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## Poland - Constitutional Tribunal ruling on abortion

### Quote from Dr Sylwia Spurek MEP

Today, the Polish Constitutional Tribunal has just announced a ruling that will see cracking down on abortion rights in Poland, effectively banning abortion in this country. Poland has one of the strictest abortion laws in Europe and the worst access to contraceptives on the continent. Polish legislation allows abortion only in three circumstances: if the pregnancy is a result of rape or incest; if the pregnancy poses a health risk to the woman/if her life is endangered by the pregnancy; or in case of foetal abnormalities. This third cause is the reason for most abortions in Poland – 1074 out of 1100 abortions performed last year were carried out due to serious congenital defects of the foetus. The Constitutional Tribunal's decision that carrying out abortion in this third circumstance is unlawful and will mean that a staggering 97,6% of abortions will now be illegal to perform in Poland.

**Dr Sylwia Spurek MEP**, Greens/EFA Vice Chair of the Women's Rights and Gender Equality Committee in the European Parliament, comments:

*"This decision will only further strip Polish women of their rights and endanger their health, mostly affecting the lives of low-income women. The Tribunal's ruling is clearly political and far from legitimate. Banning abortion has been on the political agenda of the PiS party for many years. The PiS government have unlawfully stuffed the courts, including the Constitutional Tribunal precisely so they can carry out damaging policies with impunity.*

*"The rule of law in Poland is crumbling under the government's attacks on the independence of the judiciary. Rulings, such as today's, are unlawful and cannot be considered legitimate so long as the judiciary is controlled by the PiS party. The European Commission and Council must act on the rule of law in Poland to protect the rights of women and all citizens from the whims of the Law and Justice government. Women's rights are human rights and the right to safe and legal abortion is undoubtedly a matter of human rights"*

#### More:

Protests organized by Women's Strike took place on Monday, when protesters drove in cars around Warsaw, as well as other recent protests surrounding the decision regarding abortion law, and on other rulings which further endanger Rule of Law in Poland, such as this week's decision regarding removing immunity of several important independent judges. Yesterday, Greens/EFA MEPs Dr Sylwia Spurek and Terry Reintke took part in a Handmaid's Tale Protest in solidarity with Polish women. Photos from the action are available upon request.

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