

Foster care in 2021


1.1%

Increase in the number of children in foster care compared to 2020

At the end of 2021, 72.3 thousand children deprived entirely or partly of their own family, were staying in foster care, of which 56.4 thousand children in family foster care and 15.9 thousand children in institutional foster care. In comparison to 2020 the number of children in foster care increased by 1.1%.

Forms of family foster care

At the end of 2021 family foster care functioned in the form of related, not professional and professional families which amounted to 35 915 and in the form of foster homes – 724 units. Among foster families, related families accounted for 64.2%, not professional families – 29.9%, and professional families – 5.9%.

Family foster care

The function of foster family was fulfilled by 18 983 married couples and by 16 932 lone persons. The families which admitted one child accounted for 72.6%, two children – 18.0%, three children – 5.5% and four or more children 3.7% of all foster families. Persons at age of 51–70 accounted for 53.6% of the total number of persons performing the role of foster family. Foster homes were run by 619 married couples and by 105 lone persons. Most persons (78.5%) performing the function of a family foster home were in the 41–60 age group. Nobody in the age group of 18–21 took over running family foster care.

Children in family foster care

There were 56 357 children in family foster care, including 5 108 children in foster homes. Among all persons who were provided with foster care, 6 309 had legal confirmation of disability, moderate disability or severe disability and 2 627 were orphans. Considering age of children placed in family foster care, children at age of 7–13 constituted the major group (19 518 persons), both in foster families and in foster homes, while children at age under 1 were in the smallest group of the family foster care (892). 9 664 children were admitted for the first time in family foster care in 2021. In 2021, 6 933 children up to age of 18 left family foster care. The majority of them (31.3%) returned to their own family. 1 292 children went to adoption families, while 1 905 children to other forms of family foster care. 909 children left family foster care because they were moved to institutional foster care and 39 children left family foster care, because of transferring them to social assistance house. Out of 3 980 adult residents who left foster care in 2021, 2 052 set up their own households, while 174 returned to their own families or relatives. Among the residents who left foster care at age over 18, 1 485 did not start to lead independent life.

18.05.2022

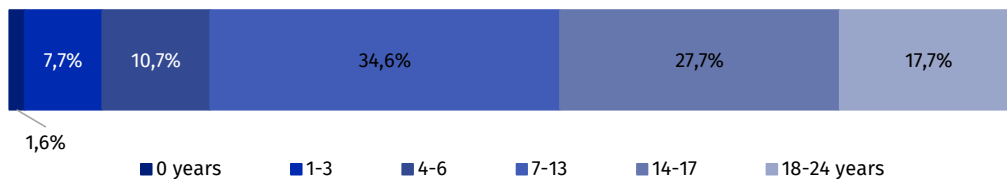
Related families accounted for over a half of all foster families

Nearly 54% of persons performing the function of foster family were at age of 51–70

Among children who were provided with family types of foster care, 6 309 had legal confirmation of disability

Chart 1. Structure of children in family foster care by age groups in 2021

As of 31 December



Institutional foster care facilities

At the end of 2021 in Poland there were 1 273 institutional foster care facilities, including 1 260 education and care facilities, 10 regional care and therapy centres and 3 intervention pre-adoptive centres. The care and education facilities encompass socialisation centres (777), family centres (219), intervention centres (51), specialist therapy centres (31) and tasks combining centres (182).

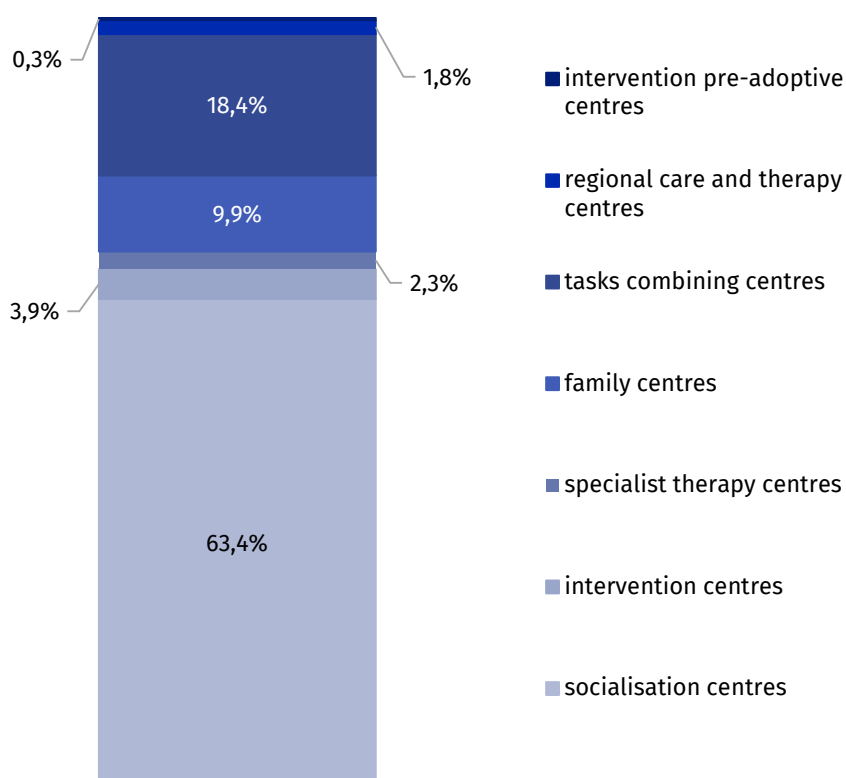
Socialisation centres accounted for 61% of all institutional foster care facilities

Places in institutional foster care

There were 16 789 places in institutional foster care facilities, including 10 641 places in socialisation centres, 3 087 places in task combining centres and in family, intervention and specialist therapy centres 1 657, 650 and 386 respectively. In other facilities in total there were 368 places.

