

Feeding the Body, Feeding the Gender:

Dietary Choices of Men and Women in Poland

Ewa Kopczyńska
Katarzyna Zielińska
Jagiellonian University

Food and eating serve as an expression of social relations and roles as well as a mechanism sustaining or challenging social structure and roles. This also includes marking and reproducing gender roles and identities. With the profound social, cultural, and political changes that have taken place there recently, Poland offers an interesting case study for grasping the changing meaning of both food and gender and the relationship between them. The aim of this article is therefore twofold—to present available data on food choices among men and women (mostly dietary choices) and to offer a socio-cultural interpretation of the data by discussing it in the context of emerging food regimes and recent gender transformations. In other words, we will be interested in finding out how food is incorporated in doing gender in the Polish context and how it can be interpreted in the light of scholarly work on both gender and food.

Keywords: *Gender; food; diet choices; Poland*

Mary Douglas's assertion that the social body and the physical body are entwined was an inspiration for our article. She argued that social and physical bodies are closely connected to the extent that belonging to various strata of society finds reflection in a person's body.¹ Food as an element of material culture and eating as social practice bring together the social and the physical. Food is therefore a code, an expression, but also a tool for realizing social aims.² As a result, both food and eating serve as an expression of social relations and roles, as well as a mechanism sustaining social structure and roles. This also includes marking and reproducing gender roles and identities.³

With the recent profound social, cultural and political changes that have taken place there, Poland offers an interesting case study for grasping the changing meaning of both food and gender and the relationship between them. The aim of this article is therefore twofold—to provide a review of the available data on food choices among men and women (mostly dietary choices) in contemporary Poland and to offer a socio-cultural interpretation of the data by discussing them in the context of emerging food regimes and recent gender transformations. In other words, we are interested in finding how food is incorporated in doing gender in the Polish context and how it can be interpreted in the light of existing scholarly work on both gender and food.

Gendering Food—Theoretical Background

A review of the existing scholarship on gender and food allows us to distinguish a few streams of theorising on the link between them. First, scholars point to the different positioning of men and women in the public and private spheres. Despite the empowerment of women in Western countries in areas such as the labour market, politics, and society, their identities are mostly defined through their position in the private sphere and in the family⁴ and centred on providing care. This care includes responsibility for feeding children and other members of the family as well as protecting the family's health and well-being.⁵ This special relationship of women to food and nutrition is seen either as empowering by providing them with the role of gatekeeper to the realm of food in the domestic sphere or as reinforcing women's subordinate role in the family.⁶ Men's involvement in food, especially in cooking, reveals a contrasting picture. It is defined in terms of a choice, art, and hobby rather than a necessity and is loosely linked to the ethics of care.⁷

Second, the differences in food-related behaviour between men and women are often theorised and researched in the context of the relationship between gender and the body. Drawing on the Foucauldian tradition and on Judith Butler's works, the body is seen as a product of disciplinary practices, and gender is a part of this, performed through marks imprinted on the body.⁸ Through food-related behaviour, the models of masculinity and femininity dominant in a given society leave an imprint on the body. They not only influence its shape and size but also have far-reaching implications for health, general physical condition and well-being, as well as mortality.

However, the body cannot be understood solely as an object of social practices, as it "is a participant in generating social practice."⁹ Food-related behaviour may therefore be considered as a way of doing gender and an outcome of regulating practices. In this context, scholars stress the distinctive expectations formed in Western culture towards the female and male body. In Western societies, women "are subject to continuing social pressures to limit their food intake for the sake of conforming to norms of appropriate feminine body size."¹⁰ Consequently, they tend to have lower food intake, choose less fatty and healthier food, and diet frequently¹¹ and have a higher level of dissatisfaction with their body image, size, and weight.¹² The male body is subject to less social control, despite the growing pressures of normalisation. It is expected to be slender and moderately muscular,¹³ yet masculinity is still built around the pleasure of eating and more positive attitudes towards body size considered as central to the male body.¹⁴ Whereas a "positive fat identity" can be observed among men, contradicting the dominant discourses of beauty, slimness, and health,¹⁵ no such identity is usually available to women.¹⁶

Eating may also be a way of challenging the hegemonic masculinities and femininities reflected in food and in behaviour related to this. In this case, the body acts as an agent changing social practices. Jemál Nath's research on vegetarian men

shows how by rejecting meat, their masculinity and heterosexuality is challenged or questioned. At the same time, their practices can be understood as an attempt to construct alternative models of masculinity centred around the rejection of meat.¹⁷

