

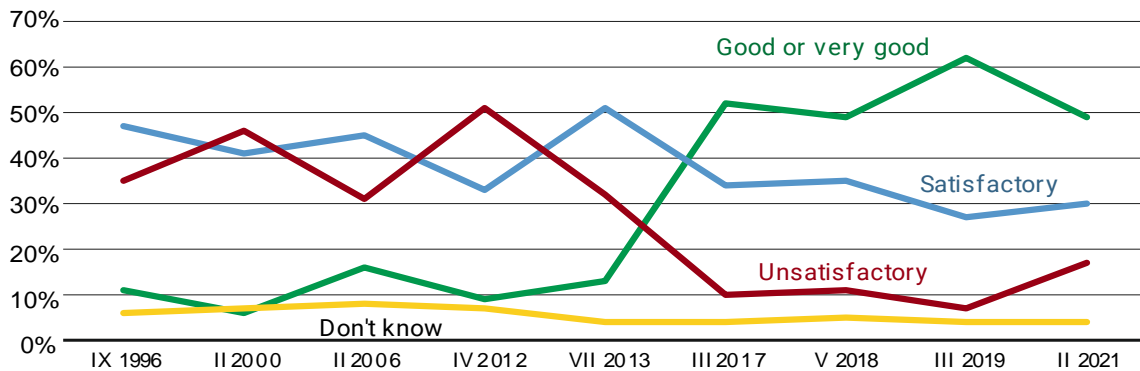
Family 500 plus program after 5 years of operation

In April, 5 years have passed since the entry into force of the Family 500 plus program, which became a showcase policy of the Law and Justice (PiS) government and one of the main sources of political credibility and election successes of this party. Initially, the child benefit from the program was payable for the second and subsequent children in the family or for each child in the case of low-income families; since July 1, 2019 it has been universal. According to assumptions, the Family 500 plus program is the main instrument of family policy, the aim of which is to improve the demographic situation, reduce poverty among children and invest in the family.

The introduction of the Family 500 plus program radically changed the perception of the state policy towards the family. In the CBOS research carried out from 1996 to 2013, the state actions towards the family were assessed as satisfactory or even unsatisfactory. Nearly a year after the introduction of the Family 500 plus program, the family policy was assessed as good or very good by more than half of respondents (52%). In March 2019, after the announcement of the extension of the program to each child, the percentage of positive assessments of family policy was at record high, reaching 62%. Current opinions are less enthusiastic, although still good. As in 2017–2018, nearly half of adult Poles (49%) have a positive opinion of the policy towards the family. On the other hand, there has been an

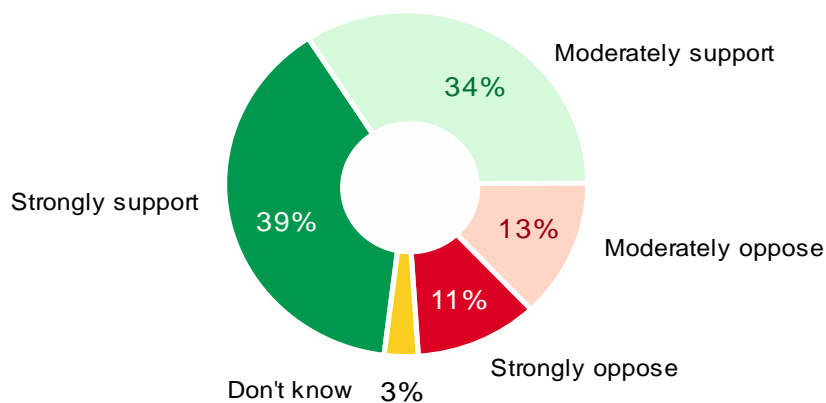
increase in the number of people assessing it as unsatisfactory from 7% in March 2019 to 17% in February 2021.

Using the grade scale from "very good" to "unsatisfactory", how do you assess the current state policy towards the family?



In February 2016, i.e. shortly before the entry into force of the Family 500 plus program, the introduction of the childcare benefit (in the form proposed at that time) was supported by 80% of respondents, and 15% of respondents opposed it. After almost a year of the program's operation, approval for it slightly decreased, but still remained very high (77% support, 20% disapproval). Three-quarters (75%) of respondents responded positively to the announcement of the introduction of the child benefit for the first child, made in March 2019, while 19% were against it. Currently, support for the program in the formula introduced in July 2019 is expressed by a total of 73% of respondents. Nearly a quarter (24%) are against it.

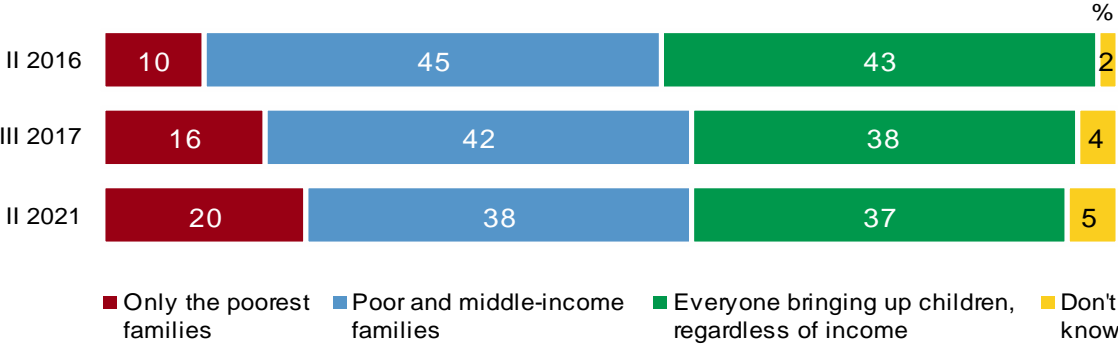
Do you support the Family 500 plus program, under which families receive a child benefit of PLN 500 for each child?



