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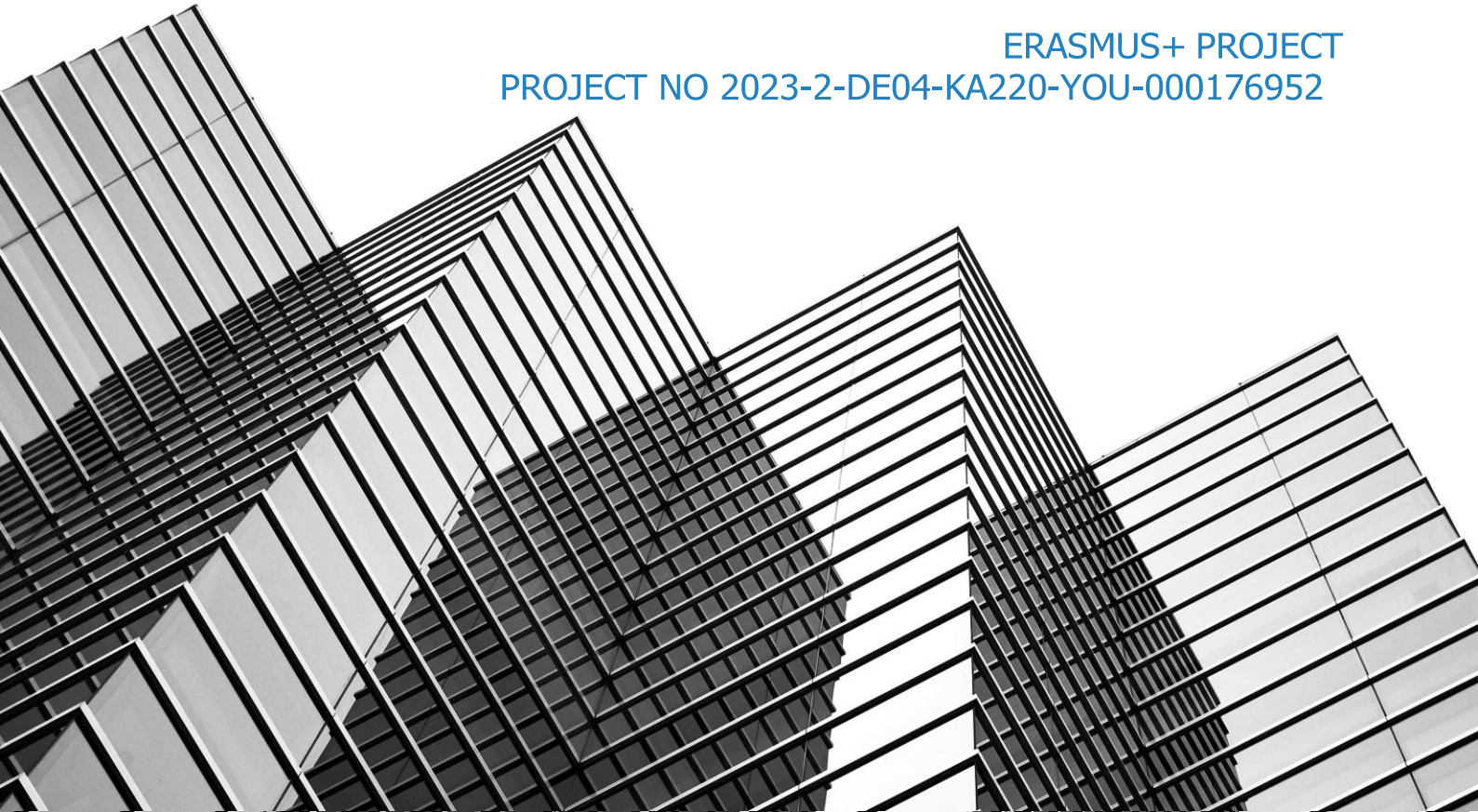
Shaping AI

YOUTH PERSPECTIVES, STAKEHOLDER INSIGHTS, AND POLICY TRENDS IN POLAND

ERASMUS+ PROJECT
PROJECT NO 2023-2-DE04-KA220-YOU-000176952



Shaping AI: Youth Perspectives, Stakeholder Insights, and Policy Trends in Poland
Regional White Paper

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Introduction

The accelerating integration of artificial intelligence (AI) into all spheres of life marks a transformative epoch for contemporary societies, with profound implications for education, labor markets, governance, and civic engagement. Nowhere is this impact more visible—and more urgently in need of critical reflection—than among young people, who simultaneously constitute the most avid adopters and the most vulnerable stakeholders in the AI-driven transformation of the digital landscape.

Poland, as a member state of the European Union and a dynamic actor within the region, finds itself at the intersection of global technological innovation, EU regulatory leadership, and its own distinctive socio-political trajectory. While the adoption of AI is widely recognized as a national priority, the development of coherent, rights-based, and forward-looking strategies for AI governance remains a work in progress. Recent policy documents, such as the "Policy for the Development of Artificial Intelligence in Poland from 2020" and ongoing alignment with the EU AI Act, illustrate both the ambitions and the challenges inherent in harmonizing innovation, ethical safeguards, and democratic values.

This report, prepared within the framework of the YouthGovAI project, undertakes a comprehensive analysis of the current status of AI regulation and educational good practices in Poland, with a distinct focus on the perspectives and needs of youth. The methodology combines a critical review of national and European legal instruments, strategic policy documents, and sectoral guidelines with empirical data collected through national surveys and focus groups. In doing so, the report offers a multidimensional perspective—bridging the legal, institutional, and experiential dimensions of AI's impact on young people.

Special emphasis is placed on the mapping and evaluation of educational initiatives that seek to promote AI literacy, critical thinking, and ethical awareness. Drawing on original case studies from schools, universities, science centers, and non-formal education providers, the report highlights both exemplary models and persistent gaps in the Polish AI education ecosystem. Furthermore, the stakeholder analysis delineates the roles and interests of public authorities, the private sector, civil society, and EU institutions in shaping Poland's AI trajectory.

The findings reveal a paradox familiar across Europe: while Polish youth are among the most digitally connected and technologically adept populations, their critical engagement with the ethical, social, and civic dimensions of AI remains limited. The absence of systematic, cross-curricular approaches to AI literacy and governance in formal education is compounded by a lack of resources and professional development opportunities for teachers and youth workers. At the same time, youth voices are often marginalized in policy discussions, reinforcing a gap between technological adoption and democratic participation.

Against this backdrop, the present report aims to inform policymakers, educators, and practitioners about both the opportunities and the risks posed by AI's expansion in Poland. By integrating legal, institutional, and youth-led perspectives, it seeks to advance the discourse on responsible and inclusive AI governance—placing youth agency, participation, and empowerment at the heart of national and European strategies for the digital future.

National Regulatory Framework on AI in Poland

1. Introduction: The Primacy of EU Law

Poland, as a member state of the European Union, operates within the broader EU legal and strategic framework concerning Artificial Intelligence (AI). Consequently, the most significant piece of legislation that will shape AI regulation in Poland is the forthcoming **EU AI Act**. While this Act is still being finalized and its full implementation will take time (likely 2-3 years post-enactment), it forms the bedrock of future AI governance in Poland.

Currently, **Poland does not have a single, comprehensive, standalone national law specifically dedicated to regulating the entirety of AI development and usage.** Instead, AI applications are governed by a patchwork of existing general laws and sectoral regulations, supplemented by a national AI strategy that outlines governmental ambitions and ethical considerations.

2. Current Legal Landscape (Pre-EU AI Act Full Implementation)

In the absence of a dedicated national AI law, the following existing legal frameworks are most relevant to AI systems in Poland:

- **General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR):** Directly applicable in Poland, GDPR (Rozporządzenie Ogólne o Ochronie Danych Osobowych - RODO) is paramount for any AI system processing personal data. The Polish Data Protection Authority, **Urząd Ochrony Danych Osobowych (UODO)**, is responsible for its enforcement. UODO has issued guidance and opinions on AI, emphasizing principles of lawfulness, fairness, transparency, purpose limitation, data minimization, accuracy, storage limitation, integrity, and confidentiality, as well as accountability in the context of AI systems [1].
- **Civil Code (Kodeks Cywilny):** General provisions on liability (contractual and tortious) apply to damages caused by AI systems. Determining liability can be complex, involving developers, deployers, and users.
- **Criminal Code (Kodeks Karny):** Existing criminal laws can apply to misuse of AI, for example, in cybercrime, fraud, or defamation.
- **Intellectual Property Law:** Laws on copyright (Ustawa o prawie autorskim i prawach pokrewnych) and industrial property (Prawo własności przemysłowej) address issues like copyright of AI-generated works (currently a debated topic with no clear Polish jurisprudence favoring AI authorship) and patentability of AI-related inventions.
- **Consumer Protection Law (Ustawa o prawach konsumenta):** Protects consumers engaging with AI-driven services or products, particularly concerning transparency, unfair contract terms, and misleading information.
- **Anti-discrimination Laws (e.g., provisions in the Labour Code - Kodeks Pracy):** These are relevant for addressing biases and discrimination perpetuated by AI systems, for instance, in recruitment or lending.

