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# **USE OF ESPAD DATA FOR DESIGNING AND EVALUATING DRUG POLICY IN POLAND**

Study was commissioned  
by the National Bureau for Drug Prevention  
and the State Agency for the Prevention of Alcohol-Related Problems

Expert meeting on the indicator 'Prevalence and patterns of drug use'  
Lisbon 4-5 May 2022

# Introduction

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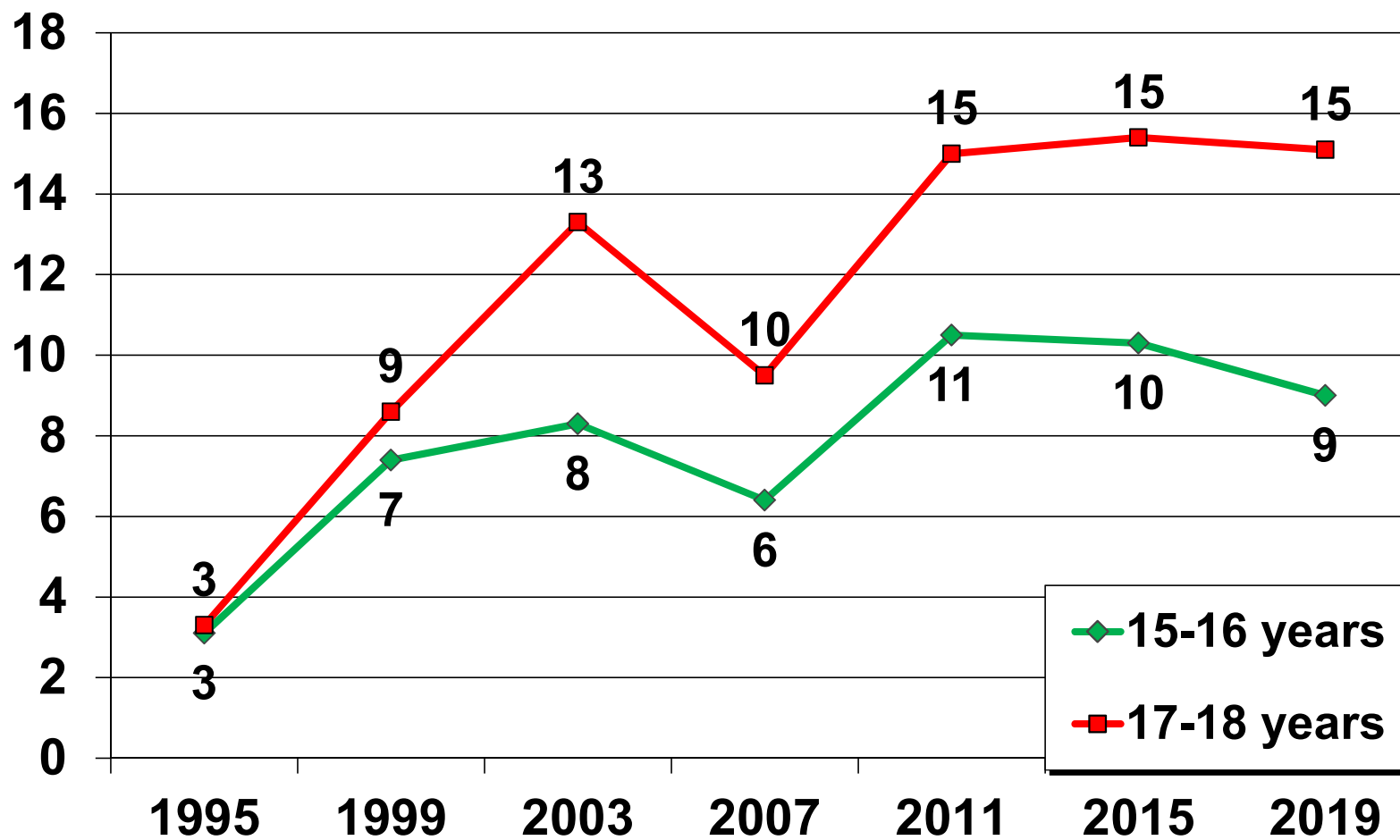
- ESPAD in Poland implemented since 1995 – possibility to analyze long-term trends
- Three examples of use of results by policy makers
  - ▶ Developing prevention and therapeutic programs as response to increasing trend in cannabis use
  - ▶ Increasing trend in unification of substance use boys' and girls' patterns prompted to search for programs addressed to girls
  - ▶ Comparison of trends in cannabis use on various levels enables outcome evaluation of local policies

