

Press release – Attacks on abortion rights and breaches of the rule of law in Poland



The [hearing](#) is jointly organised by the [Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs](#) and the [Women's Rights and Gender Equality](#) committees. It will focus on the impact of measures and attacks on women's sexual and reproductive health and rights in Poland, such as the right to access healthcare, the right to privacy, and the right to education. The hearing will also examine how various communities still face discrimination, in conjunction with the deteriorating situation of the rule of law.

In the first session, MEPs will exchange views with [Commissioner for Equality Helena Dalli](#). The second part will feature:

- Wojciech HERMELIŃSKI, attorney, former Judge of the Constitutional Tribunal, Chair of the National Electoral Commission from 2014 to 2019,
- Marta LEMPART, Leader of the Polish Women on Strike movement, and
- Dorota BOJEMSKA, Chair of the Family Council at the Ministry of Family and Social Policy in Poland.

When: Wednesday 24 February 2021, 13.45 – 15.15

Where: European Parliament in Brussels, József Antall building (room 2Q2), and with remote participation

You can [follow the hearing live](#). Due to COVID-19 restrictions, journalists are strongly advised to follow it online.

Background

[Article 7\(1\) TEU](#) procedures as regards the rule of law in Poland have been underway since the [Commission's proposal in 2017](#) (backed by [Parliament in 2018](#)), with a focus on concerns about the independence and legitimacy of the Constitutional Tribunal.

In their resolution on the EU's accession to the Istanbul Convention (November 2019), MEPs reaffirmed that "the denial of sexual and reproductive health and rights services is a form of violence against women and girls", stressing also that "the ECtHR has ruled on several occasions that restrictive abortion laws and lack of implementation violates the human rights of women". Poland's planned withdrawal from the [Istanbul Convention](#) was [criticised by the LIBE and FEMM Chairs](#) in July 2020.