

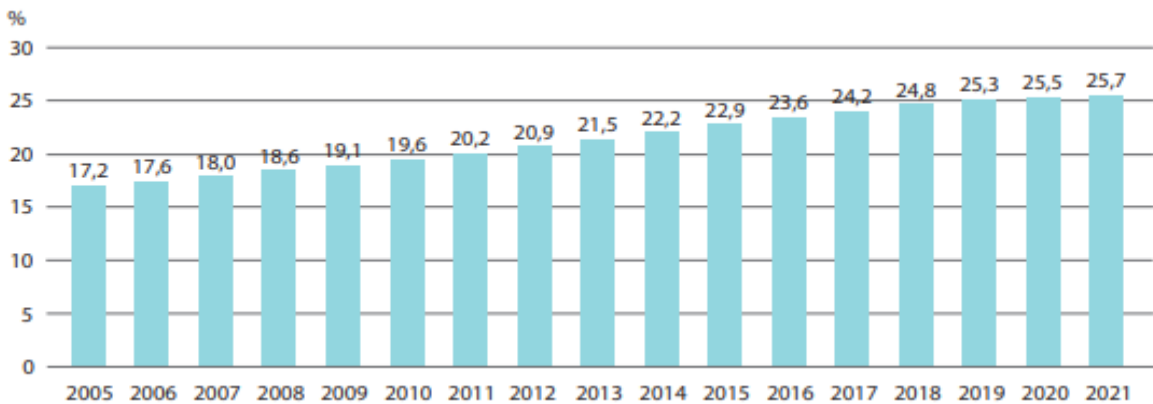
# Inequalities in the Law and Senior Policy in Poland in the Context of European Union Standards

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## INTRODUCTION

At the end of 2021, the total population of Poland was 37,9 million people and was by 180.9 thousand lower than in 2020. Apart from the ongoing demographic processes, the population decline has been significantly influenced by the ongoing COVID-19 epidemic. The resulting changes in the age structure were also observed from the ongoing aging process of the population. However, in 2021, as in previous years, there was an increase in the number of Polish residents aged 60 and more. From 2005 to 2021, there has been an increase from 17,2% to 25,7%, according to data from the Central Statistical Office (GUS):



Sytuacja osób starszych w Polsce w 2021 r., Central Statistical Office, Urząd Statystyczny w Białymstoku, Warszawa, Białystok, 2022  
[https://stat.gov.pl/files/gfx/portalinformacyjny/pl/defaultaktualnosci/6002/2/4/1/sytuacja\\_osob\\_starszych\\_w\\_polsce\\_w\\_2021\\_r.pdf](https://stat.gov.pl/files/gfx/portalinformacyjny/pl/defaultaktualnosci/6002/2/4/1/sytuacja_osob_starszych_w_polsce_w_2021_r.pdf)

## Problems

This situation not only raises concerns about the functioning of the pension system in Poland but also about the fair distribution of goods and services among older individuals, including access to prestigious job positions, education in the use of new technologies, opportunities for social engagement, and access to healthcare.

Numerous statistical and economic studies conducted in Poland indicate a significant level of inequality in the treatment and perception of older individuals by society and political authorities. In the recent parliamentary elections in Poland, the issue of older individuals was barely noticeable. To gain electoral votes, politicians mainly emphasized the need to increase pensions, without recognizing that money alone does not solve all the problems faced by the growing elderly population.

## Polish and EU policies concerning the care of the elderly

EU does not have a unified policy specifically dedicated to the care of the elderly, however it uses **European Pillar of Social Rights (EPSR)**. In Poland, the **'Social Policy for Older Persons 2030'** has been adopted, addressing issues including safety, health, combating loneliness, active participation in social life, as well as adapting infrastructure to the needs and capabilities of such individuals.

## De lege ferenda conclusions:

- Sustainable financing and availability of long-term care services
- Promoting healthy aging
- Support for caregivers
- Infrastructure adaptation
- Development of supporting technologies
- Fight against discrimination and social exclusion