# Methods

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- Standard ESPAD methodology
- Since 1995 two cohorts under study 15-16 years old and 17-18 years old
- Extension of country-wide sample by regional and local sub-samples
  - ▶ Regional and local financing
  - ▶ Regional and local reports – comparisons with national results and results from other locations participating in ESPAD
  - ▶ Only a few locations with long-term trend

# Last-30-days prevalence of cannabis use among students age 15-16 and 17-18

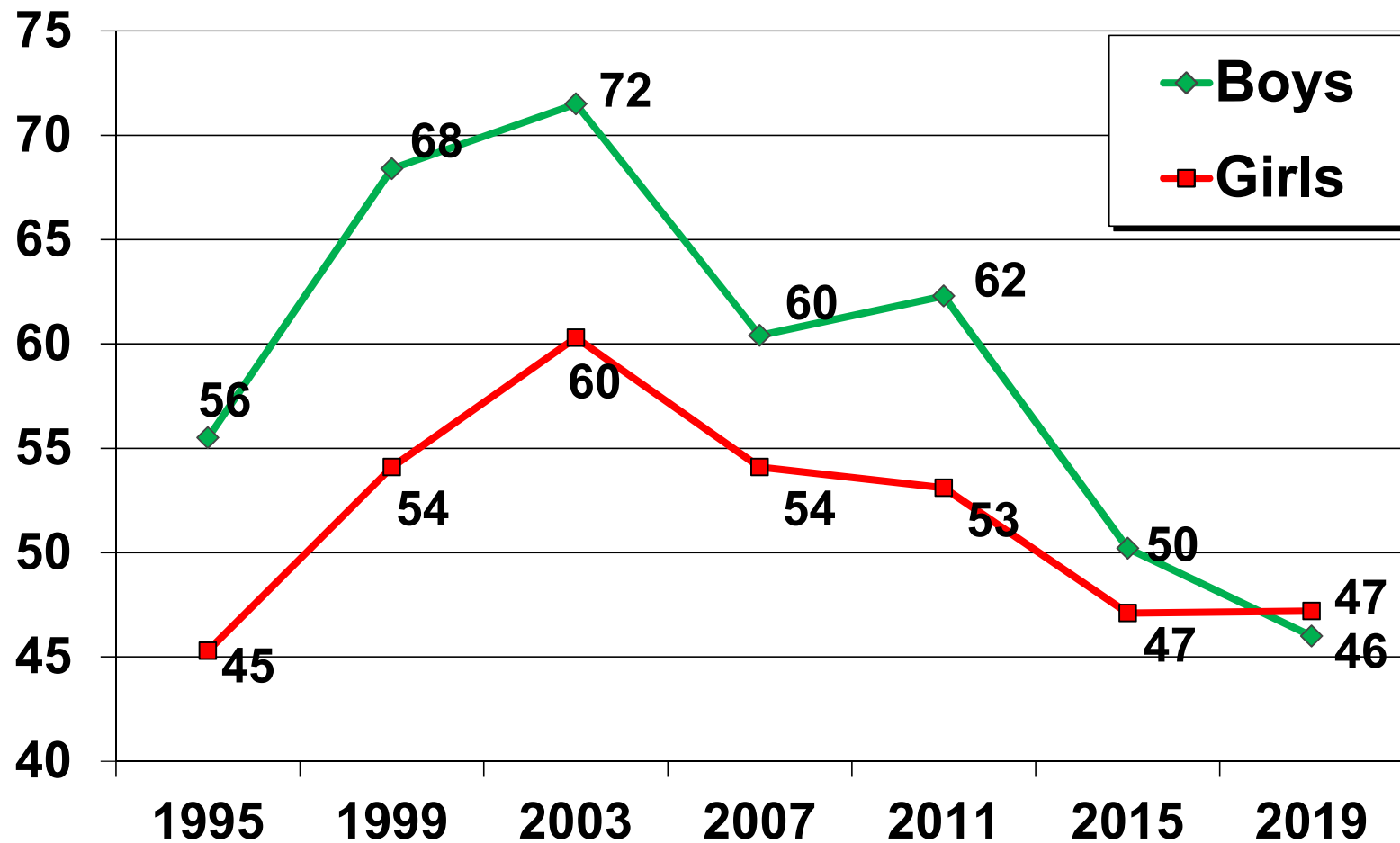


