INTRODUCTION
Stuttering is a very complex disorder combining behavioral, emotional and cognitive aspects (Krentel, 2006). Cross-cultural studies using The Public Opinion Survey of Human Attitudes - Stuttering (POSMA-S) show that public attitudes towards people who stutter (PWS) are negative or stigmatizing. Such inappropriate social attitudes toward PWS can lead to social exclusion and may negatively impact their quality of life. Identifying negative social attitudes can foster stigmatization actions that have the potential to raise acceptance of stuttering, reduce social exclusion of PWS and support therapy effectiveness.

This paper aims to summarize measured attitudes and knowledge towards stuttering and people who stutter among several Polish populations by comparing the results of four previous research studies.

METHODS
The POSMA-S questionnaire (St, Louis, 2011) was used. Polish samples included 228 respondents from the general public, 188 speech-language therapists (SLTs), 403 speech-language therapy students, and 256 students taking other courses. American (NHMS) and UK (N=50) comparative samples consisting of university students were also considered. POSMA-S mean scores were converted to a scale from 1 (Opposite) to 7 (Positive). All measures were statistically analyzed using the standard deviation of the mean. Results were compared with the mean scores of university students.

RESULTS

General public
- The Polish general public showed lower or less positive mean POSMA-S scores than databases median values for the help component, but more positive for the knowledge and knowledge source components (OS/18).
- The attitudes of the group of participants were generally similar to those of other adult samples of general public around the world (OS/16) but it is important to bear in mind that many ratings were still negative.

American vs. Polish university students
- The data are part of a bigger project carried out among American and Polish university students (St, Louis et al., in press).
- Responses of SLT students in Poland were more positive than those of control students studying other subjects (OS/93 vs. OS/39).
- Polish SLT students obtained lower overall stuttering scores, belief subscore and SLT in a persons stuttered word (OS/10) compared to the American SLT students (OS/93 vs. OS/93/OS/16).
- Non-SLT Polish students scored less favorably on the distance/sympathy (component), emotional trauma (component), and concern if a stutterer stuttered (less than American non-SLT students).

SLTs vs. SLTs in training
- Polish SLTs had higher scores than the SLT students (OS/35 vs. OS/27), although the differences were small in some cases (significant).
- These two groups, however, obtained scores higher than the Polish general public.
- Although both groups provided highly accurate responses to whether PWS have themselves to blame (less) their ratings were less appropriate to the shy and fearful item. The difference between the groups was not statistically significant.

Polish vs. English university students
- The original research included additional groups but for the purpose of this poster only the control groups (university students) taking various subjects will be described.
- Polish students showed significantly less positive attitudes towards stuttering compared to English students (OS/27 vs. OS/33).
- The Polish group scored lower on all components apart from the following: knowledge source, knowledge and training.

DISCUSSION

- Results of these studies suggest that Polish public attitudes toward stuttering can be considered reasonably typical of "average" attitudes.
- SLT students manifested somewhat more positive attitudes as shown by St, Louis et al. (in press). The attitudes of Polish non-SLT students were also less positive than those of American non-SLT students (St, Louis et al., 2013). Nevertheless, Polish students who were not studying SLT had less positive attitudes toward stuttering and their knowledge was less accurate than English non-SLT university students (Wysierska, Wieronski, St, Louis, 2013, May).
- Overall findings show that Polish samples held similar attitudes towards stuttering in other samples around the world. Therefore, stigma and social exclusion of PWS are as likely to occur in Poland as in other populations.

CONCLUSION
The multiple studies and replications shown indicate that:
- Polish attitudes in the population samples were quite consistent.
- More research on attitudes towards stuttering and other fluency disorders and the awareness of fluency disorders is needed and such efforts are currently underway.
- The results show how crucial it is to raise awareness about stuttering and other fluency disorders in Poland in order to mitigate the stigma that exists.