



Evaluation report

football3 for girls and boys in Poland project 2023

dr Paweł Zembura. Sportimpakt



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The "football3 for girls and boys in Poland" project
financed by the FIFA Foundation Community Program 2023.



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1/What is this document about?

This report is an evaluation of the project “football3 for girls and boys in Poland” project of the Trenuj Bycie Dobrym association supported by FIFA Foundation. It was prepared on the basis of evaluation studies, including observations, evaluation workshops and interviews. The evaluation focuses on showing the project’s assumptions, its implementation and the prospects of various stakeholders.

The main objective of the project is to address unequal access to (sport) football based on gender, especially for children and young people. The project assumes the use of the unrecognised potential of early childhood education teachers in conducting physical education (WF) classes using the football3 method. Football3 is a modified football, in which the game consists, among others, of mediation between players, there is no referee in it, and the participating teams award fair play points. Football3 also assumes co-participation in the game of boys and girls. The project is used as a tool to facilitate social change – e.g. challenging gender-related stereotypes related to participation in sport.

The project fits into the assumptions of the previously undertaken, the main initiative of the Trenuj Bycie Dobrym Association, i.e. Fair Play Program. Fair Play Program assumes social change (mainly – increase of social competences) through sport and volunteering.

In previous editions, the main beneficiaries were, among others, children from classes I-III and young volunteers participating in football classes³ as well as teachers of early school education. The program has so far been held in many voivodships, and locally it was based on a leader (usually a WF teacher, who is also a coach) and his Fair Play Team (volunteers).

In this project, the leaders were taken over by independent teachers of early childhood education. The project took place in the school environment in three different locations in terms of size – in Nowa Góra (rural municipality) in the municipality of Staroźreby (Mazowieckie Voivodeship), in Mrągow (small city) and in Gdańsk (large city).

The coordinator of the project is the association Trenuj Bycie Dobrym from Mrągowa – formerly known as the Youth Association of Sport Initiatives. Since the beginning of the organisation, the core of its activity has been social development through sport. The Association has a very strong network of experienced trainers and sports leaders throughout Poland. The organisation participates intensively in international cooperation in the area of *sport for development* (sport for development). It is the only organisation representing Poland in the streetfootballworld and Common Goal networks, bringing together entities from all over the world in the field of sport for development. He is also the only beneficiary of both FIFA and UEFA grants in Poland, recognising the work of the association with the football3 tool.

The evaluation of the project is a continuation of the work on Fair Play Program in the years 2019-2020 and 2021-2022.

2/Challenges identified in the project

Sport in Poland is characterised by unequal access due to gender. Physical and sports activity among girls and women is lower than among boys and men. The problem is systemic and complex.

Picture of the problem

Sports and physical activity

- Between 1 October 2020 and 30 September 2021 38.8 % of Poles from 5 years of age (36.7 % of women and 41.0 % of men) participated in sports activities or motor recreation. (1)
- 20.6 % participated in sports regularly. Men more often than women declared regular participation (23.1 % vs. 18.1 %) (1)
- In the study of 11-15 year olds in Poland, girls were less physically active than boys. Around 5 % of girls compared to boys met World Health Organisation recommendations (on average, only 17.2 % of adolescents met these recommendations).
- 24.7 % of athletes holding licenses in Polish sports unions are women and girls, despite the fact that the players make up 41 % of the staff of the Polish National Team. (2)

Sports – trainers and activists

Gender differences are very clear about people who decide what sport looks like in Poland.

- In 2021, women accounted for only 8 % of all coaches in sports relationships and 28 % of trainers in sports unions. (2)
- 21.1 % of judges in Polish sports unions were women (in 2021) (2)
- 11 % on the board of directors and 16.7 % on the supervisory board of PKO BP Ekstraklasa clubs are at least one woman (3)
- Women are rarely members of the board of directors or boards of directors, even in female sports. In the clubs of Orlen Ekstraliga Women (the highest league in women's football in Poland) varied (by gender) the composition of at least one body was present in only 41.7 % of organisations (6)

Activities of sports organisations

Sports organisations in Poland address gender inequality to a very limited extent.

- In the 2018 National Sports Governance Observer study, among nine sports associations in Poland, none of them formally addressed the topic of gender equality in their discipline. (4)

In the analysis of the social responsibility of PKO BP Ekstraklasa clubs in the 2021/22 season, a small percentage of clubs (through programmes or policies) address the issue of gender balance:

- 16.7 % Take actions aimed at supporting (future) leaders of both sexes through formal training or informal agreements (e.g. mentoring)
- No club has a written, formal document that sets out goals and specific actions aimed at gender promotion in sport.
- 11 % of organisations work with other organisations to promote gender balance in sport
- 22 % of organisations work to maintain gender balance in their social programmes (e.g. in the field of universal sport) (3)

Why is it a problem?

Sufficient physical activity translates into specific health benefits.

Compliance with recommendations regarding physical activity is associated with better cognitive development (including results in science) and motor, psychosocial, cardiopulmonary system, bones or a lower risk of injury(5). More generally, sufficient physical activity can be seen as an imperative of health. Sport is one of the ways to achieve the recommended amount of physical activity.

Participation in sport (especially team sport) also has a positive effect on improving mental resilience and mental health throughout life. More broadly, sports-active people assess their well-being higher.

Indirectly, participation in sport also makes it possible to acquire motor skills, but also a sense of self-efficacy.

Sport in many countries is also seen as a tool of social policy that goes beyond physical activity, for example:

- facilitates the integration of groups at risk of social exclusion
- it is a tool for integration into the labour market
- it is seen as a tool for the prevention of physical and mental health.
- it is used as a tool to limit criminal behaviour.
- social capital is built with its use.

External determinants of participation in sport

The factors influencing the state of participation in sport are those that go beyond the individual perspective:

- support for loved ones (family, caregivers, friends)
- access to a tailored offer in the field of sport
- access to the equipment needed
- cultural roles (e.g. a different look at how boys and girls are supposed to play)

These external conditions are not easy to influence. It is also rarely possible to solve a complex, systemic problem – the under-representation of women in Polish sport, through a single action.

