

How's Life In Poland?



May 2014



The **OECD Better Life Initiative**, launched in 2011, focuses on the aspects of life that matter to people and that shape their quality of life. The Initiative comprises a set of regularly updated well-being indicators and an analysis, published in the *How's Life?* report as well as an interactive web application, the *Better Life Index*. It also includes a number of methodological and research projects to improve the information base towards a better understanding of well-being trends and their drivers.

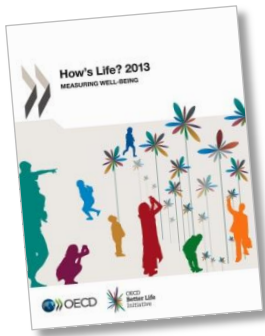
The OECD Better Life Initiative:

- Helps to inform policy making to improve quality of life.
- Connects policies to people's lives.
- Generates support for needed policy measures.
- Improves civic engagement by encouraging the public to create their own index and share their preferences.
- Empowers the public by improving their understanding of policy-making.

This brochure presents **selected findings for Poland from the *How's Life?* report** (pages 3-5) and shows what Polish **users of the Better Life Index** are telling us about their **well-being priorities** (pages 6-7).



HOW'S LIFE?



How's Life?, published every two years, provides a comprehensive picture of well-being in OECD countries and other major economies by bringing together an internationally comparable set of well-being indicators. It looks at people's material conditions and quality of life across the population in eleven dimensions including: income and wealth; jobs and earnings; housing; health status; work-life balance; education and skills; social connections; civic engagement and governance; environmental quality; personal security; and subjective well-being.

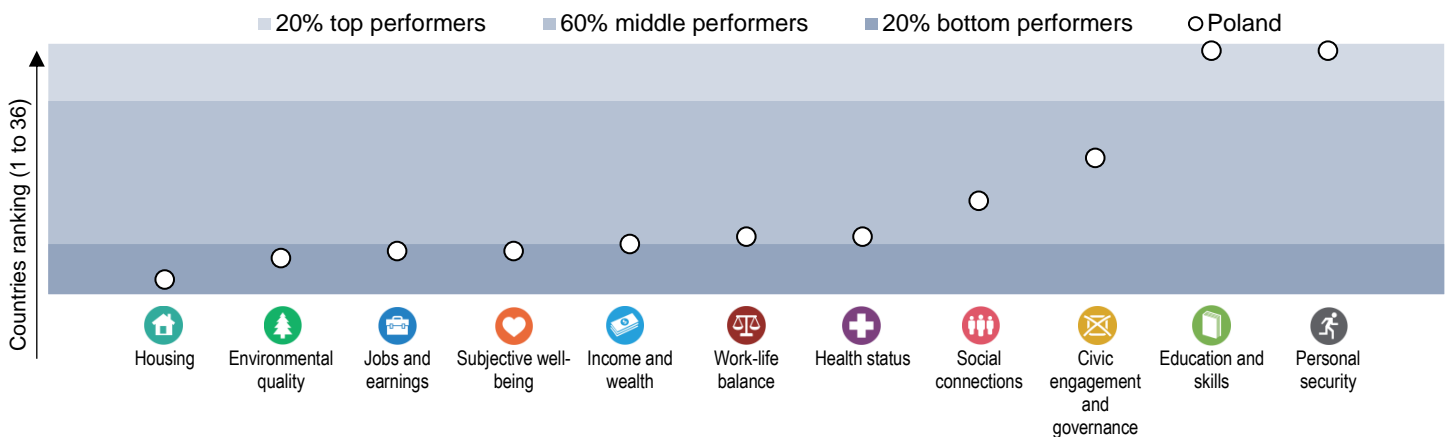
The following are findings for **Poland** based on the set of well-being indicators and the analysis found in the *How's Life?* report.

HOW'S LIFE IN POLAND IN 2014?

Compared with other OECD countries, Brazil and the Russian Federation, **Poland** performs well in only a few of the 11 dimensions mentioned above that the OECD considers as essential to a good life. **Poland** ranks above the average of the 36 countries in the dimensions of personal security, education and skills, civic engagement and social connections, but below average in health status, work-life balance, income and wealth, subjective well-being, jobs and earnings, environmental quality, and housing.

Figure 1 - How does Poland compare?

Poland's well-being compared with other OECD countries and major economies, 2014



WELL-BEING DURING THE CRISIS

The **average Polish household** has been generally spared by the crisis, which in other OECD countries has been particularly visible when looking at household income, jobs, life satisfaction and civic engagement.

From 2007 to 2011, **Poland** recorded a cumulative increase in real **household disposable income** of around 11%, the largest rise among the OECD countries. Between 2007 and 2010, market income inequality (before taxes and transfers) decreased by 2%, well below the OECD average increase of 1.2%.

