2022, a year marked by the war

The years 2020 and 2021 were recorded in collective memory as the time of the COVID-19 pandemic. Last year, however, was remembered primarily as the time of war. Nearly two-thirds of respondents (65%) said that Russia’s attack on Ukraine was the most important event in the world last year. A further 7% cited the world’s (or at least its large part) solidarity response to this aggression as the most important aspect of the issue. There was talk of international military, financial and humanitarian aid for Ukraine, political support for its authorities, as well as sanctions imposed on Russia. Among other events, the COVID-19 pandemic was mentioned above all (4% of respondents), but it was rather about its effective elimination than about the threat it poses.

The war in Ukraine was considered the most important event of the past year in the national dimension by 38% of respondents. In addition, one-ninth (11%) pointed in this context to the influx of refugees from Ukraine, as well as help for them. Other events took a back seat. They included inflation and the depreciation of money resulting in a general increase in prices (4%), and also the end of the pandemic (3%). Less often, respondents mentioned: problems with the supply of energy resources and acceleration of changes in the energy sector (2%), new weapons for the armed forces (2%) and lack of funds from the National Reconstruction Plan (2%).

More information about this topic can be found in CBOS report in Polish: "Year of War - The Most Important Event of the Year 2022 for Poland and for the World", January 2023. Fieldwork for national sample: January 2023, N=1028. The random sample is representative for adult population of Poland.

Polish opinions about the war in Ukraine and Ukrainian refugees

The percentage of respondents who feel that the war in Ukraine threatens Poland’s security is quite stable and has been in the range of 70% to 79% since April last year. January’s result (79%) falls within this range, at its upper limit – such a high level of concern was last noted in April 2022, shortly after the outbreak of war. Compared to the previous survey, we also observe a clear, 7-point increase in the number of “definitely agree” answers.
Since June last year, Poles’ optimism about the outcome of the war in Ukraine gradually increased. At the end of 2022, most respondents predicted a scenario favourable to Ukraine. The current January measurement breaks this trend. Now, the most common view is again that Ukraine will have to give up part of its territory (31%, an increase of 8 points since December). The percentage of people who believe that Russia will withdraw from the attacked territories of Ukraine (28%, a decrease of 6 points) or that it will also withdraw from the territories it occupied in 2014 (13%, a decrease of 7 points) has declined. At the same time, few people still believe that Russia will subjugate all of Ukraine (2%).

How do you think the war will end?

Most Poles (59%) feel that the international community is doing enough to help Ukraine. This opinion is now more common than in the first months of the war, i.e. in April 2022.

Do you agree that the international community is doing enough to help Ukraine?

The vast majority of Poles (78%) still support the acceptance of Ukrainian refugees by our country. This percentage has remained relatively stable since June 2022, at around 80%. One-seventh (14%) are against accepting refugees and this result has also not changed significantly since June last year.

Since May 2022, about half of Poles consistently declared that they or their household members help refugees from Ukraine voluntarily and free of charge. In January 2023, the percentage of those declaring assistance to Ukrainian refugees clearly decreased by 11 percentage points, from 52% in December 2022 to 41% in January 2023. As the change is not accompanied by a decrease in support for accepting refugees, it can be assumed that it is rather related to high inflation which has forced Poles to economize.

Do you agree that Poland should accept Ukrainian refugees from the areas affected by the conflict?

The January results also indicate a fairly clear deterioration in the perceived attitude of Poles towards Ukrainian refugees. Still, the majority of respondents believe that it is positive (62% vs. 82% in April 2022). One-fifth (21% vs. 11% earlier) believe that this attitude is mostly indifferent, and only one-ninth (11%) consider it negative.

In your opinion, what is the general attitude of Poles towards refugees from Ukraine?

More information about this topic can be found in CBOS report in Polish: ”Poles about War in Ukraine and Ukrainian Refugees”, January 2023. Fieldwork for national sample: January 2023, N=1028. The random sample is representative for adult population of Poland.
Subjective well-being in 2022

In 2022, more than half of Poles often felt satisfied that they had succeeded in something (55%) and were proud of their achievements (51%). Nearly half of them repeatedly felt sure that everything was going well (47%) and felt curious, excited about something (46%). Negative emotions were reported less frequently. The most common feeling was nervousness and irritability (43% of the respondents experienced it many times in the past year). Every third respondent (34%) often felt discouraged or tired, and one-fourth (26%) felt helpless. One-fifth (20%) felt unhappy many times in 2022 and almost the same number (19%) often felt angry. Some respondents (1%) had suicidal thoughts.

The frequency of experiencing the listed emotions in 2022 has not changed significantly compared to 2021, and the recorded changes are generally positive. Fewer people often experienced helplessness (decrease by 5 percentage points), discouragement (decrease by 3 percentage points) and irritability and nervousness (decrease by 2 percentage points). There are more people who have felt proud of their achievements (increase by 4 points) and satisfaction with the fact that something went well in life (increase by 2 points).

