

## Foster care in Opolskie Voivodship in 2023

5 June, 2023

 **2.0%**

Increase in the number of children in foster care in relation to 2022

In Opolskie Voivodship, at the end of 2023 there were 2.0 thousand children in foster care, who were completely or partially deprived of the care of natural family, including 1.6 thousand in family foster care. Compared to 2022 the number of children staying in foster care increased.

### Family foster care

Family foster care might be exercised in the form of foster family as well as foster home. In Opolskie Voivodship, at the end of 2023 a childcare was provided by 969 foster families and 26 foster homes. On an annual basis the number of foster families increased, however in relation to 2015 it decreased. In the case of foster homes the tendency was reversed.

In 2023 there was an increase in the number of foster families, while a decrease of foster homes in relation to 2022

**Table 1. Family foster care**  
As of 31 December

Specification	2015	2022	2023		
	In absolute numbers		2015=100	2022=100	
<b>Foster families</b>	<b>987</b>	<b>953</b>	<b>969</b>	<b>98.2</b>	<b>101.7</b>
Related to the child	635	598	605	95.3	101.2
Non-professional	314	298	307	97.8	103.0
Professional <sup>a</sup>	38	57	57	150.0	100.0
<b>Foster homes</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>136.8</b>	<b>96.3</b>

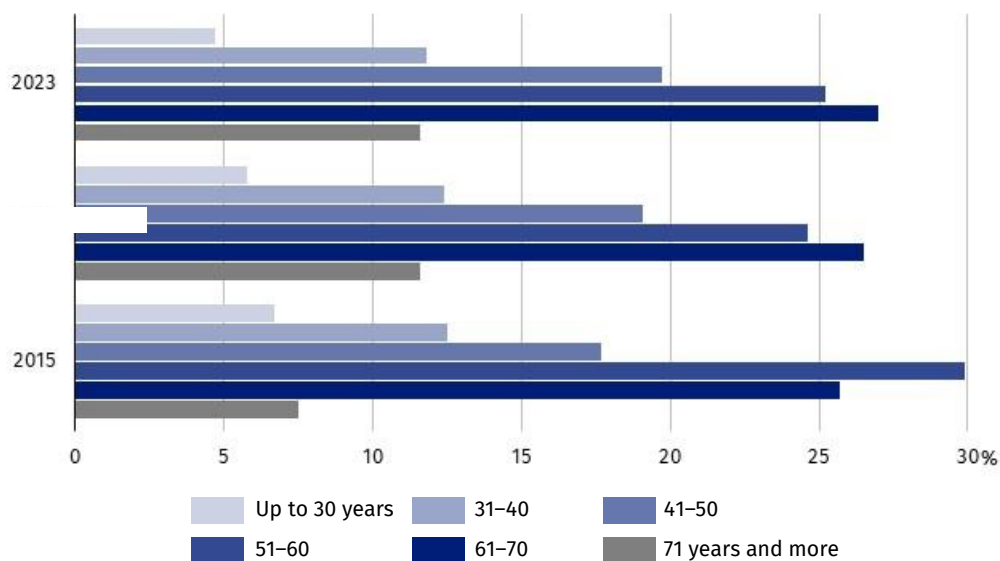
<sup>a</sup> These include professionals specialised families and the ones performing the function of a family emergency house.

The role of a foster family was most often undertaken by marriages. Their share at the end of 2023 amounted to 57.7% and was higher by 0.8 percentage point than the year before and by 4.1 percentage points compared with 2015.

As in the previous year, the role of a foster family was most often undertaken by persons in the age group 61–70 years and their share at the end of 2023 was at the level of 27.0% (the year before – 26.5%). In 2015, this function was most often performed by persons in the age group 51–60 years (29.9%).

**Chart 1. Persons performing the function of family foster care by age groups**

As of 31 December



There were a total of 1.6 thousand children in foster care at the end of 2023 (among whom girls were predominant). Both in relation to 2022, as well as to 2015, their number increased, respectively, by: 3.0% and 8.0%. Among all children under family foster care, the vast majority, similarly as in 2022 and 2015, stayed in foster families. At the end of 2023 the share of children staying in family foster homes increased by 1.4 percentage point compared with 2022 and by 4.7 percentage points in relation to 2015.