The largest impact of the crisis on people's well-being have come through lower employment and deteriorating labour market conditions. In contrast to this general trend, the **employment rate** increased by almost 3 percentage points in **Poland**, while the long-term unemployment rate decreased by almost 1 percentage point between 2007 and 2012,.

The poor employment situation had a major impact on **life satisfaction**. Despite a favourable labour market situation, the percentage of **Polish** people declaring being very satisfied with their lives fell from 38% to 36% from 2007 to 2013.

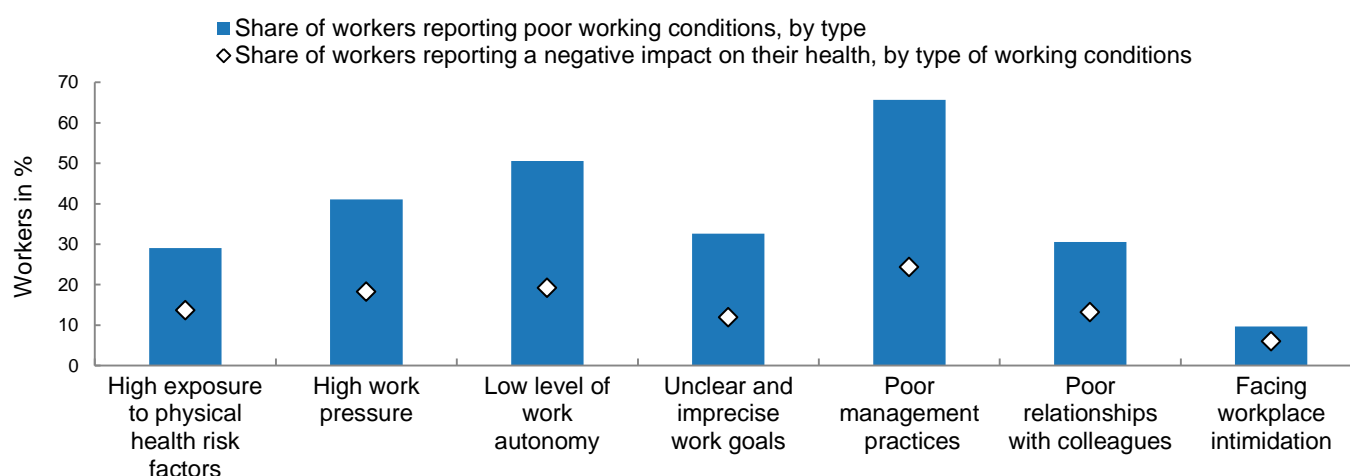
People's **trust in institutions** and in the way democracy works has also declined during the crisis. The percentage of **Polish people** reporting that they trust the government fell from 19% to 16% between 2007 and 2013.

Over the same period, **new forms of solidarity and engagement** have emerged in the countries the most impacted by the crisis. In **Poland** the opposite pattern seems to prevail. The percentage of people reporting having helped someone and having volunteered their time decreased by 1 percentage point between 2007 and 2013, while these shares increased on average in the OECD.

WELL-BEING IN THE WORKPLACE

People spend most of their daily life at work and work for a significant part of their life. Hence, the kind of jobs they have matters a great deal for their well-being. Job quality covers many different aspects, from work content to control over decisions, to interactions with colleagues, support from managers, as well as more traditional aspects such as earnings and job security. In 2010, **18% of Polish workers reported being in a poor working environment**, a share slightly below the average in European countries. Low job quality impairs the physical and mental health of workers.

Figure 2 - Working conditions and impact on Polish workers' health, 2010







Source: OECD calculations on the European Working Conditions Survey (Eurofound, 2010)

GENDER DIFFERENCES IN WELL-BEING

Gender gaps in well-being, typically in favour of men, have declined in most OECD countries over the past few decades. This trend is less clear cut in **Poland**, however. For example, the gender gap in wages has broadened over the last decade. Compared to men, **Polish women** are still less likely to have a paid job or be elected to Parliament, and more likely to spend many hours performing household tasks or to feel insecure when walking alone at night. A significant share of Polish women also report having experienced intimate partner violence.

HOW DO MEN AND WOMEN PERFORM IN POLAND?

AND IN THE OECD?

