

Report SDG 2024

Children in the context of sustainable development

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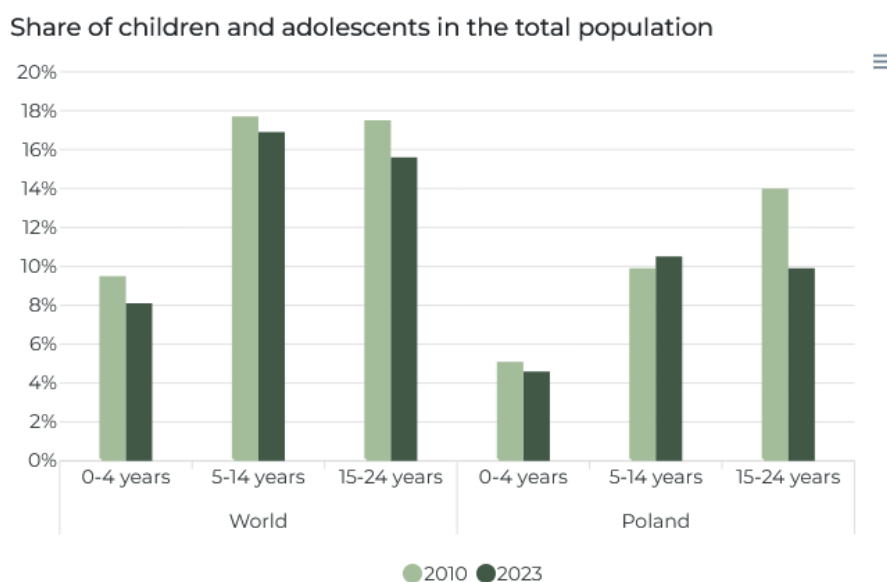
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Report SDG 2024

Children in the context of sustainable development

Satisfying children's needs is proof of fulfilling SDGs. Social inequality, poverty or aggravating conflicts are serious obstacles to the development for this social group, which requires special protection. Fundamental standards of the protection of the youngest and honouring their rights are determined by the Convention on the Rights of the Child (one of the documents ratified most readily by countries, the initiator of which, along with some other countries, was Poland). The 35th anniversary of the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child by the UN General Assembly and the 70th anniversary of establishing the International Children's Day, both celebrated in 2024, are a perfect occasion to reflect on the needs, rights and situation of children.

The share of children in the general population of both Poland and the whole world is decreasing. In Poland, the percentage of children and adolescents in the whole population is much lower than the world's average. According to the UN data, the share of children and young adults (aged 0-24) in the global population decreased from 45% in 2010 to 41% in 2023. In the same period, the share of the youngest population in Poland fell from 29% to 25%.



This year's edition of the report presents information about the situation of the youngest inhabitants of Poland with selected comparisons to the European Union. We are trying to answer questions concerning the situation of children in Poland, including those regarding the conditions they live in, types of families with children, children's health and their presence in the digital world. The report also shows the challenges relating to children in the context of fulfilling SDGs.

As in previous editions of the report, we are presenting only selected phenomena and general trends. Those of our Readers who are interested in more detailed information can refer to comprehensive databases of official statistics and follow updates on the Statistics Poland's website and the SDG Platform.

We wish you pleasant reading!

Date of publication: 4th December 2024

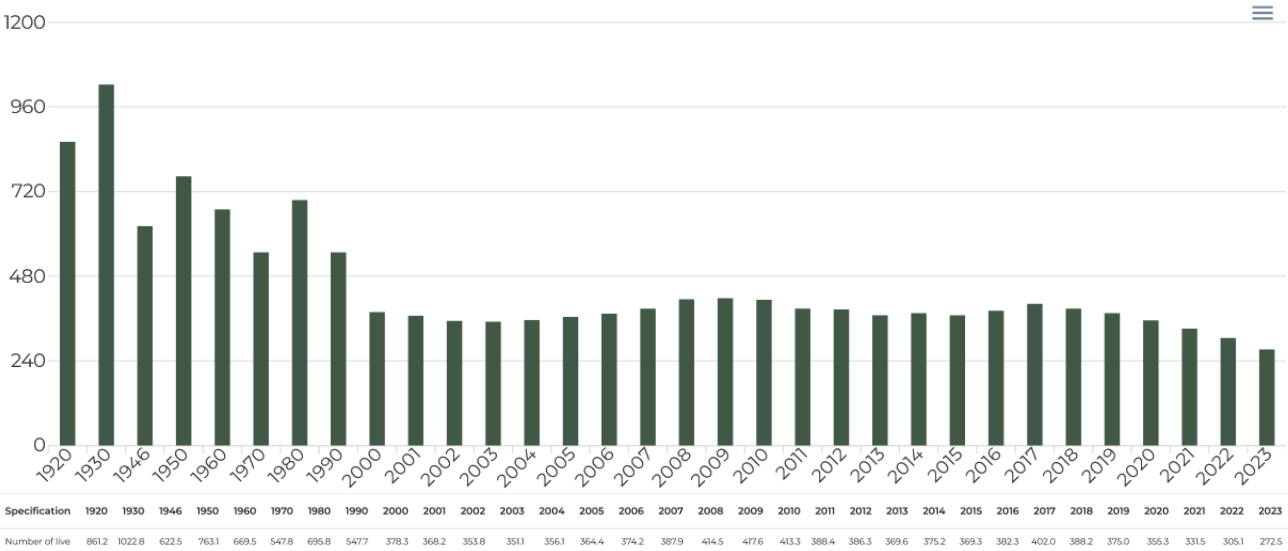
Early childhood

Fertility in Poland

The birth rate in Poland has been declining for years, which is a serious demographic problem for the country. The year 2023 saw the lowest number of children born in more than 100 years (four times fewer babies were born than in the 1920s). The fertility rate is becoming increasingly lower and Polish women tend to have their first child at later stages of their lives. Women who become first-time mothers above the age of 30 have for several years accounted for more than half of all the mothers among the 15-49 age group.

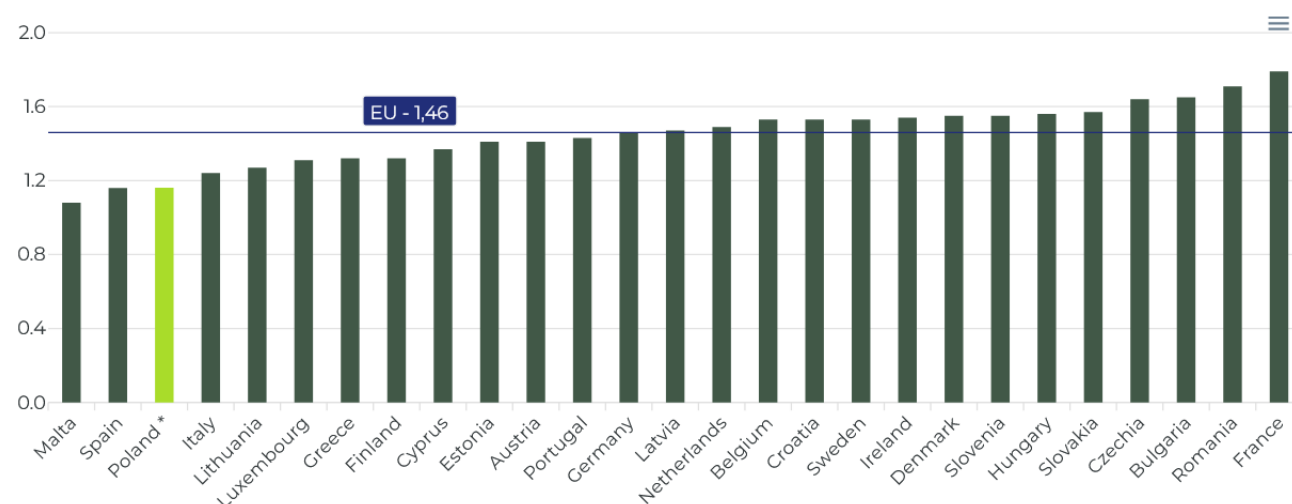
As most EU countries, Poland also struggles with a year-on-year decline in the number of births. 272,000 children were born in Poland in 2023, which was the lowest recorded number of births in the entire post-war period. This downward trend has intensified especially in the last several years. Between 2010 and 2023, the decrease in the amount of births reached 34%. Per 1,000 population, 7 children were born in 2023, while in 2010, it was 11 children. By comparison, in the post-war period, the average number of births per 1,000 population varied from nearly 29 children in the 1950s to 12 children in the 1990s.

Number of live births (thous.)



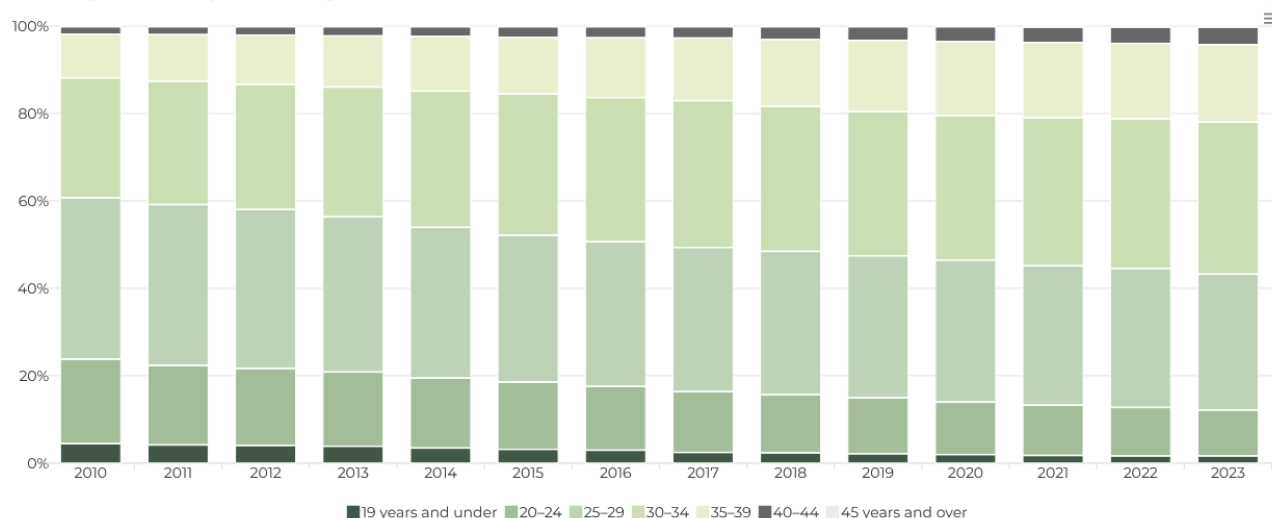
The declining number of births in Poland results from the following factors: the decreasing number of potential mothers (women of childbearing age, i.e. in the 15-49 age group), an increasingly older age at which women give birth to their first child, and a low fertility rate (the average number of children that a woman gives birth to during her lifetime). Changes in the size of the population and age structure entail a steady decline in the number of potential mothers. In Poland, their number has fallen by more than 1 million (to 8.3 million) since 2010. In the context of an aging population, the current share of women who can become potential mothers in the total number of women over the age of 15 is 51% (compared to 56% in 2010). Similar trends are observed in the whole EU, where this percentage has fallen from 54% to 48%. More Polish women, like their European counterparts, decide to give birth to their first child at an older age. In 2023, the average age at which Polish women decided to become mothers was 29, while in the EU (in 2022) it was nearly 30 (more than a decade ago, the average age was almost 27 and 29, respectively). Fewer children are born to women who are in the 20-29 age group, and more to those over 30. The percentage of children born to mothers over the age of 30 was 57% in 2023, which is significantly higher than in 2010 (39%). The percentage of children born to mothers over 40 is also rising steadily (to over 4% in 2023 from less than 2% in 2010). On the other hand, the number of very young girls giving birth has decreased markedly. There were more than 70% fewer births among 15-19-year-olds in 2023 than in 2010, falling from nearly 19,000 to less than 5,000. Births by even younger Polish mothers, i.e. aged 10-14, has remained at the level of 30-60 per year, although a downward trend is observed in their case as well.

Fertility rate in the EU countries in 2022



Specification	2022
EU	1.46
Malta	1.08
Spain	1.16
Poland *	1.16
Italy	1.24
Lithuania	1.27
Luxembourg	1.31
Greece	1.32
Finland	1.32
Cyprus	1.37
Estonia	1.41
Austria	1.41
Portugal	1.43
Germany	1.46
Latvia	1.47
Netherlands	1.49
Belgium	1.53
Croatia	1.53
Sweden	1.53
Ireland	1.54
Denmark	1.55
Slovenia	1.55
Hungary	1.56
Slovakia	1.57
Czechia	1.64
Bulgaria	1.65
Romania	1.71
France	1.79

Percentage of births by mother's age



In order to ensure a stable demographic development of the country, thus the replacement of generations, there should be on average at least 2.10–2.15 children born to every woman aged 15–49. Declining fertility trends are observed in Poland and on average in the EU. In 2023, 1.16 children were born per Polish female resident, which is one of the lowest fertility rates in the EU (compared to an average of 1.46 children per EU female resident in 2022).

The duration of the pregnancy and whether it is single or multiple is of great importance for both the mother and her baby. According to the definition of the World Health Organization, a pregnancy is considered to be full-term from the 38th week of its duration, while a baby born after the 22nd week but before the completed 37th week is classified as premature. In Poland, 7% of all newborns are premature. Among them, babies born between the 32nd and 36th week of gestation are the most numerous; between 2010 and 2023, their percentage grew from 83% to 85%. Out of the remaining premature babies, about 10% were born between the 28th and 31st week of gestation and about 5% below

the 28th week. The vast majority of newborns come from single pregnancies (these babies invariably account for more than 97% of all births). The remaining 3% come from twin and multiple pregnancies.

Between 2010 and 2023, most children in Poland were born in July, followed by January and September. On the other hand, the fewest children were born in February, December and November. The most popular day of the week for parents to welcome their babies into the world is Tuesday and the rarest Sunday. The naming trends in Poland are changing: in 2023, the most popular girl names were Zofia, Zuzanna and Laura, and boy names Nikodem, Antoni and Jan, while in 2010, parents most often named their daughters Julia, Maja and Zuzanna, and sons Jakub, Szymon and Kacper.

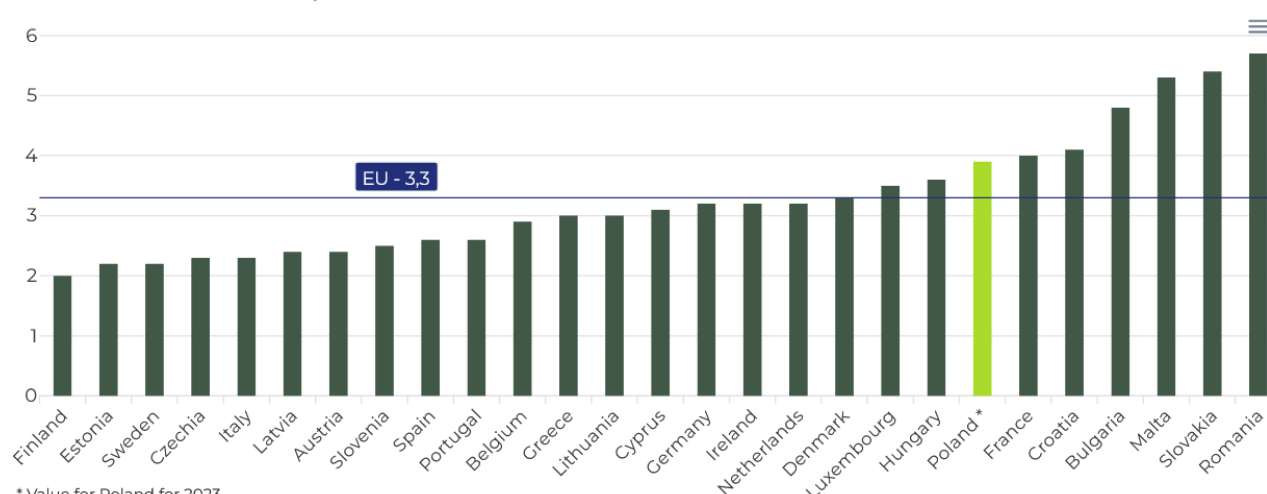
Newborn and infant mortality

Although infant mortality is decreasing in Poland, it still remains one of the highest in the EU. The majority of infant deaths are caused by diseases that begin in the perinatal period, as well as congenital defects, deformities and chromosome abnormalities. The children of women giving birth after the age of 45 face a higher risk of death.

As medicine advances and perinatal care improves, the number of deaths among infants is falling. In Poland, during the 2010-2023 period, the death rate of infants (children up to 12 months of age) per 1,000 live births fell from 5.0 to 3.9. Among them, the death rate of newborns (children up to 28 days old) decreased from 3.5 to 2.6 and of children who lived less than a day from 1.6 to 1.1. The year 2021 was an exception, when, for the first time in years, the number of infant deaths per 1,000 live births increased year-on-year. Similar trends were recorded in most EU countries, which, among other factors, should be linked to the then-ongoing pandemic.

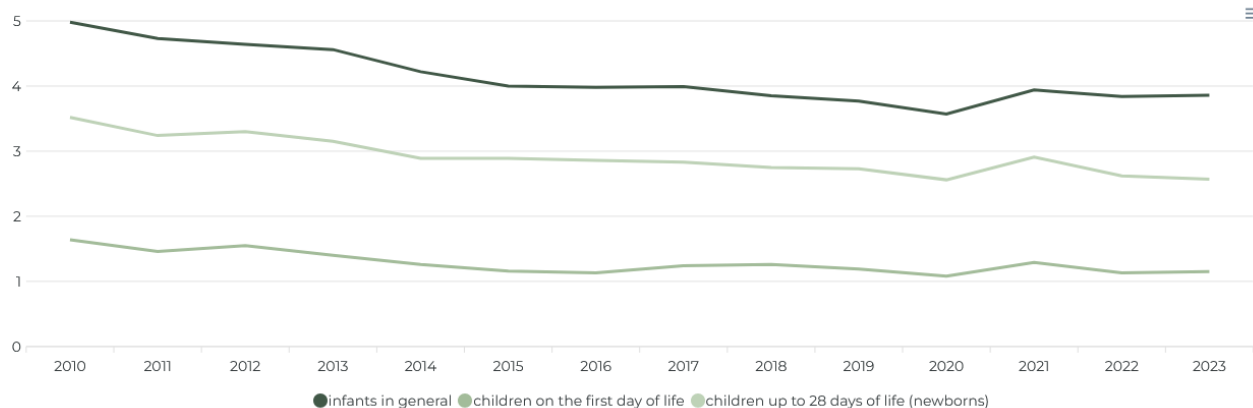
Despite the observed improvement, more infants still die per 1,000 live births in Poland than in most EU countries (both in 2010 and 2022, Poland was the 7th country with the highest infant mortality rate). Annually, out of all Polish children who die in the first year of life, 70% are those who do not live to be one month old, almost half of whom die in their first day of life.

Number of infant deaths per 1 thous. live births in the EU countries in 2022



Specification	2022
EU	3.3
Finland	2.0
Estonia	2.2
Sweden	2.2
Czechia	2.3
Italy	2.3
Latvia	2.4
Austria	2.4
Slovenia	2.5
Spain	2.6
Portugal	2.6
Belgium	2.9
Greece	3.0
Lithuania	3.0
Cyprus	3.1
Germany	3.2
Ireland	3.2
Netherlands	3.2
Denmark	3.3
Luxembourg	3.5
Hungary	3.6
Poland *	3.9
France	4.0
Croatia	4.1
Bulgaria	4.8
Malta	5.3
Slovakia	5.4
Romania	5.7

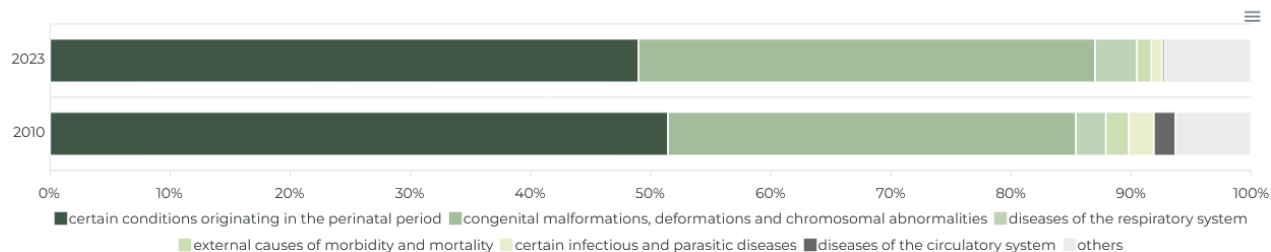
Deaths of children under 12 months of age per 1 thous. live births



Specification	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
infants in general	4.98	4.73	4.64	4.56	4.22	4.00	3.98	3.99	3.85	3.77	3.57	3.94	3.84	3.86
children on the first day of life	1.64	1.46	1.55	1.40	1.26	1.16	1.13	1.24	1.26	1.19	1.08	1.29	1.13	1.15
children up to 28 days of life (newborns)	3.52	3.24	3.30	3.15	2.89	2.89	2.86	2.83	2.75	2.73	2.56	2.91	2.62	2.57

There are many causes of death among infants, but the most common ones are conditions which begin in the perinatal period (they accounted for half of infant deaths in 2010–2023). Congenital defects, deformities and chromosomal abnormalities are considerable causes of death; the percentage of deaths among children suffering from these conditions and under the age of one ranged from 34% to 40% in 2010–2023. Other less common causes of infant deaths include respiratory diseases, cardiovascular diseases and infectious and parasitic diseases.

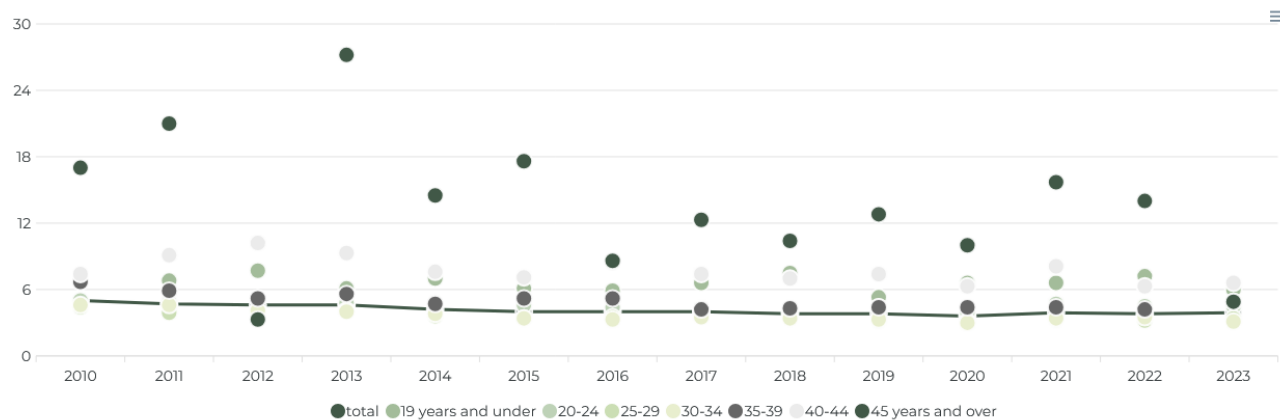
Infant deaths by selected causes



Specification	2010	2023
certain conditions originating in the perinatal period	51.5	49.0
congenital malformations, deformations and chromosomal abnormalities	34.0	38.0
diseases of the respiratory system	2.5	3.5
external causes of morbidity and mortality	1.9	1.2
certain infectious and parasitic diseases	2.1	0.9
diseases of the circulatory system	1.8	0.2
others	6.3	7.2

The older the mother, the higher the risk of infant death. The mortality rate of children born to women aged 45 and over is clearly higher than children whose mothers are younger. In 2010-2023, the number of deaths of infants born to mothers over the age of 45 varied from 3 to 27 infants per 1,000 live births, depending on the year. Among mothers aged 40-44, an average of 8 infants per 1,000 live births died each year, and 7 among the youngest mothers (aged 19 and less).

