

Kraków, 11.12.2020

**Opinion on the proposal for a parliamentary resolution**  
on access for individuals that travel to Iceland for abortion

On behalf of the citizens of Poland I would like to thank you for taking care of such an important issue presented in this proposal. Polish women have been deprived of their right to decide about themselves, while the access to proper health care during pregnancy is considered to be a basic human right. Therefore, I appreciate the opportunity to express my support for this legislation, which can ensure that the autonomy of women, who were denied abortion in Poland, is respected by providing them with secured access to health care.

I believe that the criteria of holding in one's possession the European Health Insurance Card, of foreign citizenship and permanent residence outside of Iceland do not create any serious obstacles for the Polish women. These requirements are necessary and reasonable in order to ensure safety and prevent misuse.

However, I am deeply concerned about the obligation to prove the inability to perform an abortion in the country of residence. A pregnant person in Poland does not receive any information about the possibility to terminate their pregnancy from the healthcare system, unless they fall into one of three cases stated in the Polish law and even then, the actual access to abortion is very limited. However, it would be very hard to obtain a written document confirming this state of affairs since many doctors conceal the results of medical examinations from their patients in such circumstances or refuse to perform an abortion using 'conscience clause' as an excuse. Moreover, while on 22nd October 2020 the Constitutional Tribunal ruled that abortion in the case of severe and irreversible fetus abnormalities is unconstitutional, the verdict has not been published yet which means that it is not in force. Regardless of that, a lot of hospitals issued statements that they would already stop performing abortions in fear of legal consequences. Thus, in many cases, the inability to provide a proof of the lack of access to abortion may be a major obstacle for the Polish women who wish to terminate their pregnancy in Iceland.

Nevertheless, given the large proportion of Polish citizens in the immigrant community in Iceland, the adoption of the proposed resolution, which I also see as an expression of solidarity with the Polish women, will have a positive impact on the social mood. Although some of the Polish women will make use of the right granted to them in the new legislation, most of them will still choose the neighboring countries, therefore I strongly believe that the health system in Iceland will not be overburdened.

Once again, I express my gratitude for the opportunity to articulate my opinion on the resolution and I hope to have contributed to its elaboration and adoption.

Yours faithfully,

**Member of the Parliament of Poland**

*Daria Gosek-Popiołek*

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