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ALCOHOL ABUSE IN POLAND - (UN)SOLVED ISSUE?  
EVALUATION AND CULTURALLY SENSITIVE ETHICS OF CARE  
PROPOSAL

*Złouporaba alkohola u Poljskoj – (ne)riješeni problem?  
Evaluacija i prijedlog kulturno osjetljive etike skrbi*

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*Summary*

*This article deals with the issue of alcohol abuse, especially in Polish families. Although getting drunk is condemned, everyday alcohol abuse in many families is often ignored and not treated as a serious problem of high priority. Moreover, alcohol abuse among young people is also a major educational challenge and an intergenerational problem, as many Poles see alcohol as a quick and easy way to cope with difficulties in their personal and social functioning. This text is an attempt to answer the question about the current scale and dimensions of the problem of alcohol abuse in Poland. The methodology of Catholic Social Teaching has been applied to the issue in question, which includes the observation of the problem in a social perspective, its evaluation and identification of possible solutions based on the values and principles of the CST. The article also includes some recommendations for a holistic approach that takes into account the social, moral and spiritual dimensions of the problem.*

*Keywords: alcohol abuse, family, society, Poland, CST*

INTRODUCTION

Alcohol addiction of a family member is still not rare in Polish families, among which more than 90% declare themselves to be Catholics. Getting drunk is condemned in the public sphere, but daily alcohol abuse is seen as a minor problem in many families. In addition, the problem is present in the mentality of the Poles who, as parents, do not regard alcohol as a real threat

to their children. It is perceived as a part of Polish culture; of course, alcohol abuse is not praised in upbringing, but neither is it treated as one of the most serious moral and social threats. It has done a lot of social injustice and also causes the effect of vicious circle across generations. Poles think that alcohol can be used as a way to cope with some difficulties at work or society. The aim of this article is to look for answers to the question of why alcohol abuse and passing on the “alcohol culture” is a moral and social problem and what should be done to better cope with it according to the indications of the CST. To reach this aim the methodology of CST composed on 3 pillars will be used: observing the problem in local social perspective, reviewing and looking for some ways of solving the problem based on Catholic values and principles.

#### 1. ALCOHOL ADDICTION – EUROPEAN PERSPECTIVE

Alcohol abuse is a serious problem that does not seem to be seen as an urgent issue. According to the WHO’s data more than 3 million deaths over the world every year are the result of harmful use of alcohol, which contributes 5.3% of all deaths.<sup>1</sup> To stress the importance of this problem we can compare it to the pandemic of COVID-19.<sup>2</sup> As a result of the pandemic 7,69 mil. people passed away in almost 3 years. These figures are frightening, but how many people have noticed that more than 9 million people have died in 3 years due to the harmful use of alcohol? Alcohol addiction in Europe is a multifaceted challenge with serious health, social and economic consequences across the continent. Nevertheless, alcohol is still easily accessible and advertised in many European countries.

The WHO pointed out that: “European region has the highest proportion of drinkers and the highest intake of alcohol in the world. Consumption of alcohol is a preventable risk factor that can cause premature death and over 200 diseases including seven types of cancer, neuropsychiatric disorders, cardiovascular diseases, cirrhosis of the liver and several infectious diseases. Across the WHO European region, alcohol causes almost 1 mil-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. World Health Organization, *Alcohol*, <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/alcohol> (accessed 10 August 2023)

<sup>2</sup> Cf. World Health Organization, *WHO Coronavirus (COVID-19) Dashboard*, <https://covid19.who.int> (accessed 10 August 2023)

lion deaths annually, contributing significantly to unintentional and intentional injuries.”<sup>3</sup>

Europe’s long history of alcohol consumption, often intertwined with cultural and social traditions, has led to a complex relationship between its citizens and alcohol. In order to prove the truth of these statements, it is important to recall the data illustrating that in 2010, approximately 11 million adults in Europe were addicted to alcohol and more than 22 million EU citizens were classified as having AUD.<sup>4</sup>

While moderate alcohol consumption has been a part of European culture for centuries, the excessive and problematic use of alcohol has evolved into a pressing public health concern.

One of the core issues contributing to alcohol addiction in Europe is the accessibility and affordability of alcohol.<sup>5</sup> The presence of alcohol in daily life, social gatherings, and celebratory events often makes it difficult to identify and address problematic drinking behaviours. Moreover, the availability of alcohol at relatively low prices, coupled with lax regulations in some regions, can contribute to increased consumption and subsequent addiction.

Another factor exacerbating the problem is the normalization of excessive drinking in certain cultures. Social pressure to conform to established drinking norms can lead individuals to engage in heavy drinking, potentially leading to addiction. Binge drinking, which involves consuming large amounts of alcohol within a short timeframe, is particularly prevalent among young adults and contributes to the development of addiction and related health issues.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Cf. *Alcohol Use EURO*, <https://www.who.int/europe/health-topics/alcohol> (accessed 10 August 2023)

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Jürgen Rehm et al., Prevalence of and Potential Influencing Factors for Alcohol Dependence in Europe, In: *European Addiction Research*, 13 (2015) 1, 21 <https://doi.org/10.1159/000365284>.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Carolin Kilian et al., Affordability of Alcoholic Beverages in the European Union, *European Addiction Research*, 29 (2023) 1, 63–66, <https://doi.org/10.1159/000527096>.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Yvonne M. Terry-McElrath, Brooke J. Arterberry, Megan E. Patrick, Alcohol Use Contexts (Social Settings, Drinking Games/Specials, and Locations) as Predictors of High-Intensity Drinking on a given Day among U.S. Young Adults, In: *Alcoholism: Clinical and Experimental Research*, 47 (2023), 273–284, <https://doi.org/10.1111/acer.14985>.”plainCitation”:”cf. Yvonne M. Terry-McElrath, Brooke J. Arterberry, and Megan E. Patrick, ‘Alcohol Use Contexts (Social Settings, Drinking Games/Specials, and Locations

Health consequences associated with alcohol addiction in Europe are substantial. Chronic alcohol abuse can lead to a range of physical and mental health problems, including liver cirrhosis, cardiovascular diseases, neurological disorders, and mental health conditions such as depression and anxiety.<sup>7</sup> Additionally, alcohol-related accidents and injuries, often resulting from impaired judgment and coordination, contribute to a significant burden on healthcare systems.