Infant mortality rate per 1 thous. live births by the mother's age



Specification	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
total	5.0	4.7	4.6	4.6	4.2	4.0	4.0	4.0	3.8	3.8	3.6	3.9	3.8	3.9
19 years and under	6.7	6.8	7.7	6.1	7.0	6.1	5.9	6.6	7.5	5.3	6.6	6.6	7.2	6.0
20-24	5.0	4.9	5.2	4.8	4.8	4.6	4.4	4.3	4.0	4.4	3.9	4.7	4.5	4.5
25-29	4.4	3.9	4.0	4.1	3.6	3.4	3.5	3.8	3.5	3.2	3.1	3.3	3.2	3.4
30-34	4.6	4.6	4.1	4.0	3.8	3.4	3.3	3.5	3.4	3.3	3.0	3.4	3.5	3.1
35-39	6.7	5.9	5.2	5.6	4.7	5.2	5.2	4.2	4.3	4.4	4.4	4.4	4.2	4.9
40-44	7.4	9.1	10.2	9.3	7.6	7.1	8.4	7.4	7.0	7.4	6.3	8.1	6.3	6.6
45 years and over	17.0	21.0	3.3	27.2	14.5	17.6	8.6	12.3	10.4	12.8	10.0	15.7	14.0	4.9

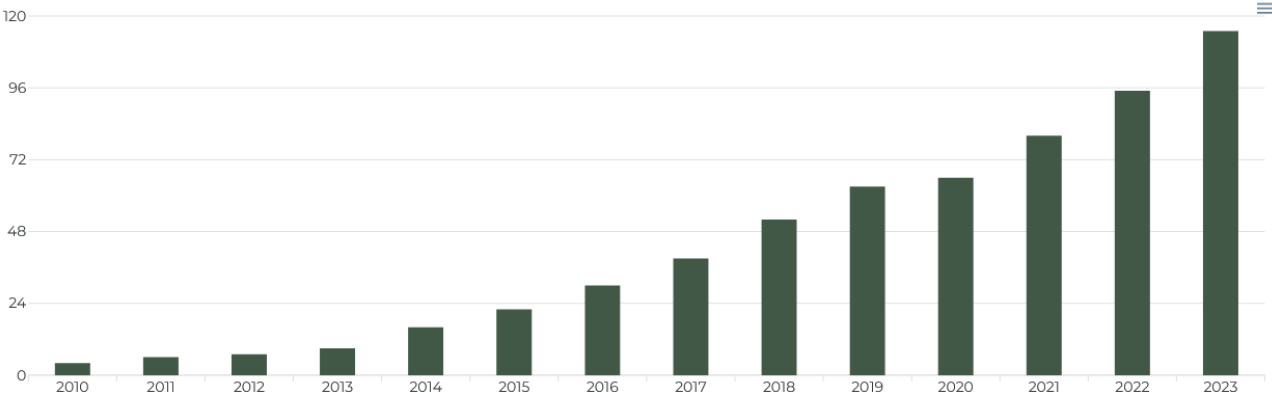
Preventive vaccinations

In Poland, the number of children and adolescents who do not receive mandatory vaccinations (i.e. those listed in the vaccination schedule) against infectious diseases is increasing. For most of the diseases, the vaccination rate among children under the age of 1 usually remains (depending on the disease) above 90% (which, according to epidemiologists, guarantees herd immunity). However, the vaccination coverage against measles and polio has for several years been close to or below the limit of herd immunity. Moreover, the vaccination rate against these infectious diseases in Poland has for some years been one of the lowest in the EU.

In Poland, mandatory vaccination is regulated by the 2008 Act on preventing and combating infections and infectious diseases in humans. Each year, the Chief Sanitary Inspectorate prepares a Preventive Vaccination Program (Vaccination Schedule), which consists of a list of mandatory and recommended vaccinations and describes the rules for their administration. Compulsory vaccinations include those against tuberculosis, hepatitis B, diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis, acute poliomyelitis (polio), *Haemophilus influenzae* type B (Hib), and measles, mumps and rubella. Due to the specific properties of the immune system of children, most vaccinations are given to those under the age of 2.

Despite the relatively high vaccination coverage of children and adolescents in Poland, the number of evasions from mandatory vaccinations is growing. Over 13 years, the number of children and adolescents (in the 0-19 age group) who have not received mandatory vaccinations increased more than 20-fold. In 2010, 4 people from this age group per 10,000 population were not vaccinated, while in 2023 this number reached 115 people. As regards the youngest children (up to the age of 3), the percentage vaccinated with the primary (basic) dose decreased from nearly 100% in 2010 to just over 90% in 2023. An even higher decline was noted among children receiving a vaccine in two or more doses. Vaccinations that need to be repeated every few years have an average vaccination rate of between 90% and 80%. Booster doses tend to be the least popular, especially those administered at an older age. For instance, by 2023, only 77% of people aged 20 decided to get a booster dose against diphtheria and tetanus (compared to 91% in 2010).

Persons aged 0-19 not vaccinated per 10 thous. persons in the same age group

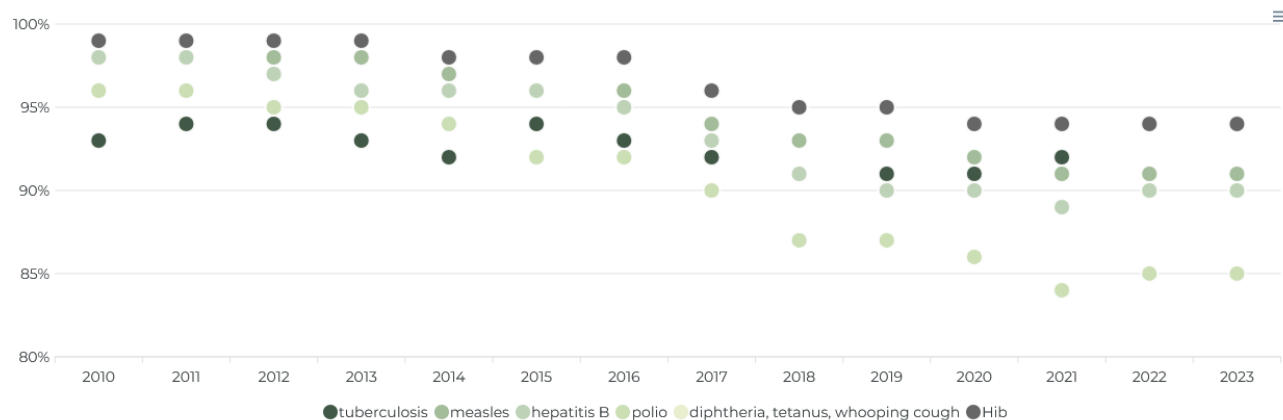


Data source: National Institute of Public Health

Specification	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
	4	6	7	9	16	22	30	39	52	63	66	80	95	115

Compared to 2010, the percentage of vaccinations against measles and polio has declined most sharply of all mandatory vaccinations. According to the WHO data, in 2020-2022, the percentage of infants vaccinated with the first dose against measles reached 70-80% (i.e. below the limit of herd immunity) in Poland. Thus, in 2022, Poland ranked last among EU countries in terms of the vaccination coverage against this infectious disease. A year later (in 2023), the percentage of children vaccinated against measles rose to 91% (yet was still lower than in 2010, when the percentage was close to 100%). In the recent years, vaccination rates against polio have also been below or close to the limit of herd immunity; in 2023, the percentage of vaccinations administered against this disease was only 85%, compared to 96% in 2010.

Percentage of children at 1 year of age vaccinated against selected infectious diseases



Data source: WHO

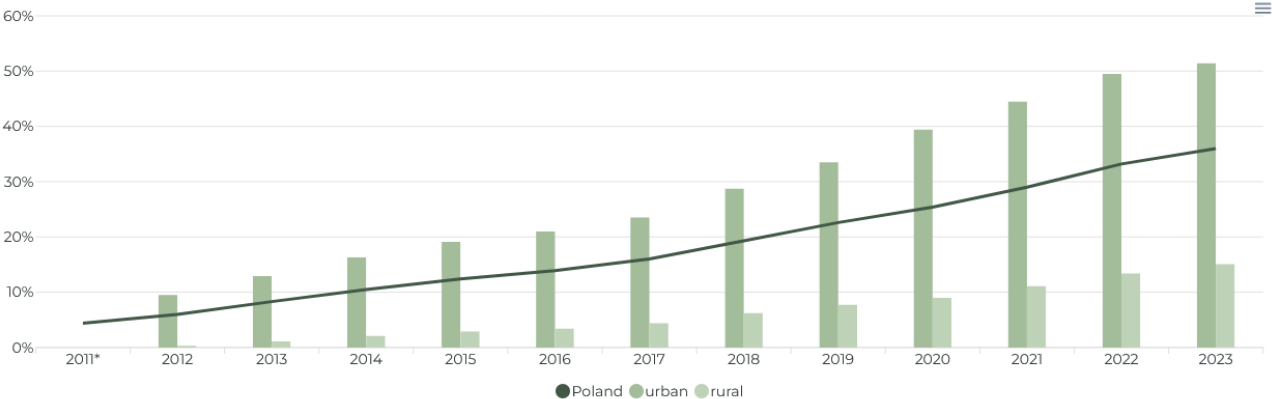
Specification	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
tuberculosis	93	94	94	93	92	94	93	92	91	91	91	92	90	90
measles	98	98	98	98	97	96	96	94	93	93	92	91	91	91
hepatitis B	98	98	97	96	96	96	95	93	91	90	90	89	90	90
polio	96	96	95	95	94	92	92	90	87	87	86	84	85	85
diphtheria, tetanus, whooping cough	99	99	99	99	98	98	98	96	95	95	94	94	94	94
Hib	99	99	99	99	98	98	98	96	95	95	94	94	94	94

Care for the youngest children

In Poland, increasingly more children under the age of 3 are provided with care by dedicated childcare institutions. The average number of hours that children spend per week in these institutions is also growing. The increasing number of facilities offering childcare services for the youngest encourages more women to return to work.

In Poland, parents of young children increasingly often decide to use available services provided by various childcare institutions. In 2023, 36% of children aged 1-2 were under the care of others than their closest family (compared to only 4% in 2011). A much higher percentage of toddlers from cities remain in the care of childcare institutions than in rural areas (over 50% and 15%, respectively in 2023). Fewer women decide not to return to work after having a child; their number per 10,000 women fell from 48 in 2010 to 31 in 2023. At the same time, the employment rate of women with the youngest child under 5 increased from 66% in 2010 to 74% in 2023.

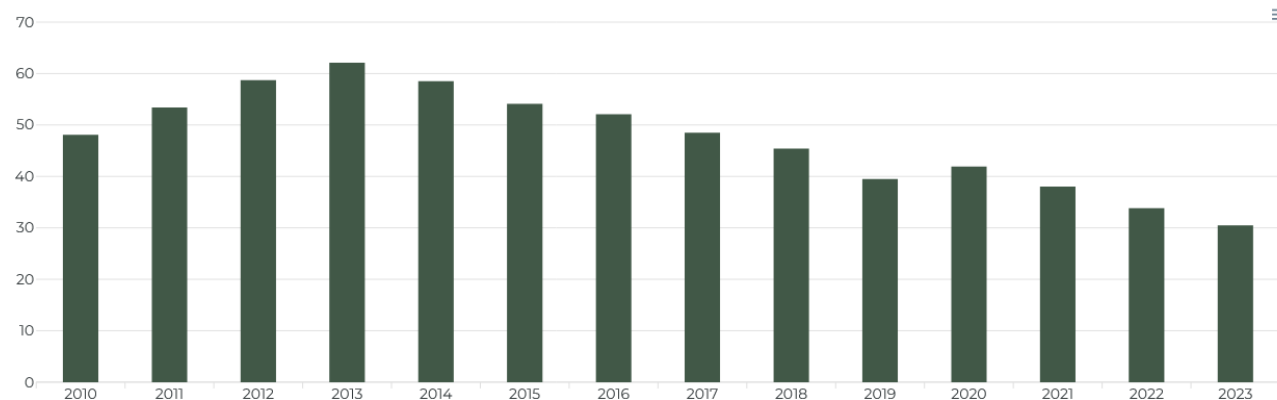
Percentage of children covered by different kinds of institutional care



* In 2011, there is no data available broken down by urban and rural areas

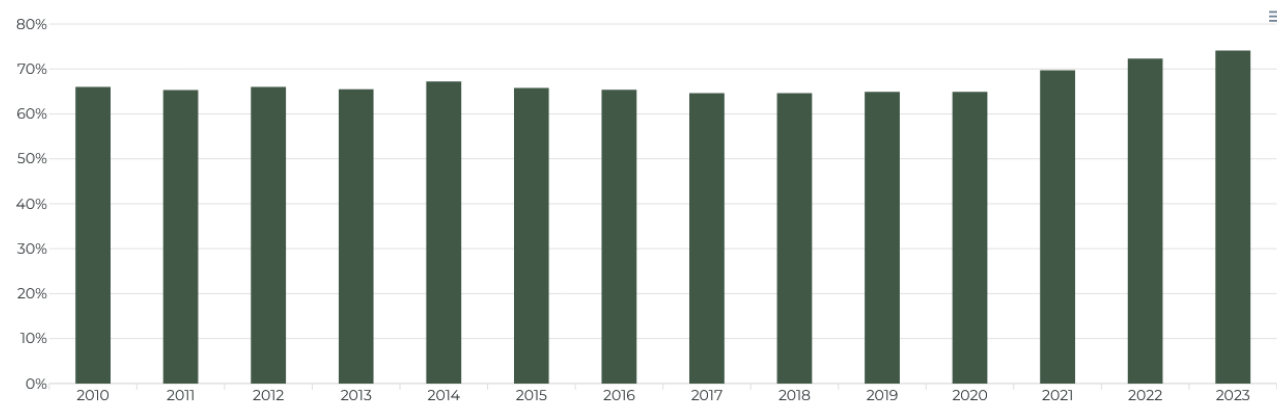
Specification	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Poland	4.4	6.0	8.3	10.5	12.4	13.9	16.0	19.3	22.6	25.4	29.0	33.2	36.0
urban	.	9.5	12.9	16.3	19.1	21.0	23.5	28.7	33.5	39.4	44.5	49.5	51.4
rural	.	0.3	1.1	2.1	2.9	3.4	4.4	6.2	7.7	9.0	11.1	13.4	15.1

Women who did not start work after childbirth per 10 thous. inhabitants



Specification	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
	48.1	53.4	58.7	62.1	58.5	54.1	52.1	48.5	45.4	39.5	41.9	38.0	33.8	30.5

Employment rate of women with the youngest child up to 5 years old (by LFS)

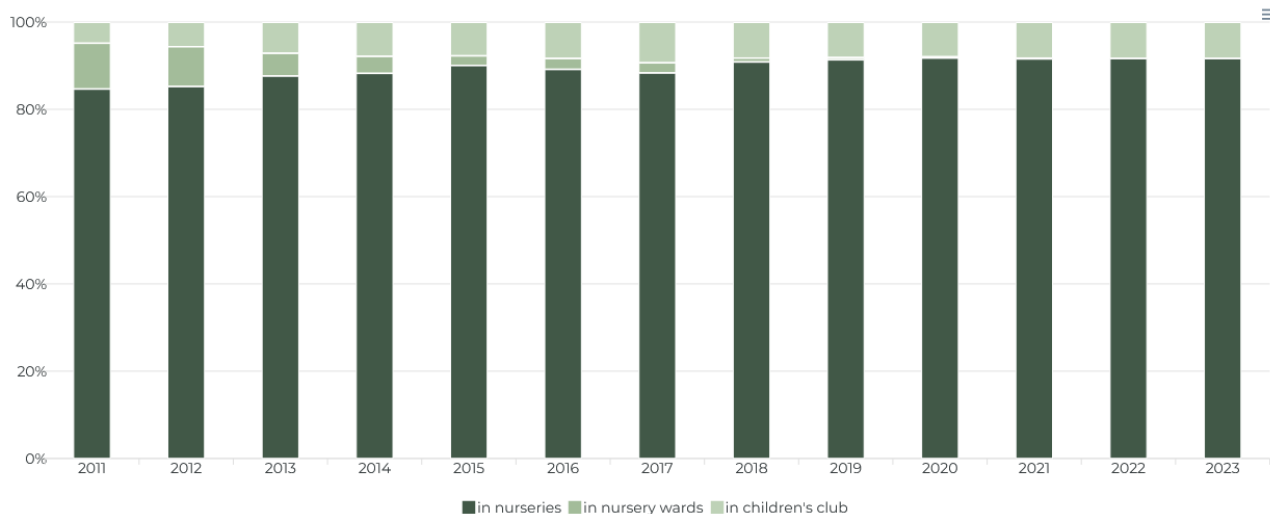


Specification	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
	66.0	65.3	66.0	65.5	67.2	65.8	65.4	64.6	64.6	64.9	64.9	69.7	72.3	74.1

Care for the youngest children in Poland is regulated by the Act on care for children under the age of 3 (of 4th February 2011), according to which care organised by institutions may take the form of nurseries, kids clubs, day carers and nannies. In the 2011-2023 period, the total number of institutions offering childcare services (nurseries, kids clubs, nursery wards) increased almost eightfold (from 700 in 2011 to 5,500 in 2023), and the number of the available places in these institutions increased more than fivefold (from 39,000 to 213,000). For every 100 places in these institutions, nurseries offer their largest number, i.e. an average of 90 places in the years 2011-2023. The remaining places are provided by

kids' clubs (an average of 8 per 100) and nursery wards¹ (an average of 2 places per 100).

Places in care facilities for children up to the age of 3



Specification	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
in nurseries	84.7	85.3	87.7	88.3	90.1	89.2	88.4	90.9	91.4	91.8	91.6	91.7	91.7
in nursery wards	10.5	9.1	5.2	3.9	2.2	2.5	2.3	0.9	0.5	0.3	0.2	.	.
in children's club	4.8	5.6	7.1	7.8	7.7	8.3	9.3	8.2	8.1	7.9	8.2	8.3	8.3

In addition to the care provided by nurseries, nursery wards and kids' clubs, parents can also use the services offered by day carers and nannies. A day carer's duties are defined by regulations, according to which he or she should have appropriate education, premises for safe care, and regularly update and develop his or her knowledge and skills. A day carer may care for up to five children (who may come from different families) who are at least 20 weeks old. In Poland, the profession of a day carer is becoming increasingly popular. In the years 2012-2022, their number grew from 30 to over 2,000. Thus, the number of children in their care also increased: from 80 children in 2012 to almost 10,000 in 2022. The institution of a nanny, the least formalised type of care for toddlers, is declining in popularity. The number of nannies reported to the Social Insurance Institution

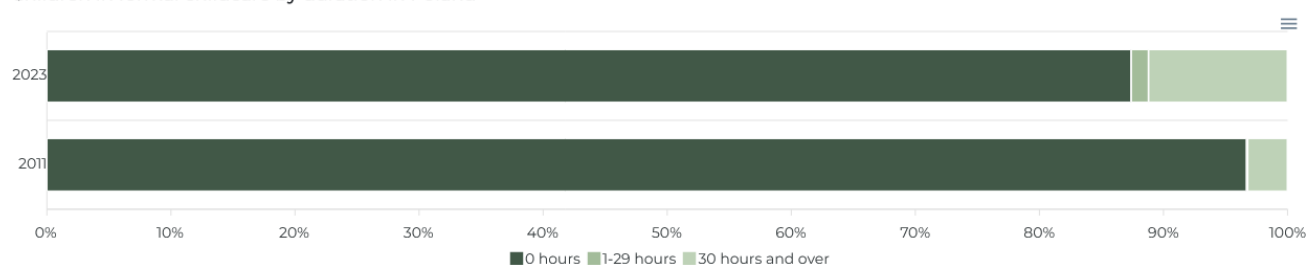
¹ Nursery wards (additional institutions established e.g. at workplaces or hospitals) are not included in the Act on care for children under the age of 3, but until 2022 they were one of the options that parents could consider. In 2022 nursery wards were no longer included in the Register of Nurseries, which collects data on institutions offering care to the youngest children.

plummeted by a half in the studied period, i.e. from 9,100 in 2012 to 4,700 in 2022.

Poland has one of the lowest percentages of children who spend more than 30 hours a week in childcare institutions in the EU (although the gap between Poland and the EU average narrowed in 2011-2023). In 2023, the percentage of children receiving formal care for more than 30 hours a week was twice as low in Poland as in the EU on average (11% in Poland and 23% in the EU), while in 2011, it was more than five times lower (3% and 16%, respectively). In the case of a shorter stay of a child in the care of formalised institutions, Poland was also among EU countries that have a very low percentage of children under such type of care (in 2023, 1% of children in Poland and 14% on average in the EU).

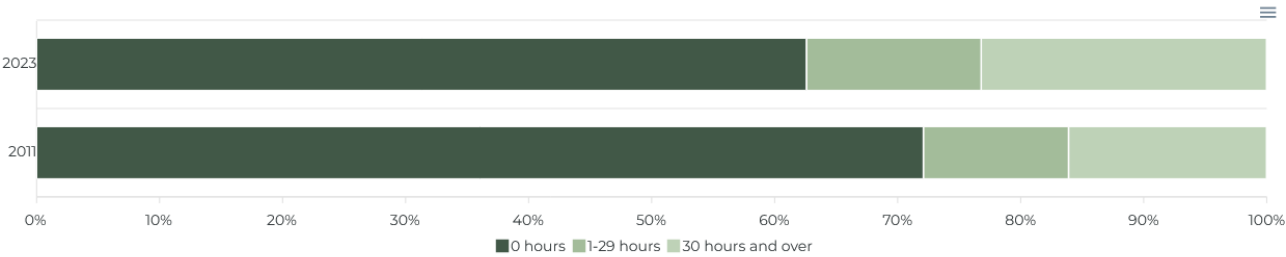
Small children whose parents decide to use childcare services offered by institutions spend increasingly longer hours per week there (although definitely a lower amount than in the EU on average). In 2023, a child in Poland spent nearly 4.5 hours per week in childcare institutions, compared to more than 11 hours in the EU. In Poland, non- formal childcare, i.e. provided by family members and neighbours, is still more popular than the care provided by relevant institutions. In 2023, children up to the age of 3 spent an average of 7 hours a week in non-formal care. Poland is thus in the top five EU countries where children spend the most time per week in this type of care. Poland exceeded the 2023 EU average of 3.5 hours in this regard.

Children in formal childcare by duration in Poland



Specification	2011	2023
0 hours	96.7	87.4
1-29 hours	0.1	1.4
30 hours and over	3.2	11.2

Children in formal childcare by duration in the EU



Specification	2011	2023
0 hours	72.1	62.6
1-29 hours	11.8	14.2
30 hours and over	16.1	23.2

Education and volunteering

The educational path of young Poles

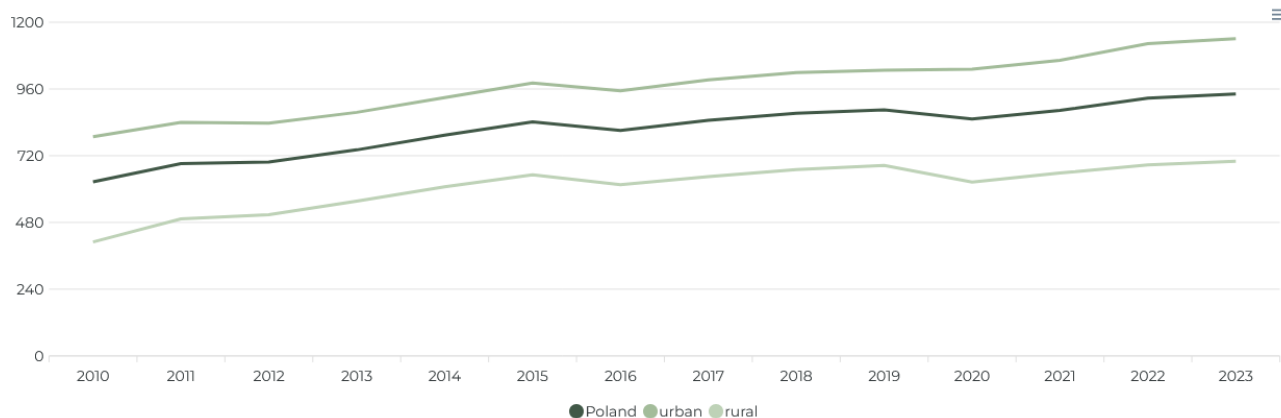
Increasing numbers of children go to preschool before they start obligatory education, and at the same time, fewer young adults give up education when it ceases to be compulsory. At all levels of education, the percentage of students with disabilities and special educational needs is on the rise.

In Poland, the right to education, understood as the right to study in organised forms, is guaranteed by the Constitution. Poland's highest law also stipulates one's duty to study until he or she reaches the age of 18. The start of obligatory education, on the other hand, is foreseen by the Education law, and set at the age of six. The educational system in Poland is divided into four phases: preschool, primary school, secondary school and tertiary education.

Before starting obligatory education, children can attend preschool institutions. This form of education² is becoming increasingly popular in Poland. In 2023, over 94% of children from the 3–5 age group used preschool education (almost twice as many as in 2010). At the same time, the amount of places in preschool institutions grew. The number of preschool institutions (in most part managed by public administration bodies) increased from 19,000 in 2010 to almost 23,000 in 2023. Thanks to this development, the number of children per one preschool institution decreased from 117 children in 2010 to 75 children in 2023. The percentage of children with disabilities among preschool attendees rose – in the 2023/2024 school year, such children constituted almost 4% of all children attending kindergartens and kindergarten departments, while at the beginning of the last decade, it was fewer than 1%.

