

Expectations about abortion law

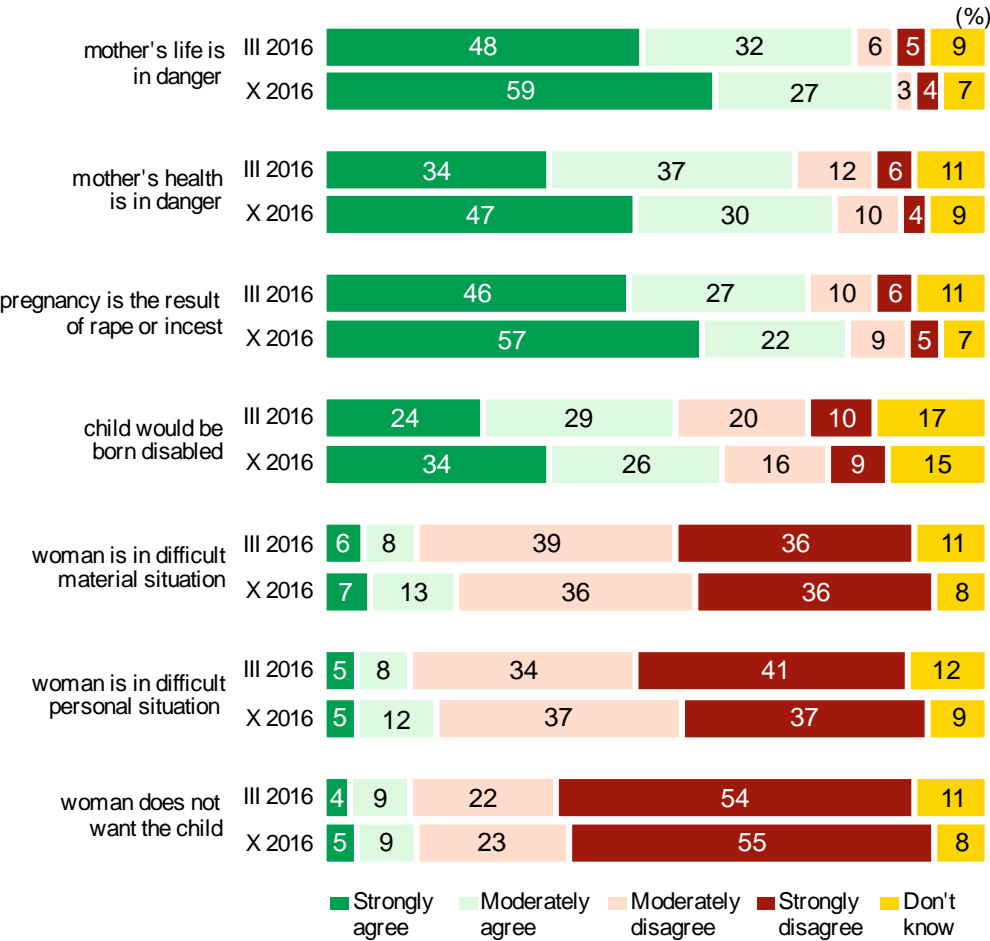
The abortion debate returned to the public sphere in Poland due to citizens' draft of legislation introducing restrictions to the 1993 law regulating abortion. The law currently allows abortion in three cases: if it is a threat to mother's life or health, if it originated by a criminal act (e.g. rape or incest) or if there is a high probability of severe and irreversible damage to the foetus or of its incurable life-threatening illness. A “black protest” was organized around Poland to oppose the restrictions, which would only allow abortion in case of a threat to mother's life. Thousands of protesters participated in this event.

In recent years (since 2007) there has been a decline in social acceptance of abortion, including in cases when it is legally available. The attempt to introduce restrictions to the law, however, reversed the trend. In the last months (from March to October 2016) there has been an increase in the proportion of people expressing strong support for legal abortion in cases included in the law.