Chart 2. Structure of places in institutional foster care facilities by type of facility in 2021

As of 31 December



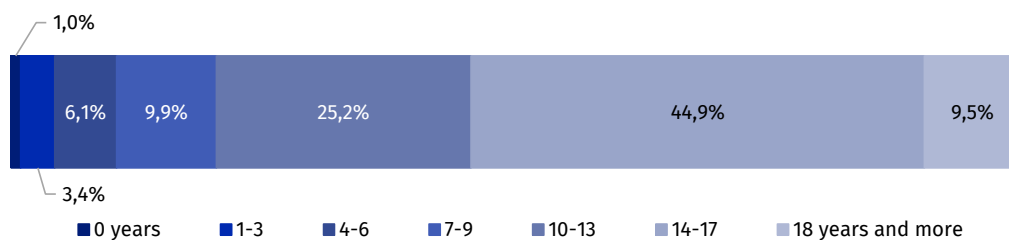
Residents in institutional foster care

At the end of 2021, there were 15 931 residents in institutional foster care. Residents at age of 14–17 constituted the major group (7 154 children). The second biggest group (4 018 persons) were children at age of 10–13. The smallest was the youngest age group under age of 1 (158 residents). In institutional foster care facilities there were 1 514 adult residents who continued their education.

Children at age of 14–17 constituted the major group of residents (44.9%)

Chart 3. Structure of residents in institutional foster care by age groups in 2021

As of 31 December



Throughout the year 2021, 4 530 residents up to age of 18 left institutional foster care facilities because of varied reasons. The major group (35.9%) were residents who returned to their own family. Transfer to other type of institutional foster care was the reason for leaving the facilities for 25.4% of children. 22.3% of residents were placed in family foster care, while 7.0% went to adoption families. Out of 2 043 residents at age over 18 who left the facilities, 1 104 set up their own household and 721 returned to their own family.

Volunteers in institutional foster care

In 2021 in institutional foster care 833 volunteers did charity work. 765 persons attended the works of care and education facilities, 49 persons worked for regional care and therapy centres and 19 volunteers were involved in the works of pre-adoptive intervention centres. Among care and education centres most volunteers supported the activities of socialisation centres (75.6%) and the smallest group worked in intervention centres (3.7%).

Legally disabled persons in institutional foster care

By the end of 2021 there were 1 858 disabled residents of institutional foster care. In care and education centres there were 1 651 persons certified as disabled while in regional care and therapy centres and pre-adoptive intervention centres – 205 and 2 persons respectively. In socialisation centres the disabled persons accounted for 62.0% of total of disabled residents in care and education centres, 17.8% in tasks combining centres, 11.0% in family centres, 7.0% in specialist therapy centres and 2.2% in intervention centres.

Among all residents of institutional foster care the disabled persons accounted for 11.7%

Table 1. Foster care by voivodships in 2021

As of 31 December

Voivodships	Family care		Institutional care	
	families	children	facilities	families
POLAND	36 639	56 357	1 273	15 931
Dolnośląskie	3 916	5 848	158	2 051
Kujawsko-pomorskie	2 201	3 436	89	1 209
Lubelskie	1 722	2 659	93	950
Lubuskie	1 331	2 009	33	414
Łódzkie	2 845	4 152	75	1 015
Małopolskie	1 995	2 965	88	913
Mazowieckie	4 085	6 018	138	1 672
Opolskie	1 000	1 563	25	411
Podkarpackie	1 155	1 782	50	720
Podlaskie	921	1 420	29	390
Pomorskie	2 400	4 189	78	993
Śląskie	4 846	7 445	180	2 191
Świętokrzyskie	992	1 420	46	572
Warmińsko-mazurskie	1 796	2 816	61	761
Wielkopolskie	3 122	4 868	68	871
Zachodniopomorskie	2 312	3 767	62	798

In the case of quoting data from the Statistics Poland, please provide information: "Statistics Poland data source", and in the case of publishing calculations made on data published by the Statistics Poland, please provide information: "Own study based on Statistics Poland data".

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Related information

[Social assistance, child and family services in 2020](#)

Data available in databases

[Database Local Data Bank – health care and social welfare](#)

Terms used in official statistics

[Pre-adoptive intervention centre](#)

[Family foster care coordinator](#)

[The organiser of family foster care](#)

[Foster care](#)

[Centres combining tasks of the centres](#)

[Care and education centre for children and young people](#)

[Intervention centre](#)

[Family centre](#)

[Socialization centre](#)

[Specialist therapy centre](#)

[Poviat centre for family support](#)

[Regional care and therapy centre](#)