² Preschool education is provided in kindergartens, pre-school departments in primary schools and in pre-school education complexes and pre-school points.

Children in nursery schools and other forms of pre-school education, per 1 thous. children aged 3-5 years

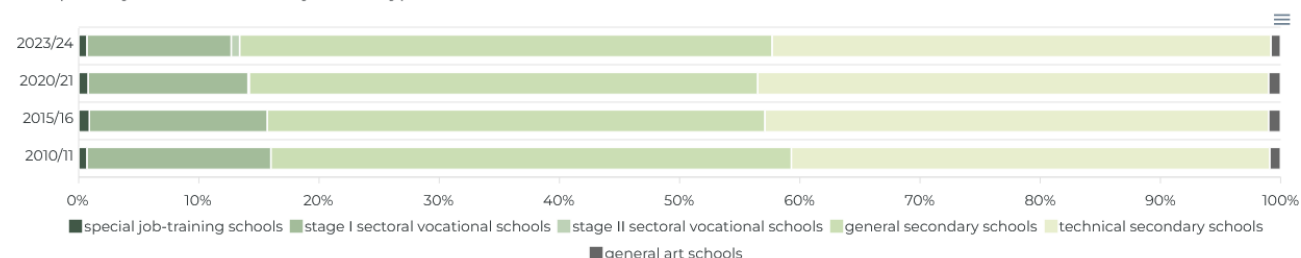


Specification	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Poland	626	692	697	741	794	842	811	847	873	885	852	883	927	942
urban	788	840	837	876	929	981	953	993	1019	1027	1031	1063	1123	1141
rural	410	493	508	557	608	651	616	645	670	685	625	658	687	700

The age from which education becomes compulsory and the duration of compulsory education are not uniform in all EU countries. In Poland, obligatory education starts at the age of six and lasts until the age of 18 (the Polish Constitution stipulates the duty to study until one is 18). Obligatory education is divided into an eight-year primary school, after leaving of which one has to continue education either in a four-year secondary school, five-year technical school or three-year 1st-degree vocational school and two-year 2nd-degree vocational school. According to the net enrolment rate (which measures the degree of the universality of studying), in 2023, 92% of all children from the 7–14 age group attended primary schools (compared to 96% in 2010). With regard to primary school, net enrolment rate below 100% does not mean that fewer children than supposed to fulfil their educational duty. This situation might be caused e.g. by the fact that some children registered in Poland study abroad, where they stay with their parents. In addition, in the years 2022–2023, underage refugees from Ukraine were not obliged to attend Polish schools; instead, they could continue learning in their schools in Ukraine in a remote mode. Attending Polish schools started being obligatory for them as of 1st September 2024. According to the Ministry of Education and Science’s framework curriculum for primary schools, 1st–3rd graders spent at school approximately 20 hours a week on average, whereas the 4th–8th graders’ average time at school fluctuated between 24 and 34 hours a week. Students learning in special needs primary schools and special needs

units constituted about 6% of all primary school students in the 2023/2024 school year (compared to about 4% in the 2017/2018 school year).

Post-primary school students by school type

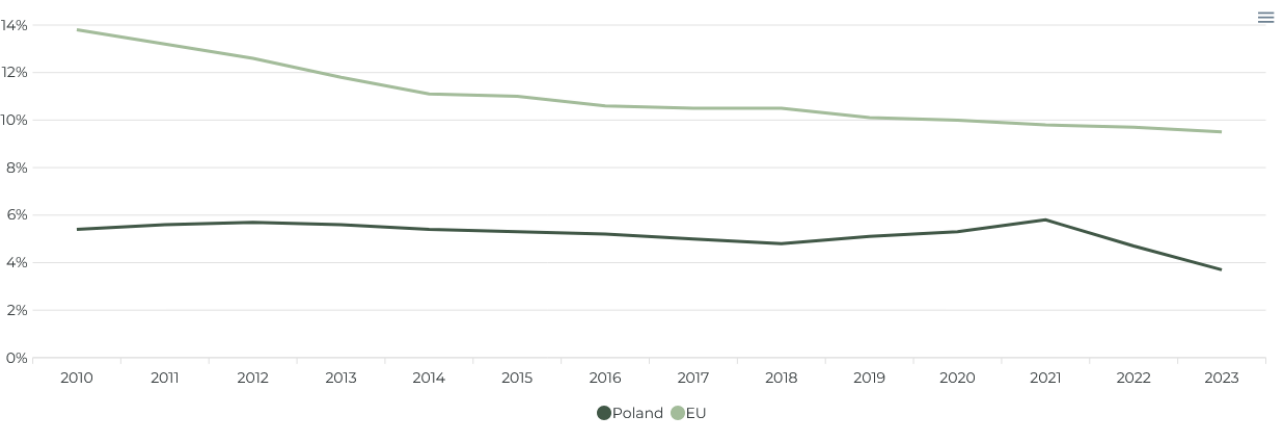


In the 2023/2024 school year, primary school leavers most often chose to continue their education in secondary schools (44% students) and technical schools (42%). Vocational schools of the 1st degree in the same period attracted 12% of students, while vocational schools of the 2nd degree, special needs vocational training schools and secondary art schools were the choice of 2% of students. The percentage of students in special needs schools and special needs units slightly increased – in the 2023/2024 school year, they constituted over 3% of all students in secondary education (compared to approximately 2% at the beginning of the last decade).

In 2023, about 4% of young people aged 18–24 did not continue education (slightly fewer than in 2010). This percentage was visibly lower than the EU average, where almost 10% of young people finished education early. Poland was the third EU country (behind only Croatia and Greece) with the lowest share of young people discontinuing education. Similarly to 2010, 42% young adults aged 19–24 went to university or college in 2023. Until 2018, the percentage of university or college students at this age was systematically falling, but in subsequent years, it started growing thanks to, among other factors, the inflow of foreign students. However, due to demographic changes, the number of students in Polish universities or colleges shrank by one third in the period of 2010–2023. In the

2023/2024 academic year, tertiary students with confirmed disabilities constituted approximately 2% of all tertiary students (a similar percentage to that from the 2010/2011 academic year).

Early leavers from education and training aged 18-24



Specification	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Poland	5.4	5.6	5.7	5.6	5.4	5.3	5.2	5.0	4.8	5.1	5.3	5.8	4.7	3.7
EU	13.8	13.2	12.6	11.8	11.1	11.0	10.6	10.5	10.5	10.1	10.0	9.8	9.7	9.5

Young people of school age in the digital world

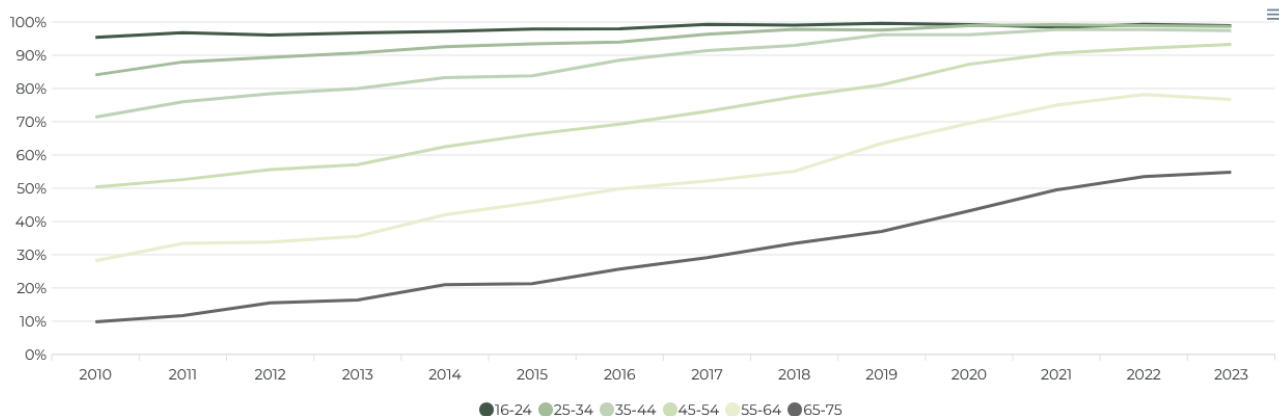
In Poland, as in the EU on average, young people of school age use the Internet more often than people from other age groups. Young Poles use the Internet most often for chatting and instant messaging. Polish youth's competence in Internet safety is lower than that of their EU counterparts, on average.

According to the results of the 'Nastolatki 3.0 NASK' (Eng. Teens 3.0) report conducted in 2022, young people aged 7-19 spent an average of about 5h and 36 min per day online on the weekdays. According to NASK, in 2022, teens declared using the Internet most often through mobile phones and smartphones (89% of responses), laptops (44%), desktop computers and TVs (about 25% each).

Telephone or video chats and using instant messaging (through Skype, Messenger, WhatsApp, Viber, etc.) were the most popular online activities of young people of school age in Poland (similar to the EU average). In 2023, almost 98% of those aged 16-24 were engaged in in this sort of online activity in Poland, compared to 95% in the EU. Other popular online activities included using social networking platforms (most often Messenger, TikTok and YouTube) and sending and receiving e-mails.

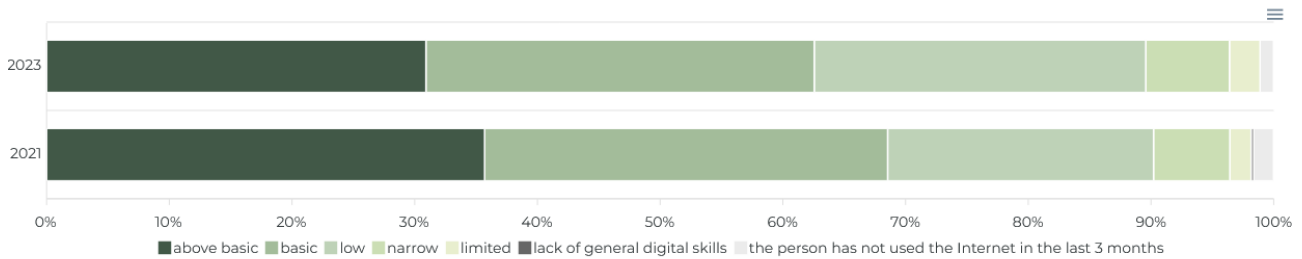
The widening of banks' range of products and services addressed to the youngest users resulted in the growth of online banking among young people (from 26% in 2010 to 55% in 2023). However, young Poles used online banking less often than their EU counterparts (61% in 2023).

Percentage of persons who used internet within the last 3 months by age groups



As the Internet has become increasingly widely used, digital skills of young Poles have been improving. The first edition of the research into digital skills (which started in 2015) showed that it was the youngest people who most often had basic and more advanced digital skills. In 2021, the range of skills examined in the framework of the research was updated, which made comparing them with previous years impossible. In the second edition of the research, young people again demonstrated overall digital skills at a basic and advanced level (63% in 2023), but fewer of them than in 2021 (69%). At the same time, the share of young people who had poor, narrow or limited digital competences grew (from 30% in 2021 to 36% in 2023).

Percentage of persons aged 16-24 with digital skills*



* During 3 months preceding the survey.

Specification	2021	2023
above basic	35.71	30.92
basic	32.84	31.64
low	21.67	27.02
narrow	6.22	6.82
limited	1.73	2.49
lack of general digital skills	0.22	0.00
the person has not used the Internet in the last 3 months	1.61	1.10

The research into digital skills examines five areas of competence: the ability to use data and information, communication and cooperation skills, creation of digital content, online security and solving problems. Young Poles demonstrated basic or advanced skills in the majority of these categories. In 2021 and 2023 over 90% of people aged 16-24 (so more than on average in the EU) proved skilled at a basic or advanced level in the fields of: communication and cooperation, solving problems, creating digital content and using data and information. However, young Poles are less skilled when it comes to online security compared to their EU counterparts, and this trend is intensifying. In 2023, a smaller percentage of young people at school age than in 2021 could boast basic or advanced online security skills (a fall from 72% to 66% in the 16-24 age group).

School results and skills

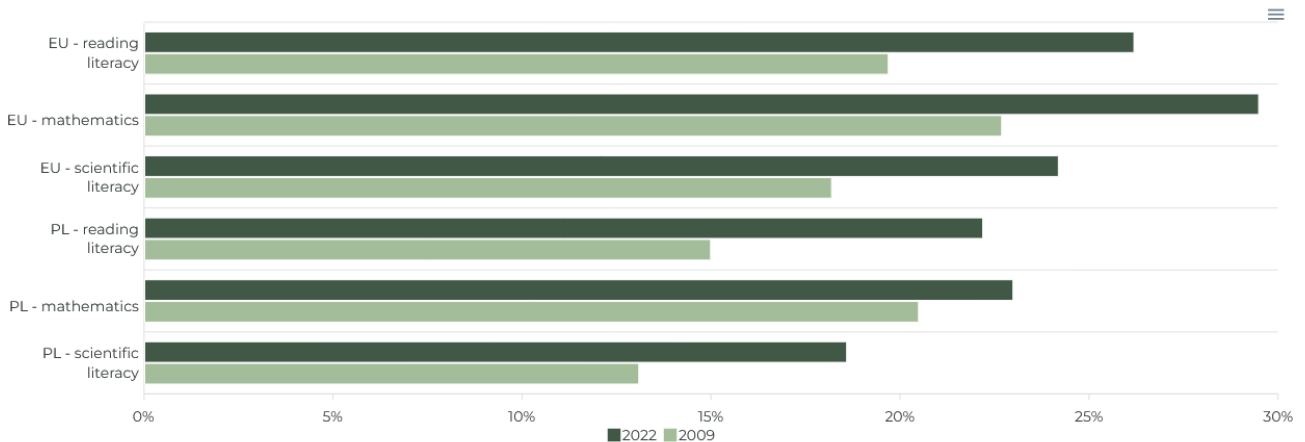
In 2022, the results of skills tests of students in Poland were one of the lowest in the whole history of conducting PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment), but they were still higher than the OECD average (also one of the lowest in the entire history of PISA). The average results of primary school final exams in Poland improved compared to when the exam was first introduced, while the pass rate of secondary school leaving exams varied throughout the years.

PISA study³ measures students' competences in three areas: reading, mathematics and scientific literacy. The average results Polish students obtained in PISA 2022 deteriorated in all these three areas compared to the results from a decade earlier, and were one of the lowest in the whole history of PISA. Poland's poor results were no exception – the average results for all OECD countries fell. In 2022, Polish students obtained better results compared to OECD students than a decade earlier, but lower than in 2018. As regards the EU, Polish students were fourth best in reading and mathematics, and fifth best in science.

In all the areas tested in the framework of PISA, the percentage of students with the poorest achievement rates, which indicate only very basic skills and an increased risk of problems in further education and adult life, grew. As regards maths, 23% of Polish students obtained the lowest achievement rates (compared to 21% in 2009), in reading and understanding it was 22% (compared to 15% in 2009), and in life sciences 19% (compared to 13% in 2009). According to the Educational Research Institute, these relatively poor results could have been the consequence of several factors, including the COVID-19 pandemic and the ensuing remote learning, as well as the educational reform.

³ The study is carried out by OECD every three years starting in 2000. The 2022 edition was exceptionally moved by one year due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Percentage of students with the lowest achievement levels (below level 2) according to the PISA study

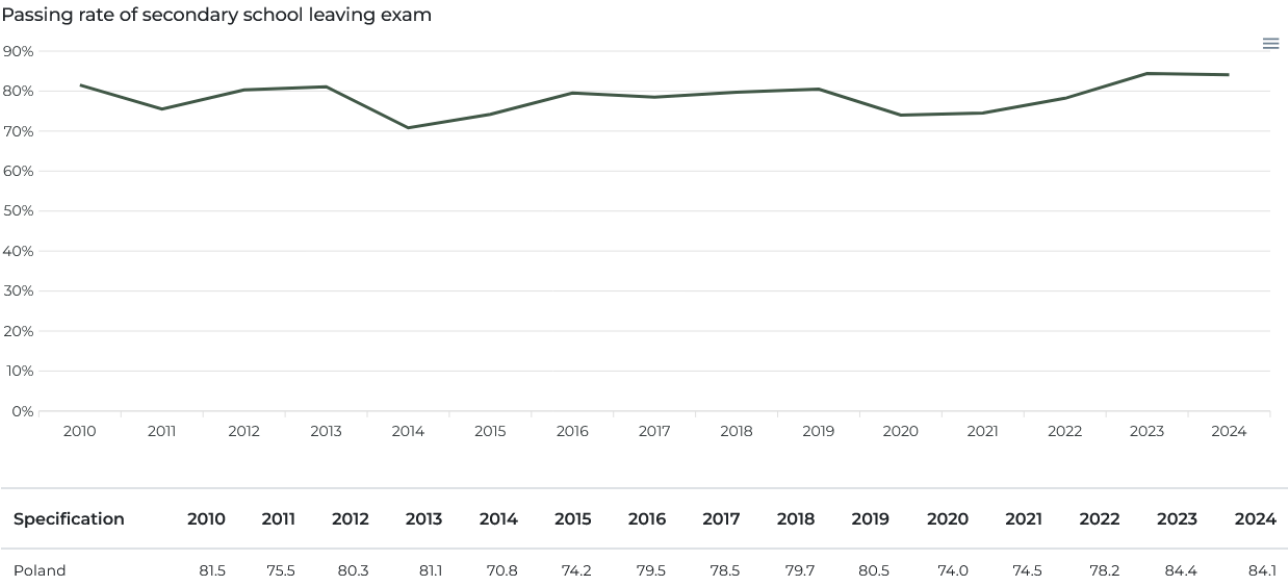


Specification	2009	2022
EU - reading literacy	19.7	26.2
EU - mathematics	22.7	29.5
EU - scientific literacy	18.2	24.2
PL - reading literacy	15.0	22.2
PL - mathematics	20.5	23.0
PL - scientific literacy	13.1	18.6

Within the past several years, the formats of important national exams changed as a result of factors such as the implementation of educational reforms (e.g. discontinuing lower secondary schools, 'gymnasias'). Since 2019, students graduating from primary schools have had to take obligatory final exams in three subjects: Polish, maths and a foreign modern language. English was Polish students' most frequent choice as a foreign modern language in the primary school final exams – in 2024, it was selected by almost 98% of eight-graders (compared to 95% in 2019). German was chosen by about 2% of students, whereas other foreign languages (Russian, Spanish, French or Italian) was picked by less than 1%. The average results in primary school final exams have improved since their introduction (apart from the results in Polish and Italian). In 2024, Polish students obtained 66% of all possible points in English, 61% in Polish and 53% in maths.

As regards secondary school leaving exams, the pass rate varied throughout the past decade, which was caused, among other things, by changes in the rules of these exams. 2023 was the first year when students who graduated from an eight-grade primary school (re-introduced in the 2017 schooling system reform) took secondary school leaving exams. The pass rate was the same in 2023 and 2024, i.e. 84%, which was the best result

since 2010 (when it was 82%). Likewise in primary school final exams, the most frequently chosen language at secondary school leaving exams was English. This language was also the additional subject most often chosen by students at an expanded level. In the exams at a basic level, Polish students obtained the best results in English and other foreign languages (except for German), and the poorest in German, Polish and maths.

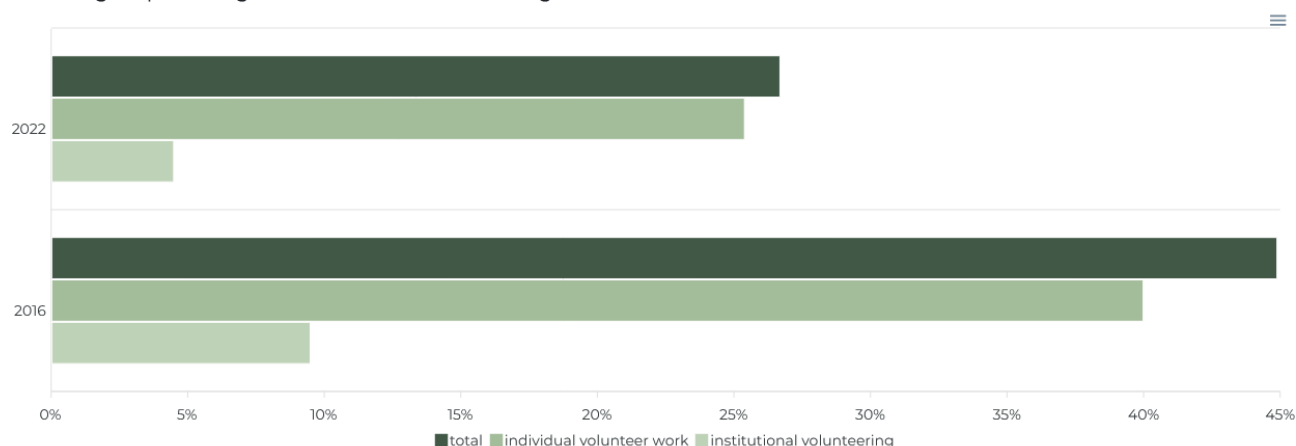


Volunteering involvement

Like most of the Polish population, young people are more likely to participate in individual rather than institutional or organisational voluntary work. In 2022, the involvement of young people in voluntary service was lower than in 2016.

Volunteering is an activity undertaken willingly and without financial gain; it aims to benefit individuals or a group of people from outside the household (and excluding the volunteer's family). Volunteering can also be performed for the benefit of society, the environment, a specific city, town or village, or community. The percentage of young people (aged 15-24) declaring involvement in voluntary services decreased from 45% in 2016 to 27% in 2022. In 2016, the share of young people engaged in voluntary work was higher than the average in the 15-89 age group, while in 2022, the percentage of the youngest volunteers was slightly lower than that of the total volunteers in Poland.

Percentage of persons aged 15-24 involved in volunteering



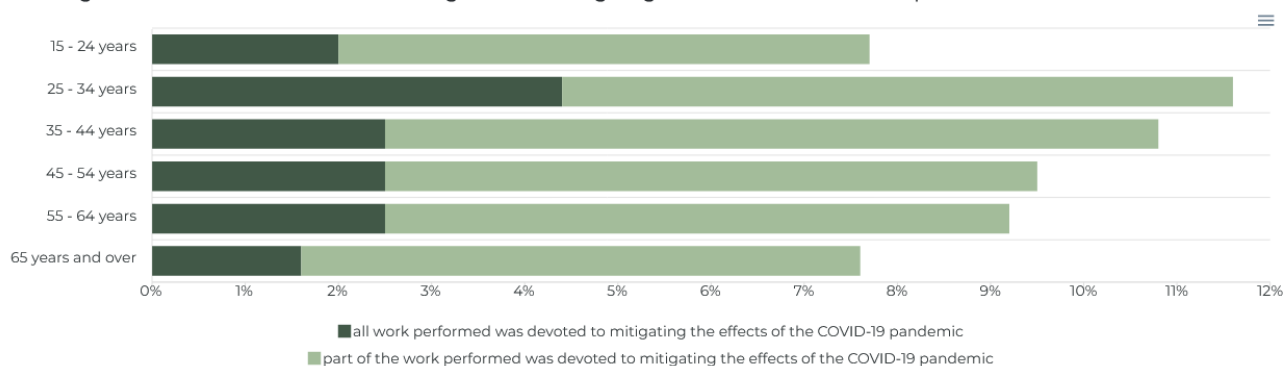
Specification	2016	2022
total	44.9	26.7
individual volunteer work	40.0	25.4
institutional volunteering	9.5	4.5

Volunteering may be either individual or institutional. Individual volunteering includes helping friends, acquaintances and neighbours, assisting strangers, and acting for the benefit of society, the environment or a particular city, town or village. Young Poles, as people from other age groups, are more likely to select this form of voluntary work.

Nevertheless, young people's involvement in the above-mentioned type of voluntary work has significantly declined, from 40% in 2016 to 25% in 2022. Institutional volunteering, on the other hand, is unpaid work performed as a member of an organization or as a person supporting the operation of an organization, association, foundation, public institution, church or other organizational unit. The involvement of young Poles in this form of volunteering within an organization or institution decreased from 10% in 2016 to 5% in 2022.

As a result of the outburst of the COVID-19 pandemic, a new type of voluntary service, aimed at mitigating the effects of the pandemic, was introduced in the 2022 study. Almost 8% of volunteers aged 15-24 declared involvement in this type of voluntary service. This was one of the lowest percentages among all the age groups. Young volunteers (similarly to those from other age groups) declared more often that their help was partially aimed at mitigating the effects of the pandemic, and less often that they helped others exclusively in their illness or limitations caused by the pandemic.

Percentage of volunteers involved in volunteering related to mitigating the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2022



* During 4 weeks preceding the survey.