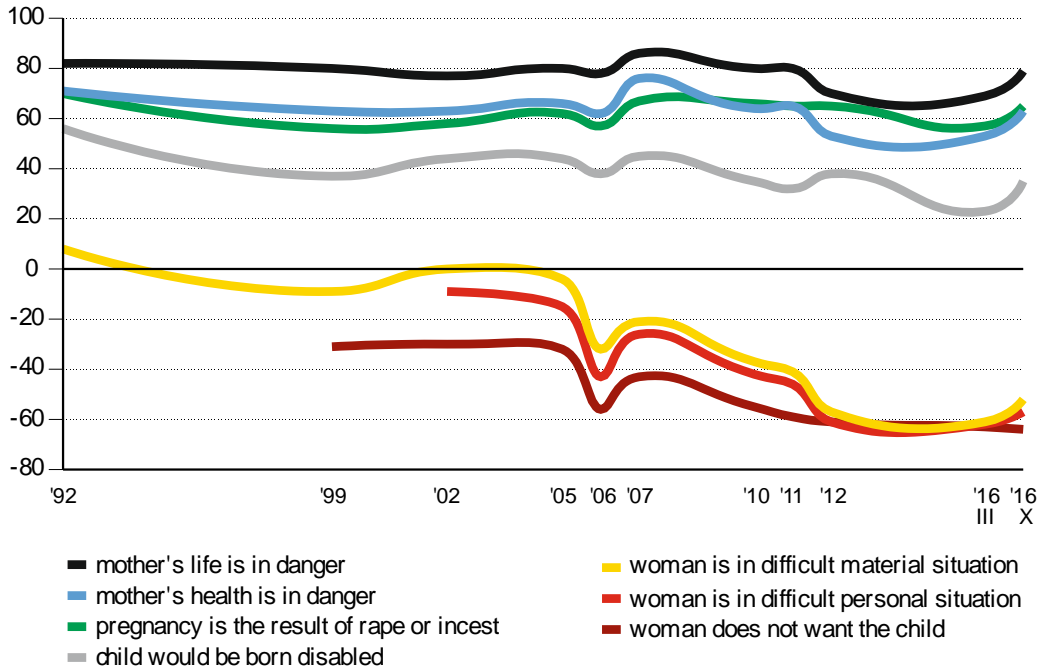
There has been a weaker rise in support for legal abortion if a woman is in bad personal or material situation. Opinions about conditions for legal abortion are predominantly consistent with the current law. The acceptance of legal abortion in case of danger to mother's life (86%) or health (77%) and in case of pregnancy due to crime (79%) is almost

universal. A smaller proportion of respondents (60%) think that abortion should be legal if it is known that the child would be born handicapped. For three-quarters of respondents, difficult personal or material situation of the woman, as well as unwillingness to bear a child are not conditions justifying an abortion. In these cases it is accepted by 20%, 17% and 14% of respondents, respectively.

Do you agree that abortion be legally available if...



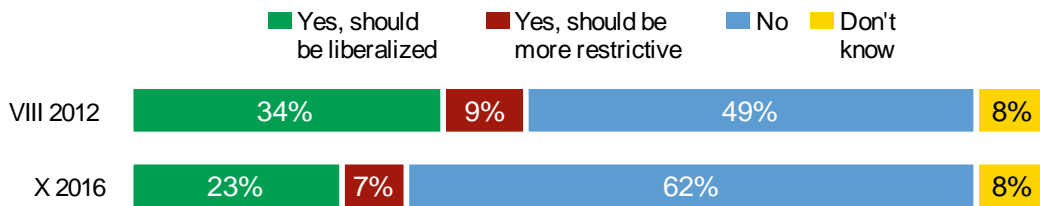
Do you agree that abortion be legally available if...



*Difference between the proportion of "agree" and "disagree"
Don't know omitted*

A large majority of respondents (62%) believe that the existing law should not be changed. Less than a quarter (23%) think that the law should be liberalized, while relatively few (7%) would like it to be more restrictive. In the last four years the support for the status quo has strengthened.

Should the abortion law be changed?



More information about this topic can be found in CBOS report in Polish: "What Abortion Law Do Poles Expect?", October 2016. Fieldwork for national sample: October 2016, N=937. The random address sample is representative for adult population of Poland.