# Response to increasing trend in cannabis use by youth

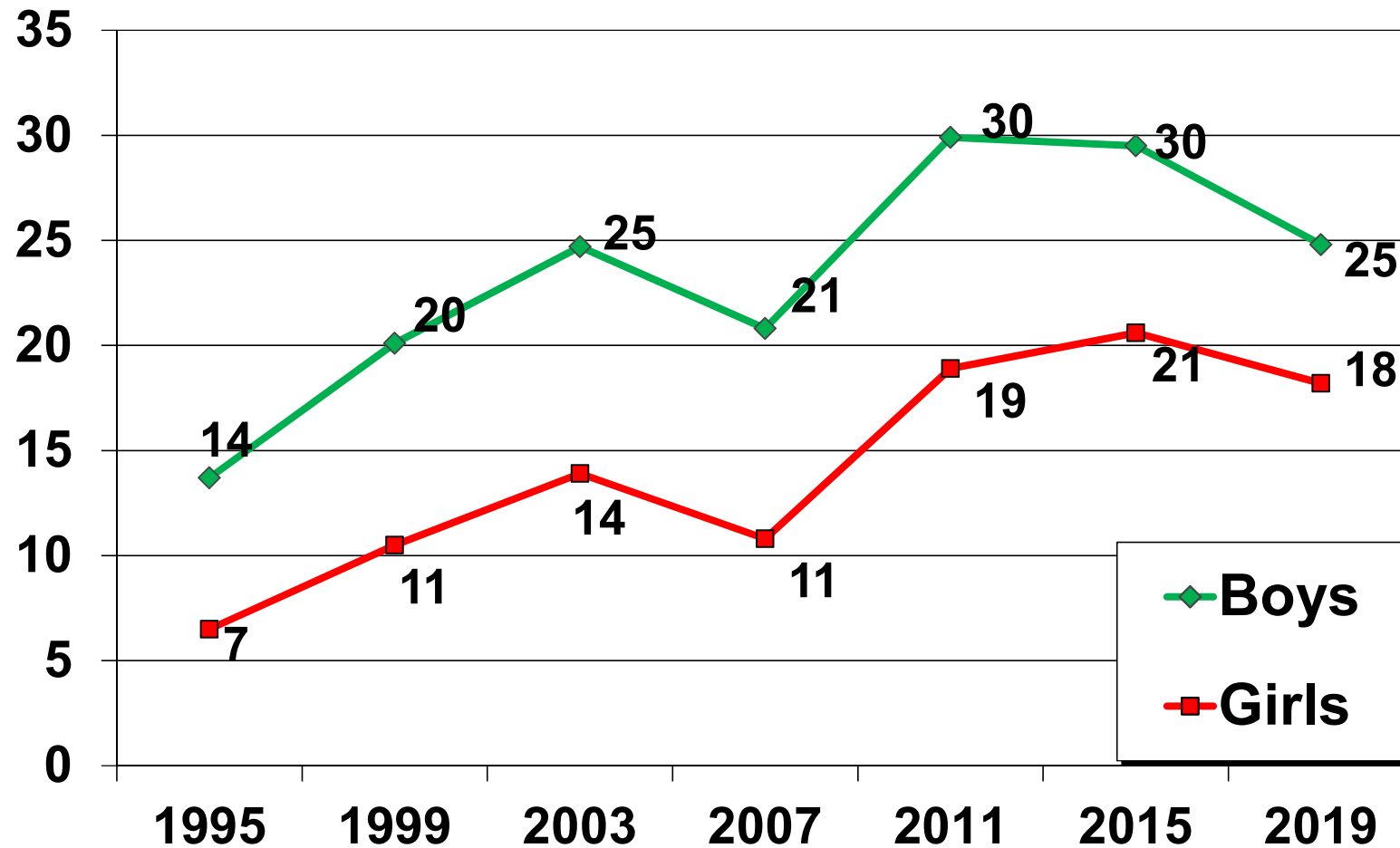
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- Since 2006 searching indicative prevention and therapeutic programs targeting cannabis users to be adopted in Poland
- Since 2007 adaptation of program „FreD goes net”
- In 2011 adaptation of therapeutic program „CANDIS”
- Both programs adopted, evaluated and disseminated by National Bureau for Drug Prevention
- 2011 Amendment to drug law introducing probation measures for occasional drug users possessing drugs – drug possession in Poland is penalized, and may even be punishable by imprisonment