The societal impact of alcohol addiction is equally concerning. Family breakdowns, domestic violence, and strained relationships are common outcomes of alcohol misuse. The economic toll of alcohol addiction is evident in increased healthcare costs, lost productivity, and strain on social services. Furthermore, alcohol-related accidents and crimes place additional burdens on law enforcement and emergency services.<sup>8</sup>

Efforts to address alcohol addiction in Europe have varied from country to country, reflecting the cultural, political, and economic differences across the region. Some nations have implemented stricter regulations on alcohol marketing, sales, and distribution, while others focus on public awareness campaigns and educational initiatives to promote responsible drinking.<sup>9</sup> Treatment and rehabilitation programs play a critical role in supporting individuals struggling with addiction, but access to these services can be limited in some areas.

Different approaches to AUD and alcohol affordability can be observed across the EU. The Scandinavian countries have implemented a separate and stricter alcohol policy compared to many other parts of Europe.<sup>10</sup> Scandinavian alcohol policy consists of certain elements, such as monopolistic alcohol sales systems, which means that the government has exclusive control over the sale of alcohol and alcohol can usually only be purchased in gov-

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<sup>7</sup> Cf. Ondrej Kalina et al., Self-Regulation, Normative Beliefs, Alcohol Use and Consequences Among University Students from Eastern Europe, In: *Drustvena Istrazivanja*, 30 (2021) 3, 473–485, <https://doi.org/10.5559/di.30.3.01.alcohol> use and negative consequences and test whether self-regulation (SR

<sup>8</sup> Cf. World Health Organization, *Alcohol*.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Rebecca Gordon and Peter Anderson, Science and Alcohol Policy: A Case Study of the EU Strategy on Alcohol: Science and EU Alcohol Policy, In: *Addiction*, 106 (2011), 62–65, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1360-0443.2010.03324.x>.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Paulette Kurzer, Can Scandinavian Member States Play a Leadership Role in the EU? The Case of Alcohol Control Policy, In: *Scandinavian Studies*, 74 (2002) 3, 307–326.

ernment-owned shops. Some Scandinavian countries have introduced limits on the alcohol content of drinks that can be sold outside government-owned shops. This is to control the availability of high alcohol products. Other restrictions include high alcohol taxes, alcohol and driving laws, strict advertising and marketing regulations, restricted opening hours of shops selling alcohol, age and purchase restrictions, alcohol content limits. Perhaps this should be a role model for the rest of European countries struggling with alcoholism in society?

## 2. ALCOHOL ADDICTION IN POLAND AND ITS SOCIAL CONSEQUENCES

Poland has many difficult pages in its history, of which it is worth mentioning in particular the period of partitions, the First and Second World Wars or the communist regime. These years were marked not only by violence in the physical dimension but were also a traumatic experience for the psychological and spiritual spheres of the Poles and the breaking of the national community, the systemic denial of the values of justice, solidarity and the fight against all expressions of the Catholic faith. What is more, these periods were often a field for the promotion of alcohol as a reward or payment, as was the case especially during the partitions or under communism, or on the contrary, it was prohibited and limited in official sales, which fostered the development of home alcohol production.<sup>11</sup> It was convenient for the partitioners, the Nazis and the communists, to make the nation drunk, which made it increasingly weak in health, mentally and morally. The problem was perceived many times by the pastors of the Catholic Church, especially Blessed Stefan Cardinal Wyszyński, Saint John Paul II and the Servant of God Fr. Franciszek Blachnicki, the founder of the Light-Life Movement. They promoted not only the kerygmatic and dogmatic content, but also the social teaching of the Church, which is why they attached importance to the promotion of the value of life in sobriety. Fr. Blachnicki pointed out that thanks to Christ's redemption, people have become new creatures according to the words of the Apostle of the Nations (cf. 2 Cor. 5:17), therefore also the dignity of redeemed man and his actions demand a life of sobriety, freedom from addictions and acting for the moral growth of

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<sup>11</sup> Cf. Krzysztof Kosiński, *Alkohol w PRL*, In: *Polska 1944/45-1989*, (2020) 18, 256-259.

the Polish community.<sup>12</sup> How big is the problem of alcoholism in Poland today?

As recent research results show, the problem of alcohol addiction still remains one of the key causes of health loss and death among the Poles compared to 1990. In 2019 the place of disorders subordinated to alcohol abuse changed from 13 to 8.<sup>13</sup> The data illustrating alcohol consumption per capita illustrate that in 1992, 3.5 l of spirits and 38.6 l of beer were consumed, in 2000, 2 l of spirits and 66.9 l of beer were consumed, and in 2021, 3.8 l of spirits and 92.7 l of beer were consumed.<sup>14</sup> Alcohol has become a daily guest and often the dominant force in the home of many Poles. Almost 40% of the total number of consumers drink alcohol at least once a week and 37.9% consume beer at least once a week. The number of days of alcohol consumption per year averages 67.6 in rural households, 77.4 in small towns with up to 50,000 inhabitants, 84.9 in towns between 50-250,000 inhabitants, 76.7 in large cities between 250,000 and 1 million inhabitants, and 62.9 in large cities with more than 1 million inhabitants. As the cited studies and a recent World Health Organisation (WHO) report show, the number of people who consume alcohol regularly has increased successively after 2000.<sup>15</sup> According to data from the World Bank and the World Health Organisation, in 2016, the rate of pure alcohol consumption per person over 15 years of age was 11.6 l in Poland. According to 2018 WHO data, it increased to 11.7 litres. In 2019, in turn, it recorded another increase to 11.89 l, including 5.65 l per woman and 18.65 l per man.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Paweł Kaźmierczak, *Pedagogiczne znaczenie Krucjaty Wyzwolenia Człowieka*, In: *Paedagogia Christiana*, 39 (2017) 1, 200–203, <https://doi.org/10.12775/PCh.2017.010>.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Agnieszka Doryńska et al., *Główne problemy dotyczące zdrowia Polaków w świetle najnowszych wyników badania*, In *Sytuacja zdrowotna ludności Polski i jej uwarunkowania*, Bogdan Wojtyniak and Paweł Goryński (ed.), Warszawa, 2018, 523.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. Magdalena Rowicka, Sławomir Postek, and Marta Zin-Sędek, *Wzory konsumpcji alkoholu w Polsce Raport z badań kwestionariuszowych 2020 r.*, Warszawa, 2021, 12–20.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. World Health Organization, *Global Status Report on Alcohol and Health 2018*, 281.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Katarzyna Obłąkowska and Artur Bartoszewicz, *Czynniki wpływające na popyt na alkohol w kontekście kosztów społecznych i ekonomicznych w Polsce. Zmiany wysokości danin publicznych i model ceny minimalnej a spożycie alkoholu i wpływy do budżetu*, 6–8.