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Causes of the problem

The general problem defined in the project is

Unequal access to (sports) football based on gender

Three of the causes of the problem addressed in the project:

- 1) Lack of awareness of the problem** (generally – in society and specifically in the “sports sector”)

There is no public debate and social activity on the subject of an adequate access to sport and physical activity for girls and boys in Poland. Acceptance of the current situation results, among others, from:

- 2) Strong stereotypes** about participation in sport and physical activity

In Poland (and sport in general) stereotypes are very strongly rooted – 1) football is for boys, 2) the best coaches are men’s. The result is—

- 3) Untapping the potential of work in the field of promoting sport in early childhood education**

The sports environment, including physical education trainers, generally negatively assess the conduct of classes in grades I-III of primary school by teachers of early childhood education. In the sports environment, represented, among others, by the Ministry of Sport and Tourism, there are regularly demands for the introduction of WF teachers in classes I-III, which are seen as a “forgotten opportunity” for children’s sports development.

However, policies to replace teachers in early childhood education are not in place.

In grades I-III, early school teachers conduct co-educational physical education classes. Their work has been treated as a “problem” and not a “opportunity” for years.

Segregation has been promoted since grade IV of primary school, i.e. the division of physical education into boys’ occupations and occupations for girls.

3/Objective in the project

Empowering women in sport:

- 1) Promoting and implementing in schools and all teachers of the early school method football3, who teaches respect and respect during the co-play of boys and girls (addresses stereotypes, strengthens working methods in early school education using the potential of early school teachers to conduct WF classes)
- 2) Through the organisation of public events, debates and the development of models of local cooperation for sport and physical activity for girls and boys (from an early age) and by creating educational materials (addressing stereotypes, awareness of the problem)

4/Model of project activities

RESOURCES

1. a network of experienced trainers and teachers involved in the Fair Play Program
2. accommodating directorate and teacher of early childhood education
3. teacher education programme (produced certification programme, MOOC course), knowledge of representatives of local non-governmental organisations training teachers
4. support for influential national organisations

ACTIONS

1. training of early childhood education teachers on football3
2. conducting regular football classes3 by teachers of early childhood education as part of WF classes
3. organisation of football tournaments3 and debates on women in sport
4. organisation of training conferences for teachers of early childhood education in the field of football3 in new locations

DIRECT PRODUCTS

1. training of early school teachers in football classes3 (teacher certification)
2. carrying out a certain number of football classes3
3. football3 tournaments, debates
4. football3 Open Training Conferences

EFFECTS

1. increasing the number of women football mediators and coaches3 in Poland
2. popularisation of the football method3 in the (early) school environment in Poland, supporting equal access to sport and physical activity
3. promotion and education on the importance of equal access to sport and physical activity among diverse stakeholders

IMPACT

1. strengthening the position of early childhood education teachers in the context of recognising their potential to conduct attractive WF classes through football3
2. empowering girls and women in sport in Poland, especially at the local level, through football3 (a larger number of coaches) and co-working with schools
3. more attractive physical education activities from the perspective of children from grades I-III

*marked

PROBLEM

nierówności w dostępie do
piłki nożnej ze względu na
płeć

ADRESOWANE PRZYCZYNY

brak świadomości
problemu

stereotypy
odnośnie ról płci w
sporcie

brak wykorzystania
potencjału nauczycielek do
upowszechniania sportu

CEL PROJEKTU

wzmocnić pozycję
kobiet w piłce
nożnej

DZIAŁANIA

promocja football3
wśród nauczycielek
edukacji wczesnoszkolnej

regularne
prowadzenie zajęć
football3

organizowanie
debat i turniejów
football3

EFEKTY DŁUGOTERMINOWE

zwiększenie liczby kobiet
mediatorów i trenerów
football3 w Polsce

popularyzacja metody football3
w środowisku (wczesno)
szkolnym w Polsce, wspierającej
równy dostęp do sportu i
aktywności fizyczne

zmiana postaw
względem piłki nożnej
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upowszechniania sportu

ograniczona liczba
liderów sportu -
kobiet

CEL PROJEKTU

wzmocnić pozycję
kobiet w piłce
nożnej

DZIAŁANIA

promocja football3
wśród nauczycielek
edukacji wczesnoszkolnej

regularne
prowadzenie zajęć
football3

organizowanie
debat i turniejów
football3

rozwój liderek sportu
w ramach projektu
Breaking Barriers

konferencje
szkoleniowe
football3 z PZPN

EFEKTY DŁUGOTERMINOWE

zwiększenie liczby kobiet
mediatorów i trenerów
football3 w Polsce

popularyzacja metody football3
w środowisku (wczesno)
szkolnym w Polsce, wspierającej
równy dostęp do sportu i
aktywności fizyczne

zmiana postaw
względem piłki nożnej
kobiet

więcej liderek sportu

Implementation

Three project teams operating at local level in different environments:

- Nowa Góra (Gmina Staroźreby) – rural environment
- the team Mrągowo – a small city
- the band Gdańsk – a big city

Each team has fallen from the following representatives: a non-governmental organisation (NGO), a school (primary school from Nowa Gojra, Mrą'gowa and Gdańska), self-ordered (the municipalities of Staroz-Reby, the City of Mrą'GOWO and the City of Gdańsk) and parents. Volunteers play an important role in local teams, mainly: students of classes IV-VII from schools involved in the project and older youth on a daily basis supporting local NGOs.

In addition to these teams, teams in other locations from Rudnik, Olsztynek, Poznań, Płock and Maszew Duże took part in similar activities. In each of these locations there were football3 classes conducted by teachers of early childhood education.