				
Women and men throughout their lifetime				
Health status				
Life expectancy at birth (years)	81	73	83	77
Share of people in good/very good health conditions	55%	61%	67%	72%
Education and skills				
Tertiary degrees awarded (all fields)	66%	34%	58%	42%
Women and men in paid and unpaid work				
Jobs and earnings				
Employment rates (tertiary educated individuals)	82%	89%	79%	88%
Wage gap between men and women	-	+10%	-	+16%
Share of poor single-adult households	41%	39%	37%	30%
Work-Life balance				
Number of hours dedicated to household tasks (per week)	35	27	32	21
Women and men in society				
Civic Engagement and governance				
Share of seats in national parliament	24%	76%	27%	73%
Personal security				
Share of women reporting intimate partner violence	16%	-	-	-
Share of people feeling safe when walking alone at night	61%	77%	61%	79%
Subjective well-being				
Levels of life satisfaction on a 0 to 10 scale	5.9	5.6	6.7	6.6



BETTER LIFE INDEX

The *Better Life Index* is an interactive web application that invites citizens to compare well-being across OECD countries and beyond on the basis of the set of well-being indicators explored in *How's Life?* Users chose what weight to give to each of the eleven dimensions shown below and therefore see how countries' perform, based on their own personal priorities in life.

11 topics to define well-being

Housing	Community	Health
Income	Education	Life Satisfaction
Jobs	Environment	Safety
	Civic Engagement	Work-Life Balance

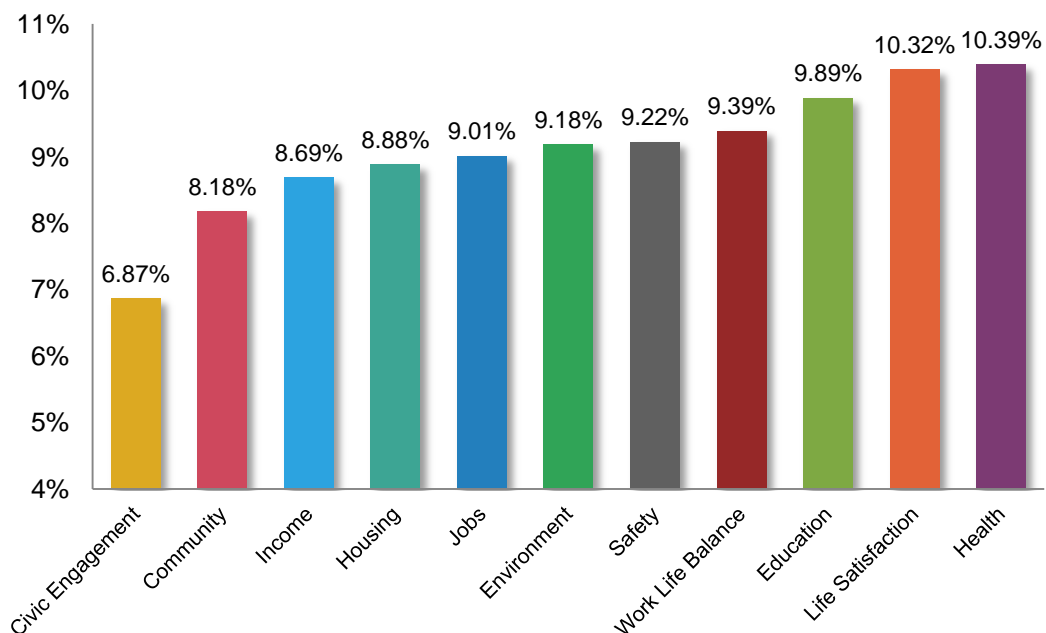
Each flower represents a country and each petal represents a topic

Rate the topics according to their importance to you

Users can share their index with other people in their networks, as well as with the OECD. This allows us to gather valuable information on the importance that users attach to various life dimensions, on how these preferences differ across countries, and on the demographic characteristics of users.

Since its launch in May 2011, the Better Life Index has attracted **over 4 million visits from just about every country on the planet (184)** and has received over **eight million page views**. And over 65,000 user-created Better Life Indexes have been shared with the OECD. The following country findings reflect voluntary submissions to the OECD via www.oecdbetterlifeindex.org. Findings can only be considered as indicative and are not representative of the population at large.

