

50 Years of History

Poland

Name of organisation: POLAND OMPT (Poland Orthopaedic Manual/Musculoskeletal Physical Therapists)

Year organisation started: Informal integration efforts: early 2000s
Formal establishment of the Umbrella Group: 2021

Member of IFOMPT since: Application process ongoing; cooperation with IFOMPT since 2007

Key influencers of OMPT through the years

The development of Orthopaedic Manipulative Physical Therapy (OMPT) in Poland has been shaped by multiple educators, clinicians, and organisations involved in postgraduate manual therapy education since the late 1990s. Early integration efforts were initiated by individuals engaged in aligning Polish manual therapy education with international standards and strengthening links with the global OMPT community.

Important contributions were made by leaders of postgraduate education programmes and professional organisations, as well as by representatives of the Polish physiotherapy community involved in dialogue with international bodies.

Development over the years:

Manual therapy and OMPT education in Poland have a long tradition; however, for many years, activities were conducted independently by different educational groups, without a unified organisational structure capable of representing Poland within IFOMPT or coordinating educational standards nationally.

The first formal attempts to integrate Poland into IFOMPT structures date back to 2007, when discussions were initiated with the national physiotherapy organisation at that time. Parallel to these efforts, structured postgraduate manual therapy programmes aligned with IFOMPT standards began to emerge, and cooperation between educators and organisations gradually increased.

A key milestone occurred in 2018, when representatives of organisations providing postgraduate OMPT education met to discuss common standards and the establishment of a national umbrella structure. This meeting marked a shift from informal cooperation towards a coordinated organisational model consistent with IFOMPT principles.

In 2019, representatives of Polish OMPT education presented curriculum documentation and external assessments to the IFOMPT Executive Board, further strengthening international collaboration and mutual understanding. Work continued on unifying educational frameworks and preparing the foundations for a formal umbrella organisation.

In 2021, a Founding Agreement was signed and the Umbrella Group was formally established under the name Orthopaedic Manipulative Physical Therapy Poland (OMPT Poland), bringing together organisations involved in OMPT education and professional development.

Any major changes or challenges in the last 50 years:

One of the main challenges in the Polish context has been the changing landscape of national representation within World Physiotherapy, which temporarily affected the formal progression of the IFOMPT membership process. Despite these changes, cooperation with IFOMPT was maintained, and educational activities continued in alignment with IFOMPT standards.

Another challenge has been the need to harmonise diverse educational traditions and organisational cultures within a single umbrella structure while preserving the autonomy of member organisations.

Current status and challenges:

OMPT Poland currently functions as an Umbrella Group bringing together Registered Interest Groups (RIGs) involved in OMPT education in Poland. The organisation focuses on strengthening cooperation between member organisations, maintaining alignment with IFOMPT Educational Standards, and supporting the final stages of the membership application process.

Ongoing challenges include further integration of educational pathways, continued quality assurance, and increasing awareness of OMPT standards within the broader physiotherapy community.

The future of the organisation:

The future of OMPT Poland is based on openness, collaboration, and gradual development. The Umbrella Group remains open to additional organisations involved in OMPT education in Poland and aims to further strengthen international cooperation, research engagement, and professional recognition of OMPT within the national and international physiotherapy community.