In assessing the phenomenon, it is also important to outline the place, circumstances and reasons for consuming alcohol in such large quantities in Poland. Well, the majority of respondents admitted that they most frequently drink alcohol products with family members, including 15% at least once a week and 32.7% at least once a month.<sup>17</sup> 15.5% of the respondents drink alcohol with friends or acquaintances at least once a week and 34.9% at least once a month<sup>18</sup>. At home, 7% of the respondents drink alcohol at least once a week and 32.2% at least once a month; at a bar or restaurant, 4.4% drink at least once a week and 15% at least once a month<sup>19</sup>. Alone, 18.2% drink at least once a week and 11.5% once a month, while in a public place, in the street, 3.1% drink at least once a week and 7% at least once a month.<sup>20</sup> The cited data illustrate that Poles prefer to drink alcohol in a private space or alone, which is certainly historically conditioned and makes it easier to overuse alcohol, deepen the problem or become completely addicted, as drinking alcohol belongs to the private sphere.

Motives for drinking alcohol are an important factor in this phenomenon, which is why the research report published by the State Agency for the Prevention of Alcohol-Related Problems (pol. PARPA) distinguishes the reasons for drinking alcohol by sex. Due to the fact that alcohol enhances celebrations and meetings, it is often used by 23.4 % of women and sometimes by 12.5 % of women<sup>21</sup> (cf. Postek, 2021, pp. 26–27). Due to the fact that alcohol makes one feel good, it is often used by 17.6% of the interviewed women and sometimes by 13.7% (cf. *ibid.*). 14.1% of the women declare that they like the after-drinking mood and therefore do it often and 9.2% do it sometimes. 12.2% of women drink often in order not to stand out from the group, and 65% do so sometimes. Finally, in order not to feel alienated, 10% drink often and 7.8% sometimes (cf. *ibid.*). Alcohol used as a substance to help cope with sadness or anxiety is used among women often

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<sup>17</sup> Cf. Rowicka, Postek, and Zin-Sędek, *Wzory konsumpcji alkoholu w Polsce Raport z badań kwestionariuszowych 2020 r.*, 20–21.

<sup>18</sup> Magdalena Rowicka, *Okoliczności Picia Alkoholu*, In: *Wzory konsumpcji alkoholu w Polsce raport z badań kwestionariuszowych 2020 r.*, Warszawa, 2021.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. *Ibid.*

<sup>20</sup> Cf. *Ibid.*

<sup>21</sup> Cf. Sławomir Postek, *Motywy picia alkoholu i motywy abstynencji*, In: *Wzory konsumpcji alkoholu w Polsce raport z badań kwestionariuszowych 2020 r.*, Warszawa, 2021, 26–27.

by 6.8% and sometimes by 9.2%, while to forget difficulties 4.7% drink often and 6.3% sometimes (cf. *ibid.*). To achieve alcohol drunkenness, 3.2% of the women surveyed drink frequently and 4.1% sometimes (cf. *ibid.*).

Among men, 36.6% use alcohol frequently during celebrations and meetings and 19.2% sometimes, because they believe that alcohol enhances such events.<sup>22</sup> Because alcohol puts one in a good mood, 30.3% of the men surveyed use it frequently and 19.2% do so sometimes. 27.1% of the men declare that they like the feeling of being in an alcoholic mood and therefore do it often and 15.4% do it sometimes. Alcohol used as a substance to help cope with sadness or anxiety is used among men often by 12.8% and 10.7% sometimes, while to forget difficulties 8.8% drink often and 8% sometimes. To achieve alcohol drunkenness, 7.8% of the men surveyed drink frequently and 8.1% sometimes<sup>23</sup>. Both groups are characterised by the fact that they consume alcohol in a social context, they do not do so in the first instance to get drunk, but to achieve good mood, to improve the quality of encounters or to cope with life's difficulties or to relax. Regarding the period of the Covid-19 pandemic, the vast majority of Poles declared that the coronavirus pandemic had not made a difference in the context of alcohol consumption (79.4%). Only 8.1% said that they consumed more alcohol during the pandemic, and the same percentage of respondents stated that they drank less alcohol during the pandemic<sup>24</sup>.

According to the research conducted by the Institute of Psychiatry and Neurology in 2010-11, in Poland 11.9% of the adult population (18-64 years of age), i.e. almost 3 million people, abused alcohol, of which about 600 000 people, or 2.4% of the population, were addicted. Alcohol consumption disorders were manifested by 20.5% of men and 3.4% of women. The highest incidence of these problems was among men aged 40-49 (27.2%) and women aged 30-39 (5.7%). The consequences of alcohol dependence and abuse also affected family members of these individuals and thus an estimated 3 million peo-

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<sup>22</sup> Cf. Postek, 28-29.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. *Ibid*

<sup>24</sup> Cf. Marta Zin-Sędek, *Picie Alkoholu a Pandemia COVID-19*, in *Wzory konsumpcji alkoholu w Polsce raport z badań kwestionariuszowych 2020 r.*, Warszawa, 2021, 76.



ple<sup>25</sup>. According to the latest PARPA data cited by the authors of the report “Factors influencing demand for alcohol in the context of social and economic costs in Poland”, it follows that there are approx. 800 thousand people, i.e. 2.5% of the 15+ population<sup>26</sup>. According to the latest PARPA report from 2021, 14.2% of respondents admitted to at least one symptom of risky drinking, as measured by the RAPS- Rapid Alcohol Problems Screening tool<sup>27</sup>. (Unfortunately, when it comes to pregnant women this was in 2013. 10.1% and in 2017. 4.94% of mothers consumed alcohol during pregnancy. The most common alcohol consumption was low-alcohol beer (27.13%), ale (31.18%) and red wine (43.98%) or white wine (19.26%)<sup>28</sup>.