Direct beneficiaries

- Children from classes I-III participating in football3 classes carried out by teachers of early childhood education
- Early school teachers from participating schools

Indirect beneficiaries

- Local environment, especially around the school, among others parents/guardians of participating children, other teachers (including WF), management, trainers from local clubs, representatives of the local government

5/Tools

- Training and implementation of football classes3:
 - education of early school teachers in the application of the football method3 during WF classes, in grades I-III in the school through certified training (online training – MOOC) and stationary, by representatives of local organisations who came to schools
 - Conducting regular football classes3 in elementary schools from Nowa Gora, Mrągow and Gdańsk
 - **Organisation of open training conferences on football3 in new locations**
- Organisation of football tournaments3
- Organisation of public debates and conferences on annual sports and physical activity for girls and boys

Football3 lessons

What is football3?

Football3 modification of football developed primarily in terms of actions in conflict-affected areas in developing countries, the aim of which is to use the popularity of football to promote cooperation, learn to resolve conflicts and values that fit into fair play.

The idea of football3 was developed by the international organisation Streetfootball, dedicated to sport for development. In football3, sports competition is limited to promoting, among others, inclusiveness and social dialogue. The game does not involve referees, but only mediators who help participants resolve misunderstandings arising during the game themselves. Points are earned, among other things, for the fair play game. Participants can modify the rules of the game to fit into a given social context. An example of such a modification is the requirement for all team members to touch the ball before hitting the goal or a double count of points for goals scored by less efficient team members.

In practice, the gameplay is divided into three parts.

- 1) In the first, the participants themselves decide on the exact rules before the game – they jointly set the rules for the game itself, as well as the way to celebrate the goal.
- 2) Then there is a proper game in which the players try to follow the accepted rules and more generally – fair play rules. The role of the referee is a mediator who helps moderate the gameplay, but does not interfere in the game, e.g. by interrupting the game in case of foul.
- 3) The final part is a summary of the game when teams talk about the gameplay, adhere to the rules and award each other fair play points.

Football3 in the activities of the Association Training Being Good

In 2020 and 2021, the Fair Play Program tested football3 classes in grades I-III of primary schools. The classes were mainly experienced WF teachers and coaches in sports clubs in various locations throughout Poland. Football classes3 were seen by participating children as attractive.

For most of them, the specific form of classes is interesting (co-educational studies, lack of aggressive game, less focus on the result, and on fun and social aspect). At the same time, these pilots identified some challenges regarding the implementation of football3 classes among early school children related to the complexity of the gameplay and the reluctance to football3 among children training.

In this project, football3 classes led, as part of WF classes, early school education teachers. Football3 classes were implemented at the school level, that is, they were not led only by willing and already familiar football3 teachers – it was more “universal”, which from the perspective of evaluation made it possible to learn more diverse perspectives for running football3 in school.

Why does football3 respond to the needs of teachers?

Football3 classes were supposed to support early school teachers in the implementation of the core curriculum (teachers are very much involved in the curriculum and are obliged to provide 10 ranges of teaching). Football3 is also part of: popularisation and promotion of the idea of sport in sport, including, among others, the role of boys and girls, also creates a context for teaching children skills that make it easier for early school teachers to continue their “educational” work with children – primarily in the field of social skills (communication, feedback, listening). Hence, it is attractive for teachers who in early childhood education work with their classes virtually without interruption for three years.

Online Training for Early Childhood Teachers

Online teacher training is part of the 2021 football certification scheme implemented by the Trenuj Being Good Association. The certification system aims to formalise the process of acquiring knowledge and skills in the field of football use³. The course was prepared by streetfootballworld organisation and partner organisations (including the association coordinating this project) and translated by the project coordinator into Polish.

Teachers had to take a mobile football3 course on the online platform. It was scheduled for about 5 hours.

A large part of the teachers also took part in training on football3 in direct contact. The direct course consisted of a theoretical and practical part, was taught by a representative of a local NGO, who is also an experienced football practice³. This training was also attended by teachers from outside the schools participating in the project for whom it was often the first contact with football3.

Football3 tournaments

School tournaments using the football method³ were organised by early school teachers, parents and other local volunteers. The tournaments included games and games, among others, promoting girls and boys.

The form of the tournaments was different, but they usually assumed on the one hand the rivalry of teams consisting of children (usually – randomly selected) as well as engaging games. Many tournaments were held with the aim of promoting specific Sustainable Development Goals.

The tournaments were attended by representatives of CEN, “verifying” the value of football3 at the school, volunteers and local guests.

The culmination of the tournaments was the final football3 tournament in Gdańsk in June 2023, which was attended by teams of children from all the towns involved in the project. The event took place at the Polsat Arena Gdańsk stadium and participated in the event, among others. representatives of partners of PZPN (patronat of the president of the union), Adidas company, recognizable professional footballers. Volunteers during the event were, among others, girls and women involved in the Adidas Breaking Barriers program – aimed at creating new female leaders in the promotion of sport through education, mentoring or support.

Debates

The first public debate on the development of sport and physical activity for girls and boys with regard to perspective: rural areas, urban areas and urban areas took place during the football3 tournament in Nowa Góra. A similar debate took place during the final event in Gdańsk.

They were attended by representatives of the JST, the School, NGOs from Gdańsk, Mrągowo and Nowa Gozra, as well as representatives of the Oscillary Office.

Its recipients were primarily the local community interested in sport and social life (representatives of locally important sports and social organisations).

During the debates, topics related to equal access to sport and specifically – the potential and experience of football3 were discussed.

Educational materials

The production of educational materials (film, photos and graphics) about realised and good practices from the implementation of the activities was aimed at disseminating information about the project, its goals and tool, which is football3.

The materials are available online and include, among others, a presentation of the “introduction to football3 at school”, which explains the rules and benefits of football3. Video materials promoting the idea of football3 have also been developed.

Training/Educational conferences football3 in school

At the end of the project, six major football training conferences took place in November and December 2023. These events took place in partnership with the Polish Football Association, the largest Polish sports association, responsible in Poland for the development of football, the voivodship football associations, as well as with the participation of local representatives of education curators, departments of municipalities responsible for education, sports and teacher education centres.

Their aim was to promote football3 in the environment of early school education teachers, among people previously not involved in the project. Training will continue in 2024.