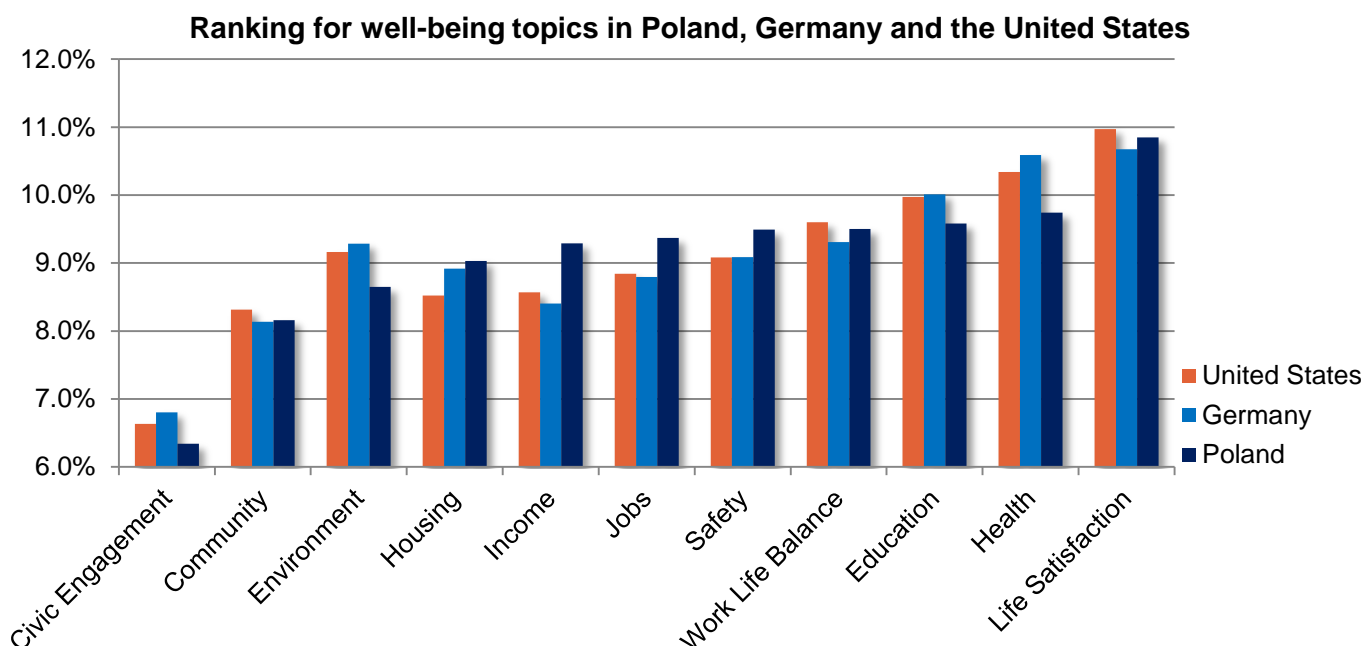
Ranking of well-being topics for all users



Health, Life Satisfaction and Education have consistently been the top rated topics overall.

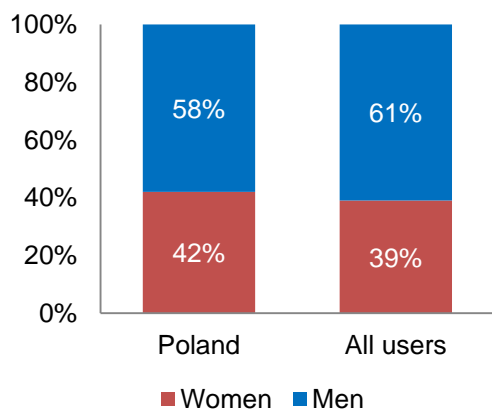
PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS OF WELL-BEING: FINDINGS FOR POLAND

Life Satisfaction, Health and Education are the three highest ranked topics by users based in Poland.¹ The following chart compares indexes submitted by users in Poland, Germany and the United States.

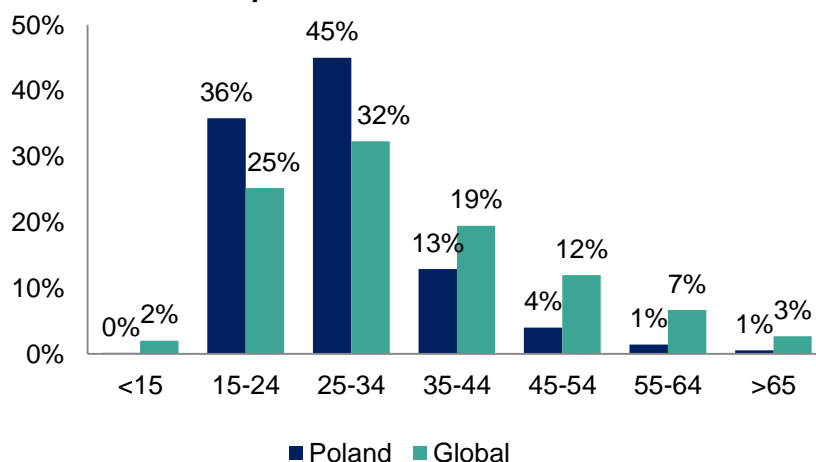


Poland is currently **22nd** in number of visits (about 44,000) to the BLI site. The top cities are Warsaw with over 16,000 visits followed by Krakow (+6,000) and Poznan (+3,000).

**Gender distribution of users
Comparison between Poland
and all users**



**Age distribution for users
Comparison between Poland and all users**



¹ User information for Poland is based on shared indexes submitted between May 2011 and May 2014. Up to date information can be found here: <http://www.oecdbetterlifeindex.org/responses/#POL>

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