Alcohol dependence or abuse is also relevant in terms of place of residence and living environment. As shown by the research conducted in Bytom, i.e. in one of the post-industrial cities in south Poland, the places most at risk of developing alcohol dependence syndrome are the urbanised districts in the city centre and the district left over from former factories and industrial centres, which are neglected and often abandoned<sup>29</sup>. A strong factor influencing the development of addiction are environmental issues against which the authors of the article identified, among other things, the settlement of suburban neighbourhoods as risk-reducing factors. Another factor influ-

<sup>25</sup> Wojciech Zgliczyński, *Alkohol w Polsce*, In: *Infos zagadnienia społeczno-gospodarcze*, 11 (2016) 2. *accessibility to alcohol outlets, alcohol use disorder, underage drinking, as well as alcohol-related economic burden and its health and social consequences.*, ”container-title”:”Infos zagadnienia społeczno-gospodarcze”, ”IS SN”:”1896-6659”, ”issue”:”11”, ”language”:”Polish”, ”note”:”publisher: Kancelaria Sejmu”, ”page”:”1-4”, ”source”:”www.ceeol.com”, ”title”:”Alkohol w Polsce”, ”author”:”[”family”:”Zgliczyński”, ”given”:”Wojciech Stefan”]”, ”issued”:”[”date-parts”:”[”2016”]”]”, ”locator”:”2”, ”label”:”page”}], ”schema”:”https://github.com/citation-style-language/schema/raw/master/csl-citation.json”}

<sup>26</sup> Cf. Obłąkowska and Bartoszewicz, *Czynniki wpływające na popyt na alkohol w kontekście kosztów społecznych i ekonomicznych w Polsce. Zmiany wysokości danin publicznych i model ceny minimalnej a spożycie alkoholu i wpływy do budżetu.*, 29.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. Rowicka, Postek, and Zin-Sędek, *Wzory konsumpcji alkoholu w Polsce raport z badań kwestionariuszowych 2020 r.*, 78.

<sup>28</sup> Obłąkowska and Bartoszewicz, *Czynniki wpływające na popyt na alkohol w kontekście kosztów społecznych i ekonomicznych w Polsce. Zmiany wysokości danin publicznych i model ceny minimalnej a spożycie alkoholu i wpływy do budżetu*, 21.

<sup>29</sup> Marcin Kozak et al., *Wskaźniki socjodemograficzne uzależnienia od alkoholu u osób leczonych odwykowo w mieście postindustrialnym*, In: *Medycyna Pracy*, 70 (2019) 2, 224–27, <https://doi.org/10.13075/mp.5893.00755>.

encing the increase in alcohol dependence is the availability of alcohol. Statistics from the Central Statistical Office (pol. GUS) in 2020 show that in Poland the number of places where alcohol can be purchased is greater than the number of pharmacies. A difference of 85 000 to 13 000 Poles tend to buy spirits, usually vodka, in the form of small bottles of so-called “monkeys”<sup>30</sup>. According to data from 2020, Poles purchase 1.1 billion small bottles of alcohol annually, which amounts to almost 3 million per day<sup>31</sup>. Reducing the availability of alcohol, especially in small bottles, is a major challenge for those in power. As noted by Polish psychotherapists, small vodka has, so to speak, created new opportunities, places and frequency of drinking strong alcoholic beverages, created a chance to drink quietly, covertly, in solitude and incidentally<sup>32</sup>.

Alcohol abuse in Poland contributes to the development of many diseases such as cirrhosis of the liver, cardiovascular diseases, neurological diseases, mental disorders and an increase in the number of deaths<sup>33</sup>. Of course, alcoholism also causes

<sup>30</sup> Główny Urząd Statystyczny, *Rynek wewnętrzny w 2019 roku*, stat.gov.pl, <https://stat.gov.pl/obszary-tematyczne/ceny-handel/handel/rynek-wewnetrzny-w-2019-roku,7,26.html> (accessed 23 March 2023), „Monopole” za każdym rogiem. *Jak dostępność alkoholu wpływa na picie Polaków?*, STOPuzależnieniom.pl, 29 September 2021, <https://stopuzalezniom.pl/artykuly/fakty-o-alkoholu/monopole-za-kazdym-rogiem-jak-dostepnosc-alkoholu-wplywa-na-picie-polakow/> (accessed?)

<sup>31</sup> Cf. Witold Zatoński et al., *Alkohol – Ojciec Polskich Chorób*, In: *Menedżer Zdrowia*, (2021) 1-2, 82–87.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. Andrzej Fala, *Alkohol w Polsce. Kontekst Społeczny, Rynkowy i Legislacyjny*, Warszawa, 2020, 10–11.

<sup>33</sup> Cf. Bartosz Wanot, Konrad Grzyb, and Monika Skoczek, *Alkoholizm. Leczenie i skutki*, In: *Problemy zdrowia publicznego*, 1 (2020), 111–116, <http://dlibra.bg.ajd.czest.pl:8080/dlibra/docmetadata?from=rss&id=6266>. Cf. Zofia Skrzypczak and Jadwiga Suchecka, *Spożycie alkoholu oraz jego konsekwencje zdrowotne i ekonomiczne*, In: *Ochrona zdrowia i gospodarka*, (2022), 59–61. an increase in the consumption of alcoholic beverages is observed. An expression of this trend in Poland is both the systematically growing level of household spending on the purchase of alcoholic products, as well as the growing revenues to the state budget from income tax from alcohol. Excessive consumption of alcohol by society has a number of negative consequences in the economic, social and medical spheres. It is a risk factor for many diseases, generates criminal activity, has a significant share among the causes of road accidents, and in the case of the drinking population leads to alcohol dependence.”, “container-title”:”Ochrona zdrowia i gospodarka”, “language”:”Polish”, “note”:”publisher: Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego”, “page”:”45-66”, “source”:”www.ceeol.com”, “title”:”Spożycie alkoholu oraz jego konsekwencje zdrowotne i ekonomiczne”, “author”:”{,family”:”Skrzypczak”, “given”:”Zofia”}, {,family”:”Suchecka”, “-

much wider moral, social and economic problems. Among them, violence in families, parental neglect, the ACA syndrome and the problem of co-dependency of alcoholic family members should be singled out in particular. At the social level, it is worth noting traffic accidents caused by drunk drivers, accidents and negligence at workplaces and in public spaces. A not insignificant group of crimes is dictated by or related to alcohol abuse. According to data from the Warsaw Police Headquarters last collected in 2012, the number of individual crimes committed under the influence of alcohol was as follows: 49,948 thefts, 8,628 robberies, robberies and extortion, 12,631 fights and beatings, 749 rapes and 577 murders<sup>34</sup>. In 2015, the number of cases of violent suspects was 76,034 (of which 92.7% were men), of which 48,841 cases involved people under the influence of alcohol, of which 95.9% were men<sup>35</sup>. Another issue is the economic damage which is the destruction of property, damage to or theft of material goods, and the expenses that taxpayers incur for medical and legal costs associated with dealing with problems resulting from alcohol use.