Specification	all work performed was devoted to mitigating the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic	part of the work performed was devoted to mitigating the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic
15 - 24 years	2.0	5.7
25 - 34 years	4.4	7.2
35 - 44 years	2.5	8.3
45 - 54 years	2.5	7.0
55 - 64 years	2.5	6.7
65 years and over	1.6	6.0

Health and lifestyle

Maintaining a proper body weight

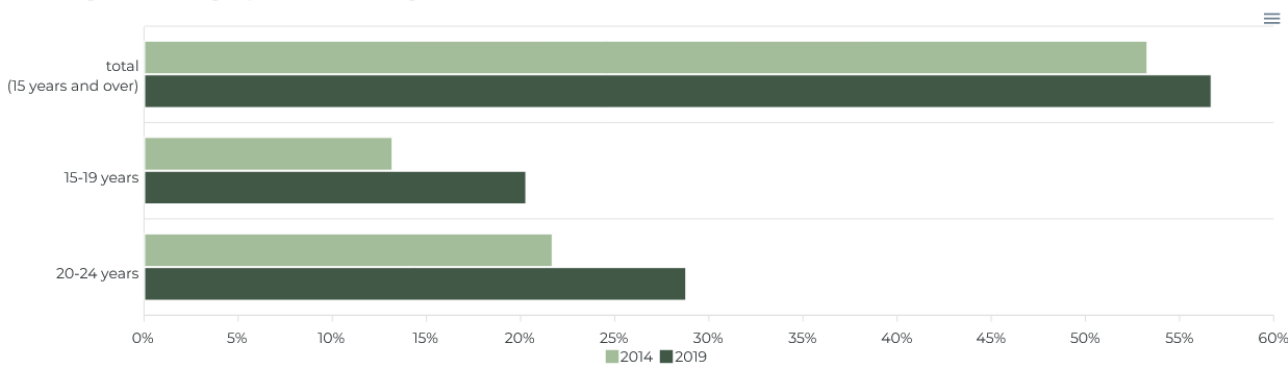
Excess body weight (overweight or obesity) among adolescents is less common than in other age groups, but the percentage of adolescents facing this health problem is growing faster than in the case of adults. On the other hand, the younger people are, the more likely they are to be underweight, and it tends to affect young women more often than young men.

Maintaining a proper body weight has a positive influence on health. Excessive weight or underweight occurring at a young age can result in serious health issues in adulthood. In Poland, excessive body weight among adolescents (in the form of overweight or obesity) is less common than in other age groups. However, surveys conducted in 2014 and 2019⁴ show that the percentage of young people struggling with overweight increased at a much faster rate (from 13% to 20% in the 15-19 age group and from 22% to 29% in the 20-24 age group) than in other age groups. Obesity is also much less common among adolescents than in any other age groups; nevertheless, the percentage of young people suffering from obesity has increased the most in the last decade. Overweight is more common among boys and young men, while obesity is more often an issue among girls and young women.

The trends relating to underweight are different. Underweight is most common among younger people. In 2019, the percentage of adolescents (aged 15-19) struggling with underweight was nearly 10% (almost 15% in 2014). Among those aged 20-24, the problem increased from almost 7% to over 8% throughout the 2014-2019 period. Underweight is more common among girls and young women than boys and young men.

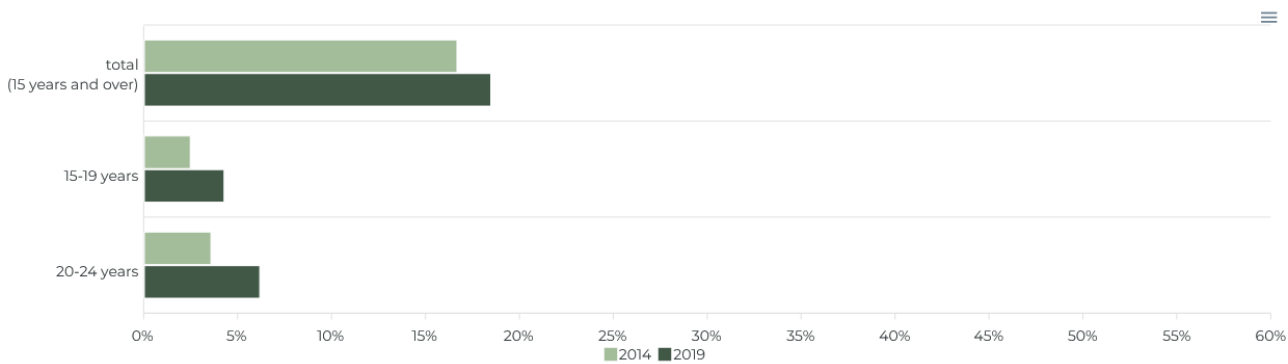
⁴ The European Health Interview Survey (EHIS) is conducted every 6 years. Its next edition will be carried out in 2025, and the results are to be published in June 2027 in a variety of publications, including 'Health status of population in Poland in 2025'.

Percentage of overweight persons according to BMI



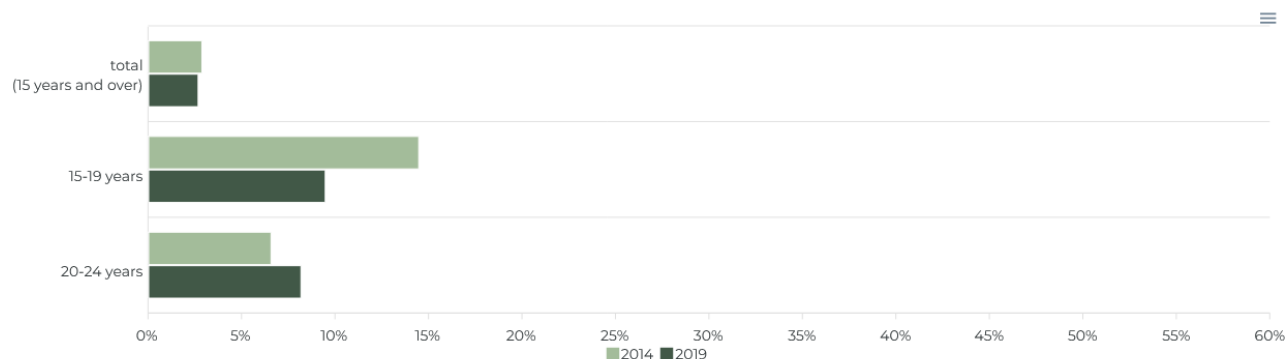
Specification	2014	2019
total (15 years and over)	53.3	56.7
15-19 years	13.2	20.3
20-24 years	21.7	28.8

Percentage of obese persons according to BMI



Specification	2014	2019
total (15 years and over)	16.7	18.5
15-19 years	2.5	4.3
20-24 years	3.6	6.2

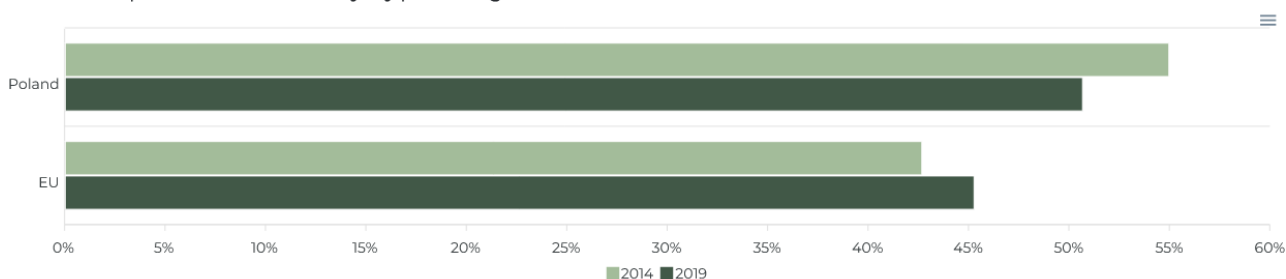
Percentage of underweight persons according to BMI



Specification	2014	2019
total (15 years and over)	2.9	2.7
15-19 years	14.5	9.5
20-24 years	6.6	8.2

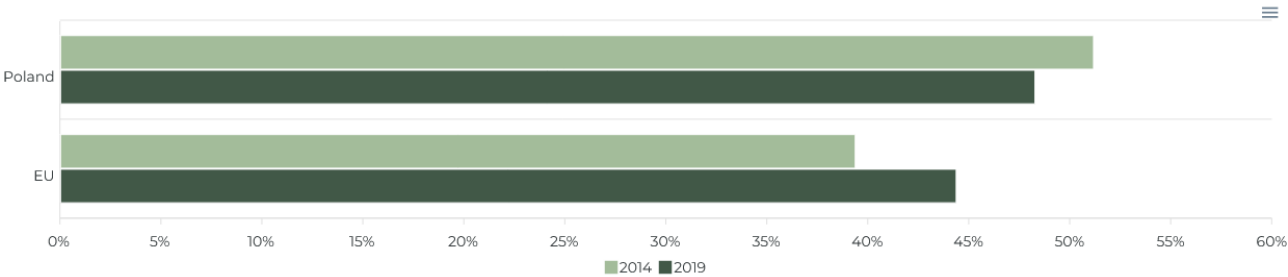
One of the reasons behind young people's problems with maintaining a proper body weight is their increasingly poor eating habits (e.g. declining fruit and vegetable consumption). The results of the EHIS survey show that in Poland, the percentage of young people (aged 15-24) eating fruit at least once a day decreased from 55% to 51% between 2014 and 2019, and those eating vegetables from 51% to 48%. The situation is different in the EU, where the average consumption of fruit and vegetables (at least once a day) by young people increased from 43% to 45% and from 39% to 44%, respectively. Despite the unfavourable trends concerning young Poles, on average they eat fruit and vegetables more readily than their European counterparts. Poland ranks 5th among EU countries with the highest percentage of young people consuming fruit at least once a day, and 7th in terms of vegetable consumption. Girls tend to eat more fruit and vegetables than boys, and this gap was larger in 2019 than in 2014.

Fruit consumption "at least once a day" by persons aged 15-24



Specification	2014	2019
Poland	55.0	50.7
EU	42.7	45.3

Vegetables consumption "at least once a day" by persons aged 15-24



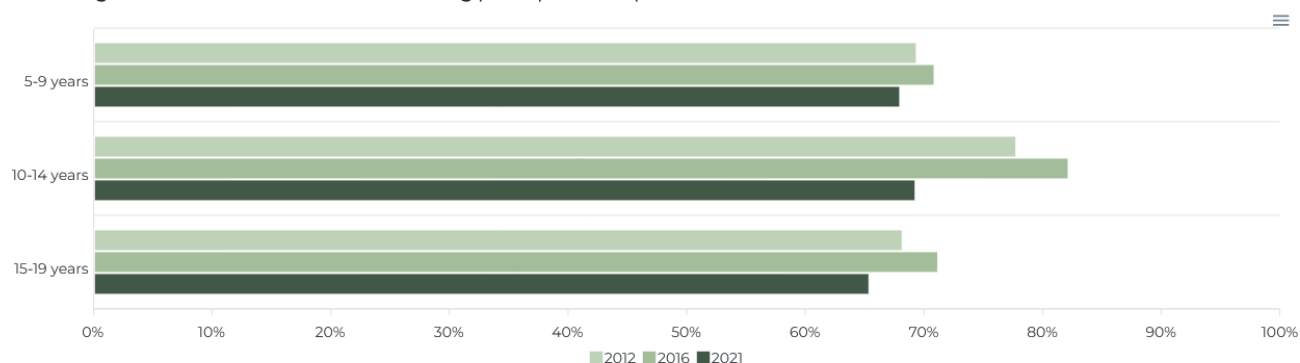
Specification	2014	2019
Poland	51.2	48.3
EU	39.4	44.4

Physical activity and leisure activities

The most common motivation for children and adolescents to engage in physical activity is pleasure and entertainment. Their physical activity in 2021 was slightly lower than before the outbreak of the pandemic. The 2023 time use survey showed that young people spent most of their time on performing duties, including studying, and the time they spent on leisure decreased compared to the previous survey (from 2013).

Physical activity plays an important role in every person's life, regardless of age. In the case of the youngest, movement is one of the factors that determines proper development and reduces the risk of many diseases occurring in adulthood. In Poland, children in the 10-14 age group most often participate in sports activities and physical recreation (as part of extracurricular/non-compulsory activities). In 2021, almost 70% of children this age indicated that they participated in this type of activity (occasionally, regularly/frequently) during the year. Participation in physical activities among children aged 5-9 was at a similar level (68%), while 65% of adolescents aged 15-19 participated in sports or physical recreation. In the years preceding the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, children were more physically active than in 2021.

Percentage of children and adolescents declaring participation in sport and recreational activities



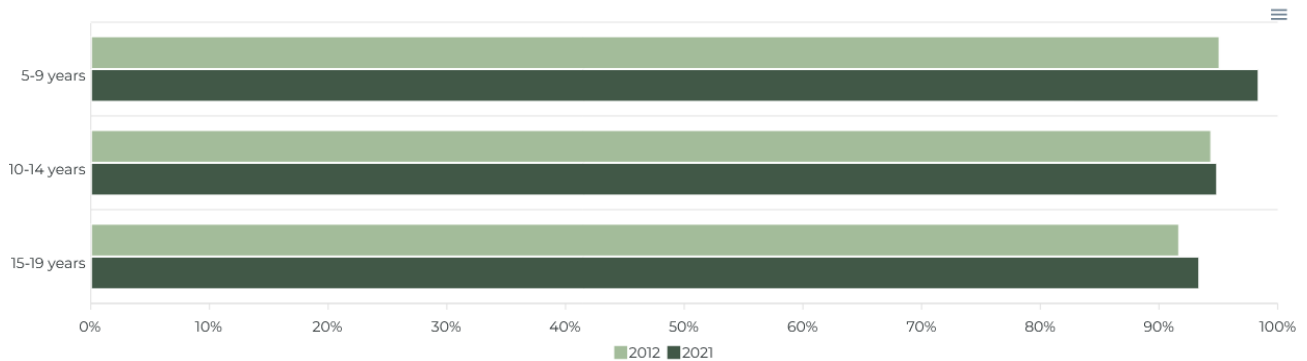
Specification	2012	2016	2021
5-9 years	69.4	70.9	68.0
10-14 years	77.8	82.2	69.3
15-19 years	68.2	71.2	65.4

The motives for engaging in sports and physical recreation have not changed significantly in the past several years. Regardless of age, pleasure and entertainment are the most common reasons for doing sports and physical recreation. Such motivation was declared by 82% of children aged 5-9, 77% of those aged 10-14 and 69% of adolescents aged 15-19. Other common motives for practicing sports among the youngest include the desire to stay healthy and in shape, and to meet with friends. On the other hand, the main reasons for children and young people to avoid sports and physical recreation (regardless of age) are invariably: lack of interest, willingness or preference for passive leisure activities, and the lack of activity provider or suitable facilities close to place of residence. In 2021, the lack of interest, willingness or preference for passive leisure activities was indicated by 23% of children aged 5-9, 30% of children aged 10-14 and 39% of children aged 15-19, while the lack of activity provider or suitable facilities close to place of residence was indicated by 26%, 14% and 17% of the respondents, respectively.

The number of children and young people becoming members of sports clubs in the junior section is on the rise. Between 2010 and 2022, this number nearly tripled (from 302,000 to 841,000), and the share of juniors in the total of sports club members increased from 59% to 69%. In the years 2010-2022, the disciplines with the largest share of juniors in the total number of sports club members changed. In 2022, the largest share of juniors was in such sports as football, golf, rugby and equestrian, while in 2010 it was figure skating, acrobatics and the biathlon. The sports preferences of boys and girls also changed during this period. Although football is still very popular among boys, their participation in this sport has slightly decreased. At the same time, boys tend to be visibly more interested in karate, swimming and volleyball. Girls still prefer volleyball, but their interest in swimming, football and karate has grown.

Physical fitness ratings of the youngest groups of people have increased. In 2021, between 93% and 98% of children and adolescents rated their physical fitness as very good or good, compared to 92%-95% in 2012.

Percentage of children and adolescents who assess their physical fitness as good or very good



Specification	2012	2021
5-9 years	95.1	98.4
10-14 years	94.4	94.9
15-19 years	91.7	93.4

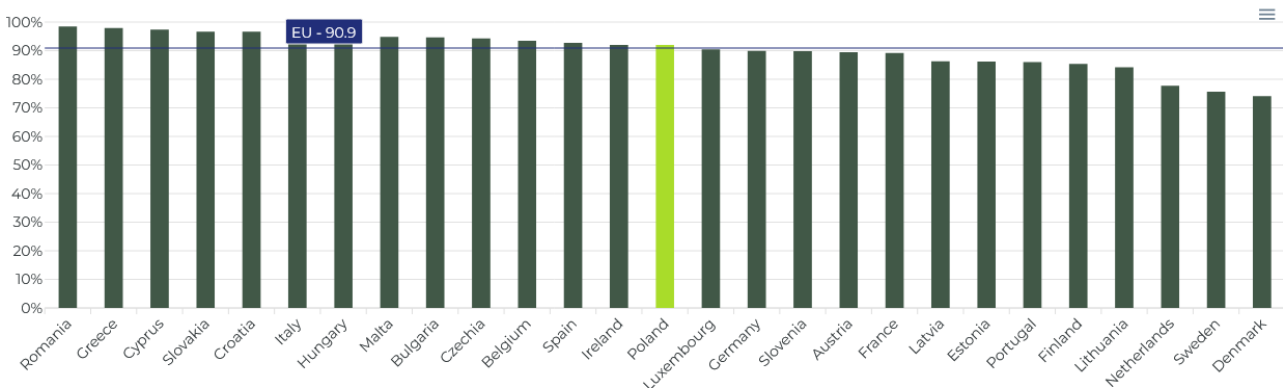
The results of the 2023 daily time use survey show that the time spent by young Poles (i.e. the 10-14, 15-19 and 20-24 age groups) on performing various daily activities did not change significantly in relation to the results of the survey conducted a decade before. They spent about half a day (11-12 hours) on satisfying their personal care (i.e. sleeping, eating, getting dressed, personal hygiene, doctor's appointments and using hair and beauty services). What changed, however, was the time shared between duties and leisure. Children and adolescents allocated a greater share of time to duties; compared to 2013, this increase ranged from 19 minutes (among adolescents aged 15-19) to 34 minutes (among children aged 10-14). Children and adolescents' duties consisted mainly of studying, on which they spent more time in 2023 than a decade earlier. The time spent by them on leisure shortened, to the largest extent among children aged 10-14 (by 43 minutes), and to the smallest among young people aged 20-24 (by 20 minutes). As regards leisure, children and adolescents (10-14- and 15-19-year olds) spent most of their free time in 2023 on hobbies, using the computer, Internet and mass media, devoting on average just over 1.5 hours a day to each of these activities. Young people aged 20-24 spent most time on using mass media (over 1.5 hours a day) and on social life, entertainment and culture (almost 1.5 hours a day). In 2023, children (aged 10-14) spent more time participating in sports and recreation (42 minutes) than adolescents aged 15-19 (36 minutes) and 20-24-year-olds (25 minutes), which did not change significantly compared to 2013.

Health self-assessment

In Poland (as in EU countries on average), most young people assess their health as very good or good. Such ratings are more often indicated by young men than young women, and the gap between the two has widened over the recent years.

In the years 2010-2023, the percentage of young Poles (in the 16-24 age group) rating their health as very good or good fluctuated between 91% and 94% (while the EU average was between 91% and 93%). The percentage of young people declaring their health as fair (neither good nor bad) increased from 5% in 2010 to 6% in 2023, and the percentage of individuals assessing their health as bad remained at the same level (about 2%).

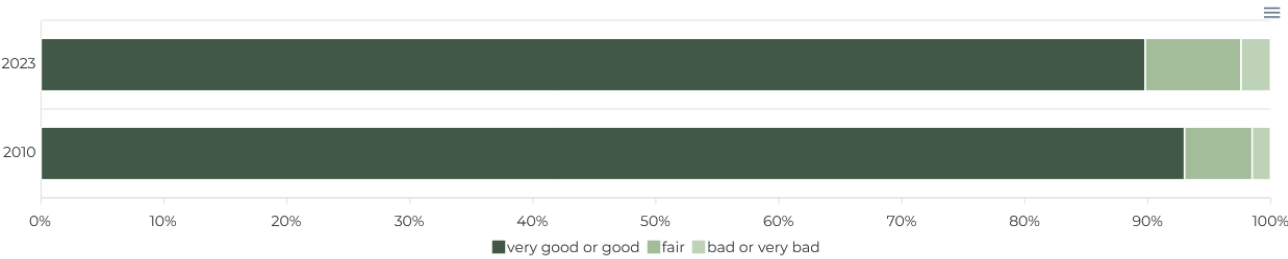
Percentage of persons (aged 16-24) assessing their health as very good or good in EU countries in 2023



Specification	2023
EU	90.9
Romania	98.5
Greece	97.9
Cyprus	97.4
Slovakia	96.6
Croatia	96.6
Italy	96.0
Hungary	95.6
Malta	94.8
Bulgaria	94.6
Czechia	94.3
Belgium	93.5
Spain	92.7
Ireland	92.0
Poland	92.0
Luxembourg	90.5
Germany	89.9
Slovenia	89.8
Austria	89.5
France	89.2
Latvia	86.3
Estonia	86.2
Portugal	86.0
Finland	85.4
Lithuania	84.2
Netherlands	77.7
Sweden	75.6
Denmark	74.1

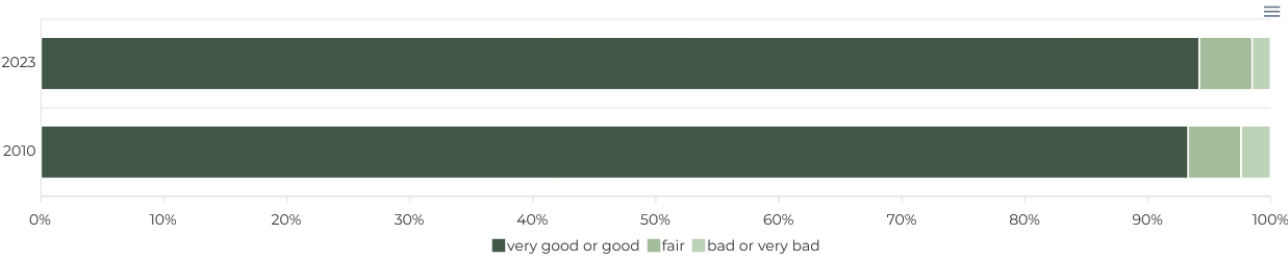
As in the EU on average, the health self-assessment of young women is noticeably different from this of young men. The latter assessed their health as very good and good more often than young women. This difference was widening in the subsequent years and in 2023, 90% of young women and 94% of young men rated their health as very good or good (in 2010, this percentage was 93% for both groups). In 2023, 8% of young women and 4% of young men rated their health as fair, and about 2% each as bad or very bad.

Subjective assessment of the health status of young women (aged 16-24)



Specification	2010	2023
very good or good	93.0	89.8
fair	5.5	7.8
bad or very bad	1.5	2.4

Subjective assessment of the health status of young men (aged 16-24)



Specification	2010	2023
very good or good	93.3	94.2
fair	4.3	4.3
bad or very bad	2.4	1.5

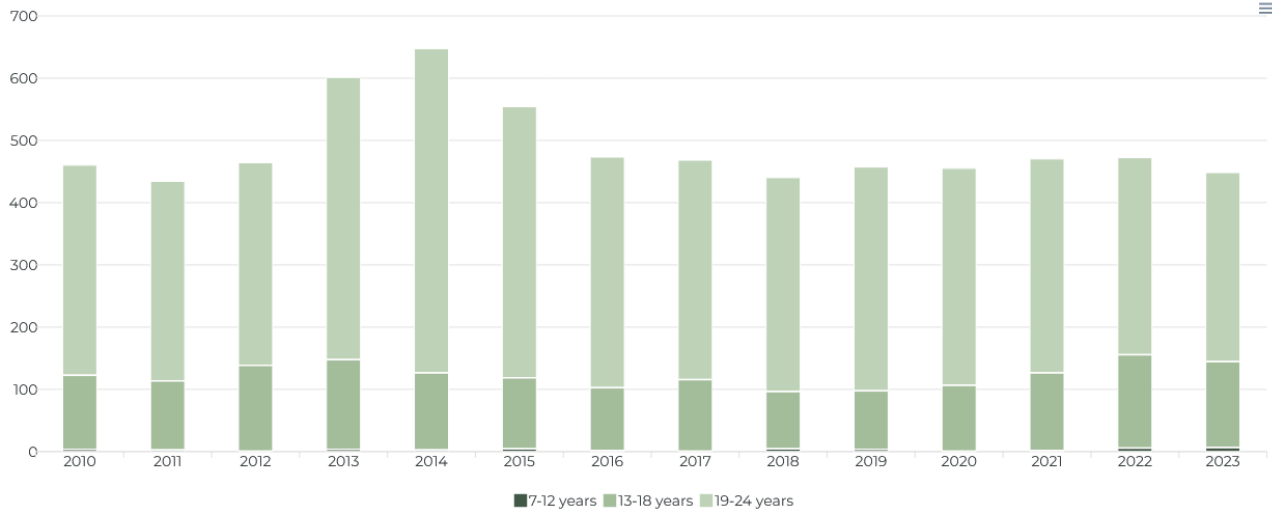
Health and life threats

Accidents and suicide are the most common causes of death among young people in Poland. The number of suicide attempts among children and adolescents is rising, and the share of young people in the total number of suicides nearly doubled in the years 2010-2023. Increasingly fewer suicide attempts end in death.

