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**Zmieniające się wzorce używania tradycyjnych i nowatorskich produktów
nikotynowych w populacji dorosłych w Polsce – uwarunkowania i znaczenie dla zdrowia
publicznego**

Changing patterns of use of traditional and novel nicotine products among the adult
population in Poland: determinants and public health implications.

Rozprawa doktorska na stopień doktora
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Summary

Cigarette smoking has long been one of the key public health challenges in Poland. In recent years, the increasing popularity and availability of novel nicotine products have been observed. These developments introduce new determinants of tobacco and nicotine use behaviors, as well as smoking cessation processes, and thus require comprehensive analysis from a public health perspective and a thorough understanding of the underlying context to inform effective preventive and regulatory strategies.

Therefore, the aim of this doctoral dissertation was to provide a comprehensive assessment of the determinants of the use of traditional and novel nicotine products, as well as to examine motivation and readiness to reduce or cease smoking among adults in Poland. The dissertation was structured as a series of three thematically linked scientific publications, covering both the prevalence and patterns of nicotine product use and the psychosocial and system-level factors influencing smoking behaviors.

In the first article, based on a representative cross-sectional study, the prevalence of conventional cigarette smoking and the use of novel nicotine products among adults in Poland was assessed. The study allowed for estimating the scale of use and identifying sociodemographic determinants of product preferences. The findings indicate that, although conventional cigarettes remain the predominant form of nicotine consumption in Poland, the growing interest in e-cigarettes and heated tobacco products (HTPs) highlights the need for continuous monitoring of the market and user behaviors.

The second article examined factors associated with switching from conventional cigarettes to HTPs. The findings indicated that the primary driver of this transition was the desire to reduce the characteristic smell of tobacco smoke, influencing users' comfort and functioning in social, family, and professional contexts. Health-related motives were less prominent; however, participants expressed a willingness to continue using HTPs, perceiving them as a preferable alternative to conventional cigarette smoking. Respondents also spontaneously referred to potential health risks associated with HTP use, highlighting gaps in risk perception. Furthermore, HTPs were commonly perceived as modern, fashionable, and technologically advanced, particularly appealing to individuals open to innovation. The study also identified emerging forms of self-identification among nicotine users, including a group of "traditionalists" who deliberately continue smoking conventional cigarettes.

The third article focused on the assessment of motivation and readiness to reduce or quit smoking conventional cigarettes and novel nicotine products, as well as the identification of

barriers hindering effective quit attempts. Among conventional cigarette smokers, nearly one-quarter reported attempting to quit smoking within the past 12 months, with readiness to quit decreasing with age. The most significant barriers to cessation were social and psychological factors, including exposure to other smokers, stress, previous unsuccessful attempts, and concerns about weight gain. The primary motivation for successful smoking cessation was concern for one's health, and higher likelihood of reducing or quitting smoking was observed among individuals with shorter smoking duration, higher educational attainment, and those living in households with children. At the same time, the study showed that novel nicotine products are often used in the context of attempts to reduce or quit conventional cigarette smoking. Users of these products reported similar motivations for their use, including reduced odor-related inconvenience, the intention to quit conventional smoking, and health-related considerations. Among the strategies used during quit attempts, novel nicotine products – alongside nicotine replacement therapy were among the most frequently chosen tools. Furthermore, the study revealed an underutilized potential of primary healthcare in identifying smokers and providing systematic smoking cessation support, particularly in relation to the range of nicotine products available on the market.

In conclusion, this series of articles underscores the need for a comprehensive and multidimensional approach to understanding nicotine use patterns in Poland within the context of a rapidly evolving nicotine product market. This is particularly relevant in light of the potential renormalization of nicotine use and the emergence of new user identities associated with alternative nicotine delivery systems.

Addressing these challenges requires a multisectoral approach, combining health promotion, education, clinical support, and continuous monitoring of consumption trends. The findings further emphasize the importance of tailoring public health strategies to the diverse motivations and behavioral patterns of users of both conventional and novel nicotine products, alongside the development of coherent regulatory frameworks and effective preventive interventions.