Finally, the link between gender and food is also further problematised by taking into account other “axes of signification,” such as age, race, ethnicity, class, or sexuality. Class seems to be a particularly salient element, as access to various types of food is highly dependent on earnings.¹⁸ Pierre Bourdieu claims that food preparation and cooking is directly related to the division of labour between the sexes, which is shaped by class. Women from the dominant class, with professions valued highly in the labour market, tend to save time and labour in preparation of food and choose a light diet (e.g. raw vegetables, salads, grilled fish and meat, various milk products). Women from the lower classes and more committed to a traditional understanding of femininity often preferred traditional food demanding more time and dedication.¹⁹ Somewhat contrary to this, Kate Cairns, Josée Johnston, and Shyon Baumann in their research on “foodies” from the privileged classes notice that (upper-) middle-class femininity is based on the provision of healthy food.²⁰ The consumption of quick and easy meals was often associated with the working class and morally condemned as unhealthy. In contrast, the issue of family health did not occur in the construction of foodie identity among men.²¹ Similarly, Jo Little, Brian Ilbery, and David Watts in their research on delocalisation of food recognise the responsibility for providing healthy food placed on (upper-) middle-class British women.²²

Another dimension intersecting with gender (and class) in their impact on food-related behaviour is sexuality. The body in lesbian and gay cultures has a different meaning from the heterosexual female and male bodies. Lesbian culture is often seen as resisting the dominant beauty and slim model for women. By way of contrast, “male gay culture appears to emphasize the importance of particular body shapes for men.”²³

Transformations of Food in a Changing Poland

Gendered food patterns in contemporary Poland require some background information on the socio-economic changes shaping the food regimes in recent history. Before the Second World War, Poland was predominantly rural, with the exception of sparse industrialised areas and large urban settlements. Its economy was principally based on agriculture and dominated by the primary sector. This determined food patterns during the first half of the century—scarcity of food for most of the population and a diet consisting of unprocessed food, based on potatoes, crops, and dairy products (mainly milk), with rare consumption of meat and fish.²⁴

The patterns of social and economic development in post-war Poland differ significantly from the model known in Western European countries. The latter experienced years of economic prosperity that resulted in dynamic development of

consumption and in a switch from societies of food scarcity to those of food abundance. The former, through its inclusion into the Soviet bloc, became a state-regulated economy marked by a scarcity of goods, including limited access to food. Despite the persistence of the predominantly rural character of the country, from the 1960s onwards certain new lifestyles and patterns of eating began to emerge. The increasing consumption of meat, fruit, sugar, and processed dairy products was accompanied by a decline in the use of potatoes and milk.²⁵ Nonetheless, queuing for all sorts of products was an integral part of life in the communist era.²⁶ As a result, food under socialism was primarily treated as a matter of survival, which led to the development of a culture of need rather than one of desire in relation to food.²⁷

The fall of the communist regime (1989) initiated profound economic, cultural, and social transformations. The radical neo-liberal reforms of the early 1990s aiming to transform the state-planned economy into a free-market one brought about a drop in GDP (on average 8.6 percent in 1989–1993), high inflation, a dramatic rise in unemployment (in 1990, 6.4 percent; in 1993, 16.4 percent), especially among women,²⁸ and a fall in net earnings (of over 30 percent in the first four years).²⁹ The economic situation only improved towards the end of the 1990s. The change in the political system and democratisation also meant pluralisation of norms, values, and styles of life. Opening of the borders enabled an unprecedented flow of various ideas and norms, but also new patterns of consumption.³⁰

The first years of the transformation of the political and economic system in Poland also changed the country's food market. On the one hand, the opening of the borders and development of the private sector meant diversification of available foods and dynamic changes in the food sector (e.g., supermarkets, restaurants, and bars). On the other, the changes were accompanied by a fall in households' purchasing power.³¹

These transformations (with the exception of the early 1990s) fitted the model of middle-income countries experiencing dramatic changes in food patterns, exemplified by greater amounts of fat, sugar, and refined carbohydrates and development of a sedentary lifestyle.³²

The dynamic of changes in food patterns in Poland today is no longer so dramatic, but the changes begun in 1989 continue. Global influences in lifestyles have had, and continue to have, a significant influence on Poles' diets, and the country's accession to the EU played a particularly important role. The opening of the borders meant an unrestricted inflow of goods and services, including food. In addition, Poles' growing mobility (economic and tourist) has led to further alterations to consumption and dietary patterns.