Relying on WHO and PARPA data, the economic and social burden on the state budget related to spending on combating alcoholism and its consequences may amount to between 1.3% and 3% of GDP, i.e. approx. 45 billion PLN<sup>36</sup>. In addition to this, there are huge incalculable costs such as psychological and spiritual suffering in marriages and families, emotional wounds, having to deal with the ACA syndrome or post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression and suicide attempts. There are also

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<sup>34</sup> Komenda Główna Policji, *Nietrzeźwi sprawcy przestępstw*, <https://statystyka.policja.pl/st/wybrane-statystyki/nietrzezwi-sprawcy-prz/50862,Nietrzezwi-sprawcy-przestepstw.html> (accessed 24 March 2023)

<sup>35</sup> Zgliczyński, *Alkohol w Polsce*, 4. accessibility to alcohol outlets, alcohol use disorder, underage drinking, as well as alcohol-related economic burden and its health and social consequences.", "container-title": "Infos zagadnienia społeczno-gospodarcze", "ISSN": "1896-6659", "issue": "11", "language": "Polish", "note": "publisher: Kancelaria Sejmu", "page": "1-4", "source": "www.ceeol.com", "title": "Alkohol w Polsce", "author": [{"family": "Zgliczyński", "given": "Wojciech Stefan"}], "issued": {"date-parts": [[2016]]}], "locator": "4", "label": "page"}], "schema": "https://github.com/citation-style-language/schema/raw/master/csl-citation.json"}]

<sup>36</sup> Cf. Maciej Bogucki, Jakub Gierczyński, and Jerzy Gryglewicz, *Ekonomiczne aspekty skutków picia alkoholu w Europie i w Polsce.*, Małgorzata Gałązka-Sobotka ed., Warszawa, 2013, 39.

widespread and difficult to heal wounds of trust, lack of love, subsidiarity, solidarity moral consequences such as the confirmation of vices, the humiliation of one's own and others' dignity and acting to the detriment of the common good.

Moreover, it is not only the use or addiction to alcohol itself that is problematic, but the lack of social sensitivity towards the problem. WHO data from the 2018 General Report show a decrease in the number of people addicted to alcohol in Poland from 4.4% in 2010 to 2.2% in 2017<sup>37</sup>. However, it is worth mentioning that the criteria for classifying people as addicted have changed<sup>38</sup>. However, at the same time, alcohol consumption in Poland is increasing. Thus, the problem has not been solved, as there is a very large group of people who abuse alcohol and do not recognise their problem. Despite the wide availability and the reimbursement by the National Health Fund of treatment for people with alcohol problems, relatively few people come forward for help. It is impossible to register these figures, however, certain symptoms of social insensitivity towards the threat of alcoholism can be identified. One of these is the silent acceptance of alcohol consumption by teenagers and young people of high school age. The number of underage vodka drinkers has been increasing since 1995 and has remained high since 2011 in the younger group (15-16 years) in 2011 it was 40.7% in 2015 33.1%, while in the older group (17-18 years) in 2011 it was 62.8% in 2015 65.2% drank vodka in the last 30 days before the survey<sup>39</sup>. More than 75 % of adolescents aged 13-17 had been in contact with alcohol with almost half drinking with friends and 33.4 % in the company of parents or relatives<sup>40</sup>. Only about 21% of the parents of 17-18 year old teenagers forbid them to drink alcohol, the rest more or less incidentally give permission to drink alcohol at home or outside the home<sup>41</sup>. The next section of this article will attempt to evaluate the described problem from the perspective of the principles of Catholic Social Teaching.

<sup>37</sup> World Health Organization, *Global Status Report on Alcohol and Health 2018*.

<sup>38</sup> Cf. Andrzej Jakubczyk, *Uzależnienie, Picie Szkodliwe i Ryzykowne – Podstawowe Definicje w Świetle Najważniejszych Systemów Klasyfikacyjnych*, In: *Medyczne Aspekty Uzależnienia Od Alkoholu*, Marcin Wojnar ed., Warszawa, 2017, 9–20.

<sup>39</sup> Cf. Fala, *Alkohol w Polsce. Kontekst Społeczny, Rynkowy i Legislacyjny*, 34.

<sup>40</sup> Marcin Herrmann, *CBOS: dorośli lekceważą picie alkoholu przez niepełnoletnich*, PAP MediaRoom portal., 2023, <https://pap-mediroom.pl/inne/cbos-dorosli-lekcewaza-picie-alkoholu-przez-niepelnoletnich> (accessed?)

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

### 3. OVERVIEW OF THE PROBLEM ACCORDING TO CST'S PRINCIPLES

As the data cited above show, the problem of alcoholism in Polish society is a broad and historically and behaviourally rooted problem. It does not stop at the individual level but affects families in a systemic aspect as well as the whole society, as the majority of the Poles experience the effects of alcohol abuse or dependence either in the form of direct or more widely spread consequences. In attempting to assess the phenomenon under discussion from the perspective of Catholic Social Teaching (CST), reference should be made to the three components of the assessment of human acts contained in the CST Compendium<sup>42</sup> and to the principals and values necessary for building a proper order and social progress.

The principle of human dignity in Catholic Social Teaching is fundamental and crucial for understanding other principles and indications for social life. Personal dignity belongs to every person from conception until natural death and derives from the fact that man is created in the image and likeness of God, which entails rights but also duties<sup>43</sup>. In this sense, alcohol abuse and its consequences in Polish society should be regarded as morally evil acts, because through them the addicted person acts against his or her dignity as a person and degrades their personal dignity. Moreover, the category of human dignity belongs to every human being. For this reason, due to alcohol abuse, addicts go against their vocation given by the Creator, but also through the acts of violence, passive or active aggression and neglect of personal development and life of virtue, they contribute to degradation, humiliation and lack of responsible love for others. Because of the disastrous consequences of alcohol abuse or addiction, the addicted person stops playing an active role in building the common good and becomes a parasite if not a destroyer of the common good.