**Table 2. Children in family foster care**

As of 31 December

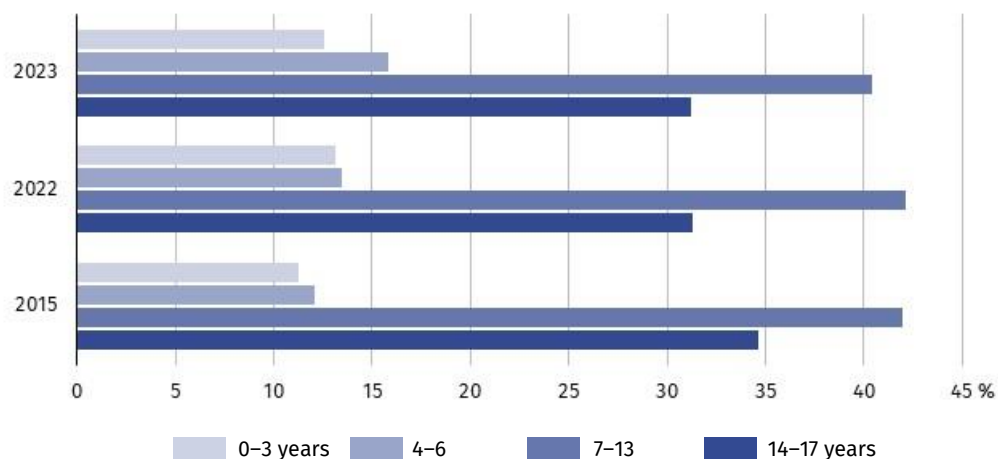
Specification	2015	2022	2023		
	In absolute numbers			2015=100	2022=100
<b>In foster families</b>	<b>1346</b>	<b>1360</b>	<b>1378</b>	<b>102.4</b>	<b>101.3</b>
of which up to 18 years	1164	1140	1169	100.4	102.5
<b>In foster homes</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>212</b>	<b>168.3</b>	<b>115.8</b>
of which up to 18 years	120	164	194	161.7	118.3

By analysing the number of children placed in foster families by family type, it can be noticed, that the most of them were in related families. Among all types of foster families, the share of children in related families at the end of 2023 amounted to 56.8% and on an annual basis it did not change, however in relation to 2015 it decreased by 2.8 percentage points.

At the end of 2023 children up to the age of 18 years accounted for 85.7% of all children placed in family foster care in the voivodship, while in the year before – 84.5%, and in 2015 – 87.2%. The analysis of particular age groups showed that in the surveyed years the highest share was constituted by children in the age group 7–13 years. Their share in the voivodship was at the level of 40.4–42.1%. The lowest percentages (oscillating between 11.3–15.8%) in surveyed period were children in the age groups 0–3 and 4–6 years.

In 2023, children up to the age of 18 years accounted for 85.7% of the total number of children in family foster care

