State policy towards families: evaluation and expectations

CBOS surveys summarizing the achievements of Beata Szydło government after two years of activity showed that policy towards the family belonged to the strongest sides of that government. This was due to the entry into force of the “Family 500 plus” program, under which families receive a benefit in the amount of PLN 500 for each second and subsequent child, and for each child in low income families. The government of Mateusz Morawiecki announced the continuation of activities aimed at supporting families and facilitating the implementation of procreation plans. Soon the “Good Start” program will be implemented, providing for the payment of PLN 300 for all students once a year. From 2019, the solutions comprising the “Mama plus” program are to be implemented: guaranteed payment of the minimum pension for mothers of at least four children, free medicines for pregnant women, facilities for mothers who study, a bonus for quick birth of another child. Deputy Prime Minister Beata Szydło also announced vouchers for sport and culture for young people.
The introduction of the “Family 500 plus” program radically changed the perception of the state policy towards the family. In CBOS surveys carried out from 1996 to 2013, the activities of the state towards the family were assessed as satisfactory or even unsatisfactory. After the introduction of the “Family 500 plus” program, good and very good grades have prevailed.

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Good or very good</th>
<th>Satisfactory</th>
<th>Unsatisfactory</th>
<th>Don't know</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>11</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>II 2000</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>7</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>8</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>7</td>
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<td>VII 2013</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>III 2017</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>49</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

In public opinion, the state should prioritize provision of adequate living conditions for families with children. Among the three most useful instruments to support families that could encourage having children are: parental benefit from the “Family 500 plus” program, help for young married couples in obtaining housing and tax breaks for families with children. Relatively many people pointed to the need to guarantee better access to nurseries and other forms of care for young children.
What forms of family support, currently functioning or postulated, are the most useful and can encourage having children?

Benefits for families with children up to 18 years of age ("Family 500 plus" program) - 40%
Help for young married couples in getting housing - 35%
Tax breaks for people bringing up children - 33%
Better availability of nurseries and other forms of day care for young children - 26%
Help in returning to work or finding employment for mothers of small children - 22%
Year-long parental leave - 20%
Better availability of kindergartens - 20%
Creating flexible working time opportunities for parents of young children - 20%
System of discounts for large families ("Large Family Card") - 19%
High benefits for families in a difficult financial situation - 17%
Retirement system beneficial for mothers - 14%
None of the above - 2%
Don't know - 3%

According to respondents, the most needed solutions among those announced by the government are the guarantees of the minimum pension for mothers of at least four children and PLN 300 for school supplies for each student. The relatively least needed are, in public opinion, vouchers for sport and culture for young people.

Which of these solutions are the most needed?

Guarantees of the minimum pension for mothers of at least four children - 40%
PLN 300 for school supplies for each student - 39%
Free medicines for pregnant women - 34%
Extension of parental leave by 3 months the case of a quick birth of subsequent child (within 2 years from the birth of the previous one) - 31%
Facilitated reconciliation of studies and motherhood for mothers who study - 22%
Vouchers for sport and culture for youth - 15%
None of the above - 2%
Don't know - 3%

More information about this topic can be found in CBOS report in Polish: "State Policy towards Families - Evaluation and Expectations", June 2018. Fieldwork for national sample: May 2018, N=1121. The random address sample is representative for adult population of Poland.