It is worth mentioning here once again the data illustrating the fatal consequences of alcoholism, which is the statistics of road accidents that took place in Poland and were caused by drunk drivers<sup>44</sup>. Fortunately, the number of accidents and fatal-

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<sup>42</sup> Pontifical Council of Justice and Peace, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, Rome, 2006, 1750.

<sup>43</sup> John Paul II, *Evangelium Vitae*, Rome, 1995, 93.

<sup>44</sup> Cf. Biuro Ruchu Drogowego Komendy Głównej Policji, *Wypadki Drogowe w Polsce w 2022 Roku*, Warszawa, 2023, 62–64.

ities and injuries over the past 10 years has decreased by half, however, in 2022 alone, road users under the influence of alcohol were involved in 2 248 road accidents, which accounts for 10.5% of the total number of accidents, while 268 people died in these accidents, which accounts for 14.1% of the total number of fatalities, while 2 567 victims were injured, which accounts for 10.4% of the total number of injuries<sup>45</sup>. Also the number of families experiencing alcohol-related violence or its consequences is frightening and convinces at the same time how destructive alcoholism is for the Polish society. As a result, the dignity of so many mothers, wives, children and neighbours of alcohol abusers is trampled on. It also creates an atmosphere of social fear of violence and mistrust, which is crucial for the development of society and building the future based on solid foundations.

In attempting to assess the phenomenon in question from the perspective of Catholic Social Teaching, reference should also be drawn to the principle of the common good, which is defined as the sum total of social conditions which allow people, either as groups or as individuals, to reach their fulfilment more fully and more easily<sup>46</sup>. Alcohol addiction and abuse slow down or completely impede the development and multiplication of the common good, both in the individual dimension, because the addicted person cannot realise himself as a person, and in the social dimension, because the alcoholic harms not only himself but also others with whom he lives, whether at family, professional or social level. St. Pope John Paul II taught that “Public life on behalf of the person and society finds its basic standard in the pursuit of the common good, as the good of everyone and as the good of each person taken as a whole, which is guaranteed and offered in a fitting manner to people, both as individuals and in groups, for their free and responsible acceptance.”<sup>47</sup> Thus, it can be said with certainty that the use of alcohol and the lack of sufficient social sensitivity to the consequences of its abuse constitute a serious threat to the common good of individuals, groups and society as a whole.

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<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> Pontifical Council of Justice and Peace, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 164.

<sup>47</sup> John Paul II, *Christifideles Laici*, Rome, 1988, 42.

It is important to refer to the criterion of participation in Catholic social teaching when assessing the problem of alcohol dependence in social terms. Everyone has the right and duty to participate in society so that the flourishing of individuals and groups can be achieved more easily. Abuse of alcohol by family members often leads to aggression, violence or passivity. All the consequences of this phenomenon cause abusers to neglect their responsibilities under the participation principle or to have an outright destructive effect on the quality of life and health of their loved ones. A civilisation of death is then built, the victims of which are often family members or relatives, although this also has its repercussions on other levels of cultural and social economic activity. It is worth mentioning at this point that Pope John Paul II called for the building of a “civilization of love” that is based on solidarity, justice, and peace<sup>48</sup>. He argues that this type of civilization requires a deep respect for human life and dignity, and a commitment to the common good. Social acceptance of alcohol abuse and the non-recognition of it as a problematic issue by a large part of society makes it impossible to build a social order based on the values pointed out by the Polish Pope.

One of the fundamental values in Catholic social teaching is justice. It is understood as a virtue that commands to give to everyone what is due to him. However, social justice as already taught by Pope Pius XI “is the constant and firm will to favour the common good as a social condition to develop the integral dignity of all men.”<sup>49</sup> For this reason, it is important to recognise social insensitivity towards the issue of alcoholism and the dangers that flow from it as an offence against justice. Alcoholism also leads to unequal treatment of family members, as the addict’s behaviour often dictates the family’s dynamics. Other family members may be forced to adjust their lives and needs to accommodate the addict’s behaviour, leading to unfair treatment and resentment.

Moreover, politically and economically, the problem of alcoholism generates the need to spend large amounts of public money on prevention programmes and addiction treatment, information and social campaigns to reduce the scale of the phenomenon. The problems also generate the need for medical, psychological and social assistance to victims of violence and accidents under

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<sup>48</sup> Cf. John Paul II, *Letter to families “Gratissimam Sane”*, Rome, 1994, 52.

<sup>49</sup> Pontifical Council of Justice and Peace, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 169.

the influence of alcohol. The lack of social sensitivity to the problems in question also generates cultural challenges aimed at spreading a culture of sobriety and conscientiousness. All these activities challenge politicians, economists, educators, psychologists, social workers and clergy. The high availability of alcohol, especially high-proof alcohol in small bottles, and the advertising of alcohol on television, radio, roadside banners, shops, and markets, are a challenge<sup>50</sup>.

All of this illustrates the Polish social situation and indicates directions for work. The problem of alcoholism was noticed by important figures of the Polish Church especially during the period of communist rule in Poland after the Second World War. Blessed Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński drew attention to it many times in his pastoral letters, condemning both the propensity for alcohol abuse among the faithful and the policy of the authorities of the time<sup>51</sup>. Also the Servant of God Father Jacek Woroniecki OP pointed out the necessity of a life of sobriety as one of the conditions for growth in virtue<sup>52</sup>. The intergenerational transmission of drinking patterns, which depraves the younger generation, is problematic. Underage drinking should not be treated as an “isolated problem of adolescence”, but as part of a complex problem of behaviour relevant to the health and psychosocial development of young people<sup>53</sup>. The lack of sensitivity and prompt response on the part of parents, the family and the environment towards underage drinking and the lack of action towards the symptoms of alcohol overuse by school-age adolescents and young adults provides a field for proposing some solutions from the point of view of Catholic social thought.

In assessing the phenomenon in question, distinguishing in it the three components of object, intention and circumstances, it should be stressed that the problem of alcohol consumption in

<sup>50</sup> Cf. Andrzej Derdziuk, *W kręgu zagadnień bioetycznych i ekologicznych*, Lublin, 2018, 151–161.