**Chart 2. Children under family foster care up to 18 years of age by age groups**  
As of 31 December

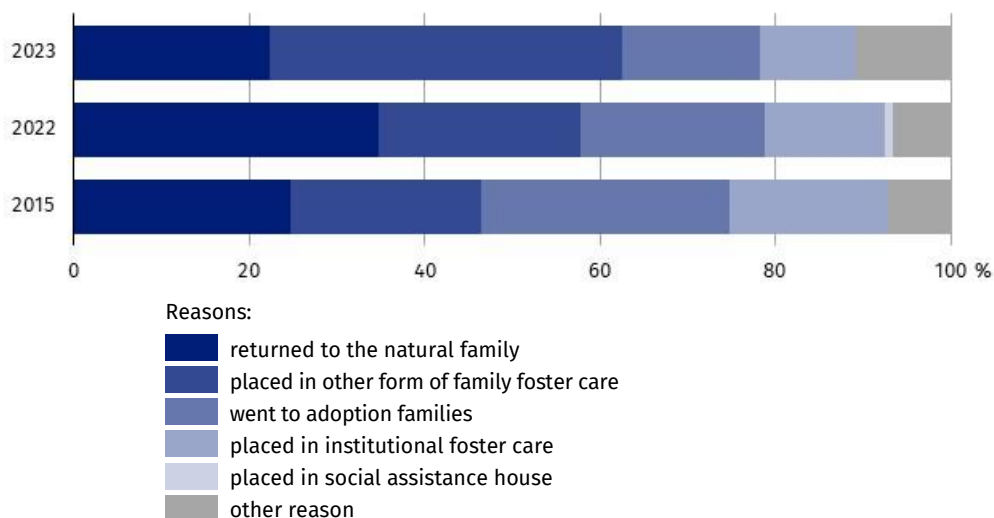


At the end of 2023, 183 children with legal confirmation of disability were in foster family care, while 69 were orphans.

In 2023, 229 children up to the age of 18 years left the family foster care, i.e. more by 0.9% than the year before and by 15.7% in relation to 2015. The most common reasons for minors to leave family foster care in 2023 was placement in other form of family foster care (40.2%), however in 2022 it was return to their natural families (34.8%), and in 2015 handing over for adoption (28.3%).

In 2023, the most common reason why minors left family foster care was placement in other form of family foster care

**Chart 3. Children up to 18 years of age who left family foster care by reasons**



In addition, in 2023, 89 residents over the age of 18 left the family foster care. Their number decreased by 25.2% compared to the previous year and by 22.6% in relation to 2015. Among adults, the percentage of residents, who became independent in 2023 was 70.8%, the year before – 60.5%, and in 2015 – 71,3%.

### Institutional foster care

Institutional foster care, which ensures constant 24-hour care, may be provided in a care and education centre, a regional care and therapy centre as well as in pre-adoptive intervention centre. In Opolskie Voivodship, only care and education centres operated as part of institutional foster care and at the end of 2023 there were 29 of them. On an annual basis as well as compared to 2015 their number increased: by 7.4% and by 20.8%, respectively. Similarly to the previous year the highest number of socialisation type centres was recorded. At the end

of 2023 these accounted for 86.2% of all care and education centres in the voivodship, the year before – 92.6%, and in 2015 – 91.7%.

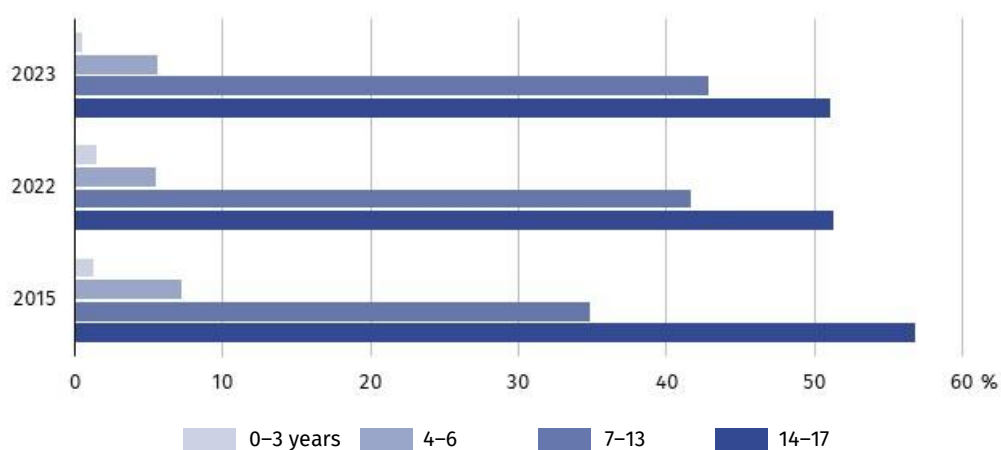
At the end of 2023, care and education centres had a total of 414 places for residents (of which 87.4% in socialisation type centres). In relation to 2022 their number decreased by 6.8%, and in relation to 2015 by 25.9%.