Among the growing number of suicides in Poland, a clear intensification of this phenomenon is observed in the group of young people. The total number of both completed and non-fatal suicide increased nearly threefold in 2010-2023 (from 5,500 to 15,100), and almost fivefold (from 800 to 3,900) among people under the age of 24. The share of young people among those who attempt to take their lives is growing. Out of the total number of completed and non-fatal suicide in 2023, one in four involved a person under the age of 24 (26%); in 2010, it was one in seven (15%). In 2023, compared to 2010, the number of suicide attempts increased among the youngest children (aged 7-12) from 2 to 78, among children aged 13-18 from 148 to 1,916, and among adolescents aged 19-24 from 217 to 1,432.

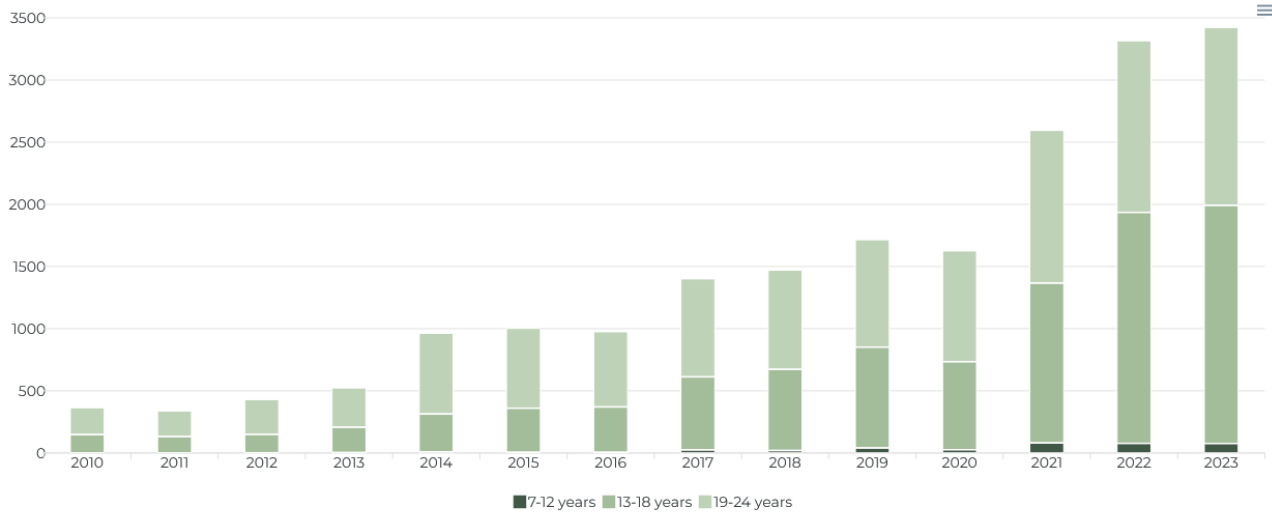
The share of completed suicide is declining: in 2023, among people below the age of 24, 12 out of a 100 suicide attempts ended in death, while in 2010, it was 56. The largest number of completed suicide is observed among young people aged 19-24, although the share of this group in the total number of children and adolescents under 24 who die by suicide decreased (from 73% in 2010 to 68% in 2023). However, the share of children aged 13-18 in completed suicide increased (from 26% to 31%), as did the share of even younger children, aged 7-12 (from 1% to 2%). The situation is similar for non-fatal suicide. For many years, young people in the 19-24 age group were most prone to attempt suicide, but the trend changed and from 2021, children in the 13-18 age group have the largest share in non-fatal suicide (56% in 2023 compared to 40% in 2010). As regards children aged 7-12, this percentage increased from 1% to 2%.

Number of deaths due to suicide (by age groups)



Specification	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
7-12 years	4	3	1	4	3	5	2	1	5	4	1	2	6	7
13-18 years	119	111	138	144	124	114	101	115	92	94	106	125	150	138
19-24 years	338	321	326	454	521	436	371	353	344	360	349	344	317	304

Number of suicide attempts (by age groups)



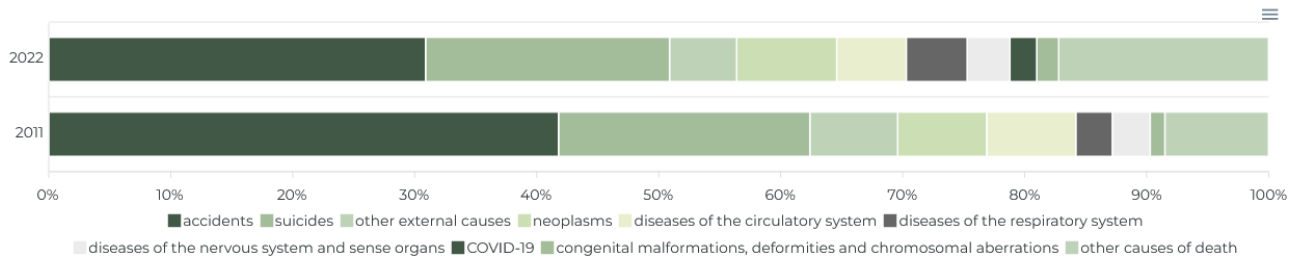
Specification	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
7-12 years	2	2	4	5	11	7	7	27	21	42	28	83	79	78
13-18 years	148	132	148	204	304	355	365	587	654	811	708	1286	1858	1916
19-24 years	217	207	281	318	651	644	607	790	799	866	893	1229	1382	1432

In Poland, suicide is the second leading cause of death among young people in the 15-19 and 20-24 age groups⁵. Between 2011 and 2022, an average of about 20% of deaths that occurred in each of these age groups resulted from people taking their own lives. The leading cause of death is accidents; in 2011-2022, out of all the deaths occurring in the 15-19 and 20-24 age groups, 40% and 37%, respectively, resulted from accidents. The third most common cause of death are neoplasms; in each of the aforementioned age groups, 8% of all deaths is due to neoplasms. The causes of death among children under 15 are different; most deaths are due to perinatal problems and congenital malformations (35% of all deaths on average in 2011-2022) and chromosomal aberrations (31%). As among adolescents, neoplasms are the third most common cause of death (accounting for an average of 7% of all deaths).

In terms of the number of completed suicide among young people (aged 15-19 and 20-24), Poland has for years recorded higher rates compared to the EU average. For the last decade, Poland has been among the top ten countries with the highest number of suicides per 100,000 population in the above-mentioned age groups. The infamous statistics relating to completed suicide of Polish youth aged 15-19 have worsened (Poland ranks fourth in the EU in terms of the highest number of suicides recorded in this age group).

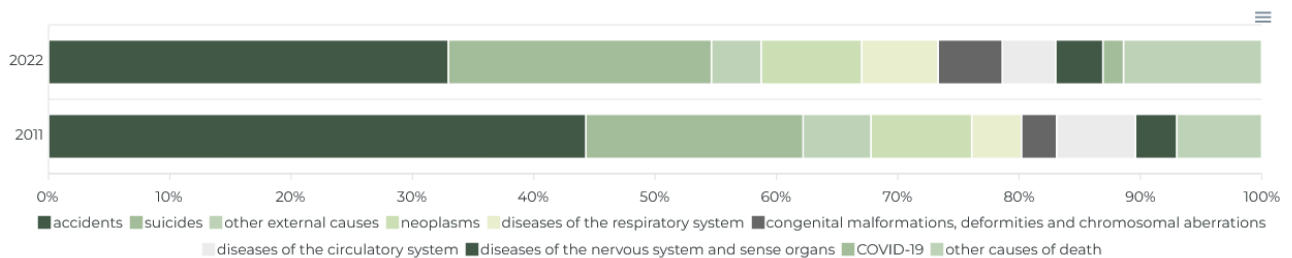
⁵ The age groups vary due to the use of different data sources: suicide statistics from the National Police Headquarters (which presents the following age groups: 7–12 years, 13–18 years, and 19–24 years), and cause of death data from Statistics Poland (which presents the following age groups: under 15 years, 15–19 years, and 20–24 years).

Percentage of deaths among persons aged 20-24 by cause



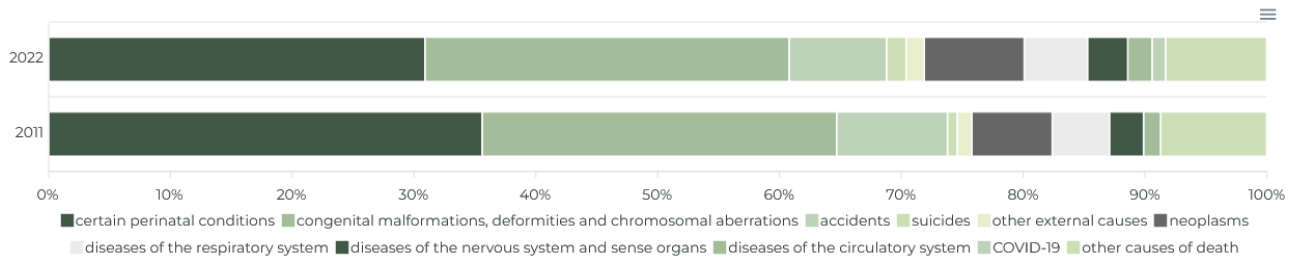
Specification	2011	2022
accidents	41.8	30.9
suicides	20.6	20.0
other external causes	7.2	5.5
neoplasms	7.3	8.2
diseases of the circulatory system	7.3	5.7
diseases of the respiratory system	3.0	5.0
diseases of the nervous system and sense organs	3.1	3.5
COVID-19	.	2.2
congenital malformations, deformities and chromosomal aberrations	1.2	1.8
other causes of death	8.5	17.2

Percentage of deaths among persons aged 15-19 by cause



Specification	2011	2022
accidents	44.3	33.0
suicides	17.9	21.7
other external causes	5.6	4.1
neoplasms	8.3	8.3
diseases of the respiratory system	4.1	6.3
congenital malformations, deformities and chromosomal aberrations	2.9	5.3
diseases of the circulatory system	6.5	4.4
diseases of the nervous system and sense organs	3.4	3.9
COVID-19	.	1.7
other causes of death	7.0	11.4

Percentage of deaths among persons under the age of 15 by cause



Specification	2011	2022
certain perinatal conditions	35.6	30.9
congenital malformations, deformities and chromosomal aberrations	29.1	29.9
accidents	9.1	8.0
suicides	0.8	1.6
other external causes	1.2	1.5
neoplasms	6.6	8.2
diseases of the respiratory system	4.7	5.2
diseases of the nervous system and sense organs	2.8	3.3
diseases of the circulatory system	1.4	2.0
COVID-19	.	1.1
other causes of death	8.7	8.3

Care and upbringing of children

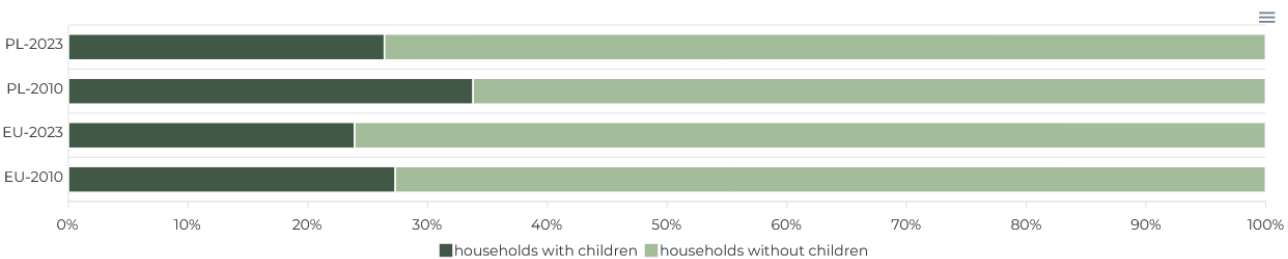
A child in a family

As a result of demographic changes, there are increasingly fewer households with children in Poland. Children are most often born to married couples, but in the last decade, the percentage of children brought up in informal relationships grew. The number of single-parent families slightly increased, more so in the case of lone fathers (who constitute a decisive minority among single-parents) than lone mothers.

In Poland, as in the whole EU, the percentage of households with children has been systematically decreasing since the beginning of the last decade. In the case of Poland, it fell from 34% in 2010 to 26% in 2023 (compared to the fall from 27% to 24% in the EU in the same period). In 2023, Poland was ranked sixth in the EU in terms of the highest percentage of households with children (in 2010, fourth).

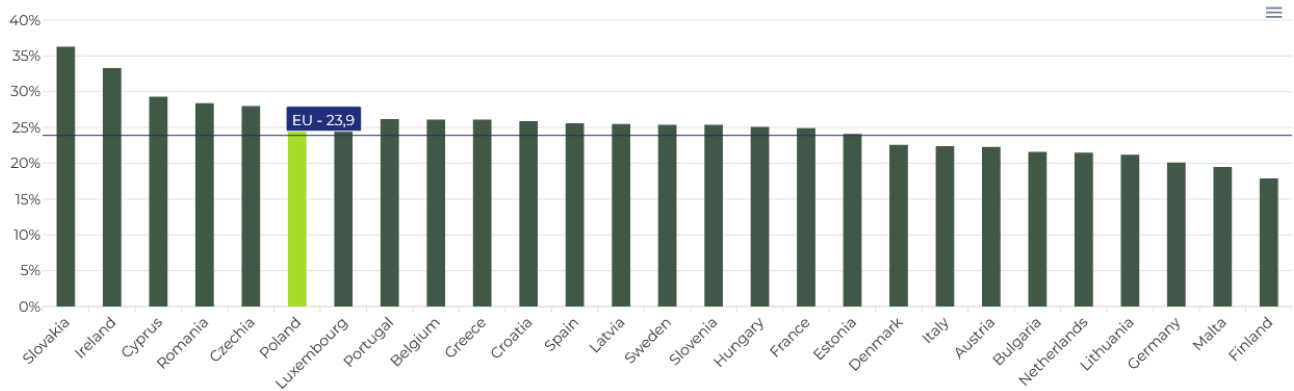
About half of all the households with children are those with one child, but their share decreased compared to the beginning of the last decade (from 54% in 2010 to 49% in 2023). The share of households with two children grew (from 35% in 2010 to 40% in 2023). There was no significant change in the percentage of households with three or more children (on average, in every tenth household with children three or more children were brought up).

Percentage of households with and without children in Poland and in the EU



Specification		2010	2023
Poland	households with children	33.8	26.4
	households without children	66.2	73.6
EU	households with children	27.3	23.9
	households without children	72.7	76.1

Percentage of households with children in the EU countries in 2023



Specification

2023

EU	23.9
Slovakia	36.3
Ireland	33.3
Cyprus	29.3
Romania	28.4
Czechia	28.0
Poland	26.4
Luxembourg	26.3
Portugal	26.2
Belgium	26.1
Greece	26.1
Croatia	25.9
Spain	25.6
Latvia	25.5
Sweden	25.4
Slovenia	25.4
Hungary	25.1
France	24.9
Estonia	24.1
Denmark	22.6
Italy	22.4
Austria	22.3
Bulgaria	21.6
Netherlands	21.5
Lithuania	21.2
Germany	20.1
Malta	19.5
Finland	17.9

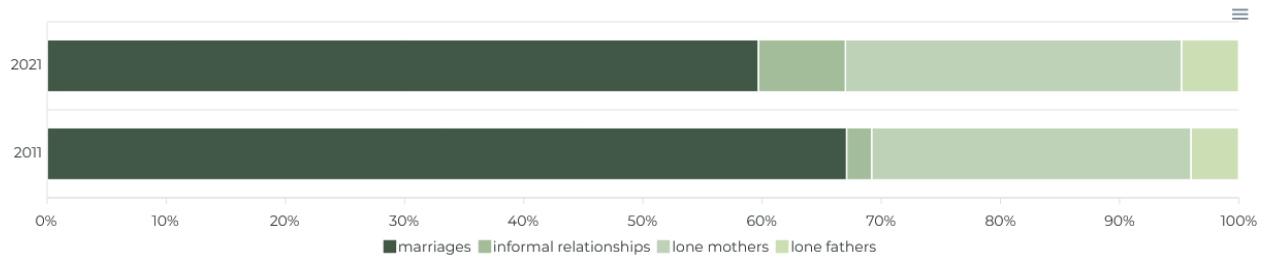
The falling number of families⁶ (defined as two or more people who are a wife and a husband, cohabiting partners of opposite sexes or a parent and a child), including families with children, has been accompanied by a change in the family model. In a decade (from 2011 to 2021), the number of families in Poland fell by 3% (from 11.0 million to 10.6 million), and the number of families with children by 4% (from 8.1 million to 7.8 million)⁷. The traditional family model with children has been partly replaced by other family types. Despite the fact that children are most often brought up by married couples, the ratio of this kind of families to the total number of families with children shrank (from 67% in 2011 to 60% in 2021). In connection with the fact that the total number of married couples decreased, and couples more often decided to live together and bring up children without legalising their relationship, children were increasingly often brought up by parents in informal relationships. The ratio of families with children where parents were in an informal relationship to all families with children grew during the 2011-2021 decade from 2% to 7%. In the same decade, the number of children brought up in single-parent families increased, both in those with lone fathers and those with lone mothers. Within this type of family, the vast majority are lone mothers (over 85% of all single-parent families).

The size of families also changes. Poles less often decide to have children, but those who become parents increasingly often have three or more children. Third- or later-born children constituted 22% of all births in 2023, compared to 15% in 2010. The percentage of second-born children grew in 2010-2017 (from 35% to 40%), but started falling in 2018 and reached 33% in 2023 (i.e. a lower level than in 2010). Since 2010, the share of first-child births among all births has systematically decreased and in 2023 it amounted to 45% (compared to 50% in 2010).

⁶ This definition of a family has been prepared by UNECE and EUROSTAT for the purpose of national population and housing censuses in the Central-Eastern Europe region.

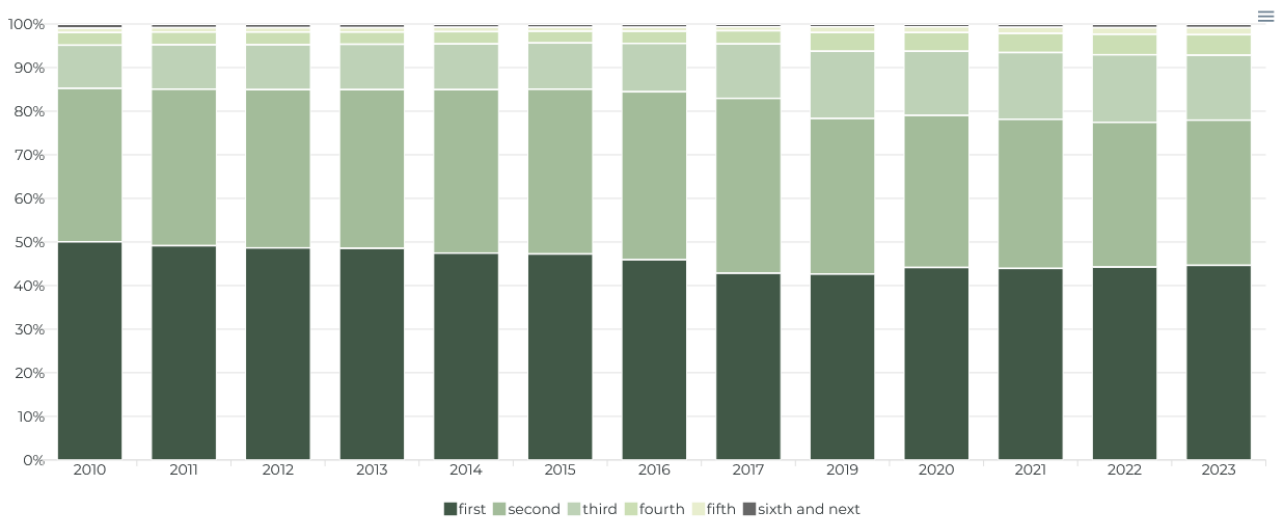
⁷ On the basis of data from the National Census.

Families with children by types



Specification	2011	2021
marriages	67.1	59.7
informal relationships	2.1	7.3
lone mothers	26.8	28.2
lone fathers	4.0	4.8

Percentage of live births by birth order



Specification	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
first	50.1	49.2	48.7	48.6	47.5	47.3	46.0	42.9	42.7	44.2	44.0	44.3	44.7
second	35.2	35.9	36.3	36.4	37.5	37.8	38.5	40.1	35.7	34.9	34.2	33.2	33.3
third	9.9	10.2	10.3	10.4	10.5	10.6	11.1	12.5	15.4	14.7	15.3	15.5	14.9
fourth	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.8	2.8	2.7	2.8	3.0	4.3	4.3	4.4	4.7	4.7
fifth	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.9	0.9	0.9	1.3	1.3	1.4	1.5	1.6
sixth and next	0.9	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.8	0.8

* The lack of data for 2018 is due to changes made to the child's birth card, which led to doctors misinterpreting the records. This resulted in incorrectly entering information about the child's birth order.

Children in foster care

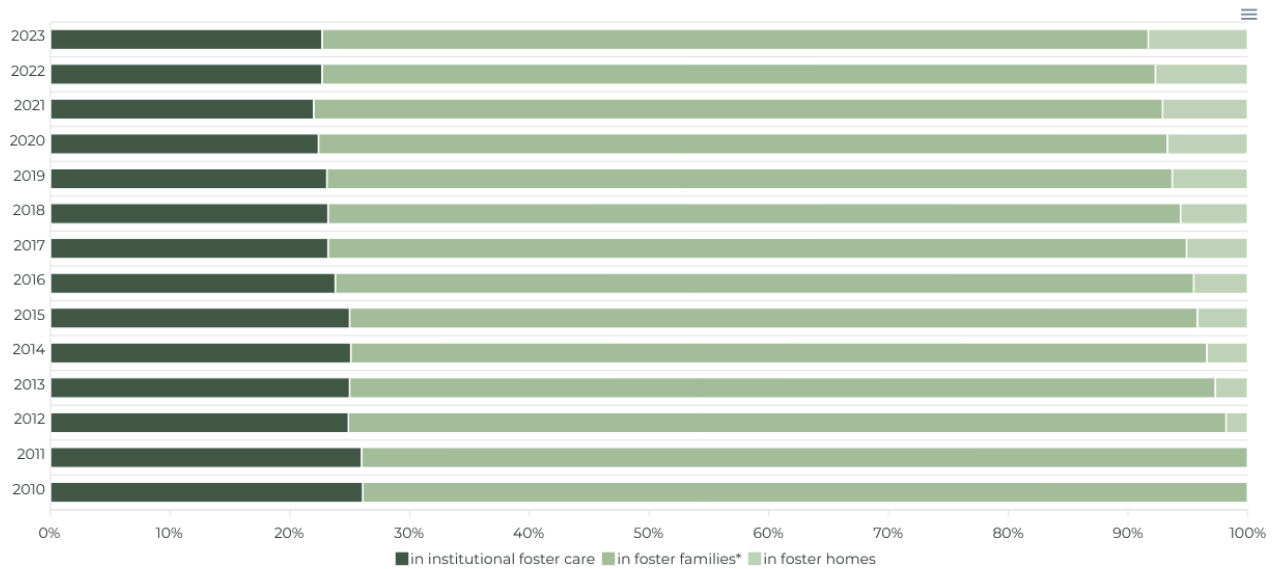
On average, one in a hundred children were brought up in foster care in the last decade in Poland. Most of them are taken care of in family foster care – approximately three quarters of them receives parenting support within foster families, while a quarter remain in institutional care.

The care and upbringing of children who are fully or partly deprived of the support from their biological families is carried out in the framework of foster care in Poland. Its aim is to provide a safe environment for children to develop in the situation where they do not have appropriate care from their natural parents. In the years 2010–2023, the number of children and young adults (aged 0–24 years⁸) in foster care in Poland fluctuated between 72,000 and 77,000 a year, i.e. on average one in a hundred children were in foster care.

