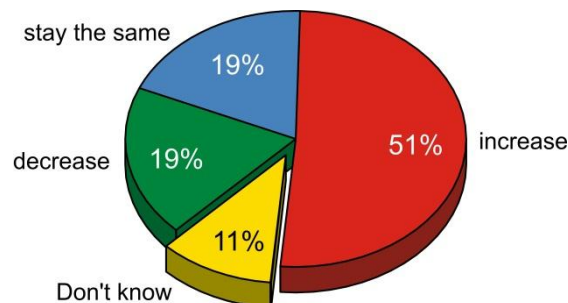


## SOCIETAL SOLIDARITY WITH SENIORS

The year 2012 was declared the European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations by the European Parliament and EU Council. This action was a response to the ageing of the European societies. Ageing consists in the increase in numbers of senior citizens among the population. The threshold for old age is usually set at 60 or 65 years, and sometimes the threshold for men (65 years) is different than for women (60 years). According to the forecast of the Central Statistical Office, the proportion of people in the retirement age will systematically increase in the years 2008-2035, and in 2035 they will constitute 26.7% of the total population of Poland, an 11-point increase compared with 2007.

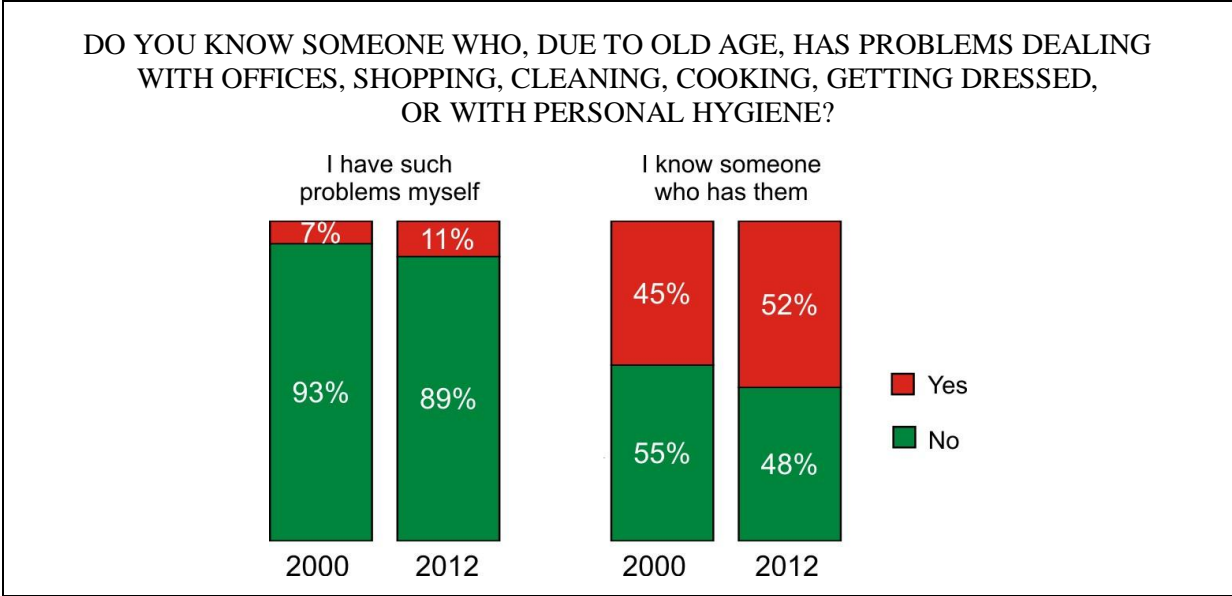
The view that the Polish society is ageing is not widespread: half of respondents express it.

IN YOUR OPINION, THE PROPORTION OF SENIORS (PEOPLE ABOVE 60) IN THE NEXT 20 YEARS IN POLAND WILL...