3. National Strategy: "Policy for the Development of Artificial Intelligence in Poland from 2020"

The primary national document outlining Poland's approach to AI is the **"Policy for the Development of Artificial Intelligence in Poland from 2020" (Polityka rozwoju sztucznej**

inteligencji w Polsce od 2020 roku), often referred to as the Polish AI Strategy. Adopted by the Council of Ministers in December 2020, this strategy aims to position Poland as a regional AI leader [2].

Key objectives and areas of focus include:

- Fostering AI innovation and research.
- Supporting AI adoption in the private and public sectors.
- Developing AI talent and skills.
- Building a robust data ecosystem.
- Promoting ethical and trustworthy AI, aligning with EU guidelines.

The strategy acknowledges the importance of a human-centric approach to AI and emphasizes the need for AI systems to be lawful, ethical, and robust. It also foresees the creation of specific working groups and initiatives to support its implementation, including addressing legal and ethical challenges. The Chancellery of the Prime Minister (Kancelaria Prezesa Rady Ministrów - KPRM) and the Ministry of Digital Affairs (Ministerstwo Cyfryzacji) have been key players in developing and overseeing this strategy.

4. The Political and Cultural Debate Around AI

The debate around AI in Poland mirrors many of the discussions happening globally and across the EU, balancing excitement for innovation with concerns about risks.

Political Debate:

- **Pro-Innovation Stance:** The Polish government, through its AI Strategy and various initiatives, generally expresses a strong desire to harness AI for economic growth, public sector modernization, and enhanced competitiveness. There's an emphasis on creating a favorable environment for AI startups and R&D.
- **EU Alignment:** Poland's AI policy is closely tied to the EU's agenda. The government largely supports the risk-based approach of the EU AI Act, seeing it as a way to foster trust and ensure a level playing field. However, specific national interests and concerns about potential over-regulation impacting innovation are sometimes voiced during EU negotiations.
- **Digital Sovereignty:** While embracing international collaboration, there's an undercurrent of discussion about ensuring Poland (and the EU) maintains a degree of digital sovereignty and doesn't become overly reliant on AI technologies from non-EU countries.
- **Public Sector Modernization:** A significant political driver is the potential for AI to improve public services, make administration more efficient (e.g., GovTech Polska initiatives), and enhance areas like healthcare and cybersecurity.
- **Skills Gap:** A recurring theme is the need to address the skills gap and prepare the workforce for an AI-driven economy, with calls for investment in education and reskilling programs.

Cultural Debate & Public Perception:

- **Cautious Optimism:** Public perception of AI is generally mixed but leans towards cautious optimism. Many Poles see the potential benefits of AI in daily life, healthcare, and convenience.
- **Job Displacement Fears:** As in many countries, there are concerns about AI leading to job losses in certain sectors, particularly those involving routine tasks. This fuels debate about social safety nets and the future of work.
- **Privacy Concerns:** Given Poland's history, there is a cultural sensitivity towards surveillance and data privacy. The use of AI for monitoring, facial recognition, or extensive data profiling raises significant public and media concern, often referencing GDPR principles.

- **Ethical Dilemmas and Bias:** The media and academic circles actively discuss ethical dilemmas posed by AI, such as algorithmic bias leading to discrimination, lack of transparency in AI decision-making ("black box" problem), and accountability for AI errors.
- **Role of Experts and Civil Society:** Think tanks, academic institutions, and NGOs are increasingly active in the AI debate, organizing conferences, publishing reports, and advocating for responsible AI development. They play a crucial role in raising public awareness and informing policy. For instance, organizations like the Panoptykon Foundation are vocal on digital rights and surveillance issues, including those related to AI [5]

Stakeholder Analysis

Public Sector

Poland's public sector approach to AI policy, while increasingly coordinated, has historically seen responsibilities distributed. The **Ministry of Digital Affairs (Ministerstwo Cyfryzacji - MC)** is the central body for digital transformation and AI strategy, especially under the new government (KPRM, 2024). Other ministries play crucial roles: the **Ministry of Development and Technology (Ministerstwo Rozwoju i Technologii - MRiT)** focuses on innovation, industry adoption, and economic impact, often championing AI for competitiveness; the **Ministry of Education and Science (Ministerstwo Edukacji i Nauki - MEiN)** steers AI research funding, ethical considerations in education, and talent development, emphasizing "responsible AI" (MEiN, 2023); and the **Ministry of Justice (Ministerstwo Sprawiedliwości - MS)**, along with the MC, is key in transposing and aligning with EU AI Act negotiations and national legal frameworks (MS, 2023). Other ministries (e.g., Health, Interior, National Defence) are involved in domain-specific AI applications, infrastructure, and security. The current coalition government under Prime Minister Donald Tusk is expected to prioritize digital transformation and EU alignment. This new leadership aims to bolster Poland's digital capabilities and innovation ecosystem, which will likely shape the national implementation of the EU AI Act and refresh Poland's AI strategy, focusing on both economic growth and citizen trust (Gazeta Wyborcza, 2025).

Data protection and other regulators: Poland's **Personal Data Protection Office (Urząd Ochrony Danych Osobowych - UODO)** is a key actor, enforcing GDPR and providing guidance on AI's data protection implications. UODO actively monitors AI developments and is expected to issue more specific guidance on AI and privacy, potentially mirroring DSK's approach (UODO, 2024). The President of UODO frequently emphasizes the need for AI systems to be transparent, accountable, and respect fundamental rights (Biuletyn UODO, 2024). Other regulators are also becoming more involved: the **Office of Electronic Communications (Urząd Komunikacji Elektronicznej - UKE)** monitors AI's impact on telecommunications and digital services; the **National Cybersecurity Centre (NC Cyber)**, part of the **NASK National Research Institute (NASK PIB)**, addresses AI-related cybersecurity threats; and the **Office of Competition and Consumer Protection (Urząd Ochrony Konkurencji i Konsumentów - UOKiK)** scrutinizes AI for potential anti-competitive practices or consumer harm. A notable initiative, announced in early 2025, involves a collaboration between the MC, UODO, and NASK to establish an "AI Regulatory Sandbox" to test AI solutions, particularly from SMEs, against the EU AI Act's requirements in a controlled environment, fostering innovation while ensuring compliance (MC, 2025).

Parliament and Regions: At the national level, the Polish Parliament (Sejm and Senat) has several committees (e.g., Digitalisation, Innovation and Modern Technologies Committee; Science, Education and Sports Committee) that conduct hearings, review legislation, and debate AI policy. For instance, in late 2022, the Sejm's Digitalisation Committee held expert consultations on the implications of the draft EU AI Act for Polish businesses and citizens (Sejm, 2022). While Poland's

regional governance (Voivodeships) is structured differently from German Länder, several regions (e.g., Małopolska, Wielkopolska, Silesia) have their own innovation strategies that include AI development hubs, support for AI startups, and initiatives to integrate AI into local public services. Coordination often occurs through national programs and EU funding mechanisms. Regional interests focus on economic development, job creation, and modernizing public administration through AI, while also ensuring local populations benefit equitably.

Private Sector

The Polish private sector, with a vibrant IT and growing tech scene, has a significant interest in AI regulation. Major Polish tech companies (e.g., Asseco, Comarch, Allegro) and numerous international corporations with large R&D and business service centres in Poland (e.g., Google, Microsoft, Intel, Samsung) view AI as vital for growth and competitiveness. They generally support clear legal frameworks but express concerns about potential over-regulation. For example, the Polish Chamber of Information Technology and Telecommunications (PIIT) has stated that while the EU AI Act provides a good foundation, care must be taken not to classify too many AI applications as "high-risk" without clear justification, which could stifle the dynamic Polish AI startup ecosystem (PIIT, 2023). Many companies are proactively developing internal AI ethics frameworks and risk management processes.