There are two types of foster care: family foster care (which encompasses foster families and foster homes) and institutional foster care. In 2010–2023, on average 76% of all children in foster care remained in family foster care, whereas 24% were cared for in institutions. The percentage of children in family foster care increased from 74% in 2010 to 77% in 2023.

⁸ In foster families the data for 2010–2011 concerns children aged 0–17 years, whereas from 2012 on relates to children and young adults aged 0–24 years.

Children in foster care by type of care provided



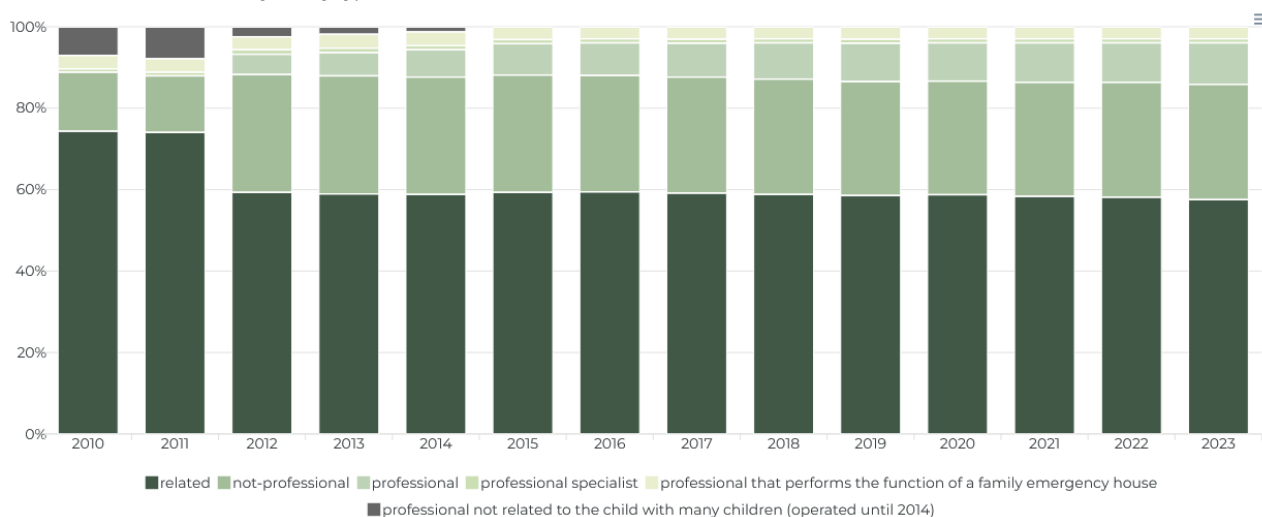
Specification	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
in institutional foster care	26.1	26.0	24.9	25.0	25.1	25.0	23.8	23.2	23.2	23.1	22.4	22.0	22.7	22.7
in foster families*	73.9	74.0	73.3	72.3	71.5	70.8	71.7	71.7	71.2	70.6	70.9	70.9	69.6	69.0
in foster homes	.	.	1.8	2.7	3.4	4.2	4.5	5.1	5.6	6.3	6.7	7.1	7.7	8.3

* In foster families, data for 2010-2011 concerns children aged 0-17, from 2012 - children and young adults aged 0-24

According to the law on family support and foster care system, since 2012, family foster care in Poland has been performed by foster families and foster homes. A foster family provides temporary care for children in a family environment, whereas a foster home is an organised institution run by qualified carers for a larger number of children. In line with this law, foster families are classified as: related (where grandparents or siblings take care of children), not-professional foster families (run by farther relatives of the children or people not related to them who are entitled to the reimbursement of the cost of the children's upbringing) and professional foster families (run by people who are not grandparents or siblings of the child, and who, apart from the reimbursement of the costs of the children's upbringing are paid salaries for performing foster care). The latter can function as specialized professional foster families and professional foster families performing the function of emergency family house. The largest share of children living in foster families are those in related foster families. However, in connection to the changes introduced to types of foster families, the percentage of children in related foster families decreased from over 74% in 2010–2011 to 59% in 2012. In the subsequent years, it stayed on approximately the same level (in 2023, it totalled 58%). On the other hand, the share of children brought

up in professional foster families has been constantly growing – it increased from 5% in 2012 to 10% in 2023. In 2012–2023, on average about 30% of all children in foster families were taken care of in not-professional foster families (in 2010–2011, this percentage stood at 14%). In the analysed period, there were no significant changes in the number of children brought up in specialized foster families (1% on average) and in professional performing the function of a family emergency house (3% on average).

Children in foster families* by family type



Specification	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
related	74.4	74.1	59.4	59.0	58.9	59.4	59.5	59.2	58.9	58.6	58.8	58.4	58.2	57.6
not-professional	14.5	13.9	28.9	29.0	28.8	28.8	28.6	28.5	28.3	28.0	27.9	28.0	28.2	28.3
professional	.	.	5.0	5.7	6.7	7.7	8.0	8.3	8.9	9.4	9.4	9.7	9.7	10.2
professional specialist	0.8	0.9	1.1	1.1	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
professional that performs the function of a family emergency house	3.3	3.3	3.2	3.4	3.4	3.1	2.9	3.0	2.9	3.0	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9
professional not related to the child with many children (operated until 2014)	7.0	7.8	2.4	1.8	1.2	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.

* In foster families, data for 2010-2011 concerns children aged 0-17, from 2012 - children and young adults aged 0-24

In the framework of institutional foster care, a large majority of children (98% in 2023) remain in the care and education centres, which provide 24-hour or temporary care and upbringing for children. Care and education centres comprise socialization, family, intervention and specialist therapy centres, plus those that perform several of the above functions combined. Increasing numbers of children remaining in institutional foster care have been placed in socialization centres (in 2010, it was 45% of all children in institutional

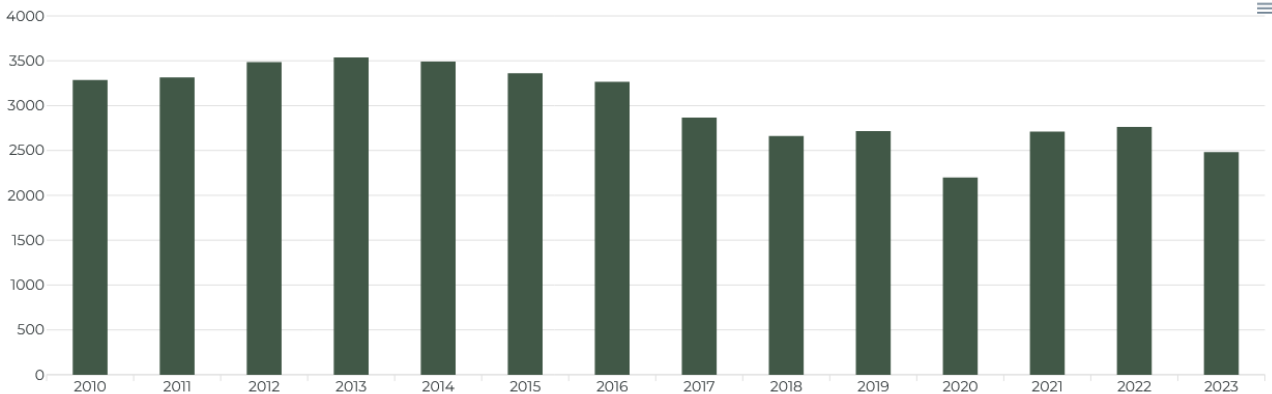
foster care; in 2023, this percentage grew to 66%). The percentage of children in family centres, on the other hand, shrank in the same period (from 12% to 8%), as did the share of children remaining in combining tasks centres (from 41% to 17%). Fewer than 10% of all children in institutional foster care were brought up in intervention and specialist therapy centres. The remaining 1% of children were taken care of in regional care and therapy centres (these were the children who, due to health conditions, required special care and rehabilitation, and thus could not be placed in family foster care or care and education centres), and in intervention pre-adoptive intervention centre (where care is taken of children below or ages one, waiting for adoption).

Adoption

In the last several years, the number of adoptions in Poland shrank. The youngest children get adopted most often, but the percentage of their adoptions fell, whereas the share of families which decided to adopt older children grew.

Adoption is acknowledging that a child with whom the adoptive parent has no biological ties is their own. As a result of adoption, a person or a couple are granted full parental rights. In the last decade, the number of adoptions slightly fell in Poland. In 2010, there were 3,300 adoptions, while in 2023, their number went down to 2,500. In addition to demographic and cultural changes taking place in the country, this situation – according to the Supreme Audit Office – is caused by the fact that there are many more potential parents than children eligible for adoption. The potential adoptive parents point to long adoption procedures and complicated regulations as significant barriers to adoption.

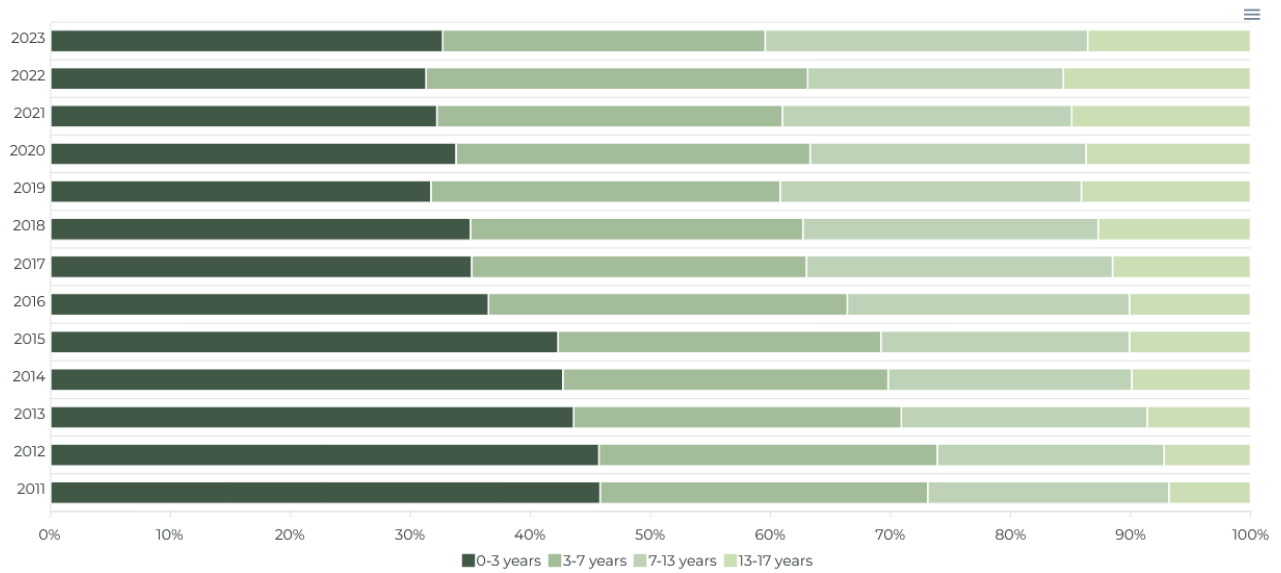
Number of adoptions of juveniles adjudicated by family courts



Specification	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
number of adoptions	3285	3315	3486	3537	3492	3361	3265	2866	2661	2715	2198	2710	2763	2482

In the last several years, children aged 0–3 were adopted most often. They constituted on average 38% of all adoptions in the period of 2011–2023 (in 2011–2015, it was over 40%, and this percentage gradually shrank over the subsequent years). As a child grows older, his or her chances of being adopted are decreasing. Teenagers (children aged 13–17) are adopted most rarely, but in recent years, the percentage of adopted teenagers grew over two-fold (from 7% in 2011 to 15% in 2023).

Percentage of child adoptions by age groups



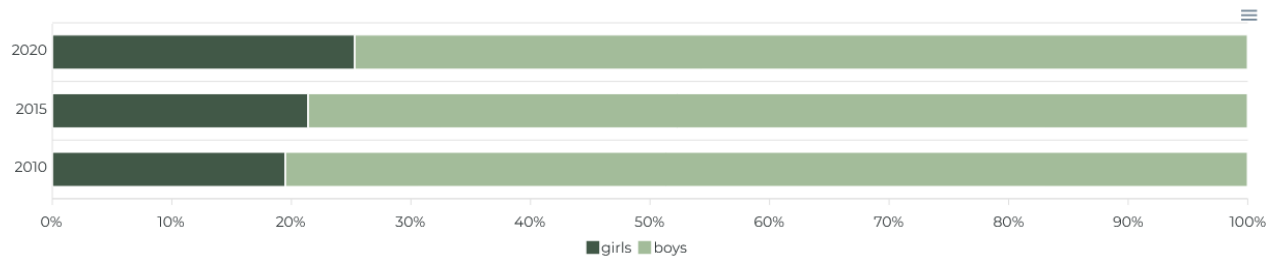
Specification	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
0-3 years	45.8	45.7	43.6	42.7	42.3	36.5	35.1	35.0	31.7	33.8	32.2	31.3	35.4
3-7 years	27.3	28.2	27.3	27.1	26.9	29.9	27.9	27.7	29.1	29.5	28.8	31.8	29.1
7-13 years	20.1	18.9	20.5	20.3	20.7	23.5	25.5	24.6	25.1	23.0	24.1	21.3	20.8
13-17 years	6.8	7.2	8.6	9.9	10.1	10.1	11.5	12.7	14.1	13.7	14.9	15.6	14.7

Juvenile delinquency and rehabilitation

Punishable acts committed by children and adolescents is a serious social problem. In Poland, the number of juveniles against whom educational or correctional measures or are adjudicated for punishable acts has been decreasing. Punishable acts are much more often committed by juvenile boys, although the share of girls in juvenile crime has been on the rise in the last few years.

In the years 2010-2020, there were significantly fewer juveniles against whom educational or correctional measures, or penalties for punishable acts were validly adjudicated. Their number dropped from 23,000 to 7,000. The vast majority in this group were boys (75%-80%), but the share of girls in juvenile delinquency is growing (from 20% in 2010 to 25% in 2020). Among the most common crimes committed by juveniles are those against property (thefts, burglaries and destructions of property). The percentage of this type of crimes committed by juveniles, however, decreased in the last years (from 55% in 2010 to 51% in 2020). Offences against health and life involving beatings and physical violence are the second most frequently committed crimes by children and adolescents. In 2010-2020, out of the total number of juvenile delinquents, 22-24% were involved in the above-mentioned crimes; as a result, educational or correctional measures, or penalties were validly adjudicated in common courts against these young offenders. The percentage of juveniles who committed crimes against freedom, freedom of conscience and religion, sexual freedom or decency increased from 7% in 2010 to 12% in 2020.

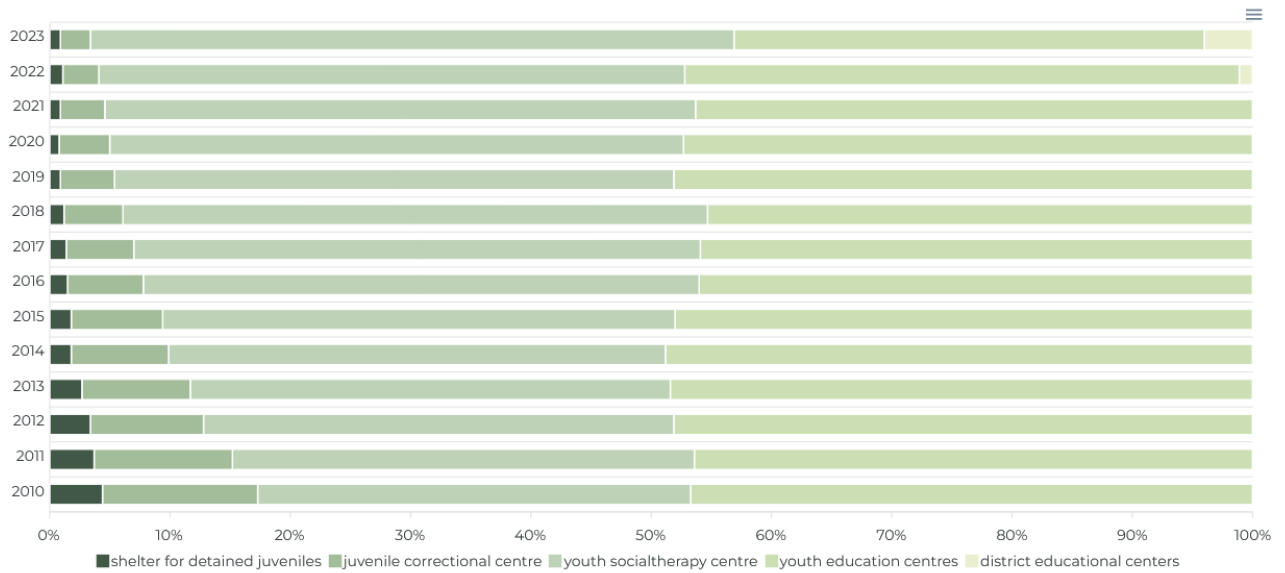
Juveniles against whom educational or correctional measures or penalties were validly adjudicated for punishable acts by gender



Specification	2010	2015	2020
girls	19.5	21.4	25.3
boys	80.5	78.6	74.7

Different types of juvenile facilities play a key role in the system of care and upbringing of children and adolescents who, for various reasons, struggle with functioning in the society. Among them there are youth education centres and youth social therapy centres, functioning under the Ministry of Education, as well as district educational centres (operating since 1st September 2022), shelters for detained juveniles and juvenile correctional centres (under the administration of the Ministry of Justice). The largest number of troubled adolescents are under the care of youth education centres (which focus on the upbringing and re-socialisation of young individuals struggling with serious behavioural problems) and youth social therapy centres (dedicated to children and adolescents who are at risk of social maladjustment resulting from developmental disorders, learning difficulties and disorders in social functioning, and who require specially organised education, methods of work, upbringing, psychological and academic support, and socio-therapy). In the case of the former facilities, the percentage of their students remained at a similar level (47% on average) in the years 2010-2023. However, the percentage of those attending youth social therapy centres increased (from 36% in 2010 to 54% in 2023). At the same time, the percentage of individuals under the care of juvenile correctional centres decreased significantly: from 13% in 2010 to 3% in 2023. The percentage of those in shelter for detained juveniles (serving a temporary function for youth suspected of committing a crime) also dropped (from 4% to 1%).

Residents in centres for juveniles



Specification	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
shelter for detained juveniles	4.4	3.7	3.4	2.7	1.8	1.8	1.5	1.4	1.2	0.9	0.8	0.9	1.1	0.9
juvenile correctional centre	12.9	11.5	9.4	9.0	8.1	7.6	6.3	5.6	4.9	4.5	4.2	3.7	3.0	2.5
youth socialtherapy centre	36.0	38.4	39.1	39.9	41.3	42.6	46.2	47.1	48.6	46.5	47.7	49.1	48.7	53.5
youth education centres	46.7	46.4	48.1	48.4	48.8	48.0	46.0	45.9	45.3	48.1	47.3	46.3	46.1	39.1
district educational centers	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	1.1	4.0

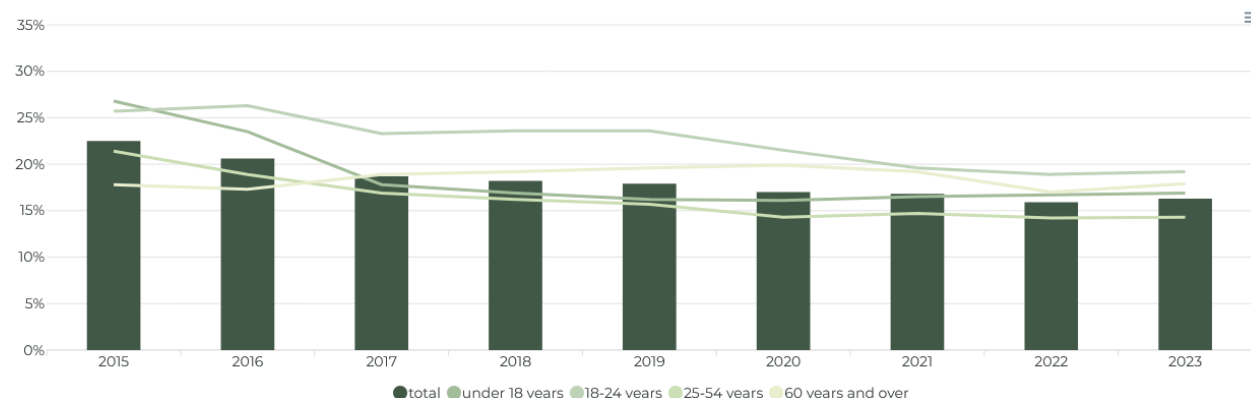
Poverty and deprivation

Risk of poverty and social exclusion

The financial and existential situation of children in Poland has been gradually improving since 2016. The living conditions of those entering adulthood have also improved compared to 2015, although it is the ‘young adults’ that form the group most often affected by poverty and social exclusion in Poland.

Poverty incidence and social exclusion among people under the age of 18 in Poland significantly decreased (by almost 10 percentage points between 2015 and 2023). The improvement in the situation of children in Poland was so substantial that in 2017-2021, the level of poverty and exclusion among the youngest was lower than in the total population. This phenomenon showed a different pattern in the EU on average, where over the same period, the financial and existential situation of those under 18 improved the least and did not approach the level of the total population. For those entering adulthood (i.e. ‘young adults’), the level of poverty and social exclusion also decreased, but to a lesser degree than among children. As a result, it is the ‘young adults’ who are now mostly affected by this phenomenon in Poland (as in the EU).

Percentage of persons at risk of poverty or social exclusion in Poland



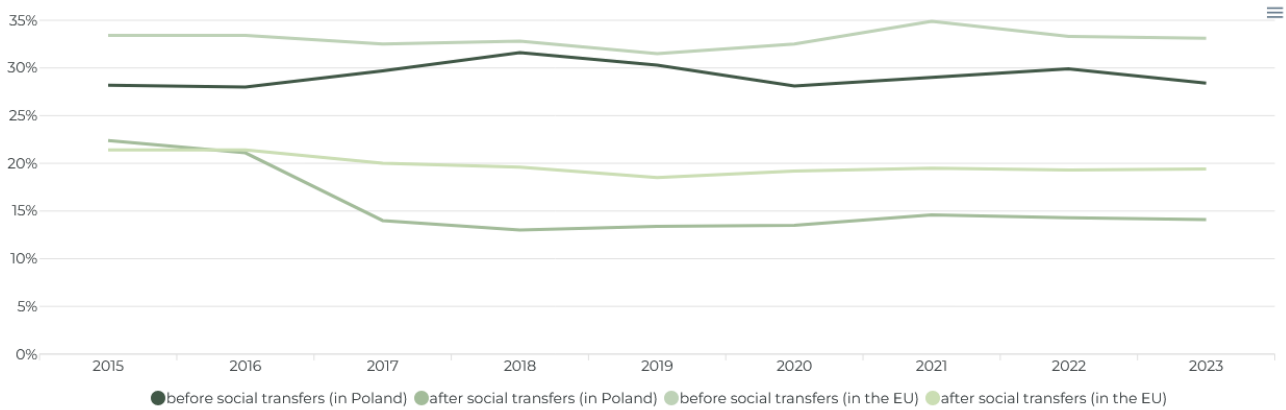
Percentage of persons at risk of poverty or social exclusion in the EU



Specification	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
total	24.0	23.7	22.4	21.7	21.1	21.5	21.7	21.6	21.3
under 18 years	27.4	27.1	25.1	23.9	22.8	24.0	24.4	24.7	24.8
18-24 years	29.7	29.8	28.1	27.2	26.5	27.8	27.3	26.5	26.1
25-54 years	23.4	22.9	21.4	20.4	19.6	19.7	20.3	19.9	19.7
60 years and over	19.8	19.9	19.8	20.2	20.4	20.7	20.3	20.6	20.4

Among the factors contributing to the improvement of children's living conditions in Poland was the introduction of a government programme called 'Family 500 plus' in 2016 ('Family 800 plus', starting from 2024). This benefit is meant to support families in partially covering the expenses related to raising children. The largest decrease in child poverty in Poland was recorded in the first years following the implementation of this programme. In the subsequent years, however, the rate in which poverty decreased was much slower, while in 2021-2023, poverty and social exclusion incidence among Polish children began to increase. A decline in the living standard of the youngest is also observed in the whole EU. The reasons behind this situation include the deterioration of the financial condition of households during the pandemic and high inflation.