**Table 3. Institutional foster care centres**  
As of 31 December

Specification	2015	2022	2023		
	In absolute numbers			2015=100	2022=100
Centres	24	27	29	120.8	107.4
of which socialisation	22	25	25	113.6	100.0
Places	559	444	414	74.1	93.2
of which in socialisation centres	515	406	362	70.3	89.2
Residents	540	420	412	76.3	98.1
of which in socialisation centres	504	386	361	71.6	93.5

In care and education centres in Opolskie Voivodship at the end of 2023 there were 412 residents (decrease in relation to 2022 by 1.9%, and compared with 2015 by 23.7%), of which vast majority in socialisation centres. Similarly as in the previous year and in 2015, there were more boys than girls in care and education centres.

**Chart 4. Residents of institutional foster care centres up to 18 years of age by age groups**  
As of 31 December



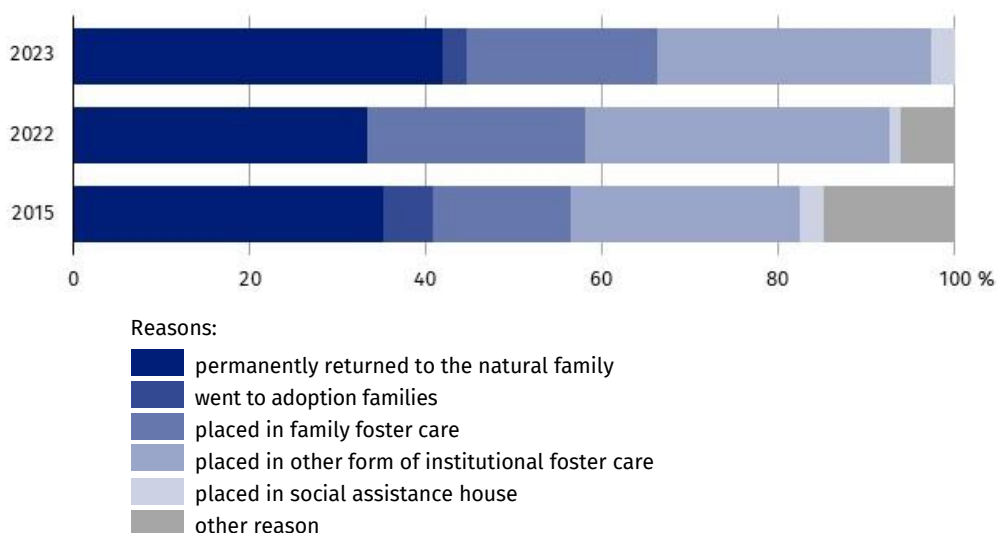
The share of children up to the age of 18 in the total number of residents in institutional foster care at the end of 2023 was 91.3%, while the year before – 94.8%, and in 2015 – 90.4%. Among children up to the age of 18 the analysis of individual age groups indicated, that the most numerous group of residents were children in the age group 14–17 years, and their share at the end of 2023 amounted to 51.1% (the year before – 51.3% , and in 2015 – 56.8%). The least numerous group of residents were the youngest children (aged 0–3 years). Their share in 2023 was 0.5%, while in the years 2022 and 2015: 1.5% and 1.2%, respectively.

In 2023 residents up to 18 years of age accounted for 91.3% of the total number of persons under institutional foster care

Persons with disabilities in 2023 accounted for 5.3% of all residents of institutional foster care in the voivodship. In relation to 2022 as well as 2015 their share decreased by 2.8 percentage points and by 4.3 percentage points, respectively.

In 2023, 74 children up to the age of 18 left care and education centres, i.e. fewer by 8.6% than the year before and by 31.5% compared with 2015 r. In 2023 the most common reason why residents left facilities was, similarly as in 2015, a permanent return to the natural family and in 2022 placement in another form of institutional foster care.

**Chart 5. Residents up to 18 years of age who left centres of institutional foster care by reasons**



Additionally, in 2023, 53 adult residents left care and education centres (less by 19.7% than the year before and by 18.5% in relation to 2015), of whom 92.5% became independent.

Volunteer work in care and education centres in 2023 was supported by 16 volunteers, while in the year earlier – 12, and in 2015 – 46.


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### **Data available in databases**

[Local Data Bank](#)

### **Terms used in official statistics**

[Social Assistance](#)