The meetings included the presentation of football3, the opportunity to observe football classes3 and participation in the game, speeches by representatives of PZPN regarding the offer of the association for schools in the area of universal sport. The events took place in Radom, Płock, Poznań, Wrocław, Gdańsk and Mrągowo. They brought together between 30 and 60 participants, including early childhood education teachers, WF teachers and trainers in local clubs. The main channels of event promotion were mailing partners of specific events, individual invitations through organisers, social media coordinator, PZPN and provincial football associations.

How do resources and activities translate into effects?

Mechanisms to promote gender equality and the promotion of football among women and girls in the project:

- Teachers of early childhood education are almost exclusively women, learning about football3 is designed to 1) give them new, attractive tools for work; 2) make it easier for them to address the issue of equality in sport/physical activity. Through training and certification, the teachers were to enter into the role of football classes3. Conducting innovative classes tailored to their needs is to strengthen their authority in conducting WF classes inside the school.
- The participants of football3 classes in schools were all children taking part in WF classes, with the assumption that in football3 half of the team are girls and the other half are boys. Participation in football3 provided opportunities to promote joint participation in sport and equality talks.
- During football tournaments3 and in debates, it was possible to reach out with information and perspective on the current situation of women and girls in sport to people who do not care about it or do not consider it a problem. The course of the debates illustrated the diversity of perspectives for equality in sport.

6/Evaluation activities

Actions in 2023

- 3 evaluation workshops focus group in Nowa Góra, Mrągowo and Gdańsk
- 3 study visits to Nowa Góra, Mrągowo and Gdańsk
- 30 individual interviews with participants (children, teachers and parents)

In addition, in 2023:

- 5 individual focus interviews with participants (children, teachers and parents)
- Questionnaire surveys after training conferences with PZPN

7/Evaluation results

Actions implemented

The project was implemented as intended. Specific numbers are found in the effects of the project.

Teams were established in three locations (Nowa Góra, Mrągowo, Gdańsk) and established cooperation between NGOs – local government – school. In each location, at least one school held regular and universal football3 classes conducted by an early school teacher. In each of these schools there was a local cooperation expressing the support of the school team by an experienced trainer/teacher, support for the promotion of football3 by the head of the school and many teachers of early school education who conducted the classes. Selected early school education teachers were school football leaders, coordinating the implementation of the methodology.

Similar cooperations resulting from the previous involvement of trainers and teachers in the Fair Play Program, operated at the same time, although sometimes on a smaller scale in Rudniki (Opolskie Voivodeship), Olsztynek (Warmińsko-Mazurskie Voivodeship), Poznań (Wielkopolska Voivodeship) and Upper Maszewie (Mazowieckie Voivodeship). It is worth emphasising this, because it illustrates the impact of the project, going beyond three locations.

The training process for teachers in some locations, as well as the start of classes, was delayed in relation to the original schedule, due to problems with the implementation of training for teachers in the pre-holiday period (5-6). 2022). It was on the support of the school supervisor and the extent and effectiveness of the promotion of football training in the locations concerned.

In the end, however, the number of football classes was completed. In some schools, teachers emphasised that they had more football classes than they originally assumed, which was a derivative of children's choice.

Training conferences that took place at the end of 2023 were not originally part of the project, but were very important in building its impact and were therefore included in this evaluation.

Selected effects and products of the project

Number of completed football3 lessons – in 2023 – 227 lessons

Number of teachers who took part in direct training on football3 in 2023 – 325 participants

Number of football tournaments completed in 2023 – 7

Number of public debates on sport and physical activity for girls and boys (from an early age) taking into account the perspective of different stakeholders – 2

Number of competitions/contests in the gamification formula for teachers of early school education at football3 lessons– 1

Involvement of public and non-governmental organisations in project activities:

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- Mazovian Self-Government Centre for Teachers' Improvement, Pomeranian Teacher Education Centre;
- Local and regional authorities: Gdańsk City Office, Mrągorowa City Office, Staroźreby Municipal Office;
- Polish Football Association;
- Partner Schools – 9;
- voivodeship football associations (WZPN, DZPN, WMZPN, MZPN, PZPN).

Number of evaluation reports in the project – 2

8/Teachers of Early Childhood Education

The process of education and training of early childhood education teachers on football3

What was football3 like in class? What were the main challenges in this process? What did football 3 need?

The project assumed a dynamic process of football education3 and the beginning of classes by teachers of early childhood education in three locations.

This process – from finding out about football3 to running it was really short. Teachers in Gdańsk, after the inauguration of the project in their school, in winter 2021, had training with one of the representatives of non-governmental organisations familiar with football3, and then worked individually with an experienced football coach3. This trainer participated in the classes of some teachers, which thanks to this were able to see the “live” running of football classes, while others gave guidance.

The teachers mentioned that watching the classes conducted by the trainer was very valuable, it made it possible to organise the process and take notes. However, not all of them had the opportunity to see the “external” classes. Teachers have never seen each other in class.

In the opinion of some teachers, they started classes very quickly (already in April 2022) and in this semester they had relatively much to do. In autumn 2022, they had six classes each for the entire semester, which meant less intensity. However, as mentioned in football3 classes within the WF, there is usually more than expected, due to children’s preference. As one teacher pointed out, with conducting classes quickly “they were thrown into the deep water, taking into account how complex this method is.”

Teachers mentioned that for the purpose of conducting football classes3 they also learned from materials found on the Internet. They then took an online course.

Teachers considered the recordings of classes to be particularly valuable, which, step by step, illustrated the realisation of the game. They also demanded recordings to help address problems with children during classes. This is about practical advice on what to do if, for example, one child does not comply with the adopted rules or if some of the participants are not involved. Some of such doubts appeared among them already during the observation of trainings, and some showed themselves on the basis of experience with form.

Football3 by some teachers, as well as methodological advisors, is perceived as a complex form. It combines elements of sporting and “educational” activities and the gameplay is

unpredictable and non-linear (because in addition to the new rules there is an aspect of their observance). In the game, due to the need to adhere to the adopted rules, lack of referee and mediation, many new situations occur. The process of learning football3 must therefore take some time, and during it, new questions may still arise in the host.