Percentage of persons (under 18) at risk of poverty and social exclusion before and after social transfers



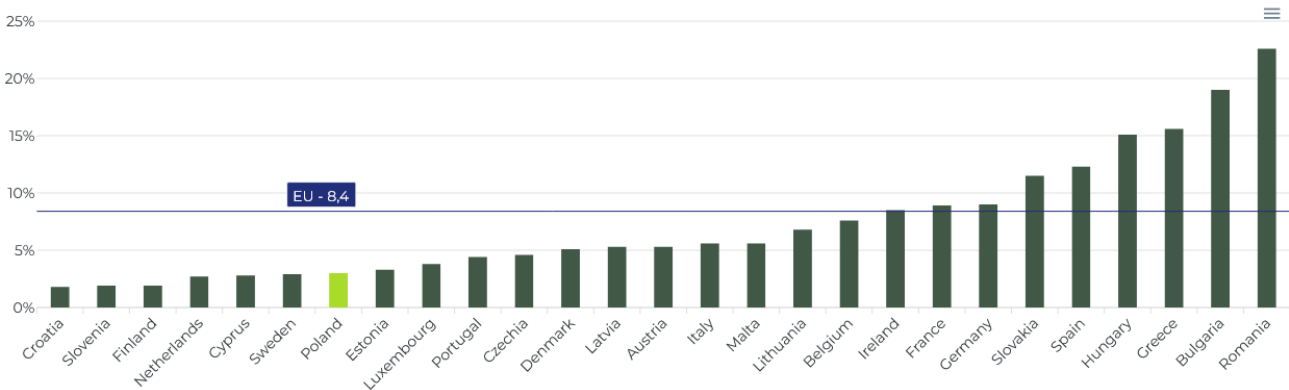
Specification	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
before social transfers (in Poland)	28.2	28.0	29.7	31.6	30.3	28.1	29.0	29.9	28.4
after social transfers (in Poland)	22.4	21.1	14.0	13.0	13.4	13.5	14.6	14.3	14.1
before social transfers (in the EU)	33.4	33.4	32.5	32.8	31.5	32.5	34.9	33.3	33.1
after social transfers (in the EU)	21.4	21.4	20.0	19.6	18.5	19.2	19.5	19.3	19.4

Unsatisfied needs and living conditions

The percentage of children and young adults living in conditions making it impossible for them to satisfy needs regarded as basic according to European standards is decreasing. But even though the quality of households in which children live is improving, still many of them live in overcrowded conditions.

One of the factors contributing to the risk of poverty and social exclusion is deep financial and social deprivation, which means that due to financial difficulties one cannot satisfy his or her needs regarded as desirable, or even those believed necessary for decent living. In Poland, the percentage of children in such a difficult situation fell from 9% to 3% in the years 2015–2023, and the share of young adults (aged 18–24) in the same situation shrank from 6% to 1%. In 2023, Poland was ranked as 7th EU country with the lowest value of the indicator of deep financial and social deprivation among children (below the age of 18), and 4th EU country in the same rating relating to young adults. These are results better than the EU average. Considering particular types of needs, children and young adults’ (aged 16–24) situation improved to the largest extent in areas such as: regular participation in different forms of leisure, spending a small amount of money on one’s needs once a week and eating out or going for a drink with family members or friends at least once a month.

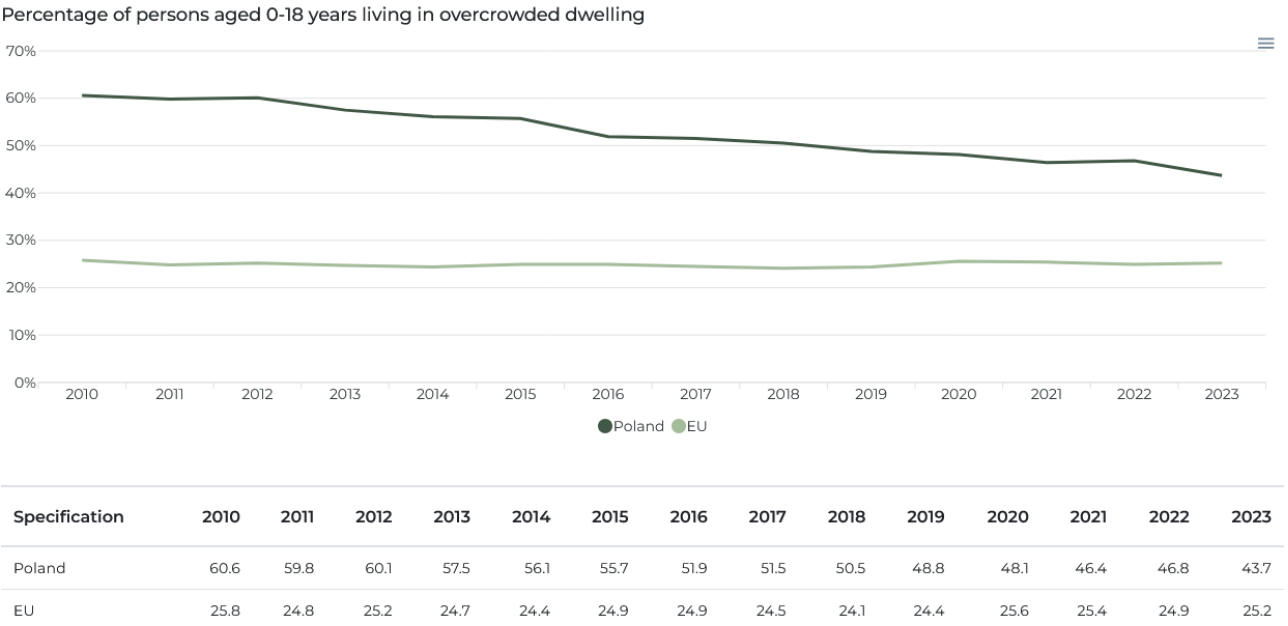
Severe material and social deprivation rate among persons aged 0-18 years in the EU countries in 2023



Specification	2023
EU	8.4
Croatia	1.8
Slovenia	1.9
Finland	1.9
Netherlands	2.7
Cyprus	2.8
Sweden	2.9
Poland	3.0
Estonia	3.3
Luxembourg	3.8
Portugal	4.4
Czechia	4.6
Denmark	5.1
Latvia	5.3
Austria	5.3
Italy	5.6
Malta	5.6
Lithuania	6.8
Belgium	7.6
Ireland	8.5
France	8.9
Germany	9.0
Slovakia	11.5
Spain	12.3
Hungary	15.1
Greece	15.6
Bulgaria	19.0
Romania	22.6

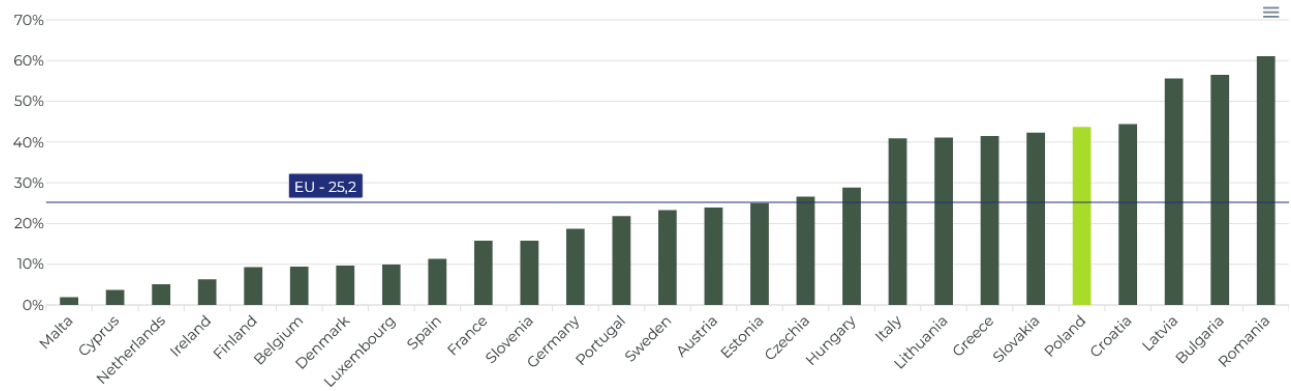
Since 2010, the living conditions of children significantly improved. The percentage of children inhabiting buildings with problems such as wall dampness, mould or leaking roof decreased from 17% 2010 to 7% in 2023. The share of children living in houses not sufficiently lit fell in the same period from 8% to 3%. The above-mentioned issues are the problem for fewer children in Poland than in the EU. What is still challenging in Poland, though, is the relatively high indicator of the overpopulation in apartments. Among people aged below 18, this indicator reached 44% in 2023, which was 5th highest result in the EU. In other words, almost half of children in Poland live in apartments which do not guarantee the minimal space

per person⁹. Still, the problem of overcrowded apartments in which Polish children live improved considerably compared to 2010, when 61% of children in Poland lived in overcrowded flats.



⁹ Applies (in accordance with the standards set by Eurostat) to dwellings that do not have at least: 1 room per household, 1 room per couple, 1 room for each person over 18 years of age, 1 room for two people of the same sex aged 12-17, 1 room for each person aged 12-17 not included in the previous category, 1 room for every two children under the age of 12.

Percentage of persons aged 0-18 years living in overcrowded dwellings in the EU countries in 2023



Specification	2023
EU	25.2
Malta	1.9
Cyprus	3.7
Netherlands	5.1
Ireland	6.3
Finland	9.3
Belgium	9.4
Denmark	9.7
Luxembourg	9.9
Spain	11.3
France	15.8
Slovenia	15.8
Germany	18.7
Portugal	21.8
Sweden	23.3
Austria	23.9
Estonia	25.0
Czechia	26.6
Hungary	28.8
Italy	40.9
Lithuania	41.1
Greece	41.5
Slovakia	42.3
Poland	43.7
Croatia	44.4
Latvia	55.6
Bulgaria	56.5
Romania	61.1

Extreme poverty

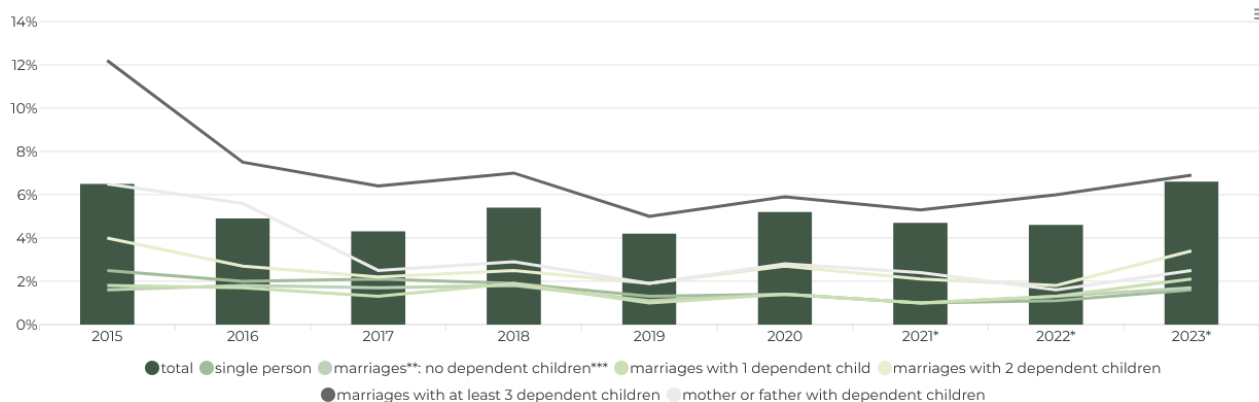
The percentage of people living below the subsistence minimum fluctuates significantly in Poland; this also regards the youngest people and families with children. Periodic increases and decreases in the incidence of this phenomenon are determined on the one hand by the financial situation of households and overlapping external crises, and on the other by changes in the extreme poverty thresholds. Despite the cyclical changes, the incidence of extreme poverty is now lower than in 2015, both among the youngest people (aged 0-17) and almost in all types of households with dependent children. Nevertheless, extreme poverty still affects children more often than adults, and it is more extensive among the youngest than in the total population.

Extreme poverty is the most severe form of poverty. In Poland, it is determined on the basis of the subsistence minimum¹⁰, which defines the most basic needs which have to be satisfied to avoid a biological threat to human life, health and psychophysical development. Therefore, the range of the subsistence minimum covers only those needs which enable a person to survive and whose satisfaction cannot be postponed (food, shelter, medicines and personal hygiene, clothing, children's basic education). The subsistence minimum does not include participation in culture, sports or recreation, nor the use of transport and communication. This is what distinguishes it from multidimensional forms of poverty, associated not only with the lack of access to basic goods and services (income poverty), but also with the inability to participate in socioeconomic, political and cultural life (social exclusion).

In 2015-2023, the percentage of people living below the subsistence minimum significantly fluctuated; this also included the youngest people and families with dependent children. The periodic decreases and increases in the extent of this phenomenon were primarily influenced by the financial situation of households (and the external crises that condition it), but also by changes in the extreme poverty thresholds (determined by the Institute of Labour and Social Studies on the basis of average annual price indices announced by Statistics Poland).

¹⁰ Subsistence minimum, also referred to as biological minimum, estimated by the Institute of Labour and Social Studies (Pol. Instytut Pracy i Spraw Socjalnych – IPISS).

Extreme poverty by household type



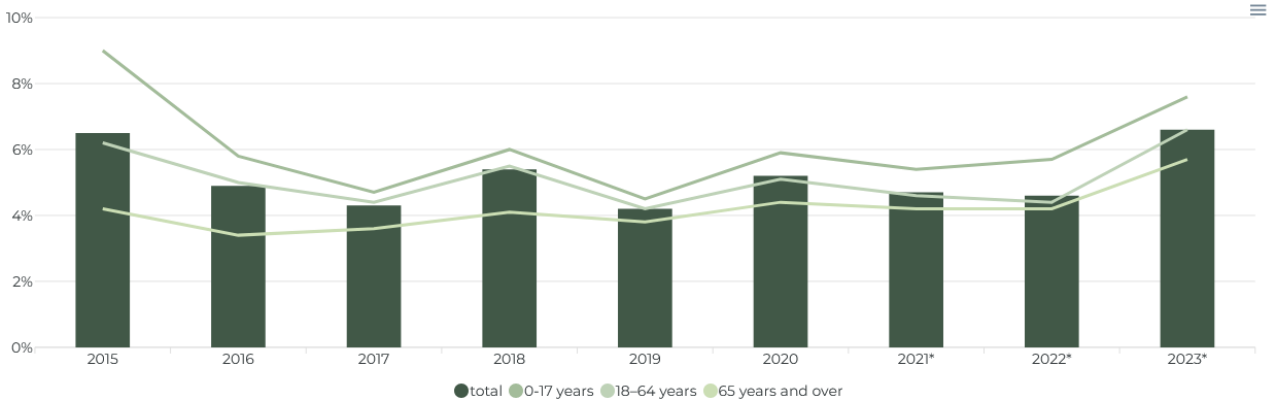
* Data for 2021-2023 have been generalized based on the results of the 2021 National Census of Population and Housing, additionally taking into account the population structure by age and gender, therefore they are not directly comparable with similar data for previous years.

** The group of married couples also includes informal unions.

*** A dependent child is a person aged 0-14 (inclusive), who is part of a household or a person aged 15-25, unless they have their own source of income or are not married (or in an informal union).

The incidence of extreme poverty in Poland is now lower than in 2015, both among the youngest (0- to 17-year-olds) and in all types of households with dependent children. Married couples (or those remaining in informal relationships) with one child are an exception, as their situation has not changed significantly. The improvement is particularly evident in the case of households that face the highest risk of poverty, i.e. multi-child families and single parents (in the case of whom the incidence of extreme poverty was reduced almost twofold or more than twofold, respectively, compared to 2015). Moreover, the occurrence of the phenomenon among single parents fell below the level for the population in total, and for families with at least three children, it almost equalled the level of extreme poverty in the total population (in 2023). Regardless of the typology of households and considering age only, the incidence of extreme poverty decreased compared to 2015 only among the youngest people (aged 0-17). Nevertheless, extreme poverty still affects children more often than adults, and its extent is greater among the youngest than in the total population.

Extreme poverty by age groups



Specification	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021*	2022*	2023*
total	6.5	4.9	4.3	5.4	4.2	5.2	4.7	4.6	6.6
0-17 years	9.0	5.8	4.7	6.0	4.5	5.9	5.4	5.7	7.6
18-64 years	6.2	5.0	4.4	5.5	4.2	5.1	4.6	4.4	6.6
65 years and over	4.2	3.4	3.6	4.1	3.8	4.4	4.2	4.2	5.7

* Data for 2021-2023 have been generalized based on the results of the 2021 National Census of Population and Housing, additionally taking into account the population structure by age and gender, therefore they are not directly comparable with similar data for previous years.

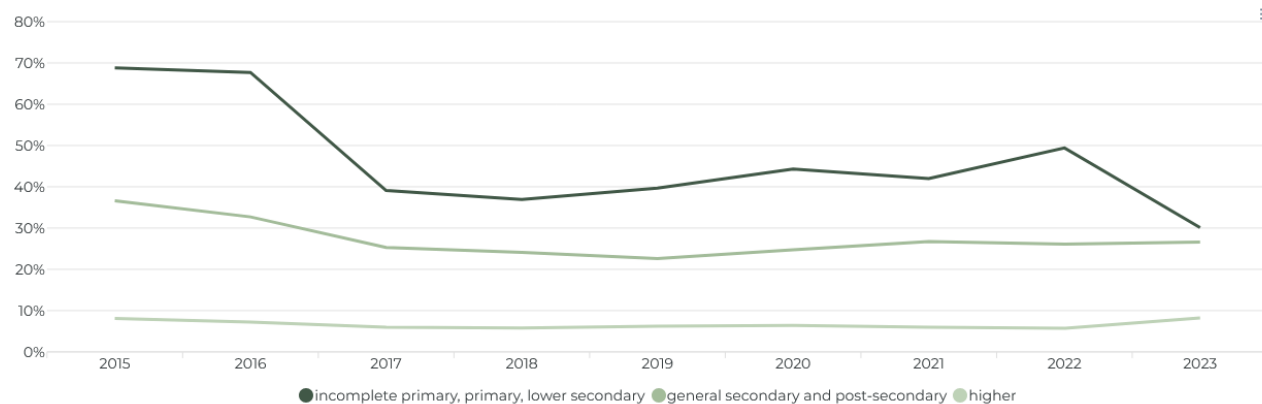
Main causes of poverty and social exclusion

The financial and existential situation of children depends mainly on their family situation, which, in turn, is mostly determined by the level of education and professional activity of the parents, and on the composition of the household. Children who are face the highest risk of poverty and social exclusion are those from multi-child or single-parent families, or those children whose parents' level of education is the lowest and/or who work below their potential.

Children's living conditions are affected, among other factors, by the level of education of their parents. Usually, the higher the level of education of the parents, the lower the incidence of poverty and social exclusion¹¹ among the children. Compared to 2015, the largest improvement in the living standard was recorded among those children most vulnerable to poverty whose parents were poorly educated; moreover, this positive change was more notable in Poland than in the EU. The extent of poverty and exclusion among children of the poorest-educated parents was limited in Poland so effectively (from 69% in 2015 to 30% in 2023) that it almost equalled the level of these phenomena among children whose parents had secondary education. In addition to the 'Family 500 plus' programme, the considerable improvement of the living standard in households with members having the lowest level of education could be the result of the increase in the minimal wage combined with the steady fall in the number of the poorest-educated people.

¹¹ The percentage of people at risk of poverty or deep material deprivation or those living in households with a very low level of labour intensity.

Children at risk of poverty and social exclusion by level of education of parents

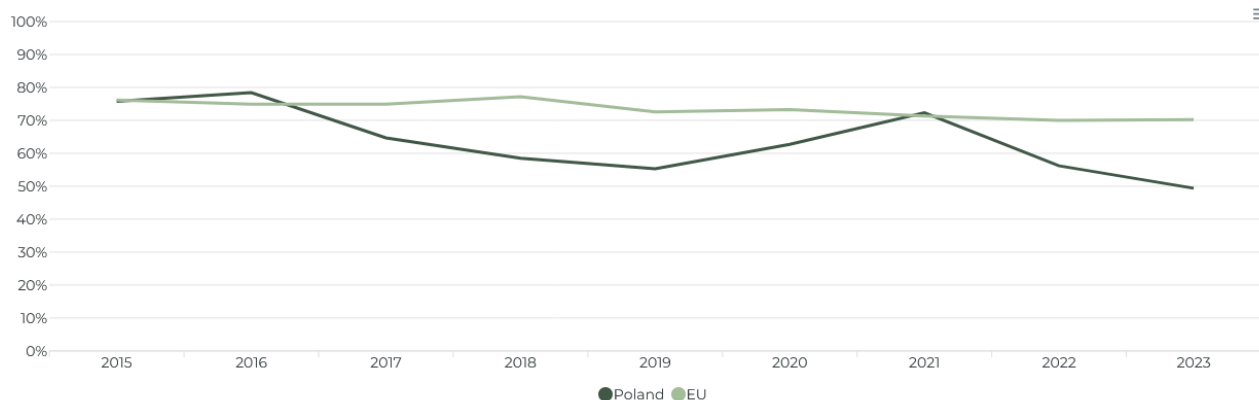


Specification	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
incomplete primary, primary, lower secondary	68.8	67.7	39.1	36.9	39.7	44.3	42.0	49.4	30.1
general secondary and post-secondary	36.6	32.7	25.3	24.1	22.6	24.7	26.7	26.1	26.6
higher	8.1	7.2	6.0	5.8	6.2	6.4	6.0	5.7	8.2

The closer the members of a household to being employed full time, the lower the risk of poverty among children. Poland belongs to a group of EU countries where very low labour intensity¹² is not a challenge; in 2023, it was an issue for 3% of households with children. In households without children, on the other hand, very low labour intensity was recorded twice as often. The number of children in households where adults work below their potential (i.e. use less than 20% of their full labour potential) fell in Poland by almost 40% compared to 2015 (by over 10% on average in the EU). As a result, the share of children in families with very low labour intensity and at the same time vulnerable to poverty and exclusion decreased significantly in Poland – from 76% in 2015 to 49% in 2023 (despite a sharp reversal of this trend in 2020–2021). In the EU, the extent of this phenomenon was limited to a much lower degree, i.e. from 76% to 70% (without the fluctuations during the pandemic), respectively.

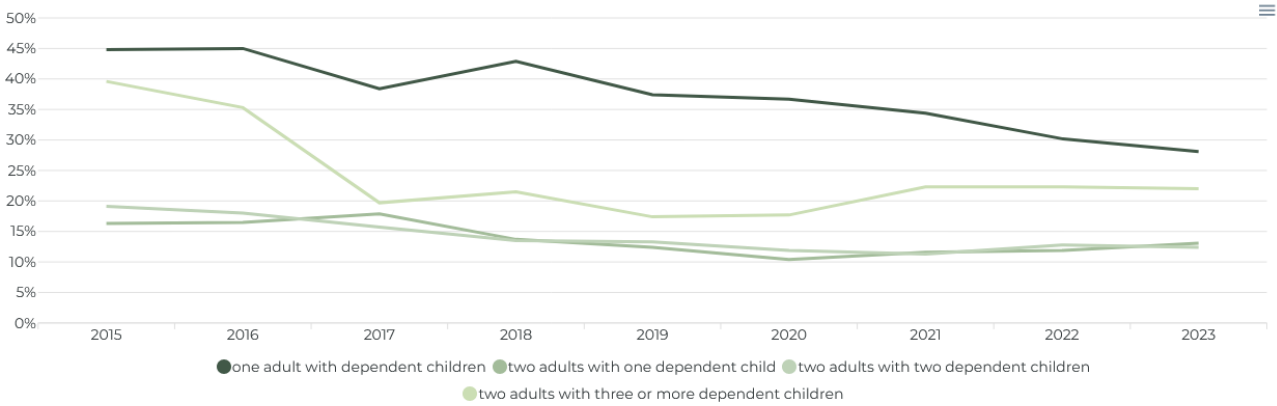
¹² The percentage of people aged 0-59 living in households with very low labour intensity, i.e. those whose adults (aged 18-59) worked less than 20% of their total labour potential in the previous year.

Children in households with very low work intensity and at risk of poverty and social exclusion



The nature of the relationship between the composition of a household and the living conditions of the youngest did not change significantly in the last few years. Children cared for by a single parent and children from multi-child families (i.e. those raising three or more children) are still at more risk of poverty and exclusion than children with both parents and with a smaller number or no siblings (both in Poland and in the EU). The situation of children cared for by single parents and those raised in multi-child families nevertheless improved significantly in Poland in 2015–2023 (as it did in the EU, but to a smaller extent in Poland).

Risk of poverty and social exclusion by household composition



Specification	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
one adult with dependent children	44.8	45.0	38.4	42.9	37.4	36.7	34.4	30.2	28.1
two adults with one dependent child	16.3	16.5	17.9	13.7	12.4	10.4	11.6	11.9	13.1
two adults with two dependent children	19.1	18.0	15.7	13.5	13.3	11.9	11.3	12.8	12.4
two adults with three or more dependent children	39.6	35.3	19.7	21.5	17.4	17.7	22.3	22.3	22.0

Glossary:

Early childhood

Chromosome abnormalities – can be numerical or structural. A numerical abnormality mean an individual is either missing one of the chromosomes from a pair or has more than two chromosomes instead of a pair. A structural abnormality means the chromosome's structure has been altered in one of several ways.