Industry associations are vocal in articulating collective interests. **PIIT** consistently advocates for a balanced, risk-based AI regulation that fosters innovation while protecting fundamental rights (PIIT, 2023). **SoDA (Software Development Association Poland)**, representing many software development companies and AI startups, emphasizes the need for regulatory clarity, support for SMEs, and avoiding excessive burdens that could hinder Poland's ability to compete globally in AI development (SoDA, 2023). The employers' confederation **Lewiatan** echoes these sentiments, supporting a risk-based approach but warning against provisions that could make Poland less attractive for AI investment or put Polish companies at a disadvantage (Lewiatan, 2023). In summary, the Polish private sector's primary concerns revolve around ensuring compliance is manageable (especially for the numerous SMEs and startups), harmonizing AI rules with existing legislation (like GDPR), and maintaining Poland's attractiveness as an innovation hub within the EU. There's a general sentiment that while regulation is needed, it shouldn't impede the rapid advancements seen in the Polish tech sector (Rzeczpospolita, 2023).

AI Startups and SMEs are a dynamic part of Poland’s AI ecosystem and generally favor an approach that combines ethical safeguards with flexibility for innovation. Many are members of PIIT, SoDA, or specialized AI clusters. They share broader industry concerns about avoiding overly prescriptive rules that could increase costs or slow down market entry, particularly given their often-limited resources compared to large corporations. They seek clear guidelines, access to data, and support for R&D and scaling up.

Civil Society and Academia

Civil society organizations and academic institutions are crucial for providing research, ethical scrutiny, and public advocacy on AI. **Research institutions and academia** (e.g., University of Warsaw, Jagiellonian University, AGH University of Science and Technology, Warsaw University of Technology, the NASK National Research Institute, and centres within the Łukasiewicz Research Network) are at the forefront of AI R&D, policy advice, and talent development. They typically advocate for substantial public and private investment in AI research, open data initiatives, and the development of "trustworthy and human-centric AI." Through participation in government advisory bodies (like the Council for Digital Affairs advising the MC) and public consultations, scholars influence policy. For instance, groups like the **AI Poland Foundation** (Fundacja AI Polska) work to promote AI literacy and ethical AI development.

Digital rights and ethics NGOs act as watchdogs. Organizations such as the **Panoptykon Foundation** (a leading digital rights organization), **Fundacja ePaństwo** (eState Foundation, promoting transparency and open data), and the **Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights** monitor AI's impact on privacy, bias, surveillance, and fundamental freedoms. Panoptykon, for example, provided critical input during consultations on the EU AI Act, warning against broad exemptions for law enforcement and advocating for strong transparency, redress mechanisms, and mandatory fundamental rights impact assessments (Panoptykon, 2022). These groups often raise concerns about the potential for AI to exacerbate inequalities or enable misuse by state or private actors, demanding robust citizen protections.

Consumer protection and labour organizations also contribute. The **Office of Competition and Consumer Protection (UOKiK)**, beyond its regulatory role, also acts as a consumer advocate, highlighting risks from opaque AI systems in consumer products or services and calling for greater transparency (UOKiK, 2024). On the labour front, major trade unions like **NSZZ "Solidarność"** and the **All-Poland Alliance of Trade Unions (OPZZ)** are increasingly focused on AI's impact on the workplace. They advocate for worker consultation in AI deployment, reskilling programs, and ensuring AI tools augment rather than replace human workers, aiming to "ensure AI serves the workforce and does not lead to precarious employment" (NSZZ "Solidarność", 2023).

In sum, Polish civil society and academia shape AI policy through research, public awareness campaigns, expert opinions for government bodies, and advocacy. They generally push for strong ethical guidelines and legal safeguards in AI development and deployment. Regarding the EU AI Act, Polish advocates have supported its rights-based approach but continue to call for diligent national implementation to ensure effective protection for citizens (Panoptykon, 2023; UOKiK, 2024).

European Union Institutions

EU bodies are central to shaping Poland's AI regulatory landscape. The **European Commission's AI Act**, which entered into force on 1 August 2024, establishes the primary legal framework. As the world's first comprehensive AI law, it takes a risk-based approach, aiming to balance innovation with safety and fundamental rights. It mandates EU-level structures like the European AI Office and requires Member States, including Poland (by 2025), to designate national supervisory authorities. Polish officials and experts actively participate in the EU legislative process. In the **Council of the EU**, Poland's positions, typically coordinated by the Ministry of Digital Affairs (MC) and Ministry of Development and Technology (MRiT), have generally supported a harmonized EU approach while seeking flexibility for innovation. Polish MEPs in the **European Parliament** also contributed to shaping the final text, often reflecting national concerns about competitiveness and the specific needs of its dynamic tech sector. The final EU AI Act reflects compromises influenced by various Member States, including Poland. EU regulatory bodies like the **European Data Protection Board (EDPB)** and **EDPS** provide guidance on the AI Act's interaction with GDPR, which Polish authorities (like UODO) follow closely. Polish ministries are now focused on transposing and implementing the AI Act into national law, developing compliance guidelines, and aligning national AI strategies (e.g., updates to the "Policy for the Development of Artificial Intelligence in Poland from 2020"). The planned Polish "AI Regulatory Sandbox" is an example of a national initiative designed to align with EU AI Act requirements. Poland views the EU AI Act as the cornerstone of its AI regulation, preferring EU-wide rules over fragmented national laws. Polish stakeholders from government, industry, and civil society were actively engaged in the EU trilogue process and continue to engage with EU agencies. The AI Act's implementation will require significant adjustments to Poland's national strategies and enforcement mechanisms, ensuring Polish AI development aligns with the new European standards.

Stakeholders within the Power-Interest Matrix

(No in-text citations typically required in this summary matrix as it synthesizes the preceding analysis)

High Power / High Interest – Manage Closely

- Ministry of Digital Affairs (MC)
- Prime Minister's Chancellery (KPRM) / Donald Tusk Government
- Ministry of Development and Technology (MRiT)
- European Commission
- Personal Data Protection Office (UODO)
- Office of Competition and Consumer Protection (UOKiK)
- Sejm Committees (e.g., Digitalisation, Innovation)
- Major Tech Companies (Polish & International with Polish hubs)
- PIIT, SoDA, Lewiatan

High Power / Low Interest – Keep Satisfied

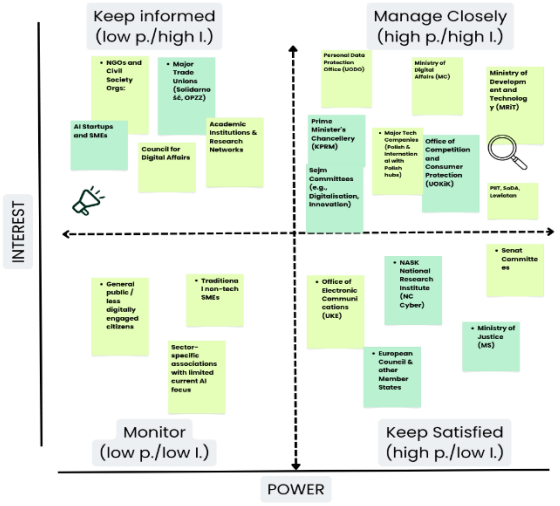
- Office of Electronic Communications (UKE)
- NASK National Research Institute (NC Cyber)
- Senat Committees
- European Council & other Member States
- Ministry of Justice (MS)

Low Power / High Interest – Keep Informed

- NGOs and Civil Society Orgs:
  - Panoptykon Foundation
  - Fundacja ePaństwo, Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights
  - AI Poland Foundation & similar initiatives
- Major Trade Unions (Solidarność, OPZZ)
- Academic Institutions & Research Networks (Universities, NASK, Łukasiewicz Network)
- Council for Digital Affairs (Rada do Spraw Cyfryzacji)
- AI Startups and SMEs (often via SoDA or regional clusters)

Low Power / Low Interest – Monitor

- General public / less digitally engaged citizens
- Traditional non-tech SMEs
- Sector-specific associations with limited current AI focus



Good Practices – AI for education

1. AI Labs in Polish Schools (Intel, Google, CCT Poland)

Overview:
In 2024, a coalition of Intel, Google, and the Polish Center for Creative Technologies (CCT Poland) launched a nationwide program to install "AI Labs" in over 50 public schools. Each lab is equipped with AI-enabled computers, VR headsets, coding robots, and internet of things (IoT) kits.

Methodology:

- **Teacher training:** Educators participate in workshops on integrating AI tools, focusing on project-based and personalized learning.
- **Student workshops:** Pupils engage in AI programming, using Python and visual languages, plus hands-on projects (e.g., training image recognition models, building simple chatbots).
- **Inclusive access:** The labs are installed in both urban and rural schools, aiming to reduce the digital divide.

Results:

- Over 3,500 students and 200 teachers have participated since January 2024.
- Students report higher interest in STEM and improved digital skills.
- Teachers gain confidence in using AI as a classroom tool.

Reference & Photo:

- Intel Newsroom – CCT Poland AI Labs

2. Synerise AI Schools & Academy

Overview:
The Synerise AI Schools & Academy initiative, started in 2018, is one of Poland's most mature programs supporting AI literacy at all school levels (primary, secondary, and vocational).