The current situation of the food sector and consumption patterns in Poland seems to match the developments in other countries of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). The main characteristics include the replacement of food shortages with food-obesity and access to cheap food,

developing regulations regarding food security, diversity of available food, rise in the power of the retail sector, and stretching and thinning of food supply chains. Visible at the same time is a process of loss of power of farmers and increased influence of consumers. The data also suggest growing interest in environmental issues, the impact of food production on nature, the climate and the environment, and a slowly increasing concern about animal welfare.³³ Finally, the cultural dimension of food consumption is becoming more significant in marking class status and identities (e.g., the growing popularity of “foodie” communities in big cities, food consumers’ cooperatives, local food festivals, and organic farming).³⁴ At the same time, post-socialist transformation has left a mark on these developments.

Gender Transformations

Gender equality was an important element of the socialist regime’s emancipatory discourse. The gender policies introduced in post-war Poland (even if altering over time) provided wider access to education and the labour market for women.³⁵ Furthermore, the construction of femininity traditionally based on the role of mother was enriched with new, socially accepted identities as worker or political activist (*ibid.*, 303),³⁶ or the model of the modern girl “including financial independence, the pursuit of diverse non-domestic activities, and the cultivation of femininity through fashion and cosmetics.”³⁷ Nonetheless, the emancipation project did not challenge the traditional understanding of the family, the gendered division of work in the household, and the centrality of a maternal identity for women.³⁸ Therefore, responsibility for nutrition and the household was mostly placed on women’s shoulders, and “they suffered disproportionately from the queuing culture, shouldering a ‘double shift’ under the regime.”³⁹

The cultural liberalisation and political openness of the 1990s was accompanied by a profound redefinition of gender roles. On the one hand, data from the 1990 edition of the European Values Study (EVS) indicate a predominance of materialist values among the Polish population, with a strong commitment to and valuing of the family, religion, and traditional perception of gender roles and identities. The majority of respondents (75.2 percent) agreed that women need children in order to be fulfilled, while 88 percent agreed or agreed strongly with the statement that women want a children and home. Furthermore, 63.4 percent agreed or strongly agreed that being a housewife was as fulfilling as having a job.⁴⁰ Sentimentalisation of the traditional family and retraditionalisation of gender roles and identities should be interpreted as a backlash against the emancipatory project of the socialist regime. Commenting on the gender transformation in Central and Eastern Europe after 1989, Valentine Moghadam speaks of the women-in-the-family model of revolution that “excludes or marginalises women from definitions and constructions of independence, liberation and liberty.”⁴¹

On the other hand, studies on media, film, and advertisements confirm that the transformation towards a market economy, opening the mass media to the private sector, and the prevailing value given to individualism also produced new images and gender identities. The vision of the self-sacrificing mother committed to the family and the community were complemented with the emergence in the 1990s of a new representation of femininity—sexualised female bodies complying with the hegemonic beauty model.⁴² Various studies frequently link the growing interest in diets and body modelling techniques and activities, as well as the large number of women suffering from eating disorders (anorexia and bulimia), to the pressures exerted by the new model.⁴³

The more recent EVS data from 2005 and 2008 suggest a shift towards post-modern values marked with a predominance of secular-rational worldviews, focus on individual choices and self-expression, independence, and democratic participation in politics.⁴⁴ The ongoing cultural changes are also visible in changing gender roles. The findings of various research clearly indicate an increase in egalitarian attitudes towards the role of women and men in both public and private life, especially in comparison to data from the 1990s. Visible are growing support and a need for more equal participation for women in political⁴⁵ and economic life as well as in the labour market.⁴⁶ Changes can also be noticed in private life. Recent polls show growing support for partnership in the household (46 percent of respondents, in comparison with 37 percent supporting such a model in 1997) and a decline in support for the traditional model of division of labour (23 percent of respondents, compared to 38 percent in 1997).⁴⁷ Nonetheless, domestic labour is still predominantly the domain of women, and this includes foodwork (e.g., preparing meals 67 percent, washing up 58 percent).⁴⁸ How do economic, political, and cultural transformations contribute to the change in food-related behaviours in the Polish context? What are the peculiarities of the relations between gender and food in the Polish context?