<sup>51</sup> Cf. Renata Irena Doniec, Kardynała Stefana Wyszyńskiego Troska o Rodzinę w Czasach Komunistycznego Zniewolenia (na przykładzie Listów Pasterskich Prymasa Polski z lat 1946–1974), In: *Horyzonty Wychowania*, 19 (2020) 49, 35–45, <https://doi.org/10.35765/hw.1782>.

<sup>52</sup> Cf. Iwona Szewczak, W trosce o aretologiczne podstawy wychowania. Wokół koncepcji o. Jacka Woronieckiego, In: *Roczniki Pedagogiczne*, 12 (2020) 1, 99–117.

<sup>53</sup> Cf. Katarzyna Resler and Dorota Cichosz, The Abuse of Alcohol by Children and Young People in Poland and in the World, In: *Paediatrics and Family Medicine*, 11 (2015) 3, 295–301, <https://doi.org/10.15557/PiMR.2015.0028>.



Poland and the lack of sufficient social sensitivity towards this subject is the subject of moral evaluation. The object should be described as morally negative for the reason that, due to the lack of sufficient social awareness of the dangers of alcohol abuse or cultural background, it can never change the moral evaluation. However, attention should be paid to intentions, which are very often an example of culpable ignorance and thus confusion between evil and good. Studies into the causes of alcohol consumption in Poland show that Poles want to achieve a good purpose, such as relaxation, good mood and relief, but the alcoholic beverage becomes addictive and reduces or deactivates consciousness and therefore responsibility, making the person abusing alcohol passive or aggressive, thus going against his or her nature and vocation to love God and neighbour and care for creation. St John Paul II reminded us of this in his first encyclical, "Man cannot live without love. He remains a being that is incomprehensible for himself, his life is senseless, if love is not revealed to him, if he does not encounter love, if he does not experience it and make it his own, if he does not participate intimately in it. This is the fundamental and innate vocation of every human being."<sup>54</sup>

The circumstances of excessive alcohol consumption and cultural consent to this phenomenon also have a significant impact on the moral assessment of individual addicts in Poland, as well as on a number of social consequences resulting from it, such as social maladjustment of children and young people from alcoholic families, alcohol abuse by young people, drunkenness among adults at work and at home, a burden on the state budget and a waste of social capital. However, these circumstances never justify the act in accordance with the teaching contained in *Veritatis Splendor*. "The circumstances, including the consequences, are secondary elements of a moral act. They contribute to increasing or diminishing the moral goodness or evil of human acts such as the gravity of a theft. They cannot however change the moral quality of acts themselves; they can make neither good nor right an action that is in itself evil."<sup>55</sup> Thus, it can be said that sometimes the responsibility of individuals may be diminished due to lack of sufficient awareness and social sensitivity

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<sup>54</sup> John Paul II, *Redemptor Hominis*, Rome, 1979, 10.

<sup>55</sup> John Paul II, *Veritatis Splendor*, Rome, 1993,78.

and other circumstances, but alcoholism and lack of social sensitivity to this problem can never be justified. Thus, there is all the more need for some proposals flowing from the social teaching of the Church aimed at indicating possible ways of dealing with this problem.

#### 4. SOME PROPOSALS HOW TO ACT ON THESE PROBLEMS ACCORDING TO CST

In order to counteract the development of the alcohol mentality in Polish society, numerous activities aimed at raising social sensitivity to the issue are needed. The social problem is not only alcohol abuse itself, but also the lack of social perception of this threat. One important tool that not only defines what is good and what is bad, but also teaches how to distinguish one from the other, is the law, especially in its criminal aspect. Hence, it seems that one of the essential components of shaping the public's sensitivity to the issue at hand is the severe punishment of drunk drivers and intoxicated accident perpetrators. In recent years, the criminal law concerning intoxicated drivers has been strengthened. As reported by the Police Headquarters: "In the new legislation, penalties have been tightened for drunk drivers and those who have caused a road accident under the influence of alcohol. The period for which a driving ban is imposed has been extended from 10 to 15 years, the minimum penalty will be three years. Those driving while intoxicated will also face heavy financial penalties."<sup>56</sup> Certainly, strict criminal law will have an impact on the decreasing number of drink-drivers and thus perhaps more and more people will start to see the moral evil of alcohol abuse and drink-driving.

The next step is to launch an awareness-raising campaign that alcohol abuse is a serious and collective problem. It seems clear and certain that Poles are aware of the dangers of alcohol abuse. However, the amount of alcohol consumed and its sale has been increasing year on year for several years; moreover, almost 80% of parents allow their under-age children to consume

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<sup>56</sup> Zachodniopomorska Policja, *Surowsze kary dla piratów drogowych i pijanych kierowców*, <https://walcz.policja.gov.pl/zwa/aktualnosci/ruch-drogowy/2810,Surowsze-kary-dla-piratorow-drogowych-i-pijanych-kierowcow.html> (accessed 17 April 2023)

alcohol, more than half of them undergo their alcohol initiation in their presence<sup>57</sup>. Moreover, it is not perceived in society as a moral threat. Poles perceive completely different types of moral problems. According to the research, Poles consider the following to be the most morally controversial: neglecting one's duties or attempting to cheat on tax returns (77%), abusing one's professional position to obtain benefits (89%), violence against children (89%), giving or accepting bribes (above 90%) and exploiting employees (95%)<sup>58</sup>. Alcoholism is not seen as one of the key moral and social problems of Polish society. In order to achieve the goal, a campaign in social media, television, as well as in public schools and cultural centres would be needed. School catechesis and the formation of young people for the sacrament of confirmation could also play a big role in this matter. Then catechists and priests have the opportunity to shape the sensitivity of young people to the dangers of alcohol abuse.

In undertaking information-education activities, it is important not only to take the initiative, but also to plan strategy for raising public awareness; moreover, it is also significant that this strategy should allow for the cooperation of schools, cultural centres, church communities, NGOs, etc. The problem is widespread and deeply rooted in Polish society, therefore an integral and complementary action is required at every educational level. Pope Benedict XVI noted that "We must work together to address the root causes of alcoholism, including poverty, social exclusion, and lack of opportunity. We must promote the culture of life and respect for the dignity of every person."<sup>59</sup> Furthermore, the Holy Father pointed out that joint efforts of parents, teachers and educators are needed to shape a better world of people, free from alcoholism and other forms of addiction. The Pope taught "International cooperation requires people who can be part of a coordinated and effective team. This is only possible with education that is aimed at developing intelligence, moral values, and the ability to work together."<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> Herrmann, *CBOS*.