# Last-30-days prevalence of drinking among students age 15-16 by gender



# Lifetime prevalence of cannabis use among students age 15-16 by gender



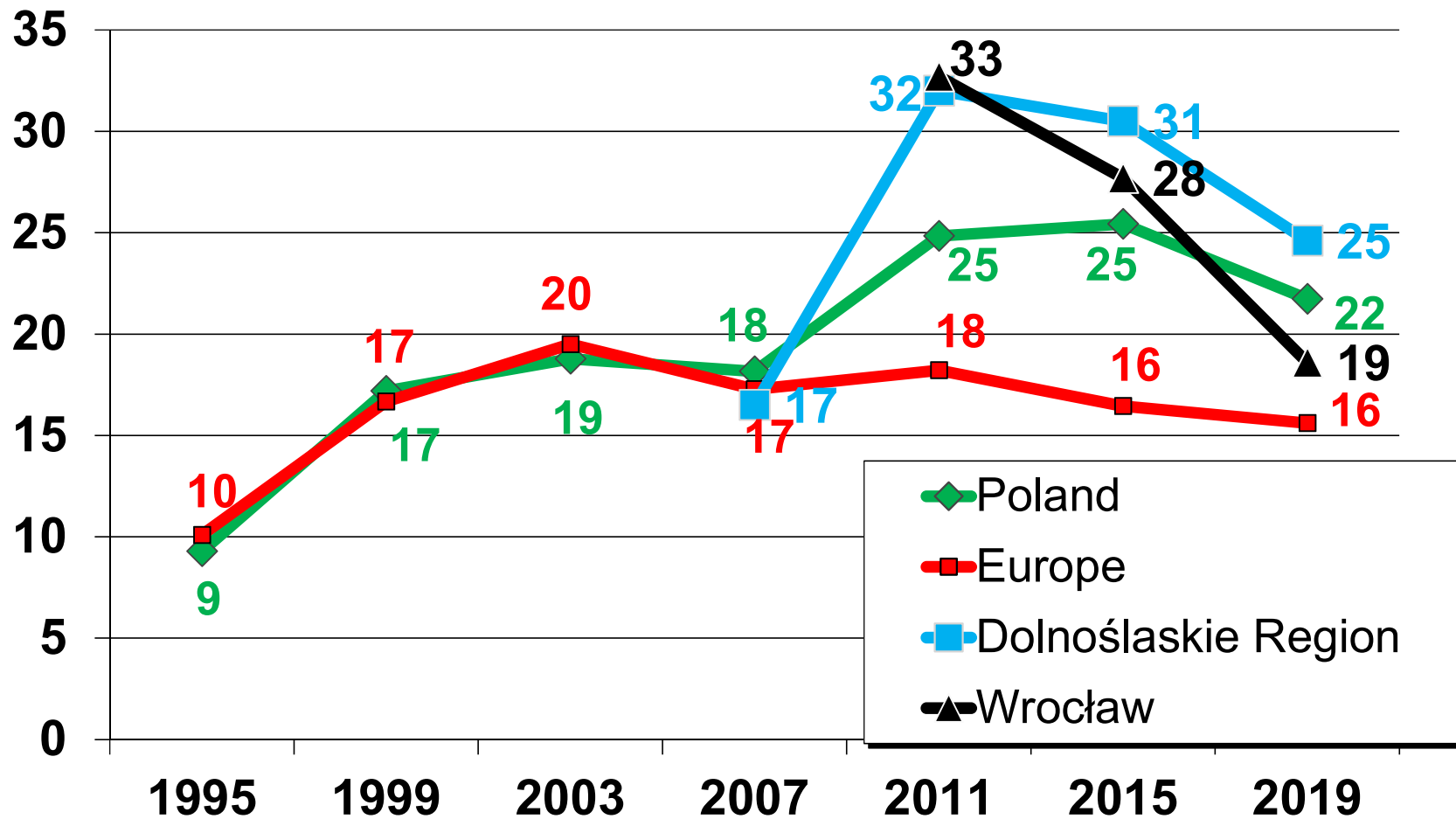
# Response to increasing trend in unification of substance use boys' and girls' patterns

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- In Poland traditionally substance use is attributed to male culture – even among teenagers prevalence among boys was higher than among girls
- Nowadays prevalence of current drinking is the same for both sexes, and the gender gaps in cannabis use are narrowing and even disappearing locally
- National Centre for Prevention of Addiction is currently looking for prevention program addressed to girls to be adapted



# Lifetime prevalence of cannabis use (percentages of students age 15-16 years)



# Outcome evaluation of local cannabis policy in Wrocław

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- Wrocław is the capital city of Dolnośląskie Region
- Dolnośląskie Region participated in ESPAD since 2007 and Wrocław since 2011
- In 2011 lifetime prevalence of cannabis use in Wrocław was closely to twofold higher than national figures – in 2019 this difference disappeared
- Decrease of indicator in Wrocław was stronger than in whole Dolnośląskie Region
- Comparison of trends suggest success of cannabis policy in Wrocław – but possible also other interpretations

# Conclusions

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- ESPAD data are used by national and local levels policy makers for the purpose of:
  - ▶ identification of new phenomena on the substance use area which call for response
  - ▶ justification of needs for actions
  - ▶ evaluation of outcome of the actions
  - ▶ promotion of demand reduction actions as well as mobilization of society
- Use of ESPAD data for evaluation purposes needs formulation of restrictions and reservations