Data Sources

Two main sources provide data that we can use to describe Polish food models. The first, with greater methodological weight, is the household budget survey, which has been conducted regularly since 1957. Every year, the Polish Central Statistical Office publishes information about the income, outgoings, living conditions, and consumption of various sections of the population. These studies are representative and can be used to make international comparisons.⁴⁹

The drawback of these data from the point of view of our study is that they concern entire households, rather than individuals. The data can be used to identify territorial, socioeconomic, and professional but not gender differences. A limited insight into such differences is given by figures on single-person households (women and

men), yet this category is too narrow and hampered by additional sociological characteristics to be treated as a basis for generalisation to the population as a whole.

The second local data source is the Multicentre Polish Population Health Survey (Wieloośrodkowe Badanie Stanu Zdrowia Ludności [WOBASZ]), the first stage of which took place in 2003–2005 and the second in 2010–2012 (the full results are yet to be published). This study was on risk of cardiovascular disease in the Polish population and encompassed such aspects as the link between health and lifestyle, including diet. The sample consisted of individuals specified according to key lifestyle parameters – socioeconomic status, gender, age and place of residence. Some of the WOBASZ project studies comprised sociological analyses, a particularly valuable source of knowledge on corporality understood as a combination of physical, social, and psychological factors.

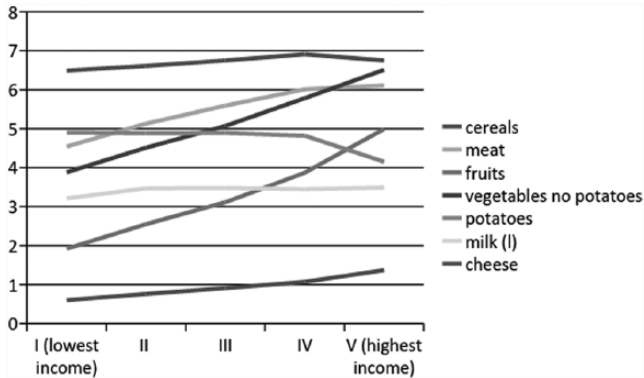
In addition, to reconstruct selected aspects of eating models among men and women in Poland we used diverse, more detailed research on such areas as obesity, alcohol consumption, and nutrition habits of children of different ages. Considering the cultural significance of various food groups and food patterns, we employed more extensive studies on other European countries and collective European and global data.

Food Consumption in Poland—A General Overview

Provision of food remains the most important element of the domestic budget in Poland, comprising 25.1 percent of all expenditure. According to a scale adopted by the World Health Organization (WHO) for the OECD, this percentage situates Poland exactly between middle- and high-income countries.⁵⁰ The proportion is falling, as is consumption of almost all food groups. This process is typical of countries with strong economic growth and is a sign of a society growing richer. The most dynamic fall is recorded in such categories as potatoes, milk, eggs, and cereal products—the staples of a traditional diet. A gradual change in eating habits can be observed involving reduced consumption of the basic, unprocessed products that form the basis of a diet whose roots lie in the traditional agrarian economy.⁵¹ In spite of these evident changes, though, Polish consumers are clearly more conservative and less receptive to modifications to their diet than the European average (PL: 17 percent, EU: 22 percent).⁵² Contrary to global trends, we can also observe an attachment to previous foodways⁵³ and—albeit still at a niche level—increasingly perceptible nutrition movements that have innovative ways of alluding to tradition, the idea of slow food and food sustainability. Polish food patterns are characterised by both a consuming tradition and consuming modernity.⁵⁴

An analysis of the factors differentiating expenditure on eating within society points to the major social determinants that dictate the types of food patterns in Poland. These determinants are socioeconomic in character: food costs occupy the

Figure 1
Consumption of selected foodstuffs in households by quintile groups
(kilograms per month per capita)



Source: Central Statistical Office, "Budżety gospodarstw domowych w 2011 roku" (Household Budgets Survey in 2011).