<sup>58</sup> Rafał Boguszewski, *stosunek Polaków do wybranych zjawisk i zachowań kontrowersyjnych moralnie*, Research report, Warszawa, 2021, 1-12.

<sup>59</sup> *Benedict XVI, Address to the Participants in the International Congress on Alcoholism*, Rome, 2012.

<sup>60</sup> Benedict XVI, *Deus Caritas Est*, Rome, 2005, 30.

Alcohol is often mentioned by the Poles as an indispensable part of parties, family celebrations and as a means used to achieve relaxation and cope with daily problems. Hence, the purpose of information and education activities is not only to point out the destructive impact of alcohol abuse, but to promote interesting forms of rest and celebrations that are not based on alcohol as the main driver of good mood. This seems particularly important with regard to young people, who often take on a pattern of alcohol abuse from adults. An important field of education is to raise their awareness of the serious risks of alcohol abuse, which can be done through classes at school, psychological-educational workshops, meetings at parishes, and on the occasion of sports and cultural events. Simulations of accidents caused under the influence of alcohol and their medical, legal and moral consequences can also play an important role. It is important to arouse the sensitivity of young Poles to the impact of alcohol on traffic accidents, sports accidents, increased violence and aggression, which can be communicated in the form of films or educational performances. However, there is also need for some instruction on how to celebrate, how to have fun, how to spend their free time without alcohol. Many young people, as well as their parents, cannot even imagine celebrating without consuming alcohol in large quantities.

The Polish church has a sobriety pastoral service, which organises various initiatives every year, such as a month of sobriety or supporting Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) groups, which often meet at parishes. At this point, it is worth emphasising that the creation of support groups for alcohol addicts and co-dependents from their families is an idea strongly supported and present in Catholic Social Teaching. Already Pope Leo XIII pointed out, in relation to the problems of his time, the need of workers' unions and unions, the point that was subsequently emphasised in the social encyclicals of his successors. Over time, the principles of the CST were formulated, one of which is solidarity. The formation of support groups for addicts is a practical exemplification of the application of this principle. Many support groups not only teach how to fight addiction, but also, thanks to their communal character, open individuals up to seeing new ways of living their lives. What is more, these groups are also based on the principle of subsidiarity, because they do not exclude free will and responsibility of the individual, but support his or her resour-

es by sharing his or her story of life and struggle with addiction. Hence, alcoholics who have not been drinking for many years are not only an inspiration and motivation for new members, but a sign of hope for returning to a life of sobriety.

It is also necessary to acknowledge the spiritual dimension of the alcohol problem of Polish society, which calls for the Church's prayerful and pastoral support.

From the theological-moral point of view, every sin and addiction is rooted in the blemish of original sin and the resulting propensity to choose evil. Hence the need to proclaim the gratuitousness of salvation in Christ in an increasingly secularising Polish society. The Second Vatican Council reminded us that every human being has within himself or herself an openness to God and the right to practise religion as a way of connecting with God<sup>61</sup>. This is not a private matter, as some would have it. The same is true of the issue of overcoming alcoholism. It must be recognised that this problem also has a spiritual root and dimension and therefore requires the help of the Church. The clergy should provide specific forms of pastoral support and assistance to addicts, i.e. sacramental ministry, spiritual guidance, prayer meetings and education and formation. In addition, it is important for the Church at the local level to cooperate with social institutions working on behalf of addicts and their families. This could also be done in the form of training courses and seminars that would provide new experiences, improve professional competence and open up those struggling with alcoholism and their families to the prospect of a better tomorrow. This would be a practical implementation of the call to fraternal love and a fulfilment of Pope Francis' invitation to become the Church on the way, which is a mother with open heart and will include those on the periphery<sup>62</sup>.

#### CONCLUSION

The issue of alcohol dependence is a major problem that affects a significant part of Polish society. It is not only about excessive drinking itself, but about the political, economic, cultural, moral and spiritual consequences that it carries with it.

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<sup>61</sup> II Vatican Council, *Declaration on Religious Freedom "Dignitatis Humanae"*, Rome, 1965, 2.

<sup>62</sup> Cf. Francis, *Fratelli Tutti*, Rome, 2020, 77.

The above text shows the broad spectrum of alcoholism and its consequences in social life and presents their destructive dimension, which is, among other things, acting against the dignity of the human person and the common good. The problem needs to be placed at one of the priority places in the activities of state and non-governmental institutions and the Church in Poland. There is need to take educational, formative, therapeutic and pastoral action to awaken social sensitivity to the problem, but not only to treat the effects of alcoholism, but to act prophylactically, especially on the young generation. This would then be another important step in building the civilisation of love and life called for in particular by St John Paul II.

ZLOUPORABA ALKOHOLA U POLJSKOJ – (NE)RIJEŠENI  
PROBLEM? EVALUACIJA I PRIJEDLOG KULTURNO  
OSJETLJIVE ETIKE SKRBI

*Sažetak*

Ovaj članak bavi se problemom zlouporabe alkohola, posebno u poljskim obiteljima. Iako se opijanje osuđuje, svakodnevna zlouporaba alkohola u mnogim se obiteljima često zanemaruje i ne tretira kao ozbiljan problem visokog prioriteta. Štoviše, zlouporaba alkohola među mladima također je veliki obrazovni izazov i međugeneracijski problem, budući da mnogi Poljaci vide alkohol kao brz i jednostavan način da se nose s poteškoćama u osobnom i društvenom funkcioniranju. Ovaj tekst je pokušaj da se odgovori na pitanje o trenutnom razmjeru i dimenzijama problema zlouporabe alkohola u Poljskoj. Na predmetnu problematiku primijenjena je metodologija Katoličkog socijalnog nauka koja uključuje promatranje problema u društvenoj perspektivi, njegovu evaluaciju i pronalaženje mogućih rješenja temeljenih na vrijednostima i načelima Katoličkog socijalnog nauka. Članak također uključuje neke preporuke za holistički pristup koji uzima u obzir društvenu, moralnu i duhovnu dimenziju problema.

*Ključne riječi:* zlouporaba alkohola, obitelj, društvo, Poljska, Katolički socijalni nauk.

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