Teachers emphasised that as part of their physical education classes, training or courses that could be a stimulus for their development are not available. This means that while everyone is aware of the need to conduct physical education classes in grades I-III by teachers, they have practically no support in this (apart from – in some schools – support of WF teachers).

Thus, teachers develop their workshops primarily along with gaining experience in school. However, they do not have a prepared development path in this area. More generally, teachers were often interested in training and football3 specifically due to the limited development offer and the perceived need for a larger structure in the classes. And indeed, also in the words of the PZPN representative, the union has so far not been interested in this group (teachers of early school education) and has not had programs addressed to it.

Evaluation of training conferences as encounters with football3

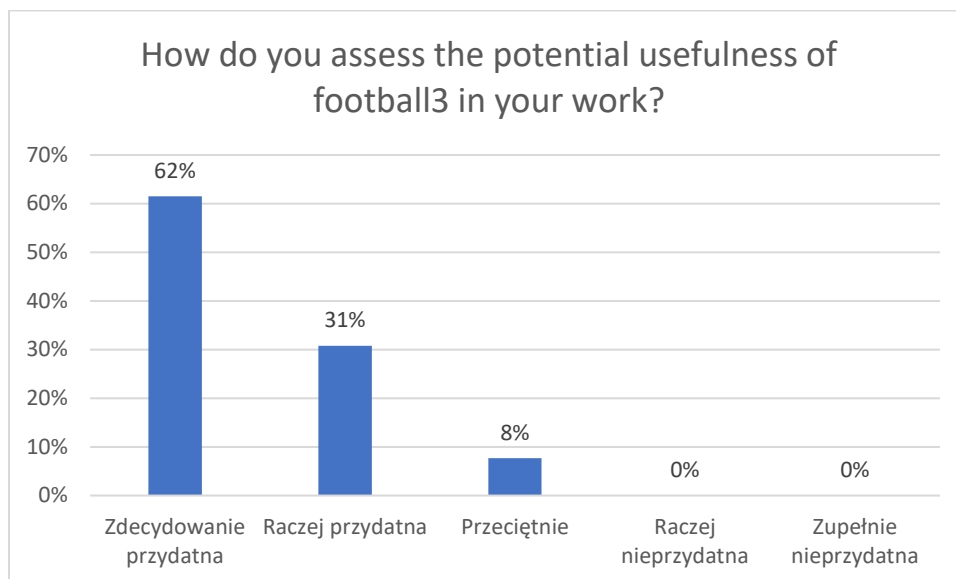
Following training conferences held in November and December 2023, an evaluation survey was conducted among participants, the results of which illustrate the prospects for football3 promotion in the school context. The correctly filled data were collected from 26 people per about 260 participants.

The vast majority of respondents were early school teachers (77 %) and the rest were WF teachers (23 %). Teachers and teachers were experienced, 46 % worked between 6 and 15 years, 23 % between 15 and 25 years, and 26 % were over 25 years.

Teachers who first went to **training conferences** in November and December 2023 learned about the events through information distributed by schools (52 %), but a large part learned from their friends by “pantoflow mail” (32 %).

The most popular motive for participation was curiosity about a new form of teaching (football3) (69 %) and cheating on new teaching tools (23 %) and only one person indicated a commitment by their employer. Exactly half of the respondents indicated that they did not know football3 before the conference, and to a very limited extent recognised the form 23 %. On the other hand, the events were also attended by people who already had experience with her and declared to have conducted classes earlier (15 %).

The key, from the perspective of football3, is the assessment of teachers regarding the potential usefulness of football3 in their work. The answers here are very positive.



The participants also highly valued the substantive and organizational value of the conference. As many as 85 % of participants considered the substantive value to be definitely good, 12 % were rather good and 4 % considered average. The organisation of the conference estimated 77 % to be definitely good, 19 % for good and 4 % for the average.

73 % indicated that the educational conference definitely met their expectations and 19 % indicated that it rather met their expectations. 69 % of participants would definitely recommend participation to other teachers, while 27 % would recommend it.

As the most important aspect of the conference, the participants indicated the opportunity to learn about an interesting teaching method (58 %), the possibility to participate in the conference (19 %) and its rich program (15 %).

Suggestions for the improvement of the conference mainly included the need for even more practice, including the possibility to lead a dialogue zone in front of the participants, access to post-conference materials and building a greater relationship with the participants.

After the conference, 85 % of respondents said they were encouraged to use the football3 method in their work, and 58 % indicated that they would participate in the certification process of a football3 mediator. When asked about additional motivators to participate in the next edition of football3 educational conferences at the school, participants indicated that they already felt sufficiently motivated, there were also indications about extending the content to the organisation of the football tournament3, the possibility of obtaining a certificate, practical materials facilitating work using the football3 method and obtaining gadgets.

To sum up – it seems that the conferences have come to fertile ground, and the participants are motivated to look for new tools in their work. Football3 responds to the needs of participants, even those who learned about the method only during the conference.

Use of football3 by early childhood education teachers

The methodological advisor who observed the implementation of football3 in one of the schools mentioned that the implementation of the assumptions of classes for teachers is demanding and these challenges do not resonate sufficiently.

The teachers themselves often emphasised that they implemented football3 in their classes “at one stroke”, i.e. all the rules at the same time. A smaller part of the process was approached in stages.

They also pointed out that it is not a problem to combine football3 classes with mediation or education about the Sustainable Development Goals (which are topics of classes).

The problems of teachers appear during the game itself and relate to sticking to the assumptions of fair play among students. This refers to taking into account the specific assumptions of football3, e.g. fair play rules. On the other hand, children learn the football process3, they “watch” during the game, they are afraid that the opposing team will point out their non-compliance when summarising the game (and awarding fair play points). What is important is that football3 is able to stick to children in the first grade.