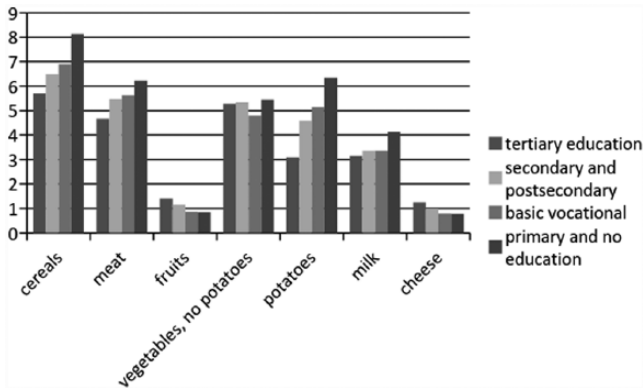
highest proportion of the budgets of farmers (31.8 percent) and the lowest for self-employed people (21.5 percent). The differences in consumption of various types of food between income groups in the Polish population are sometimes even two- or threefold (Figure 1).

Similarly striking differences can be observed in terms of education (data in Figure 2). Essentially, the higher the socioeconomic status, the healthier the diet (understood as higher consumption of vegetables and fruits), although the exceptions to this rule point to Poland's unique nature as a strongly traditional rural culture that is at the same time embracing global processes and Western influences.

The place of residence is also an important sociological parameter shaping food consumption. Most of the data we reviewed showed a clear division into rural and urban models. The rural style draws from the tradition of self-sufficient economy that is at the heart of eating practices. It is based more on unprocessed food, often produced on site (higher consumption of milk, eggs, simple cereal products, local vegetables, apples), and possesses a different meal order (the main, hot meal is taken earlier than in cities). The urban style is based on paid work and access to processed, imported, diverse food. As a result, large cities are characterised by a higher consumption of cheeses, yoghurts, foreign fruits and vegetables, tomatoes, confectionery products, high-quality cured meats, waters and juices, as well as alcohols. Smaller differences in styles of eating can be observed if we make divisions into age, regional groups, or biological types of households.⁵⁵

Economic categories, education, and the type of place of residence overlap with the category of gender, forming a mosaic of gender roles and food patterns. The

Figure 2
Consumption of selected foodstuffs in households by education (kilograms per month per capita)



Note: Based on Central Statistical Office, “Budżety gospodarstw domowych w 2011 roku” (Household Budgets Survey in 2011).

forementioned changes in eating habits have an effect on masculinity and femininity in the countryside and towns, among poorer and wealthier, and more or less educated people to varying degrees and sometimes following different trajectories. The above general observations point first to the need to follow an intersectional approach. Second, it is crucial to discern the Polish situation, mainly the complications of historical-cultural traditional circumstances and the modernising mechanisms under the influence of Western economies and cultures.

Public/Private and Family Caring

The cultural position of women in the private sphere and their place in the family structure translate into their relationship to nutrition, food, and what is served at home.⁵⁶ It is therefore no surprise that an important aspect of femininity confirmed in Polish research is women’s much greater interest (59 percent, as opposed to 25 percent of men) in pro-health behaviours, including the influence of the diet on health.⁵⁷ Research on the level of health-related knowledge also indicates a difference: 21 percent of men and 31 percent of women are aware of the necessity of weight reduction, salt reduction (15 percent vs. 25 percent respectively), cutting fat intake (35 percent vs. 43 percent), and regular consumption of fruit and vegetables (21 percent vs. 29 percent).⁵⁸ These results are similar to those from studies carried out in other countries, including those with a different cultural context.⁵⁹ Moreover,

the tendency to change eating habits in order to reduce the calorie content of meals, cut down on harmful substances, and increase quantities of fruit and vegetables consumed is more often seen in women than in men (in Europe: 25 percent and 19 percent, respectively).⁶⁰ Women, then, are not only characterised by pro-health knowledge in their eating habits but are also more likely to put this knowledge into practice. The authors of a comparison of 23 countries therefore stress that women's family roles and responsibility for the private sphere tend to equip them with the cultural tools for implementing knowledge into everyday practice.⁶¹

