

POLAND — Country Profile

Overview

Poland is located in Central Europe, to the east of Germany. The population of the country was about 38.4 million in 2018. The population is concentrated in the southern area around Krakow and the central area around Warsaw and Lodz, with an extension to the northern coastal city of Gdansk. Catholics make up 87.2% of the population. In terms of education, women have a literacy rate of 99.7% and school life expectancy of 17 years. At the end of 2014, women accounted for 59% of the total number of people with higher education, 72% of people with post-secondary school or college education, and 54% of people with secondary education.

A "shock therapy" programme during the early 1990s enabled the country to transform its economy into one of the most robust in Central Europe. Poland joined NATO in 1999 and the EU in 2004. With its transformation to a democratic, market-oriented country largely completed and with large investments in defense, energy, and other infrastructure, Poland is an increasingly active member of Euro-Atlantic organisations.

Source: *extracted from CIA World Factbook: Poland*

Sexual and Reproductive Health

Key findings from *Population and Housing Census 2011* on the situation of SRHR in Poland are as follows:

Maternal Health:

- The maternal mortality rate was 3 deaths per 100,000 live births in 2015.
- The infant mortality rate was 4.4 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2018.

Contraception:

- The total fertility rate was 1.36 births per woman in 2018.
- Based on data from 2014, the mean age at first birth for women is 27.4 years.
- Among women aged 18-49, the contraceptive prevalence rate was 50.6% in 2010/11.
- 73% of married women aged 15-49 used some method of contraception with 28% using a modern method.

Abortion:

According to the [UN Abortion Policies and Reproductive Health around the World \(2014\)](#), abortion is permitted to save a woman's life, to preserve a woman's physical health, to preserve a woman's mental health, in case of rape or incest or because of foetal impairment.

Sexual and Reproductive Rights

Child Early & Forced Marriage (CEFM):

- The adolescent fertility rate among women aged 15 to 19 was 12 births per 1,000 women in 2017.
- A 2014 study shows that around 2% of Roma girls aged 10-15 are traditionally married or cohabiting with a partner across 11 European Union member states, including Poland.

Violence Against Women:

- Thirteen percent of women have experienced physical and/or sexual violence by a partner since the age of 15.

Extracted from Violence against women: an EU-wide survey

Current initiatives in Poland

- ARROW has collaborated with ASTRA and ASTRA Youth to conduct a review of the implementation of the ICPD POA in Central and Eastern Europe.