It should also be emphasised that there are teachers whose implementation of the rules of football3 has been very difficult. They usually attribute this to the characteristics of the group they work with:

“Children are very keen to play football3, especially boys. The problem is that they really want to play football. It’s not easy to get them out of football and bring them into football3. They don’t want football, they want football.(...) This is a second grader. He only has a ball in front of his eyes. Dot.’

At training conferences, the perceived barrier to the introduction of football3 in the school was an idea of the inability to explain the new rules among students who have played traditional football so far. For this, teachers saw a special ease in disseminating football3 among new, first-year students who were very open to the new rules.

Teachers have no problem handing over the power and control of the game into the hands of children (rejecting themselves aside, e.g. in relation to judging), which comes naturally to them. They also try to do this in other classes “supporting” teamwork. However, the observation of classes shows that, especially in the case of spaces that are small (limited) and therefore lead to greater contactivity and the game is naturally more brutal, teachers engage in “judging”. More generally – football3 fits more into the “backyard” style of sports activities than the usual WF classes, which are more planned and supervised by the teacher.

In conversations with teachers, it was noted that they were worried about the possible injuries of the children. This is not just about football3. In football3, however, developing children’s creativity can lead to situations of increased risk of injury, e.g. during fancy celebrations.

On the other hand, teachers believe that the child’s perspective and satisfaction is also the satisfaction of the parent, i.e. parents are not involved as long as their children like and complain about them.

Football3 as WF Classes – Challenges

Some teachers have mentioned that football classes are too short for children. In their opinion, classes should last 1:30 hours so that the children can run out. The matches are quite short and few children play, which means that in general the energy expenditure of children is not significant. In some locations where teachers had more flexibility to create a schedule of classes, they placed or combined WF classes in recent lessons, allowing them to manage their time more efficiently. The second way to use as much of the WF lessons as possible was to organise part of the mediation in other classes.

A commonly mentioned problem among early school education teachers is also **access to a gym** or other playable space. Due to the characteristics of the game, some teams usually have to wait for their game. There is occasional access to a space that can be divided into several pitches where matches are held at the same time. An interesting idea here is to plan games and games that you can introduce for those waiting for your match.

However, this does not solve the problem of access to attractive spaces for conducting WF classes, especially from the winter season, **which seems systemic.** Plans for access to the halls are arranged by WF-staffs – who do so thinking about their needs. WF classes taught by WF teachers are seen in schools (including – by directors) as more important – because they work with older children and specialise in this field.

Improving access to infrastructure would require, on the one hand, more attractive and less burdened school infrastructure, on the other hand, **equalisation mechanisms for access to infrastructure for early school** teachers.

From the perspective of substantive advisors and WF teachers, football3 classes, **due to their complexity, put less emphasis on gaining movement skills,** e.g. related to football. While the formula of football3 does not limit teachers in this learning process, the number of elements of the game and the transfer of emphasis to mediation or fair play makes exercises strictly related to football skills often less important.

It is also a more general complaint concerning the conduct of WF classes by teachers of early childhood education. The solution suggested by the advisors **is to limit the number of people participating in a single game (which will result in more contact with the ball), planning the development of specific movement or football skills in individual classes (why special rules or warm-up time can serve)** and more generally – taking care of the intensity of effort during classes. As some WF teachers have pointed out, there are many ways to combine quality (in terms of motor skills) and football3 classes, but they require experience and competences that may not be experienced by people starting the adventure with running football3.

On the other hand, football3 gives a course structure that pleases teachers (and children). Through mediation, it goes beyond standard physical education activities, and therefore develops social skills.

The challenges shown above are confirmed by the indications of the teachers who participated in the football training conference3 and the potential barriers to the implementation of football3 indicated:

- Large numbers of their classes
- Lack of access to the equipment needed
- Lack of access to an attractive classroom
- Fear of injury
- Challenges with conducting classes in integration classes
- Limited time to conduct WF classes

The Value of Football3 – Teacher's Perspective

When asked what skills/behaviours they see as particularly developed in football3, teachers mentioned:

- Communication skills – i.e. children are able to get along by themselves, they are better able to deal with conversations, exchange thoughts, listen to someone else's

opinion. Football3 skills move to other school situations, children give themselves time to speak out, it is easier for them to reach consensus. By referring to football3, we give ourselves more space to talk.

- Empathy – children during the game are sensitised (primarily) to injuries of others, they make sure that everyone participates (the game is more incubative). During classes, children try to notice other people in their team, give them the ball, specifically engage them. This helps the teacher build a group.
- Creativity – children show creativity during the selection of enjoyments (how to celebrate the goal gained), it still happens that they come up with new ideas to celebrate goals, adapt their observations from everyday life from the game
- Ability to stick to the rules – children independently supervise the game, “regulate” themselves and better understand the need to introduce rules, also outside of classes.

Football3 has a “educational” potential for a teacher. The context of the game allows you to include in the game football3 some topical topic in the classroom. This gives you the chance to talk about topics that are usually taken at “educational hours” (formally they are not in grades I-III).

“The conversations before and after the game have helped me a lot. We solve our class problems. I say – everyone will be able to speak and immediately become quiet.

An interesting aspect of football3 was pointed out by one of the WF teachers, who looked at the method. He pointed out that the form fits into the broader trend of coaches who understand their role as creating an environment for players, not authoritarian leaders.

The director of one of the participating schools emphasised that football3, through the role of mediators, an open formula and low fitness requirements for the game, is suitable for involving people outside players and teachers, e.g. volunteers or parents. Therefore, it can play a place of expression in school for older pupils who want to engage in activities for the wider community by creating pro-social attitudes.

Due to their form, which is less competitive, the teachers indicated that football3 sometimes works in the inclusion of children who are reluctant to participate in ordinary sports activities.

Also, when asked about the potential value of football3 in their work, teachers participating in training conferences pointed primarily to the educational dimension, group integration, building communication and problem solving skills within the group, attention was paid to the importance of equality during the game and the possibility of giving children the space of ingenuity, supporting their creativity.