At the same time, the greater role played by women in preparing and serving food to members of their household and their interest in nutrition poses a potential threat to their health. In Poland, as in other developed countries, the ease of access to food—and sometimes even surfeit thereof—can lead the domestic supplier and cook to excessive consumption. This finds a reflection in the data—along with their declarations of a healthy diet, women declare to succumb to the habit of snacking between meals, leading to potential weight problems.⁶² Their entanglement with the private sphere and gendered foodwork division could serve as a plausible explanation.⁶³ However, various studies show that snacking is not necessarily a women-specific habit, as men seem to snack as often as women.⁶⁴ The difference is in distinctive meanings and attitudes attached to the snacking. For women, it is often perceived as a comfort food⁶⁵ or special treat.⁶⁶ Therefore, women's snacks are often the products seen as “rewarding” or comforting—sweets, desserts, or convenience food. At the same time, the restrictions stemming from the beauty model of the female body discipline women's diet and make the snacking morally reprehensible and seen as unhealthy and fattening.⁶⁷ As the result of those contradictory tendencies, women's attitudes to snacking are far more ambivalent and strongly culturally and emotionally entangled. For men, meanwhile, snacking seems to be seen as an additional source of energy, used when required. A characteristic deviation from the rule of healthy eating in this group is the consumption of sweet fizzy drinks and fast-food meals at least once a week (twice as many men declare this as women).⁶⁸ These habits are associated with functioning outside of the home, in the public sphere.

The combined role of domestic cook and doctor makes women more sensitive to stimuli coming from the body, meaning that they are more aware of various types of ailments, discomforts and generally feeling unwell. On average, they have higher competences in terms of bodily processes. We can use this thesis to explain the paradox whereby women generally assess their health as worse than men but have a lower mortality rate. Polish women react faster to illness and are more willing to seek medical help, but their illnesses are longer-lasting and more frequent, albeit less severe.⁶⁹

The care shown by women for their bodily health is therefore bound firstly with various dimensions of the “private” welfare of family members. It is composed not only of eating issues but also health or hygiene, as well as the private issues of social relations and the psychological state of members of a given structure. Secondly, in

this private role, women realise social norms and values, including gender nutrition models. Their actions are therefore an important aspect of the embodiments of social meanings of gender, in addition to class, status, and culture. The structure of family meals and order at the table encode the social structure.⁷⁰

The Body Mirrors the Meal

The gendered marking of specific types of food and meals, as well as ways and rhythms of eating and amounts eaten, are a component of gender identification. This mechanism is shown by a study carried out among students of Indiana University of Pennsylvania on the size of portions consumed among groups varying in terms of gender composition and also in the experiment of Patricia Pliner and Shelly Chaiken.⁷¹ The members of a mixed group demonstrate a clearer belonging to their gender category—men take a larger portion and women a smaller one, with a lower energy value. In accordance with the norms concerning the female body—smaller, with moderate needs, and less physically active—and the male body—muscle and given to greater physical exercise—the participants in the meal mark their own position in the female–male dichotomy. In single-sex groups, this difference is less significant, as the gender category does not play a key role in intra-group relations. The gender aspects of food comprise a structuralistic opposition that demonstrates the meaning of masculinity and femininity in various contexts and social situations.

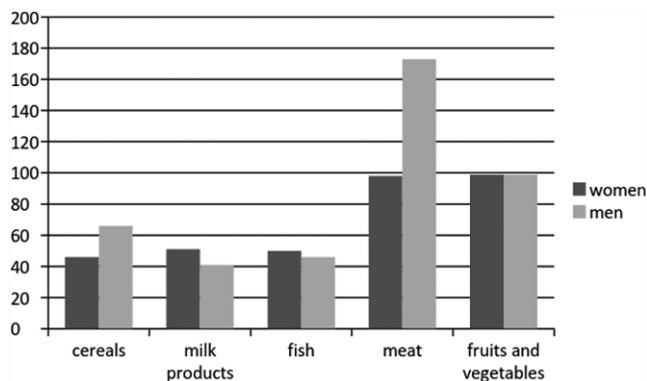
One of the main factors playing a role in the femininity–masculinity axis in this context is physical size: of the body, meal, and activity. An analysis of the Body Mass Index (BMI) in the Polish population demonstrates a significant diversification in terms of gender. Both the survey conducted by the International Association for the Study of Obesity in Poland (2003–2007) and WOBASZ data (2003–2005) show that 60.9 percent of men are overweight (40.3 percent) or obese (20.6 percent), while the figure is 52.2 percent (28.4 and 23.8 percent, respectively) among women (Polish Population Review 2008). According to the WHO, the equivalent proportions for 2000 were, respectively, 41 and 15.7 percent for men and 28.7 and 19.9 percent for women. Kanter and Caballero's analyses⁷² show that whereas there are more obese women (BMI > 30) in all of the 108 countries analysed, considerably more men are overweight in high-income countries. Men are also catching up with women in the BMI >30 category in these countries. In most of the countries of "old Europe," therefore, the obesity gender gap is not large. In the countries of the former Eastern bloc, meanwhile, it remains greater, with more women being obese. In a few countries (Greece, Ireland, Malta), the reverse is true.⁷³ Although the BMI indicator is far from perfect in revealing eating models and health,⁷⁴ its fluctuations can legitimately be analysed in relation to economic or cultural changes, as to a great extent it depends on amounts consumed and physical activity. The increase in the average BMI in Poland since the Second World War, with a peak in the late 1990s, has thus gone