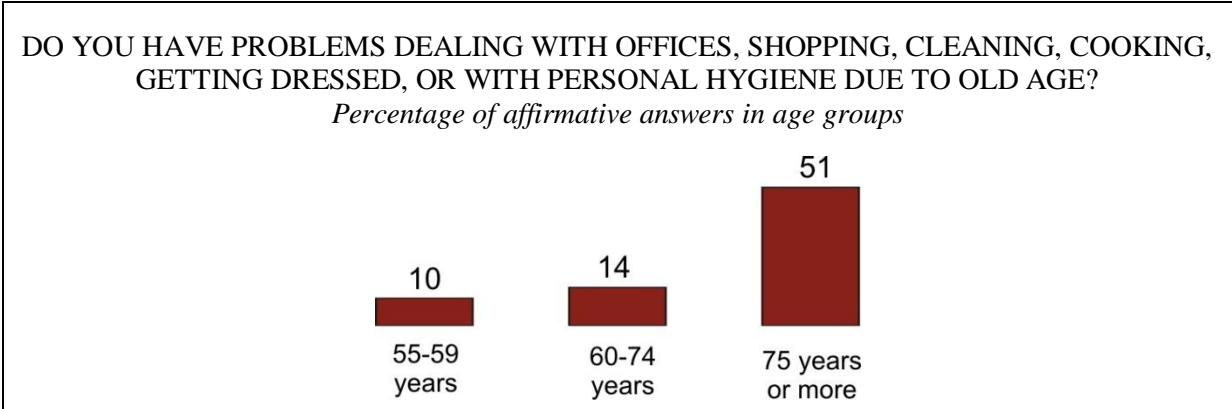


Over half of Poles (52%) know someone who has everyday problems due to old age, such as: difficulties with dealing with offices, doing the shopping, cleaning, preparing meals, getting dressed, personal hygiene. One in ten respondents admits such problems him or

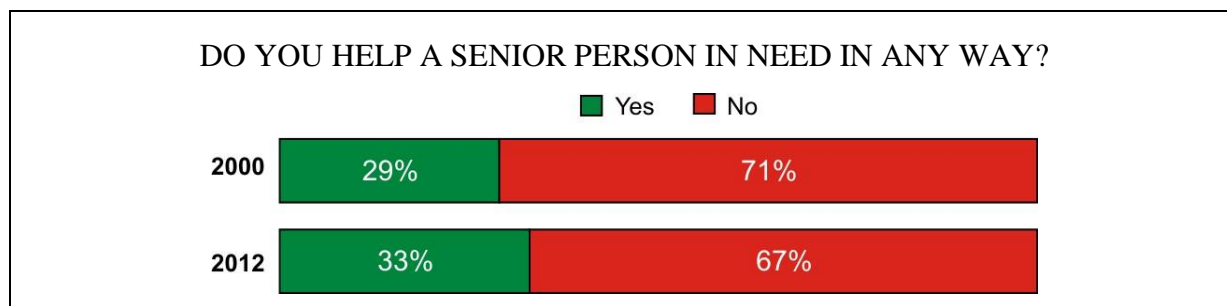
herself. Compared with 12 years ago, there is an increase in the number of respondents who know someone having such problems. The proportion of respondents admitting having such difficulties themselves has also risen slightly.



Limitations due to old age are aggravated after reaching 75. In this age group, half of respondents experience them. In the 60-74 age group one in seven respondents has problems, and in the 55-59 group one in ten declares having these difficulties.



Every third adult Pole helps a senior in need. The proportion of helpers is now higher than in 2000.



Help is usually given in families: almost three-quarters (73%) of helpers support a member of their close family. Secondly, help is given to neighbours (21%), or acquaintances (21%). Furthermore, Poles support their friends (16%), and members of distant family (12%).

Most frequently, seniors are helped with household chores: shopping, cleaning, laundry, preparing meals (78%). The other common forms of support are keeping company at home, on a walk, in church (74%), dealing with official affairs, for instance with the doctor, office or bank (70%), giving advice on important matters (66%) and caring in illness (53%). Far less frequently, support consist in assistance with personal hygiene and getting dressed (28%) or financial help (17%). One in seven (14%) respondents helping a senior person mentioned some other type of support, usually assisting in transport to different places and psychological support through conversation or sheer presence.

Usually, the helping people live close to the seniors they support: either in close neighbourhood (37%) or nearby (54%). About a quarter (27%) live together with the person they help, while one-third must cover a long distance to reach that person (13% travel within the same locality, and 23% go to another town or village).

On average, respondents helping seniors devote over 11 hrs. per week, which means that the daily workload is ca. 1.5 hours. Almost half of helpers (45%) spend less than 4 hrs. a week on helping seniors, whereas one-third (33%) spend between 4 and 10 hrs., and one-fifth (22%) devote more than 10 hours a week.

Almost all helpers work voluntarily, without pay (96%). This is related to the family nature of support. Only very few work full-time (2%) or irregularly (2%) and receive compensation. Although this type of help is typically time-consuming and unpaid, only 11% of carers consider it tedious. Almost half (46%) does not find it a great burden, while 42% consider it not burdensome at all.

---

More information about this topic can be found in CBOS report in Polish: *"Societal solidarity with seniors"*, June 2012. Fieldwork for national sample: May 2012, N=1017. The random address sample is representative for adult population of Poland.