Methodology:

- **Teacher support:** Online and in-person courses on AI basics, lesson planning, and using AI tools (including Synerise's own AI platforms for schools).
- **Student engagement:** Ready-to-use classroom scenarios and digital learning materials in Polish, with a focus on ethics and critical thinking alongside technical skills.
- **Events:** Hackathons, project days, and nationwide AI contests for students.

Results:

- More than 200 schools have implemented AI literacy modules.
- Thousands of students have participated in coding and AI challenges.
- The program's "AI Ambassadors" network provides peer support for educators.

Reference:

- Synerise AI Schools & Academy
- Strategy for the Development of AI in Poland

3. "Elements of AI" (Digital Poland Foundation and University of Warsaw)

Overview:
"Elements of AI" is a free, globally recognized online course made available in Polish via partnership with the Digital Poland Foundation and the University of Warsaw. It is open to everyone, regardless of background.

Methodology:

- **Self-paced course:** Modules cover the basics of machine learning, neural networks, and ethical challenges in AI.
- **Targeted outreach:** Schools and universities encourage students and staff to enroll. Local governments promote the course to adult learners and public-sector employees.

Results:

- As of 2024, over 50,000 Poles have completed the course.
- Significant uptake among women and people outside major cities, supporting inclusion.

Reference:

- Elements of AI – Poland
- Digital Poland Foundation

4. AI Programming in Technical Schools (Zespół Szkół Licealnych i Technicznych nr 1, Warsaw)

Overview:
This technical high school was one of the first in Poland to offer a formal AI programming track for students, beginning in 2022.

Methodology:

- **Curriculum:** Specialized classes on data analysis, machine learning, and robotics.
- **Industry partnerships:** Collaborations with companies like Microsoft and Samsung for guest lectures, internships, and equipment donations.
- **Project-based learning:** Students develop real-world AI applications (e.g., facial recognition for attendance, automated environmental sensors).

Results:

- Students from this school have placed in national and European AI competitions.
- Over 90% of graduates pursue STEM or IT studies at university.

Reference:

- ZSLiT1 Warsaw – School Website

- School profile in national press (in Polish)

5. **Fake News and Disinformation Detection: "Critical Thinking in the Digital Age" (NASK & Ministry of Education)**

Overview:
NASK (National Research Institute) and the Ministry of Education run ongoing programs teaching both students and teachers how to spot AI-generated fake news, deepfakes, and misinformation.

Methodology:

- **Workshops:** Delivered in-person and online to primary and secondary school students, focused on verifying sources, image forensics, and recognizing AI-generated content.
- **Teacher resources:** Toolkits and lesson plans for integrating critical thinking about AI into various subjects (civics, language arts, history).

Results:

- The annual "Digital Awareness Week" in 2024 reached over 120,000 students in 500+ schools.
- Surveys show increased student awareness of disinformation risks and better self-reported ability to verify online content.

Reference:

- NASK – Edukacja Cyfrowa
- Critical Thinking Resources (in Polish)

6. **Erasmus+ Project: "AI4Youth – Artificial Intelligence for Youth"**

Overview:
AI4Youth is an Erasmus+ project coordinated in Poland by the "TechSoup Foundation" and several secondary schools, targeting young people from less advantaged backgrounds.

Methodology:

- **Modular training:** A series of hands-on workshops, e-learning modules, and hackathons on AI, machine learning, and data science.
- **Mentoring:** Participants receive support from AI professionals and university students.
- **Community projects:** Youth develop AI solutions to local problems (e.g., environmental monitoring, accessibility tools).

Results:

- Over 400 students trained in 2023-2024, with many proceeding to participate in international hackathons and competitions.
- Increased interest in STEM among girls and students from rural areas.

Reference:

- AI4Youth – European Project Page

- TechSoup Polska

7. WOMAI Kraków – "AI and Science for All" Interactive Science Center

Overview:
WOMAI, an interactive science center in Kraków, offers a permanent exhibit and hands-on workshops on AI, robotics, and the ethical implications of new technologies.

Methodology:

- **Interactive stations:** Students experiment with AI-powered robots, voice recognition, and vision systems.
- **Workshops:** Themed sessions for school groups, focusing on AI in everyday life, creativity, and potential social impacts.
- **Teacher training:** Support in integrating AI topics into science classes.

Results:

- More than 20,000 students visited WOMAI for AI workshops in 2023.
- High teacher satisfaction and increased demand for repeat visits.

Reference:

- WOMAI Kraków
- Workshop Gallery

8. AI Ethics and Social Responsibility: University of Warsaw "AI and Society" Programme

Overview:
The University of Warsaw offers a unique, interdisciplinary elective "AI and Society," open to all students, not just those in STEM fields.

Methodology:

- **Interdisciplinary approach:** Combines technical knowledge with philosophy, law, and sociology.
- **Public events:** Regular open lectures and debates featuring national policymakers, business leaders, and international AI experts.
- **Student projects:** Essays, podcasts, and community outreach on AI's impact in society.

Results:

- The course regularly fills its 100-seat limit and receives excellent student evaluations.
- Outputs are published online and shared with policymakers and schools.

Reference:

- University of Warsaw – AI and Society
- Sample student projects

Survey's results

1. Demographic Overview

The survey data primarily reflects the perspectives of adolescents and young adults, with a strong focus on the **16–18 age group (30 respondents)**, followed by the **13–15 age group (9 respondents)**. Older demographics, including **19–21 (8 respondents)** and **21+ (4 respondents)**, are also represented. This age distribution suggests that the findings are highly representative of high school students, as well as those just entering higher education or the workforce. The gender distribution is somewhat male-skewed, with **37 male**, **13 female**, and **1 non-binary** respondent. No respondent selected "prefer not to say." While less balanced than in some samples, this diversity still supports meaningful generalizations.

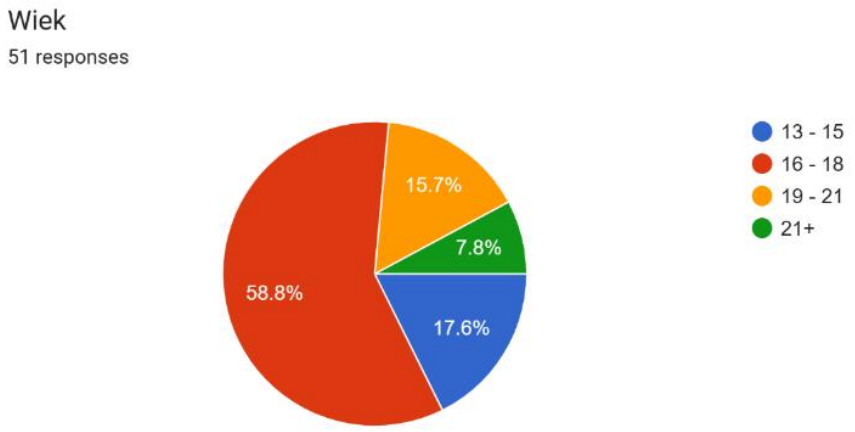


Figure 2: Age distribution (YouthGovAI – Wiedza i postawy młodzieży wobec sztucznej inteligencji, 2025)

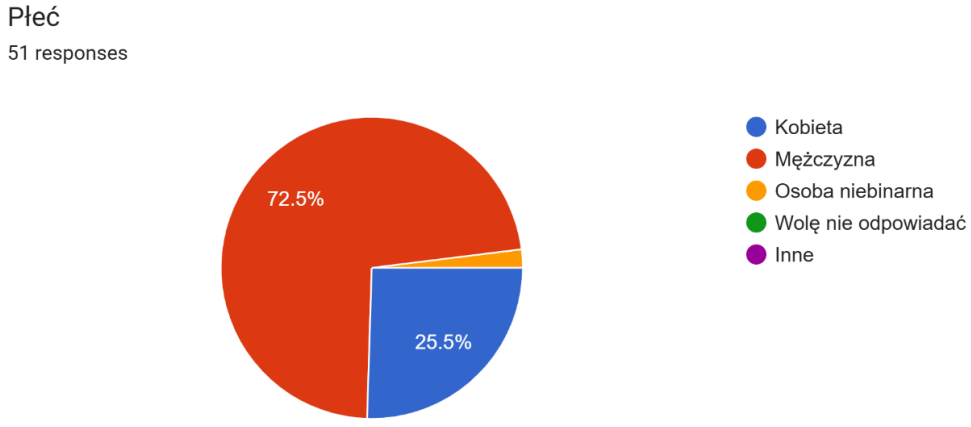


Figure 3: Gender distribution (YouthGovAI – Wiedza i postawy młodzieży wobec sztucznej inteligencji, 2025)

2. Familiarity with AI

The findings indicate a high level of general awareness of AI among Polish youngsters. A substantial majority—**37 out of 51 (72.5%)**—reported not only having heard the term "artificial intelligence," but also being able to explain what it means. **12 respondents (23.5%)** indicated they have heard the term but do not precisely understand its meaning. Only **1 respondent (2%)** reported never having heard of AI, and **1 (2%)** had heard of it but could not imagine what it means. This supports the notion that AI is a widely recognized concept in this demographic.