Congenital disorders – diseases that are substantially determined before or during birth and which are in principle recognizable in early life. Congenital malformation can be defined as structural or functional anomalies.

Day carer – one of the forms of care for children under 3 years of age. A natural person who is self-employed or employed by local government units (gminas, powiats, voivodships), public institutions, natural persons, legal persons and organizational units without legal personality, on the basis of an employment contract or a contract for the provision of services. Day carer takes care of children from 20 weeks of age.

Herd immunity – (population immunity or group immunity) protection of non-immune individuals as a result of vaccinating a high percentage of the population.

Infant – a child below the age of 1 year.

Infant mortality rate – the ratio of infant deaths in a given period to the number of live births in that period – expressed in ‰ (i.e. per 1000 population).

Lifetime fertility – the average number of children that would be born by a woman during her whole reproductive period (15-49 years) assuming that in particular phases of this period she would give birth to children with the intensity observed among women in a year under observation.

Live birth - the complete expulsion or extraction from its mother of a newborn, irrespectively of the pregnancy duration, that after such expulsion or extraction breathes or shows any other signs of life, such as beating of the heart, pulsation of the umbilical cord or muscle contractions depending on the will, whether or not the umbilical cord has been cut or the placenta has been separated.

Nanny – one of the forms of care for children under 3 years of age. A natural person caring for children under a service contract called an 'activation contract', concluded in writing

between the nanny and the parents or a single parent. Nanny takes care of children from 20 weeks of age. Social Insurance Institution (ZUS) pays contributions for a nanny on the amount of remuneration is not greater than the amount of the minimum wage, and the excess of this amount, contributions paid parent of a child.

Neonate – child aged up to 28 days.

Nursery, children's club – an organizational unit having the care of children under the age of 3, making functions of caring, upbringing, education and entered in the register kept by the mayor, president of the city.

Perinatal period – the perinatal period commences at 22 completed weeks of gestation, and ends seven completed days after birth.

Post neonatal mortality – deaths of children who have reached the age of 28 to 364 days.

Preterm – babies born alive before 37 weeks of pregnancy are completed.

Preventive vaccination – application of vaccine against infectious disease for artificial immunization against the disease.

Reproductive age – age at which a woman is biologically capable of giving birth to a child.

Total fertility rate – the number of children that would be born on average by a woman during her whole reproductive period (15–49 years), assuming that in particular phases of this period she would give birth to children with the intensity observed in a given year, i.e. the age-specific fertility rates are treated as constant. With a total fertility rate of 2.1, we are talking about generation replacement.

Education and volunteering

Degree programmes - first-cycle, second-cycle or long-cycle programmes of study provided by a higher education institution authorised to do so.

Digital skills - are classified based on the number of skills (out of five) possessed and their level:

- using information and data,
- communicating and collaborating,
- creating digital content,

- security,
- problem-solving.

We distinguish the following levels of digital skills:

- above-basic – people have every type of digital skill,
- basic – people have every type of digital skill, but at least one type at a basic level,
- low – people have four out of five digital skills,
- narrow – people have three out of five digital skills,
- limited – people have two out of five digital skills,
- none – people have one digital skill or none at all.

Early leavers from education and training – percentage of the population aged 18-24 who have completed at most lower secondary education and are not in any further education or training (in the total population of the same age group).

Eighth-grader exam – an exam covering the knowledge and skills specified in the core curriculum of general education for primary schools. It is a compulsory exam in writing form without a specified minimum score necessary to pass it. Eighth-grade-student takes the examination in three compulsory subjects: Polish; Mathematics and a selected modern foreign language (English, French, Spanish, German, Russian, Ukrainian or Italian), which the student learned at school as part of compulsory educational activities.

Homeschooling – a form of education in which parents or guardians take responsibility for educating their children at home, instead of sending them to a traditional school. This form of education applies to a child who is between 6 and 18 years old, i.e. is subject to compulsory pre-school, school and education.

Individual volunteering (directly) – unpaid work that is not performed within organizational structures. It includes: helping friends, acquaintances and neighbors, helping strangers and activities for the benefit of society, the natural environment, the place where one lives or stays or the local community.

Matriculation exam - an exam conducted at the end of secondary school, and its results determines further education. Since 2015, the matriculation examination has been carried out in a new formula. It is taken by graduates of post-primary schools, including general secondary and technical secondary schools. To pass the exam and obtain a certificate, it is required to: score a minimum of 30% of the points available in each mandatory subject in the oral and in the written part, and proceed to the written examination of an additional option

subject (no credit threshold). An examinee must sit two oral exams: Polish language, a modern foreign language and four exams in the written part of examination: at a standard level: Polish language, a foreign modern language and mathematics, and an option subject at an extended level.

Net enrollment rate - a ratio of the number of pupils or students in a given age group (as of the beginning of the school year) at a given level of education to the population (as of 31 December) in the age group defined as corresponding to this level of education. The result is given in percentage terms.

Nursery school - an establishment for children between the age of 3 years and the beginning of their education in a primary school, supporting individual development, providing care adequate for the children's needs and preparing them for school education.

Persons with disabilities – person, who has appropriate judgment issued by a body, authorized to this or a person, who does not have a judgement but feels constraints in the ability of performing basic activities for its age.

PISA Survey – Programme for International Student Assessment supervised by OECD; the purpose of PISA is to measure the ability to apply knowledge acquired at school and beyond school in three fields: reading literacy, mathematics and science knowledge; the survey covers randomly drawn students aged 15-16 years. The survey is conducted every three or four years since 2000.

Post-primary school - a school conducting educational tasks following the core curriculum of an eight-year primary school. Post-primary schools include the following types of schools: a four-year general secondary school, a five-year technical secondary school, a three-year stage I sectoral vocational school, a three-year special job-training school, a two-year stage II sectoral vocational school and a post-secondary school where the education lasts a maximum of 2.5 years.

Pre-primary education - covers children from the beginning of the school year in the calendar year when the child turns 3 until the end of the school year in the calendar year when the child reaches the age of 7. It is implemented in nursery schools, pre-primary sections in primary schools and in other forms of pre-school education (pre-primary education units and pre-primary centres).

Primary school - an eight-year school in which the pupils/students take the final examination at the end of the eight grade and the completion of which gives access to a post-primary school. The organisational structure of primary school comprises grades 1-8 in which

education is compulsory.

Special education - education that covers children and youth with disabilities, socially maladjusted and at risk of social maladjustment, requiring the use of special organization of teaching and working methods.

Volunteer – an individual who voluntarily and without remuneration provides services to organizations, institutions, individuals outside the volunteer's family, the wider community or the natural environment. The provision of these services is referred to as community service or volunteering.

Volunteering (social work) – an action (activity) undertaken voluntarily and without remuneration, aimed at bringing benefits to individuals or a group of people outside the household (excluding the volunteer's family); it can also be provided for the benefit of society, the natural environment, a specific location or community. Volunteering involves devoting free time to it. An activity classified as volunteering should have the nature of work, i.e. payment (remuneration) could be obtained for its performance, but the person performing this work did not expect remuneration for it and did not receive it. Volunteering can be performed individually or as part of the activities of an organization/institution.

Volunteering performed within an organization or institution (formal volunteering) – unpaid work (volunteer work, social work) performed within organizational structures by members of a given organization or persons supporting the activities of an organization, association, foundation, committee, public institution, cooperative, church or other organizational unit. This also applies to activities, programs and initiatives operating at the above-mentioned organizational units.

Health and lifestyle

BMI (Body Mass Index) – body weight monitoring index that represents the relationship between body mass and height, calculated using the formula:

$$\text{BMI} = \text{body mass (kg)} / \text{height (cm)}^2 / 10\,000$$

For adults, there are four weight categories:

- normal weight (BMI: 18.50–24.99),
- underweight ($\text{BMI} \leq 18.49$) – a state of insufficient body mass,
- overweight (BMI: 25.00–29.99) – abnormal or excessive fat accumulation, posing a threat to human life and health,

- **obesity (BMI \geq 30.00)** – abnormal or excessive fat accumulation, posing a threat to human life and health; obesity is a chronic disease caused by an excessive supply of energy in food relative to the body's requirements; obesity is most commonly associated with numerous complications involving the cardiovascular system and other organs.

Completed suicide – a situation in which a person consciously and deliberately takes actions leading to their death, resulting in an actual fatality.

Juniors – all persons practicing sport who are not seniors, i.e. juniors, younger juniors, sub-juniors and children; there is no definitive age limit for this category of competitors because it might be different in particular kinds of sports and even in each sports event within one type of sport.

Member of sports club – a person who possess a valid membership card of a club or who complies with other definite requirements, if the club has accepted other rules of membership.

Recreational activity – the form of physical activity, connected with sport, undertaken for active leisure and regeneration of psychophysical strength.

Self-perceived health – general, not current health status. It covers the different dimensions of health, i.e. physical, social and emotional functioning and biomedical signs and symptoms. It omits any reference to age. Self-perceived of health status is researched by the Statistics Poland as a part of the European Union Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC).

Sports club – a basic organizational unit running sports activity which acts as a legal person.

Suicide attempt (non-fatal suicide) - a deliberate act aimed at taking one's own life that does not result in death. This attempt may lead to various consequences, including physical or psychological injuries, but without a fatal outcome.

Care and upbringing of children

Adoption – the ratio of family law entered between the adopter and the adoptee similar to the relationship between parents and children.

Care and education centre – provides a child who is deprived of full or partial parental care with full-time or periodic care and education, and fulfil its needs, especially emotional, development, health, living, social and religious needs; provides access to eligible healthcare services and education.

A care and education centre shall be run as:

- socialization centre – provides a child with full-time care and education, and fulfil its needs, especially emotional, development, health, living, social and religious needs; implements a child assistance plan prepared in cooperation with a family assistant; enables contact with parents and other close persons; unless otherwise decided by a court, takes actions aimed at the child's return to a family; provides a child with access to education adjusted to his/her age and development skills; provides a child with therapeutic actions, provides access to eligible healthcare services;
- intervention centre – provides immediate care for a child in the crisis situation, especially if it is required for the centre to place the child under immediate care
- family centre – educates children of various age groups, including adolescents and those becoming independent; enables common education and care for numerous siblings; cooperate with a family foster care coordinator and a family assistant;
- specialist therapy centre – provides care for a child with individual needs, in particular: a child with a disability certificate or a certificate of high or moderate level of disability; a child requiring the application of special education methods and specialist therapy; a child requiring dealing with their developmental and emotional retardation. The centre provides educational, sociotherapeutic, corrective, compensating, speech therapy, and therapeutic activities compensating for lacks in upbringing in a family and preparing for social life, as well as proper rehabilitation for disabled children;
- combining tasks centre – provides care and education through the implementation of the tasks specified for the socialization, intervention and specialist therapy centres.

Crime against freedom – deprivation of liberty including punishable threat, unlawful threat, violence against persons and breach of the inviolability of the home.

Crime against freedom of conscience and religion – act prohibited threatening individual or community freedom of conscience and religion including creed discrimination, disrupting public performance of the religious act, outraging religious feelings.

Crime against life and health – act prohibited with the Penal code, chapter XXVII covering: homicide, infanticide, euthanasia, abetting or aiding to commit suicide, termination of a woman's pregnancy with or without her consent, woman's death as a result of abortion, unintentional killing, bodily harm, participation in violation or assault.

Crime against property – crime including theft, burglary, robbery, theft with assault, criminal coercion, larceny, appropriation of a telecommunication device, fraud, computer

fraud, destroying or damaging property, joyriding, forestry theft, fencing of stolen property.

District education centre – a facility where the educational measure - placement of a juvenile in a district educational center - is carried out. The center is intended for:

- juveniles in the intellectual norm;
- juveniles with intellectual disabilities (mild and moderate).

Family nucleus - defined in the narrow sense as two or more persons who live in the same household and who are related as husband and wife, as cohabiting partners, or as parent and child.

Foster care – family or institutional form of care, exercised in case when it is impossible for the parents to provide care and education for a child:

- Institutional foster care – shall be exercised in the form of:
 - care and education centre;
 - regional care and therapy centre;
 - pre-adoptive intervention centre.
- Family foster care shall be exercised in case when it is impossible for the parents to provide care and education for a child. It guarantees a work with a family to make possibility for a child to return to its family, or when it is impossible – efforts aimed at child's adoption or preparation of a child to live an independent and responsible life, satisfaction of children's emotional needs, in particular the needs related to welfare, healthcare, education, culture, recreation and religious. The forms of family foster care are the following:
 - foster family;
 - foster home.

Foster family – provides a child who is deprived of full or partial parental care with full-time or periodic care and education. We distinguish the following types of foster families:

- related - established by ascendants or siblings; a family is entitled to receive a payment for each entrusted child to cover the cost of its maintenance;
- not-professional - established by persons other than ascendants or siblings; a family is entitled to receive a payment for each entrusted child to cover the cost of its maintenance; placed in it may be not more than 3 children (except for numerous siblings);
- professional – established by persons other than ascendants or siblings; in addition to a payment for each entrusted child to cover the cost of its maintenance, a family is entitled to

remuneration on the account of performance of a foster family function; placed in it may be not more than 3 children (except for numerous siblings); may operate for example as:

- performing the function of a family emergency house – shall receive a child on the basis of a court ruling, case when a child was escorted by Police or Border Guard, upon consent of parents, child or another person in case of immediate threat to the life or health of the child in connection with domestic violence
- specialized - shall receive in particular: children with a disability certificate or a certificate of high or moderate level of disability, children on the basis of the Law on Support and Resocialization of Juveniles, underage mothers with children.

Foster home – form of the family foster care, which provides a child with a round-the-clock care and upbringing, in which may be placed not more than 8 children or persons that reached the age of majority while being under foster care.

Informal relationship – means the maintenance of psychological, physical and/or economic ties of a marital nature (without marriage) between two persons. In the editions of the National Census of Population and Housing before 2021, this item in the typology of families used in the statistics was defined as partners with or without children.

Juvenile (within the meaning of the Act of 9 June 2022 on the support and resocialization of juveniles) – a person who:

- committed the punishable act after completing 13 years, but before the age of 17
- become demoralized being under the age of 18,
- has an educational or corrective measure adjudged, provided that he is under the age of 21.

Juvenile correctional centre - resocialisation centre for juvenile aged 13-17 - the most severe corrective measure adjudicated by the family court. This measure applies when the educational measures previously applied have not resulted in the expected improvement in the behaviour of the minor. A minor may stay there for no longer than until the age of 21.

Pre-adoptive intervention centre – centre where shall be placed children up to the 1 year old, requiring special care who, waiting for adoption, cannot be covered by family foster care.

Private household – group of people living together in a housing unit and jointly maintaining themselves. Persons living alone and independently maintaining themselves constitute a one-person household.

Punishable act - an act committed by a juvenile, prohibited by law as an offence, a fiscal

offence or petty offence.

Regional care and therapy centre – a centre which provides round-the clock care and upbringing of a child deprived in part or in full of paternal care, who due to their health condition require specialist care and rehabilitation and cannot be placed in family foster care or a care and education centre.

Single-parent family - the family of one parent and the child/children living in the same household.

Shelter for detained juveniles – diagnostic and correctional establishment intended for detained juveniles over the age of 13.

Youth education centre – a facility for socially maladjusted children and youth who require special organisation of education and working and methods, psychological and educational support and social rehabilitation. The purpose of the centre is to eliminate the causes and symptoms of social maladjustment and to prepare students for life in accordance with valid social and legal norms.

Youth socialtherapy centre – a facility for children and youth who, due to developmental disorders, learning difficulties and problems in social functioning, are at risk of social maladjustment and require special organisation of education and working methods, psychological and educational support and sociotherapy, and who have a statement of special educational needs issued due to the risk of social maladjustment. The tasks of the youth sociotherapy centre include eliminating manifestations of behavioural disorders and preparing students for an independent and responsible life after leaving the centre, in accordance with valid social and legal norms.

Poverty and deprivation

At risk of poverty or social exclusion – persons are considered at risk of poverty or social exclusion who are materially deprived or living in households with very low work intensity.

At-risk of poverty rate after social transfers – percentage of persons with an equivalised disposable income (after social transfers) is below the at-risk-of-poverty threshold set at 60% of the national median of equivalised disposable income.

Biological type of household – determined based on the degree of relationship of household members to the reference person. The following biological types of households are distinguished:

- married couple with no dependent children,
- married couple with one dependent child,
- married couple with two dependent children,
- married couple with three dependent children,
- married couple with four or more dependent children,
- mother with dependent children,
- father with dependent children,
- married couple with at least one dependent child and other persons,
- mother with at least one dependent child and other persons,
- father with at least one dependent child and other persons,
- other persons with dependent children,
- single-person households,
- other.

Economically active population (by LFS) – persons aged 15-89 who are considered as employed or unemployed.

Extreme poverty – households are considered to be affected by extreme poverty where the level of expenditures (including a value of free-of-charge articles as well as natural consumption) was lower than the adopted extreme poverty threshold (subsistence minimum, setting the level of satisfaction of needs below which occurs a biological threat to life and psychophysical human development).

Income poverty – households are considered to be affected by income poverty if their monthly monetary income was less than the official poverty threshold during the reference year.

Large family – a family with at least three children.

Material deprivation – lack of ability to fulfill needs regarded as basic in European conditions due to financial problems.

Overcrowding rate - defined as the percentage of the population living in an overcrowded household, i.e. one that does not have at least:

- one room for the household,

- one room by couple in the household,
- one room for each single person aged 18 and more,
- one room by pair of single people of the same sex between 12 and 17 years of age,
- one room for each single person between 12 and 17 years of age and not included in the previous category,
- one room by pair of children under 12 years of age.

Subsistence minimum – also called as biological minimum; is calculated by the Institute of Labour and Social Studies. It takes into account only these needs, fulfilment of which cannot be postponed. Consumption below this level leads to biological destruction.

Severe material and social deprivation rate – the proportion of the population experiencing an enforced lack of at least 7 out of 13 deprivation items (6 related to the individual and 7 related to the household). List of items:

- At the household level:
 - Capacity to face unexpected expenses
 - Capacity to afford paying for one week annual holiday away from home
 - Capacity to being confronted with payment arrears (on mortgage or rental payments, utility bills, hire purchase instalments or other loan payments)
 - Capacity to afford a meal with meat, chicken, fish or vegetarian equivalent every second day
 - Ability to keep home adequately warm
 - Have access to a car/van for personal use
 - Replacing worn-out furniture
- At individual level:
 - Having internet connection
 - Replacing worn-out clothes by some new ones
 - Having two pairs of properly fitting shoes (including a pair of all-weather shoes)
 - Spending a small amount of money each week on him/herself
 - Having regular leisure activities
 - Getting together with friends/family for a drink/meal at least once a month

Very low work intensity – occurs in households in which adults aged 18-64 work less than 20% of their total work potential during the past year.

Characteristics of selected surveys of Statistics Poland

European Health Interview Survey (EHIS) – the representative survey carried out every five years. In Poland that survey has conducted by Statistics Poland since 2009. EHIS results provide data for comparisons between EU countries. The objective of EHIS is to assess the health status of the Polish population, considering subjective assessments, both physical and mental. This survey covers topics such as the frequency of the most serious, long- term health problems (e.g. chronic diseases), the level of fitness and limitations in performing basic life activities, as well as emotional well-being and preventive care. The survey also allows monitoring selected aspects of both anti- and pro-health behaviors, including sports activities, fruit and vegetable consumption, tobacco smoking and alcohol consumption.

European Union Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC) – an annual, representative survey conducted by Statistics Poland (GUS) since 2005. The main objective of EU-SILC is to provide data comparable to the EU countries on living conditions of the population in the broad sense. EU-SILC results provide information on income, poverty, material and social deprivation, self-assessment of health, and selected aspects of social exclusion. EU-SILC also entails the conduct of survey modules, answering the current needs of the EU institutions.

Households Budget Survey – an annual, representative survey conducted by Statistics Poland (GUS) since 1957 on an annual basis. The survey covers mainly household budget, i.e. the amount of revenues and outgoings (in cash and in kind) of all members of a given household and the quantitative consumption of selected goods and services. It allows to analyze the material aspects of living conditions of the population and to assess the impact of various factors on the diverse living conditions of the basic groups of households.

Labour Force Survey (LFS) – a representative survey carried out by Statistics Poland (GUS) since 1992 on a quarterly basis. The objective of this survey is to assess the situation in terms of economic activity of the population. LFS provides information on the size and structure of the employed, unemployed and economically inactive persons and, among others, sources of income and self-assessment of health. Since 2021, the survey has covered all persons aged 15-89 living in the sampled dwellings.

National Census of Population and Housing – the main survey and source of data on population statistics, which aims to collect information on its state and structure according to established demographic and socio-occupational characteristics at a specific moment on a defined territory. Censuses cover the entire population and housing. This means that data obtained from a national census are derived from all citizens. Importantly, for many

demographic and social characteristics, such as religion, nationality, or degree of disability, censuses are the only source of data for the state. Censuses are conducted approximately every 10 years, in accordance with recommendations and standards of international organizations such as the EU and the UN, enabling international comparisons.

Surveys in the area of Information Society Indicators – conducted annually since 2004 and closely related to measuring the development of a knowledge-based society. The objective of the surveys includes the use of information and communication technologies (ICT) in enterprises, households and individuals and, from 2019, in public administration units. This surveys aims to obtain indicators that allow for the assessment of individual stages of the development of the information society and the analysis of the processes taking place in it, as well as making comparisons between EU countries (excluding the study on the use of ICT in public administration units).

Time use survey – is conducted every 10 years on a representative sample of respondents using interviews and a “time diary”. It provides information on the daily time-use structure of society and its variations by demographic, social, economic, and territorial characteristics. The goal of the survey is to value household working time, which supports national accounts and the preparation of balance sheets for working time. It has practical applications, for instance, in courts when awarding child support for individuals involved in household work. The survey enables international comparisons and detailed analyses of various topics, such as changes in time-use structure across different life stages, valuation of unpaid domestic work, and work-life balance. With its ten-year cycle, it allows observation of lifestyle changes, such as the impact of modern technologies in everyday life. The survey is a source of essential indicators of living standards and quality of life, providing information that supports social policy and labor market decision-making.

Unpaid work outside the household – the survey was conducted for the first time in 2011 as a module for the Labour Force Survey. The second edition was carried out in 2016, the third in 2022. The goal of the survey is to measure the economic and social dimension of work provided voluntarily and free of charge by Polish residents who have reached the age of 15. Apart from social work provided in various organisational units (e.g. associations, foundations, churches, trade unions, etc.), the survey also covers the work performed free of charge outside any organisational structures, e.g. for relatives and friends outside their own household, for strangers, as well as for the environment, town and community.

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Polish publications:

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2. Concise Statistical Yearbook of Poland (Statistics Poland)
3. Daily time use for population (Statistics Poland)
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5. Disabled people (Statistics Poland)
6. Economic poverty rates in Poland (Statistics Poland)
7. Education (Statistics Poland)
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9. Families in Poland in the light of the 2021 Census results (Statistics Poland)
10. Generation of young adults living with their parents in Poland (Statistics Poland)
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13. Information society in Poland (Statistics Poland)
14. Methodological report Vital statistic. Balances of population (Statistics Poland)
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20. Social assistance, child and family services (Statistics Poland)
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24. Vaccinations in Poland (National Institute of Public Health)
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- 26.Social Protection Committee Annual Report (European Commission)
- 27.Sustainable development in the European Union: monitoring report on progress towards the SDGs in an EU context (Eurostat)
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- 29.World mental health report: Transforming mental health for all (WHO)

Polish websites:

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- 31.Chief Sanitary Inspectorate
- 32.National Institute of Public Health - vaccines

Polish databases:

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- 34.Local Data Bank (stat.gov.pl)
- 35.National Reporting Platform - SDG (sdg.gov.pl)
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- 37.STRATEG System (strateg.stat.gov.pl)
- 38.ZUS Statistical Portal (psz.zus.pl)

International databases:

- 39.Eurostat (europa.eu)
- 40.UN Global SDG Database
- 41.WHO

Legal acts:

- 42.Regulation of the Minister of Education and Science of March 30, 2023 on certain public institutions of the education system
- 43.Regulation of the Minister of Health of 27 September 2023 on mandatory vaccinations
- 44.Act of 14 December 2016 - Education Law
- 45.Act of 4 February 2011 on the care of children under 3 years of age
- 46.Act of 9 June 2011 on supporting the family and the foster care system

47. Act of 9 June 2022 on the support and resocialization of juveniles

Strategic documents:

48. Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

49. The EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child and the European Child Guarantee

50. The National Action Plan to Implement the EU Council Recommendation 2021/14 of 14 June, 2021 on the European Child Guarantee