Both before the introduction of the Family 500 plus program and later, controversy was caused by the lack of an income limit entitling to child benefit (initially for the second and

subsequent children, and from July 2019 the first child). The universal nature of the service causes divergent opinions also today. Nearly two-fifths of all respondents (37%) believe that it should be paid to all bringing up children, regardless of income. The others most often believe that the childcare benefit should be available to poor and middle-income families (38%). In addition, over time, the percentage of people who believe that it should be paid only to the poorest families is growing (10% in 2016, 16% in 2017, 20% now).

Who should be entitled to the child benefit of PLN 500 per child?



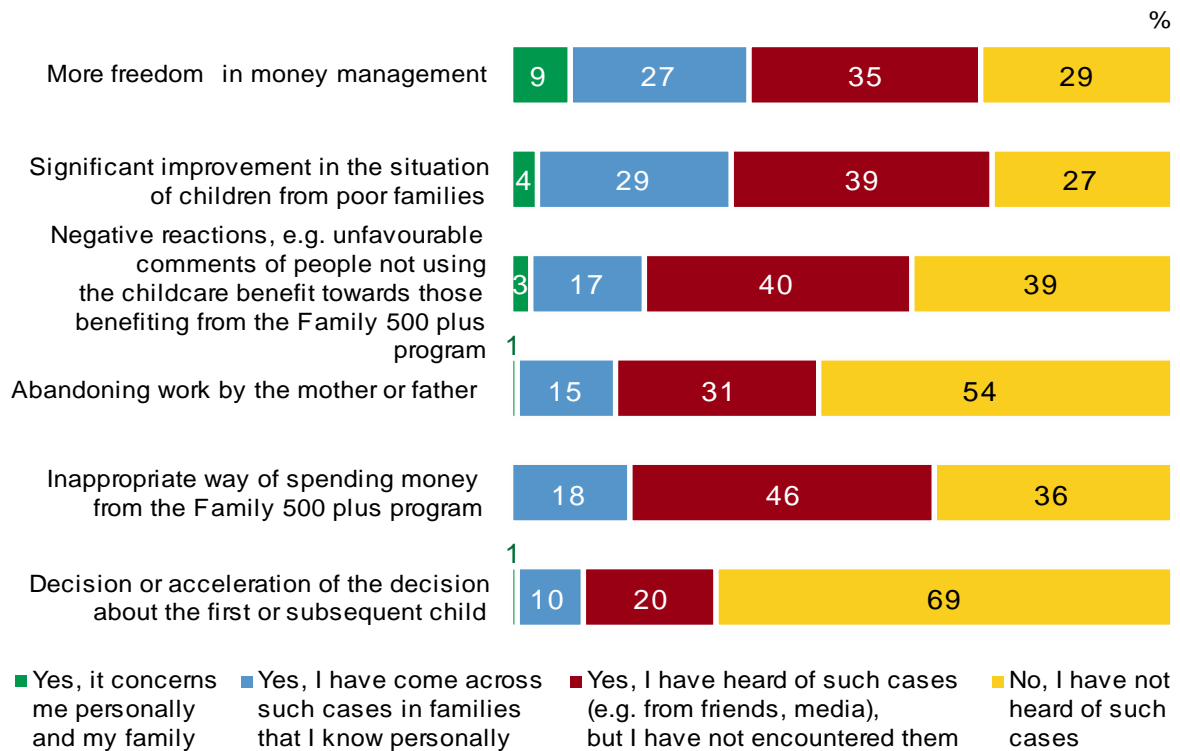
After five years of program operation, respondents most often notice its positive impact on the budgets of households with children: easier money management for families receiving the benefit (in total 36% of respondents declare that they know personally affected persons or that they themselves are in such a situation) and a significant improvement in the situation of children from poor families (33% in total). Fewer people (18%) say that they know cases of improper spending of money under the Family 500 plus program. Even before the program came into force, concerns were expressed about its possible negative impact on the labour market through economic deactivation of women. According to their own declarations, a total of 16% of respondents have encountered cases in which the mother or father resigned from work due to receiving the childcare benefit.

Overall, slightly more than one-tenth (11%) notice the higher birth-rate as an effect of the program and say that they know personally a case or cases in which the introduction of the childcare benefit influenced the decision on the first or subsequent child.

One-fifth of respondents (20%) mention negative reactions and unfavourable comments faced by the beneficiaries of the Family 500 plus program among the negative phenomena

accompanying the program which concern either the respondents personally or their acquaintances.

Have you encountered the following situations regarding families receiving the child benefit?



More information about this topic can be found in CBOS report in Polish: "Family 500 Plus Programme Five Years after Introduction", March 2021. Fieldwork for national sample: February 2021, N=1179. The random sample is representative for adult population of Poland.