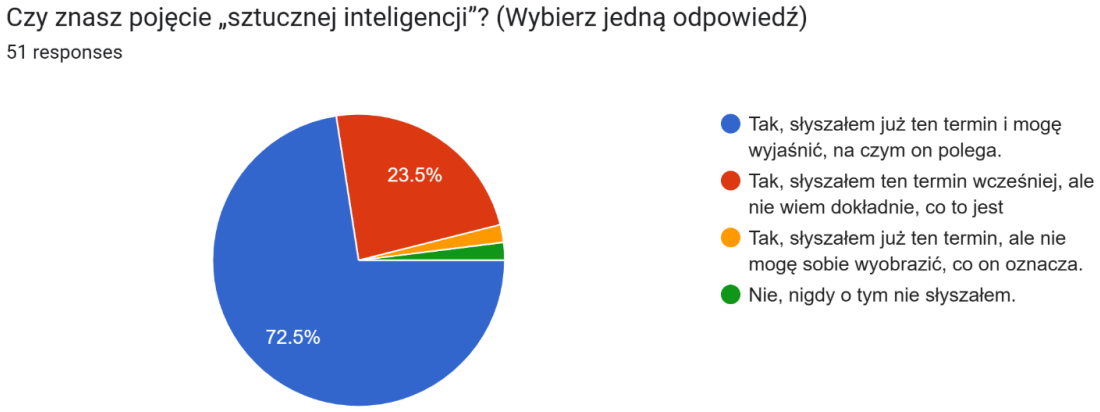


Figure 4: Familiarity with AI (YouthGovAI – Wiedza i postawy młodzieży wobec sztucznej inteligencji, 2025)

3. Confidence in AI Knowledge

Despite high familiarity, confidence in understanding AI varies. The largest groups fall into **"Umiarkowana pewność siebie" (Moderately Confident – 16 respondents, 31.4%)** and **"Pewny/-a" (Confident – 16, 31.4%)**, with **8 "Bardzo pewny/-a" (Very Confident, 15.7%)**, **8 "Trochę pewny/-a" (Slightly Confident, 15.7%)**, and **3 "Wcale niepewny/-a" (Not at all Confident, 5.9%)**. This shows most youth are confident or moderately confident, but a significant group remains uncertain or lacking foundational knowledge.

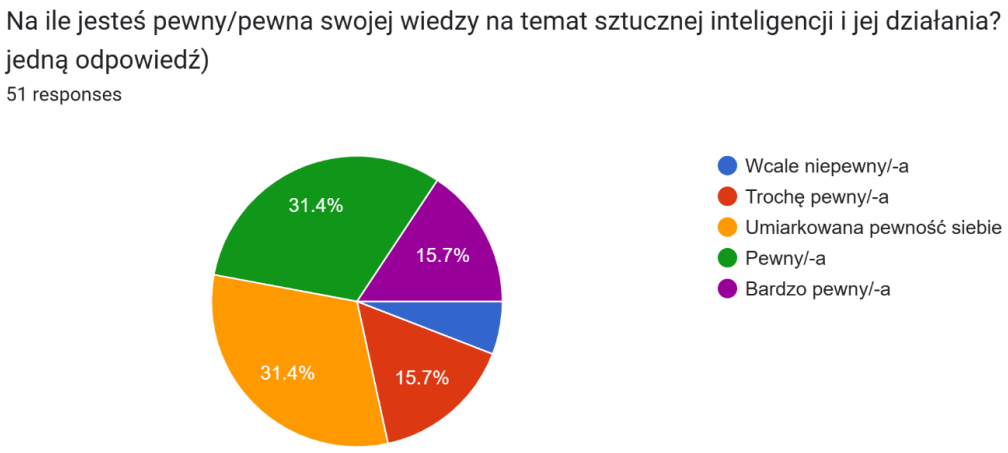


Figure 5: Confidence in AI knowledge (YouthGovAI – Wiedza i postawy młodzieży wobec sztucznej inteligencji, 2025)

4. Confidence in Identifying AI Technologies

When asked about their ability to identify specific AI technologies, responses are similar to knowledge confidence. The most common response was **"Umiarkowana pewność siebie" (Moderately Confident – 20, 39.2%)**, followed by **"Pewny/-a" (Confident – 12, 23.5%)**, **"Trochę pewny/-a" (Slightly Confident – 11, 21.6%)**, **"Bardzo pewny/-a" (Very Confident – 7, 13.7%)**, and **"Wcale niepewny/-a" (Not at all Confident – 1, 2%)**. This indicates that while many are moderately or highly confident, there is a large group that would benefit from more hands-on experience with real AI tools.

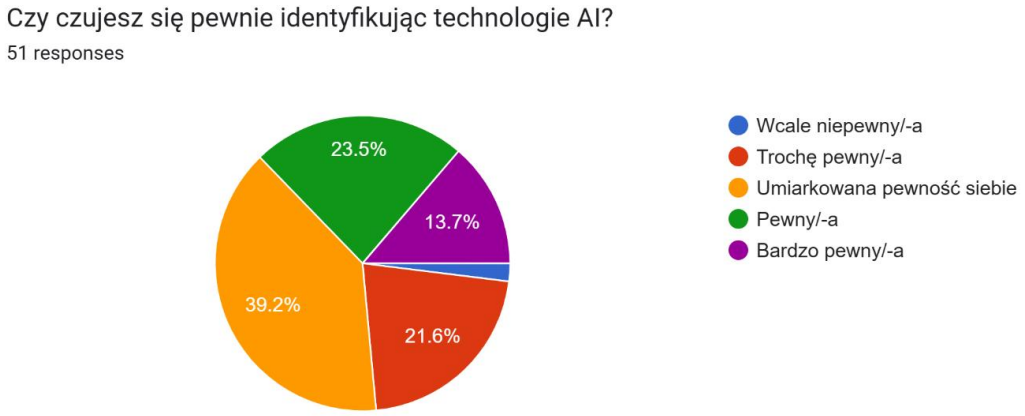


Figure 6: Confidence in identifying AI technologies (YouthGovAI – Wiedza i postawy młodzieży wobec sztucznej inteligencji, 2025)

5. Frequency of AI Use (Daily Life)

The survey reveals a high integration of AI technologies into the daily lives of Polish youngsters. **24 respondents (47.1%)** use AI **2–4 times per week**, and **13 (25.5%)** use it **daily**. Additionally, **6 (11.8%)** each use it **weekly** or **less than weekly**, and only **2 (3.9%)** report **never** using AI in their daily lives. This highlights the prevalence and routine nature of AI-powered technologies—often via smartphones, media, or digital platforms.

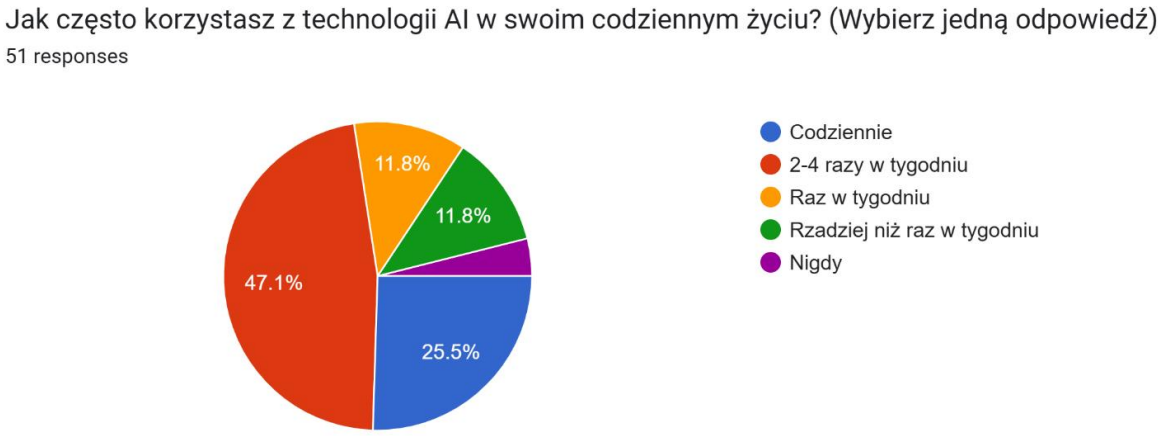


Figure 7: Frequency of AI use in daily life (YouthGovAI – Wiedza i postawy młodzieży wobec sztucznej inteligencji, 2025)

6. Frequency of AI Use (Schoolwork or Learning)

AI technologies are also common in academic settings. **15 respondents (29.4%)** each use AI for schoolwork **daily** and **2–4 times per week**. **11 (21.6%)** report using it **less than weekly**, **6 (11.8%)** use it **weekly**, and **4 (7.8%)** never use AI for learning. This indicates that a majority are integrating AI tools into their education, though some still rarely or never use them for academic purposes.