hand-in-hand with a gradual improvement in living conditions and availability of food.⁷⁵ The modern trend towards overrepresentation of obese people in the Polish countryside also reflects contemporary “excessive” food regimes, where scarcity of various types (financial, knowledge, power) translates into excessive body weight and ill health. An analogous process is visible in education. In high-income countries, lower education and a higher age profile are linked to a growth in the percentage of obese people. These tendencies are most pronounced among women, as a result not just of the female metabolism (a biological sex factor) but also of a different dynamic of eating models. The greatest differences in BMI between young and older women exist in Latvia, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, and Estonia, that is, developing countries undergoing major socio-cultural transformations.⁷⁶ Among young people aged 13–15 in Poland, numbers of obese or overweight people are not differentiated by gender.⁷⁷ Apart from biological conditions, also significant in this case is the fact that the diet of children and young people, with no gender divides yet introduced, plays a major role. The education factor is strongest in Slovakia, Malta, Greece, and Poland.⁷⁸ Two models of femininity co-exist in these countries. The first derives from agrarian traditions, favouring more ample female bodies symbolising affluence and fertility and associated with the reproductive cycle, domestic realm, and family caring. The second model is defined by the regime that considers beauty to mean slim, athletic bodies with a restrictive diet,⁷⁹ in accordance with the principles of modern healthy eating. The latter model exerts a particularly strong influence on younger, more educated, and better-off people affected by the trends of Westernisation and globalisation.

A key aspect of eating models for describing the population is consumption of specific types of food and the related social significance of eating. The analysis of consumption of distinct types of food presented below provides an illustration of gendered food groups and of how men and women in Poland differ in their styles of eating (Figure 3).⁸⁰

Consumption of the various food groups is similar for men and women. Relatively minor differences appear in cereals and dairy products (more for women), and these groups have limited gender marking. A more detailed analysis of products consumed would probably permit us to explain more precisely what the “masculinity” and “femininity” of cheeses, yoghurts, ice cream, bread, breakfast cereals, and cakes entail. Interestingly, in 24-hour diet recall interviews, the declared consumption of fruits and vegetables is almost identical for the two sexes. These are surprising values if we consider the prominence of these products in the healthy eating model as well as the greater tendency exhibited by women to introduce changes in their diet in order to enrich it and reduce calorie intake. In survey research from 2011, Poles answered general questions on their diet. Well over twice as many Polish women as men declared that they consumed fruit and vegetables daily (87 percent women and 33 percent men).⁸¹ This contradiction between the specific and the general declarations should be interpreted in the context of two phenomena. First, it can be viewed

Figure 3
Differences in consumption of food groups among women and men aged 20–74 in percentages of recommended amounts



Note: Based on Sygnowska et al., “Spożycie produktów spożywczych przez dorosłą populację Polski. Wyniki programu WOBASZ.”

as a sign of the differences in nutritional awareness between men and women, and the fact that women are more likely to recognise the principles of healthy eating. They eat fruit and vegetables “consciously,” as it were, with healthy intentions. The fact that men do not declare regular consumption of these food types may result from a failure to recognise their different and exceptional nature. Therefore, despite the lack of major differences in consumption, there may be a strong gender symbolism in some products.

The second explanation is to do with Poland’s unique cultural and economic context. In most highly developed food economies, consumption of fruit and vegetables is identified as a component of a healthy lifestyle,⁸² linked with a lower incidence of cardio-vascular diseases and cancer.⁸³ It is therefore promoted in public health policies and constitutes an important class and socioeconomic correlate.⁸⁴ However, in some European countries, such as Hungary, Greece, and Spain, this correlation is weaker, or the reverse correlation is even evident.⁸⁵ This can be explained by the nature of the food market in these countries, and the price and availability of fruit and vegetables. If these foodstuffs are traditionally cultivated and constitute a staple of the diet of the lower classes and farmers, they are not a symbol of high status. We can conclude that in Poland, which has strong traditions of independent production of “common” food (so-called garden food), potatoes, carrots, onions, cabbage, beet-roots, and apples are perceived as an ordinary, everyday diet, and not as “healthy eating.” This phenomenon can be interpreted as an overlapping of the cultural axes associated with diet, such as traditional–modern, habitual–rational (healthy) with