Respondents declaring they felt the following emotions often:

- **Stress, nervousness**
- **Exhaustion**
- **Helplessness**
- **Anger**
- **Depression, unhappiness**
- **Suicidal thoughts**

Statistical analyses show that mental well-being depends to a large extent on the living standards. The better the assessment of the material living conditions, the better the well-being. People who assess their own material living conditions as bad have particularly poor mental condition. They not only experience negative emotions more often (and positive emotions less frequently) than people in good conditions, but also feel negative emotional states more often than positive. Most of them declare that they often have felt discouraged (62%) and nervous (56%) in the past year. Almost half of this group (48%) have often felt helpless, while nearly two-fifths (39%) have felt unhappy many times, and more than onethird (36%) have been angry.

Taking into account other socio-demographic characteristics, it can be concluded that the well-being is worse than average among young people up to 24 years of age, especially students. Young people in education are among those who most often declare frequent feelings such as: nervousness, irritability (50%), helplessness (44%), and anger (30%). In addition, school and university students more often than all other analysed groups feel discouraged or tired (70% of them repeatedly), unhappy (46%) and have had suicidal thoughts (8%).

Describing the moods in their environment, more than four-fifths of Poles (83%) notice mainly negative emotions, most often concern or fear of what the future will bring (60%), less often general dissatisfaction and lack of faith in any improvement (14%) or apathy, resignation, and acceptance of fate (9%). Only a total of 13% of respondents, when describing the social climate in their environment, notice primarily positive emotions: relaxation and satisfaction that things are improving (9%), and less often, confidence that things will get better (4%).

2022 was another year in which we observed a deterioration of sentiments in social environment. The clear decline in sentiment related to the COVID-19 pandemic has therefore deepened, probably due to the war in Ukraine, the energy crisis and the increase in prices.

How would you in general describe the current mood among people with whom you come into contact on a daily basis at your workplace and your place of residence? Which of the following terms best describes it?

Compared to the previous measurement, there was a clear rise in the number of people noticing fear of what the future will bring (increase by 15 points). The percentage of people who notice uncertainty about the future in their environment is now at the highest level since 1988. The number of people who perceive relaxation around them
and satisfaction that things are getting better has decreased by 7 points. Interestingly, the perceived apathy, resignation and acceptance of fate have also decreased by 7 points and are now at the lowest level in the history of CBOS research. Thus, despite the uncertain situation, Poles are not willing to react with passivity and resignation. Massive social involvement in helping refugees fleeing war-torn Ukraine could have reduced the feeling of helplessness and reduced apathy.

More information about this topic can be found in CBOS report in Polish: “Psychological Wellbeing in 2022”, January 2023. Fieldwork for national sample: December 2022, N=1018. The random sample is representative for adult population of Poland.

Reproductive plans of women

According to the declarations obtained in CBOS research, 17% of women aged 18-45 plan to have children in the next 3-4 years, and another 15% want them in a more distant perspective.

Do you plan to have children in the future?

Responses of women aged 18-45.

![Graph showing reproductive plans of women]

Compared to 2017, the share of women aged 18–45 planning to have children fell from 41% to 32%, and the proportion declaring such intentions within 3 or 4 years decreased from 25% to 17%. This decline can be partly explained by the demographic changes that took place at that time. Compared to 2017, the percentage of younger women, aged up to 34, decreased in the analysed group, while the percentage of older women, aged 35–39, and above all those aged 40–45, increased.

Women’s reproductive plans are closely related to their age and the number of children they already have. In general, the percentage of women planning to have children decreases with age, while childbearing intentions in the near future are most often declared by women aged 30–34 (31%), and slightly less often by those aged 25–29 (27%). The intention to enlarge the family is most often declared by childless women (58%), followed by women with one child (33%). Respondents with two or more children relatively rarely intend to expand their family (7%).

Taking into account the combined effect of age and number of children, it can be noticed that the intention to have children, regardless of whether in the short or long term, is most often declared by childless respondents under 30 (67%), and slightly less frequently by women under 35 with one child (64%). On the other hand, short-term childbearing plans are most often noted among respondents aged up to 35 with one child (47%), followed by those without children who are at least 30 years old (32%).

Reproductive plans of women

Women aged 18-45 - total

- Yes, in the next 3 or 4 years: 15%
- Yes, in more distant future: 66%
- I don’t plan/I don’t know: 19%

Women with one child

- Yes, in the next 3 or 4 years: 24%
- Yes, in more distant future: 0%
- I don’t plan/I don’t know: 76%

Women with two or more children

- Yes, in the next 3 or 4 years: 2%
- Yes, in more distant future: 93%
- I don’t plan/I don’t know: 7%

Among women who already have children, plans to enlarge the family, especially short-term ones, are more often declared by respondents with children up to 4 years of age (28% of them plan to have children in the next 3 or 4 years). Respondents whose youngest children are 5 years old or more only rarely have childbearing plans (3% in the short term).

More information about this topic can be found in CBOS report in Polish: "Women’s Reproductive Attitudes", January 2023. Aggregated data from three subsequent monthly surveys fielded from September to November 2022. The total number of women aged 18-45 was N=669.