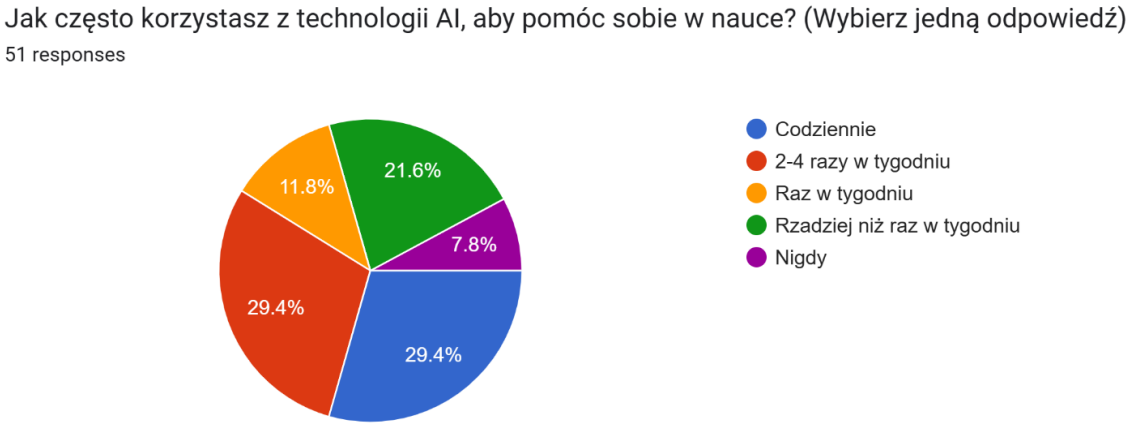
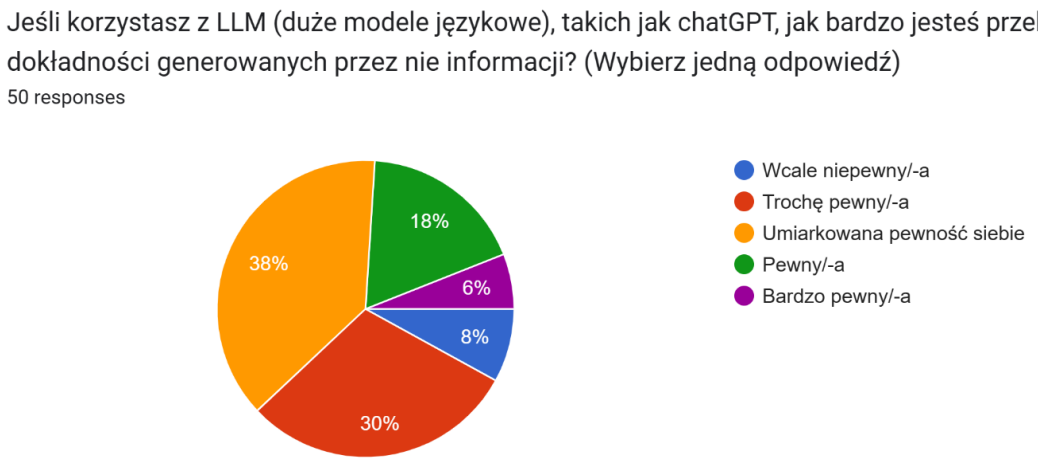


Figure 8: Frequency of AI use for school and learning (YouthGovAI – Wiedza i postawy młodzieży wobec sztucznej inteligencji, 2025)

7. Confidence in LLM Information Accuracy



The increasing use of large language models (LLMs) like ChatGPT is reflected in attitudes toward information accuracy. **19 respondents (37.3%)** are **moderately confident**, **15 (29.4%)** are **slightly confident**, **9 (17.6%)** are **confident**, **4 (7.8%)** are **not at all confident**, and **3 (5.9%)** are **very confident** in LLM information accuracy. This shows both a healthy skepticism and some risk of overreliance on AI-generated information.

Figure 9: Confidence in LLM information accuracy (YouthGovAI – Wiedza i postawy młodzieży wobec sztucznej inteligencji, 2025)

8. Confidence in Detecting AI Disinformation

The ability to detect AI-generated disinformation is a key aspect of digital literacy. **24 respondents (47.1%)** report feeling **confident**, **10 (19.6%)** are **slightly confident**, **10 (19.6%)** are **moderately confident**, **5 (9.8%)** are **very confident**, and **2 (3.9%)** are **not at all confident** in detecting AI disinformation. This indicates that while many are confident, a significant segment lacks critical skills in this area, highlighting an opportunity for targeted digital literacy training.

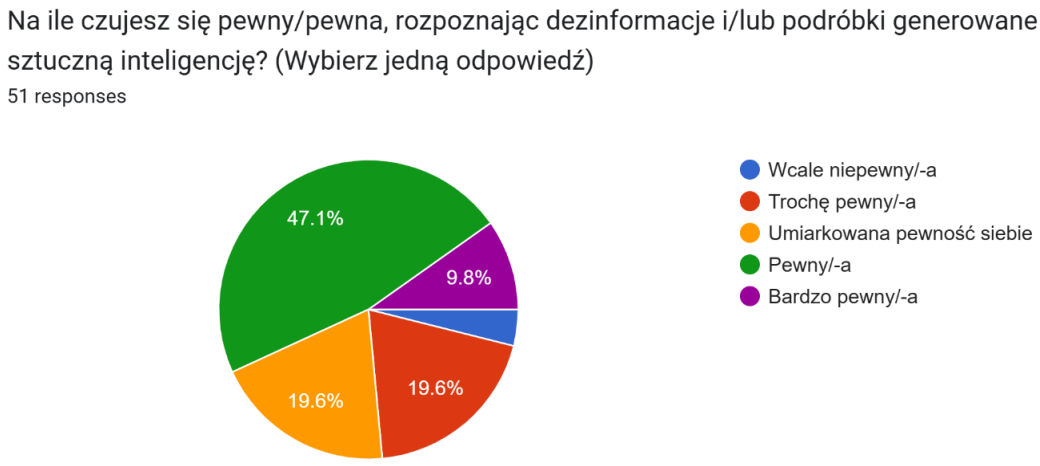


Figure 10: Confidence in detecting AI disinformation (YouthGovAI – Wiedza i postawy młodzieży wobec sztucznej inteligencji, 2025)

9. Perceptions on AI Decisions and Control

The survey included two true/false statements designed to probe potential misconceptions about AI's autonomy and benevolence.

AI Decisions in User Interest (True/False):

The statement "AI always makes decisions in the interest of its users" elicited a highly varied response. The most frequent was **"Nie jestem pewien" (Not Sure – 18, 35.3%)**, followed by **"Raczej prawda" (Rather True – 16, 31.4%)**, **"Prawda" (True – 10, 19.6%)**, **"Raczej fałsz" (Rather False – 5, 9.8%)**, and **"Fałsz" (False – 2, 3.9%)**. This distribution demonstrates the prevalence of the misconception that AI is inherently benevolent or aligned with user interests.

