.

Pupils will obtain abilities for seeking information quickly and using the information found to problem solving. Both teachers and pupils have an opportunity to learn and develop their Internet skills. The programme offers many educational projects increasing knowledge and skill related to the Internet use in the process of informatisation of the schools.

There has been a long discussion of how to regulate the internet, with the proposal to have ratings across various media including the internet. Some of this impetus came from Catholic institutions concerned about sexuality issues. But when there have been votes this proposed legislation has always been blocked. In general there is a great resistance to anything perceived as being a form of censorship of the media. The Interklasa – Polish Educational Programme on the Internet for teachers and pupils programme involved the very rapid introduction of the Internet and computer technology, as well as the Internet education, so that every school joining the programme has Internet access and computer/Internet class.

There had been a survey of a group of people engaged in the practical side of this programme. The Polish Mediapro project was run by the foundation that conducted this.

Recent initiatives:

The Government promises to provide free access to the Internet for poor people (2006). Present premier Donald Tusk promises that every kid at school will obtain computer laptop, educational software, and the Internet access (2008).

NGOs collaborate to train teachers. For instance, Nobody's Children Foundation ran two waves of studies (in 2003 and 2005) immediately after the campaign was finished using an online survey to check things such as the personal information that children gave out, or offline contact with strangers met online.

The Influence of media coverage, events and lobbies on research

The examples that come to mind relate to TV rather than the internet. For example, there was a PhD on violent content on TV, and research on advertisements on TV, gender portrayals on TV and in the press, as well as in TV programmes for children. The latter was ordered by

National Council for Broadcasting, and later influenced laws on what could show at certain times. In general the press raises question of violence on TV and the internet, while commercial TV defends itself on this issue.

The Nobody's Children Foundation received some EC money for research. It was more interested in paedophiles and the internet rather than any other media effect. At the beginning the Foundation was interested in child abuse by paedophiles, then this expanded to child abuse by the media and the influence of the internet.

Two events certainly raised the issue that there was a need to know about the prevalence of certain situations. In a sting operation in 2006, a known child therapist in Warsaw was accused as a paedophile and he had a court hearing in January 2007. There was a lot of media coverage of this, with the media accusing him even before guilt was proved at the trial. He was a really high profile person, an authority on children development and social behaviour, who used to speak on the media. The second event in October 2006 in gymnasium in Gdańsk was where a 14-years old girl was sexually molested by 5 peers in a class when their teacher left the class for 20 minutes. The scene was filmed with a mobile phone by one of the molesters. Other children witnessing the scene reported this event to teachers or parents. The girl committed suicide the next day.

There were long discussions of these events in media. Two weeks later the Minister of Education announced a project on "Zero tolerance for school violence". There were studies undertaken on school aggression by psychologists from Warsaw University and sociologists from Łódź University on prevalence and forms of school aggression and gender differences on school aggression and mechanisms of school aggression. For instance, in a Łódź study 23,000 children were surveyed (cost 100,100 PLN).

There is no evidence that the event caused media research on new media, i.e. mobile phones. The problem is that this type of event may have led to Masters work on the topic, but nobody will know that this exists since it is not registered anywhere.

Particular debates and concerns about children

There have been debates about advertisements, especially on commercial websites for children (where there was little educational content and many advertisements). Both media and academics have discussed this. The right wing discusses this in terms of bad content, the left wing discusses it in terms of children's rights. But mostly this problem is discussed by NGOs. In general children are not considered to be safe in public spaces. Middle-class parents drive children to school and then they stay in school until they are picked up. In fact, Poles perceive more risk to children in the physical world than online. In June 2003, 69% of a nationwide representative sample of parents were convinced that their children were at various risks in real world and 84% of parents estimated risk as higher than during the period childhood of their own generation. The perceived risk level is higher for urban (59%) than for rural regions (15%). The most often reported risks were: car/road accidents (59%), being bitten by a dog (36%),

High number of guarded/protected neighbourhoods indicates that there is still a feeling of unsafety however surveys from last years show that level of security increased among Poles. There is still a relatively high risk of being robbed (cell phones) in public transportation, streets, yards, etc.

Case Studies

The Government Spokesperson for Children's Rights in Poland had ordered a study to understand what language and knowledge should be used to increase awareness among children concerning Internet risks related to pornographic content. This was in order to make the planned campaigns (TV programmes) more effective in terms of how to ask children about sex, pornography etc. while talking about risks on the Internet; for instance: should one speak in a direct way with children aged 10-12 and 13-15; what kind of words did children of that age use etc. The study consisted two parts: FGI on the Internet use, activities online,

websites visited, encountering unwanted content, and language used by adolescents to describe erotic and pornographic contents on the Internet. The second part was a survey about the patterns of Internet use among children, places of the Internet use, time online, activities online, visited websites (self-perception and peer-perception), unwanted contents met online, parental mediation (blocking filters). The funding involved such a small amount of money that the regular MR companies would not accept it. Having assistants interested in topic Lucyna Kirwil undertook this task.

The study had had to be run in a rich and a poor city: in the first there were more private computers at home, in the second there was more access in public places like schools. The project lasted 2 months. The survey consisted of a 2-page questionnaire with some open questions, some scales, some yes/no questions and some multiple choices. It was administered by Lucyna Kirwil and trained assistants in class with no teachers present. Although the Spokesperson had wanted to study younger children starting at 10 years of age, this had been difficult with the money offered. 10 year olds go to a different school from the secondary school of older children, which would have required sampling more schools. In addition, if younger children had been included the number of questions would have had to be limited because 10 year olds write slowly and take more time. Finally after discussions about what would be the best solution for the research the decision was made together with the office of the Spokesperson to limit the study to secondary school and 13-15 year olds, as they seemed to use Internet without the control of parents and be at risk of encountering pornographic content. Due to time pressures – there were only 2 weeks to conduct the survey - open questions were minimised since the coding of open questions was time consuming.