Football3 – attractive in a specific context

Football3 was seen as an attractive tool for working with young people at risk of social exclusion (i.e. from certain “difficult” settlements in the city), with which one of the teachers working on football3 works. He mentioned that for this group activities without competition, shifting the emphasis on fun and creative participants, can be better received (perhaps less stressful) and that he regularly uses football3 in this context. Football3 is part of the wider educational work with the use of sport by this teacher/trainer.

9/Children from classes I-III

Compliance with the rules of football³

According to teachers, children in grades I-III well understand the “realisation of the assumptions” of football³, they have no problem with the complexity of the rules.

Children similarly perceive what is fair play behavior and how they should behave (e.g. they help when someone falls over, there is physical contact), but they are not fair play “creative”. This means that they adopt the rules and understand expectations, but they do not necessarily refer to new situations within the game.

Children already in the first class can argue, for which they give fair play points and for which they subtract them. Even in “sports” classes, children honestly award points, they are not malicious to themselves. Teachers emphasised that children have no problem telling openly what they did not like in the game. There are children who, quiet on a daily basis, during mediation, dare and play an important role. Children also watch the game very closely, which makes it easier for them to formulate feedback at the end of the match.

Attractive elements of football³ from the perspective of children

Two dimensions of the overall attractiveness of football are repeated³:

- 1) Children like football³ because they're associated with football.
- 2) Kids like football³, it's linked to efficiency. This agency plays a special role for children, i.e. some are very serious about self-determined rules.

For children, other often mentioned distinguishing features of football³ are: lack of judge (autonomy), need to talk, fair game (i.e. non-aggressive), less significance of the result.

Groups that are worse off adopting the rules of football³ are children (especially boys) who train in clubs (and are accustomed to competition and certain rules). More generally – problems with adapting to the new rules have children with strong beliefs about what a football game should look like. Teachers often pointed out that football³ games are liked by girls who do not necessarily like to participate in standard football classes.

A mediator is a desirable role among children. Young people rarely want to be a judge, it is a depreciated occupation – “next to” the mainstream game. The mediator in football³, on the other hand, is a desirable role, children themselves want to be the “animator of the game”. It seems that in the role of mediator is a good (and demanding) context for the development of social skills of children, as well as building leadership attitudes. Children are happy to see themselves in this role, who like personal contacts and are self-confident.

10/Gender Equality Context and Football

Activities³

The theme of the project is equal access to physical activity and sport based on gender. This topic rarely directly resonates as superior among the main beneficiaries of the project (children and teachers of early school education), but is ubiquitous in the context of football classes³.

Stereotypes in Primary School

Children in early childhood education do not know WF other than co-educational activities. However, they often have ready-made beliefs about what the game should look like and who should play. Among some boys, you can hear statements suggesting a reluctance to play football together³:

MA'am, it's a football game on WF, and it's not given to girls.

it's football, not kindergarten!

Gender in the background?

On the other hand, as one teacher pointed out, children do not account for each other because of gender, but rather commitment.

The cause of the claim to the other child is "that he stands and does nothing" and not gender. If Hanka kicks well, everyone will want her on the team.

Inclusion of girls

Don't worry, Milenka, next time you're kicking that ball.

Children can be very calculated, even when building teams – if some boys "on a daily basis" do not want to play with girls, they are willing to include them in their team by additional rules (e.g. greater weight assigned to goals scored by a girl).

In the opinion of the teachers, the most popular additional rule in the course of football³ is the double counting of goals scored by the girl. A common rule is also the need for a girl to touch the ball before the goal is scored. The adoption of these rules practically does not meet the resistance of boys. The reasons for suggesting these rules are different, as one teacher mentioned – it is usually a search for an advantage over the other team.

For boys observed by the evaluator in classes, it is natural to include girls in the game, the game is more "inclusive" than what we are accustomed to in the case of football by children. The challenge with greater inclusion in the game is the lack of tactics during the game, all children usually chase the ball, and the game is individual.

Details Determining Engagement

In the opinion of teachers, girls are generally more afraid of games, they make sure that, for example, their ball does not hit, especially hard.

One of the teachers used light balls with a small amount of air, which encouraged the girls to play bolder. More generally, girls were more likely to play when there was less risk of aggressive boys playing and there was no physical contact.

On the other hand, the involvement of the girls seems very dependent on the class. One of the teachers mentioned that during her classes, some girls make up for their lack of physical strength with their aggression. In another class, girls are "captains." In football, according to teachers, there is a lot of self-confidence and fitness of the child. However, there are exceptions, girls who express themselves best in sports and are withdrawn on a daily basis.

Teachers also point out that girls, as they continue their football classes³, are making progress in their involvement in the game.

Some children emphasised that the form of football3 removes from them the pressure on the effect, which is part of the usual WF classes, which allows for greater enjoyment of the game.

11/Equality in sport in debate

It is worth recalling the dimensions of thinking about equality in sport taken during the debates within the project and the accompanying discussion. They discussed the following aspects:

Stereotypes of the role of women begin at home

In a traditional family model in Poland, a man has a place for sports in his free time. Meanwhile, the woman is much more burdened with homework, rarely appreciated. It changes, but slowly. It is this model that determines its expectations for participation in sport among young women.

Lack of external support in context

One of the young leaders involved in the project (as a volunteer) drew attention to the role of positive support in the environment in the context of building self-confidence or making decisions enabling self-realisation (women in sport). She raised the issue of the importance of loved ones and acquaintances, among whom there may be such supporters.

Openness is not enough

Open access does not mean equal access, i.e. the democratisation of physical activity and sport requires targeted action. The Director from Gdańsk emphasised the importance of parities in various Gdańsk bodies as an introduction to better decisions (taking into account different perspectives) – however, this did not specifically refer to decisions regarding sports/physical activity policies.

Challenges with defining good practices

Discussions provoked a model of conducting WF classes at a school (schools?) in Gdańsk, where to grade VII of primary school these are coeducational classes. Representatives of “sport” argued that this is not beneficial from the perspective of (a) attractiveness of classes for participants (b) in the context of teaching and values (in the sense of developing motor skills) for children and young people. Consider whether the co-educational model is desirable, appropriate, what benefits and disadvantages lie behind it.