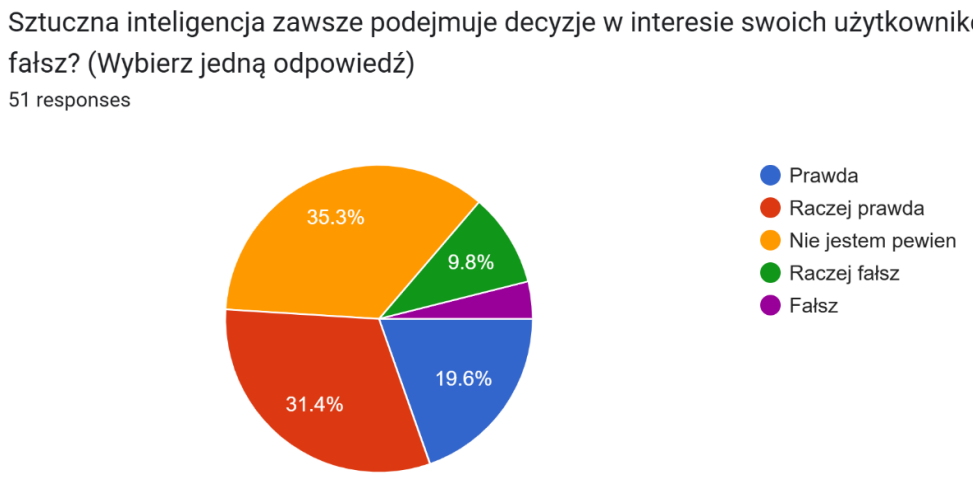


Figure 11: AI misconception – AI decisions in user interest (YouthGovAI – Wiedza i postawy młodzieży wobec sztucznej inteligencji, 2025)

AI Beyond Human Control (True/False):

The statement "Artificial intelligence is beyond human control and can, in the worst case, act against the will of its developers" also revealed a mixed understanding: **"Prawda" (True – 13, 25.5%)**, **"Raczej prawda" (Rather True – 10, 19.6%)**, **"Fałsz" (False – 10, 19.6%)**, **"Raczej fałsz" (Rather False – 9, 17.6%)**, and **"Nie jestem pewien" (Not Sure – 9, 17.6%)**. This suggests that many believe AI could potentially operate outside human control, reflecting common science fiction tropes and a lack of nuanced understanding of real-world AI governance.

Figure 12: AI misconception – AI beyond human control (YouthGovAI – Wiedza i postawy młodzieży wobec sztucznej inteligencji, 2025)

Conclusion and Implications for AI and AI Regulation in Poland

The findings from the YouthGovAI survey contribute significant empirical evidence regarding the digital competencies, perceptions, and attitudes of Polish youth toward artificial intelligence. The data underscores several key themes that have substantial implications for both educational practice and policy formulation:

1. High Engagement and Awareness

The survey confirms that Polish youth are not passive observers but active participants in the AI-driven digital ecosystem. The vast majority are familiar with the term "artificial intelligence," and many interact with AI-enabled technologies daily—whether through social media algorithms, voice assistants, or educational tools. This high level of exposure, corroborated by recent national studies (CBOS, 2023; UKE, 2023), reflects the ongoing digital transformation of young people's learning, communication, and leisure activities. However, familiarity does not necessarily translate into deep understanding, and the routine integration of AI into daily life may inadvertently foster a superficial grasp of its underlying mechanisms.

2. Knowledge Gaps and Moderate Confidence

Despite widespread use and awareness, the survey reveals substantial gaps in technical knowledge and self-assessed confidence among respondents. While a considerable segment reports feeling "confident" or "very confident" in their understanding of AI, an equally large group identifies as only "moderately" or "slightly" confident, particularly regarding the identification of AI technologies and the evaluation of AI-generated content. These results are consistent with prior findings indicating that "digital native" status does not guarantee advanced digital or AI literacy (PTI, 2022; OECD, 2024). Notably, the ability to critically assess AI outputs—especially distinguishing between authentic and AI-generated information—remains an area of vulnerability for many Polish students.

3. Critical Misconceptions

The section on AI-related misconceptions is especially revealing. When confronted with statements about AI's autonomy and its alignment with user interests, respondents often expressed uncertainty or endorsed inaccurate beliefs. Many view AI as inherently benevolent, always acting in the user's interest, or conversely, as potentially uncontrollable and capable of acting against human intent. Such misconceptions echo popular media narratives rather than empirical reality and highlight the urgent need for nuanced public education that addresses the real risks and limitations of current AI systems. These misunderstandings can have direct implications for trust in digital services, susceptibility to manipulation, and broader societal attitudes toward technology governance.

Policy Recommendations and Future Directions

The survey's findings articulate clear priorities for AI regulation and digital education in Poland:

- **Comprehensive AI Literacy Programs:** Educational strategies must move beyond surface-level awareness, equipping youth with practical skills in identifying AI systems, interrogating the validity of AI outputs, and understanding algorithmic decision-making. This should include exposure to the technical, ethical, and social dimensions of AI, as advocated by both national and international bodies (UNICEF, 2022; OECD, 2024).
- **Addressing Misconceptions Directly:** Curricula and public awareness campaigns must explicitly confront and dispel prevalent myths—such as the notion of AI's inherent benevolence or autonomy—using evidence-based explanations. Transparent discussion about the capabilities, limitations, and ethical challenges of AI can foster a more informed and resilient citizenry.
- **Fostering Critical Thinking and Digital Literacy:** As AI-generated misinformation and deepfakes become more sophisticated, educational interventions should prioritize critical media literacy. Young people need targeted training to evaluate digital content, recognize manipulation, and apply critical reasoning to both human- and machine-generated information.
- **Promoting Transparency and Accountability:** Regulatory frameworks should require that AI systems—especially those used in public and educational settings—are explainable and transparent. Mechanisms for accountability must be established to ensure that adverse outcomes are traceable and that users can contest or understand algorithmic decisions that affect them.

Conclusion

In sum, the YouthGovAI survey demonstrates that while Polish youth are enthusiastic adopters of AI technologies, this engagement is not always matched by robust technical or critical literacy. The persistence of knowledge gaps and misconceptions signals an urgent need for well-structured, participatory educational programs and regulatory oversight. By proactively addressing these challenges, policymakers and educators can help ensure that young people in Poland are not only users of AI, but also informed, empowered, and responsible participants in an increasingly algorithmic society.

Focus Group with national Stakeholders

Results from the National Focus Groups (WP 4 – Stakeholder Engagement)

Country: Poland
Place: Academic School Complex of the International Academy of Applied Sciences in Łomża – ZSA MANS
Format: Offline
online/offline
Implemented by: Igor Skrodzki
names of personnel, organization

1. **Participants**
   Students from the IT Technical School (17 individuals, 1st year class):

- Secondary school students aged 16-17, specializing in Information Technology (IT technician track).
- Brought the perspective of young users who interact daily with AI-based systems such as ChatGPT, YouTube, TikTok, and educational platforms.
- Shared practical experiences, expressed the challenges in understanding how AI works, and highlighted the lack of opportunities to influence AI-related decision-making.

Vocational subject teacher – IT Systems:

- Specialist in computer networks, operating systems, and basic programming.
- Contributed technical insights and a practical perspective on how AI is integrated into vocational education.

Vocational subject teacher – Cybersecurity:

- Expert in cybersecurity, data protection, and IT threat management.
- Brought forward the perspective on ethical and legal risks associated with AI development, as well as the limitations of current educational frameworks on these topics.

Vocational subject teacher – Programming

- Specialist in algorithm design, software development, and programming education (Python, C++, and Java).
- Emphasized the importance of including AI-related programming skills in vocational training, highlighting the need for hands-on experience with machine learning models and responsible coding practices.

2. **Summary of the course of discussion**

The session lasted approximately 1,5 hour and was structured around interactive thematic blocks that enabled both students and educators to reflect, share, and collaborate. The key focus areas included:

- the current level of youth involvement in AI governance,
- the everyday interaction of students with AI technologies,
- the role of education in preparing young people for responsible AI engagement,

- and the needs of teachers and youth workers in facilitating AI literacy.

Current Involvement of Youth in AI Governance

Students unanimously indicated that they had no formal involvement in AI governance. Their awareness of AI policies, ethical debates, or regulatory frameworks was extremely limited. They described their engagement with AI as "automatic" or "unquestioned"—they interact with AI through platforms like ChatGPT, YouTube, TikTok, and anti-plagiarism tools, but have no understanding of how these systems are governed or who controls their development.

They also reported a complete lack of exposure to topics such as algorithmic bias, data protection rights, or societal impacts of automation. Their knowledge of AI is often limited to basic IT course content, where AI is treated as a technical tool, not a subject of civic importance.

Role of Schools and Curriculum Gaps

Both students and teachers noted that the curriculum does not currently support discussions on AI ethics or governance. AI is introduced in purely technical contexts (e.g., automation, algorithms, machine learning examples), with no links to human rights, democratic participation, or social impact. Teachers expressed frustration at the lack of training and structured resources that would allow them to deliver interdisciplinary AI literacy content.

Educator and Youth Worker Needs

Educators voiced a clear need for:

- dedicated, modular AI literacy materials that are adapted to vocational education,
- professional development opportunities to understand AI's ethical and legal dimensions,
- tools to engage students in debates, simulations, or youth-led research projects.

Students, on the other hand, emphasized the need for:

- accessible formats (videos, games, podcasts) to understand AI governance,
- practical case studies that relate to their digital lives,
- spaces where their opinions about technology can be heard and taken seriously.

3. Quotes / Soundbites (with consent or anonymized)

- "We use AI every day, but we don't really know what it's doing behind the scenes." – Student
- "No one's asking us what we think about AI, but we're the ones living with it all the time." – Student
- "AI is part of our lives now, but in school it's treated like something distant or optional." – Teacher (Cybersecurity)
- "We teach the tools, not the consequences. That's a gap we need to fill." – Teacher (IT Systems)
- "If AI is deciding what we see online and how we're judged, we should be part of the decisions too." – Student
- "It would help if someone explained AI policies in our language, not in legal or technical jargon." – Student
- "Right now, students are just AI users. But with the right help, we could be its watchdogs too." – Student

- "There should be hackathons or debates about AI in every school. That's how you get people thinking." – Teacher

4. Key take-aways and learnings for the project

· Youth are highly engaged with AI technologies but lack critical awareness.

The session confirmed that while young people interact with AI tools daily (e.g., chatbots, recommendation systems, plagiarism detectors), they rarely reflect on the systems' impact on their rights, choices, or opportunities. There is a clear gap between technological use and civic understanding.

· AI governance is invisible to young people.

None of the participants had heard of AI policy frameworks, ethical review boards, or digital rights initiatives. This demonstrates the need for youth-friendly communication and outreach strategies that explain how AI systems are governed—and how young people can get involved.

· Vocational education needs AI literacy reform.

Teachers and students agreed that current curricula in technical schools do not address AI beyond basic automation or coding tasks. There is a strong call for incorporating discussions about AI ethics, bias, privacy, and democratic participation into standard IT education.

· Youth workers and educators require dedicated resources.

Teachers highlighted the lack of training, tools, and institutional support to guide meaningful discussions about AI governance. Modular, ready-to-use educational materials—co-created with youth—would be a powerful way to close this gap.

· Young people are open to participation—if invited properly.

Students showed genuine interest in understanding AI's broader role in society and expressed readiness to contribute if given accessible platforms, gamified content, and space for dialogue. Interactive tools, national youth consultations, and digital platforms could dramatically increase engagement.

· The youth voice is missing, not indifferent.

One of the strongest insights from the session is that exclusion is systemic, not voluntary. Youth are not disinterested—they are unheard. To include them meaningfully, projects like YouthGovAI must prioritize empowerment, language accessibility, and long-term presence in educational settings.

National Co-Creation Group Findings – Poland

Location and Implementation

The Polish Co-Creation Group session took place on May 26 at the International Academy of Applied Sciences in Łomża. Igor Skrodzki (InCrea) organised the offline event, which included academic leadership and faculty members from the institution.

Participants and Expertise

The session gathered academic, administrative, and support staff involved in teaching and student services. Key participants included:

- Dr. Eng. Ireneusz Żuchowski – Rector, agroeconomics and food economy management expert.
- Dr. Eng. Piotr Ponichtera – Vice-Rector for Teaching and Student Affairs, specializing in quality assurance and practice-based education.
- Paulina Marszałek, MA – Student affairs officer and academic teacher, supporting student mobility and digital tools.
- Katarzyna Radecka, MA – Academic teacher, coordinating administrative processes and e-learning platforms.
- Sylwia Siedlecka, MA – Lecturer, expert in educational innovation.
- Magdalena Łewańska, MSc Eng. – Head of the Dean's Office, responsible for study logistics and hybrid learning coordination.
- Karolina Żebrowska, MSc Eng. – Deputy Head of the Dean's Office, overseeing academic documentation and scheduling.
- Dr. Eng. Dariusz Tomaszewicz – civil engineering lecturer specializing in sustainable building technologies.

Discussion Highlights and Observations

AI Awareness and Challenges in Education

Participants noted that while youth increasingly use AI-based tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Grammarly), they often lack understanding of how these systems work or what risks they pose. Even some educators feel unprepared to integrate AI topics into curricula due to a lack of institutional training and support.

Barriers to AI Competency Development

The group highlighted a shortage of Polish-language educational materials tailored to young people and non-technical audiences. Rural schools and vocational institutions often suffer from poor infrastructure and a lack of staff with relevant AI skills. Ethical issues and widespread myths (e.g., AI as mass surveillance or job destroyer) are largely absent from school debates.

Recommendations for AI Literacy Course Design

Participants recommended that the course include:

- An introduction to algorithms and data bias.
- Social impacts of AI (e.g., employment, privacy, manipulation).
- A human rights-based approach linking AI with digital rights and democratic principles.

Gamification, project-based learning (e.g., ethical AI use cases), and Polish case studies were advised to boost engagement. A modular structure should allow adaptation for both youth and youth workers.

Role of Stakeholders

- Universities should collaborate with secondary schools to deliver workshops and guest lectures.
- The Ministry of Education and tech companies could support teacher training and provide open educational resources.
- Civil society organizations, especially youth-focused NGOs, should help co-create inclusive and culturally relevant learning materials.

Youth Engagement

It was emphasized that young people should be involved in co-designing educational content, particularly online modules and case studies. Additional suggestions included youth AI ambassador programs and organizing school debates or hackathons.

Participant Quotes

- "Young people know how to use AI, but not how to understand it."
- "We need to stop pretending AI is neutral—students should learn to question it."
- "Our challenge is to bring AI down to earth—make it real, relatable, and relevant."

Project Takeaways

- The need for AI competency development in Poland is especially high outside major urban centers.
- Emphasis should be placed on reception competence—the ability to evaluate and responsibly use AI outputs.
- Efforts must be made to bridge the digital divide and ensure disadvantaged youth have access to AI education.
- A Polish version of the YouthGovAI platform should include local examples and allow for certification upon course completion.
- Universities can act as regional hubs for AI awareness through workshops, publication of educational materials, and community dialogue initiatives.

Conclusions

The analysis undertaken in this report illuminates the complex and evolving landscape of artificial intelligence in Poland, situating it within the broader context of European regulatory harmonization and the local realities of educational practice and youth engagement. As the EU AI Act begins to set new legal and ethical standards for member states, Poland's response will be critical in determining not only the country's competitiveness and capacity for innovation, but also its ability to safeguard fundamental rights and promote digital citizenship.

Empirical evidence gathered through the YouthGovAI project confirms that Polish youth are intensely exposed to AI-driven technologies, both in and outside of the classroom. However, this exposure is not matched by a commensurate development of critical AI literacy or meaningful opportunities for civic engagement. The findings point to a number of interrelated challenges: the

absence of dedicated AI literacy components within the national curriculum; the limited integration of ethical and societal considerations into technical education; the need for teacher upskilling and resource development; and the insufficient representation of youth perspectives in policy and governance forums.

At the same time, the report identifies several exemplary initiatives—across formal, non-formal, and informal education sectors—that demonstrate the transformative potential of well-designed AI literacy programs. Initiatives such as AI Labs in schools, university-based interdisciplinary modules, and national campaigns against disinformation provide important blueprints for scaling up and mainstreaming good practices. These examples underscore the value of participatory, hands-on, and contextually relevant approaches that empower young people not only as consumers of AI, but as active co-creators, watchdogs, and informed citizens.

From a policy perspective, the recommendations emerging from this analysis converge around several core imperatives:

1. **Mainstreaming AI Literacy**: There is a pressing need to embed AI literacy—encompassing technical, ethical, and civic dimensions—into all levels of the Polish educational system. This should include cross-curricular modules, project-based learning, and opportunities for critical debate and reflection.
2. **Empowering Educators and Youth Workers**: Sustained investment in the professional development of teachers and youth workers is essential. Modular training, access to up-to-date resources, and collaborative communities of practice can bridge current knowledge and skills gaps.
3. **Fostering Youth Participation**: Policymakers and institutions must establish structured mechanisms for meaningful youth participation in the design, implementation, and oversight of AI strategies and policies. Youth consultations, advisory boards, and co-creation processes can help ensure that the digital transformation is shaped by, and for, young people.
4. **Promoting Ethical and Inclusive Innovation**: As Poland seeks to balance the imperatives of competitiveness and social responsibility, ethical safeguards—aligned with EU frameworks—must be prioritized. Attention should be paid to the risks of bias, discrimination, and exclusion, especially among marginalized youth populations.
5. **Strengthening Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration**: The complexity of the AI challenge requires robust partnerships across government, academia, civil society, and the private sector. The creation of national platforms for dialogue, experimentation (such as regulatory sandboxes), and monitoring will be key to adaptive, evidence-based governance.

In conclusion, Poland's AI journey is at a critical juncture. The country has the opportunity to harness the energy, creativity, and aspirations of its youth in building a trustworthy, innovative, and socially just AI ecosystem. Realizing this potential will require sustained commitment, strategic vision, and the courage to place young people at the center of digital transformation. The YouthGovAI project stands as both a testament to and a catalyst for these necessary changes—demonstrating that the future of AI in Poland will be determined not only by technological prowess, but by the values, participation, and agency of the next generation.

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