Among the people participating in the project, there is a different understanding of balance or equality in sport, which seems to be inter alia dependent on the environment in which the person operates.

Among people associated with sport (trainers, clubs) this refers to equal opportunities (primarily – in the context of the available offer), for teachers – equalising the attractiveness of classes for two groups, for young leaders/volunteers – perceived in the context of their own beliefs, self-confidence, patterns of their gender.

The discussion on equalisation focused primarily on stereotypes and attitudes, less often on strategies to address inequalities. It seems natural for stakeholders to tour on the understanding of “irregularity” in their immediate surroundings. In the discussions within the project, there were no reflections on targeted policies that could lead to an increase in women’s physical or sports activity. Therefore, note that not necessarily everyone involved

in the project has to think about its overarching goal, while effectively carrying out the tasks leading to it.

This shows the multidimensionality of the addressed problem.

12/Key examples of project impact

Building awareness of the potential impact of early childhood education teachers in promoting sport

One of the diagnosed causes of the problem of differences in access to sport among girls and boys in Poland is the lack of recognition of the potential of female staff in sport. An important part of these staff are early childhood education teachers. The project, through the implemented activities, led to measurable effects illustrating a wider perception of this potential by the sports sector (PZPN).

However, which seems equally important, the project confirmed the readiness and interest of teachers to develop in the field of conducting physical education classes. An image of this interest is, for example, attendance at training conferences, during which a minority of people were seconded by their superiors. On the other hand, it has been confirmed that the barrier is the lack of opportunities for teachers to develop in this area.

Acquiring partners and building coalitions for football promotion³ and exploiting the potential of early school teachers in the context of sport/dissemination of physical activity

Establishing cooperation with the Polish Football Association in the implementation of training conferences at the end of the project (November, December 2023) illustrates the potential of the project and football³. The same can be seen from FIFA's support for the project.

It is also the best laurel for the coordinator, who managed to obtain not only formal support, but a strong commitment to activities aimed at increasing the impact of the project and achieving its ambitious goals of equalising access to sport among women and men.

The project is a unique attempt to recognise the potential of early school education teachers as football animators and more broadly – physical activity. Cooperation with PZPN resulted in new people interested in football³ in new locations, among others. Poznań, Krakow and Wrocław. PZPN is the largest sports association, which, according to its representatives, rarely engages in projects without being their coordinator and – which until now has not been involved in activities specifically aimed at teachers of early childhood education. Significant participation in this project shows its uniqueness and potential – because at the same time it is an entity with a huge scope (over 500 thousand members).

Check and confirm the value of football³ in the context of early childhood education

The project managed to implement regular football³ classes in three schools in a very wide range of teachers with different experiences and in different contexts – in the school, urban environment, among children starting and continuing education, in schools with a good base to lead WF and poor, by experienced teachers and beginners. Football³ classes, according to the belief of the directors and teachers, will continue after the end of the project, which illustrates the test of the tool in the school context.

These observations are confirmed by reports prepared on the basis of expert observations carried out, among others, by representatives of the Education Centre for Teachers and

Methodological Advisors. The involvement of entities supervising primary schools and educating their staff influences the possibility of increasing the impact of the project in the near future, and also gives a mandate for wider introduction of football3 in early childhood education.

13/Recommendations

Recommendations for activities within the project

Preparation of training materials in the form of video – including illustrating the conduct of football3 classes

Early childhood education teachers emphasised that they often have a significant need to return to training materials when starting football3. Video materials depicting the course of the lesson and its individual fragments are particularly valuable. It would be useful to record lessons showing their organisation in specific conditions, e.g. in a small room.

Problematic lesson scenarios

Teachers commonly reported a demand for lesson scenarios related to, among others, combining football3 lessons with education on some specific issues, e.g.: The Sustainable Development Goals. You also need lesson scenarios to be carried out under special conditions.

In addition, the need for information on how to deal with specific situations that fit into football3 (questions and answers section, among others, aggressive play of students, reluctance of individual students to play according to the accepted rules) was indicated.

Possibility for teachers of early childhood education to exchange knowledge in a more structured way, consultation with an expert

The idea would be to organise visits by an expert who would discuss and answer questions from early school education teachers shortly after they started football classes3. This is a period in which many questions arise from the dt of conducting football lessons3, and the potential of the tool is also recognised.

Greater involvement of parents and guardians in football3 tournaments

Recommendations for the achievement of the wider objectives of the programme

More accessible (short, attractive) features of the tools that could be familiar to those considering participation in football3 training conferences

In the development of knowledge of the football3 tool, short content will help to enable a) an initial understanding of the assumptions of tool b) the potential benefits for children, teachers, management.

Involvement of local government representatives in practical actions on equal access to sport regardless of gender

Local authorities and the sport sector lack reflection on the issue of equal access to sport. The programme can be used to educate about gender-based differences in access to sport, which could result in policies aimed at reducing these differences by e.g. equalising access to sports offer, educating sports personnel, hiring certain sports staff (parities) etc.

Involvement of school representatives in practical action on equal access to sport regardless of gender

Greater involvement of early school teachers in WF activities opens up a discussion on the issue of sport promotion at school. The barriers diagnosed during the evaluation were at least the lack or limited access to attractive school infrastructure during WF classes. Schools joining the project could organise debates taking into account the various stakeholders on actions that could be taken to increase access to sport for girls (characteristics of the offer in and after classes, access to infrastructure, etc.).

Seeking synergies with Ministerial/PZPN programmes with a broad scope

Ministerial programmes in the field of universal sport and school sport, e.g. WF from AWF or Sport Clubs, which are intended to increase the availability of the offer in the field of physical activity or sport for children, to a limited extent take into account the topic of gender equality. Cooperation with similar, wide-ranging initiatives is, among others, an opportunity for more widespread promotion of football3.

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