that of the social structure, and in particular class hierarchy (peasant food–middle-class cuisine). “Common” products (cereals, unprocessed dairy products, root vegetables, apples) would therefore remain, because of the opposition in meaning, on the side of the ordinary diet, and not that of the new, healthy lifestyle. The greater inclination of women to dietary changes would therefore be manifested not in opting for common food, but rather exchanging such products for fruit and vegetables from the “modern” category. In order to confirm this hypothesis, specific data as well as an in-depth intersectional analysis and analysis of the cultural meanings of individual products would be required.

The food group that differs most in terms of gender is meat. Men in Poland eat twice as much meat as women, thereby almost doubling the recommended consumption. The category of meat is strongly differentiated by gender in all countries in the European cultural sphere, although the scale of disproportion varies. Further factors, in particular class, education, and social and financial considerations, influence the internal dynamic of this correlation, but its direction remains invariable.⁸⁶ The masculinity of meat is very strong. The gender dimension of this category means both recognition that meat is good for the male body and the hierarchising belief—found much more frequently among men⁸⁷—that the main meal of the day should contain meat. Meat is often treated as a fundamental order giving structure and meaning to a menu. The meaning-forming role of meat even exists when there is little or no meat itself, such as in vegetarian dishes.⁸⁸ The dynamic development of discourses questioning the value of meat in the human diet has not led to a change in this situation.

The symbolism of meat in European culture is connected to the image of masculinity, which invokes the category of physical strength, activity (associated with procuring meat), aggression, hierarchy, autonomy, and control. The traditional models of manhood refer on the basis of consumption to individual control, abundance, and satisfaction. These contents, in accordance with hegemonic masculinity,⁸⁹ constitute the masculinity that is presented in the media.⁹⁰ If we compare this message with the ubiquitous promotion of a healthy lifestyle and the modern ethics of restricted, rational consumption, we get a contradiction that may explain the greater resistance displayed by men to making changes to their own diet.⁹¹ By recognising foodways, like health habits,⁹² as gendered practices, we can observe that the choice of dish or amount on the plate are akin to putting on a tie or makeup. The model of hegemonic masculinity understood as power, strength, emotional and physical control and denial of weakness, sensitivity, and the need for help, as well as the precedence of the male body over the female one, are manifested in eating options. In terms of health, this denotes a tendency to risk, limited sleep and rest, and avoiding preventive measures (such as sunblock), while in food they include excessive consumption of alcohol, fats, or meat, consumption of large portions, and opposition to the moderation and control of a “healthy diet” programme. This model is pursued in different ways according to class, culture, and community,⁹³ but these are linked by a tendency to risky behaviours, and especially control and emphasis of autonomy.⁹⁴ Paradoxically,

the exceptionally high gender significance of meat coincides—in contrasting terms—with the idea of healthy eating, stressing independence, autonomy, and readiness of immoderate consumers of meat products to take risks.

Renegotiating Gender at the Table

The new narratives legitimising the consumption of food in developed economies are changing the structure of meanings associated with food. The essential foundation of these changes is the transition from a discourse of scarcity/saturation to one of excess/moderation.⁹⁵ One of the major food types to have undergone a dramatic cultural redefinition is meat. The increasingly frequent criticism towards meat takes various forms: ethical (its origin), ecological, aesthetic, and health related (causing ill health and an increasing risk of diseases).⁹⁶ The results of O'Doherty and Holm's studies in Copenhagen showed that meat was viewed as the food of the lower classes and traditional cultures (especially pork). Attempts to eliminate its negative symbolism from one's own diet were manifested in the growing popularity of minced and portioned meat, which bore an ever smaller resemblance to its source of origin. Meat continues to be a typical part of daily meals, but increasingly often it is seen as a complement, or one of the components of the dish, rather than the dish itself. The authors of the study place these changes alongside the general identification of meat as a food and symbol of masculinity, concluding that there have been changes in the social status of men. Their assumption is that eating systems are parallel and coherent with the social system and order of norms, roles, and statuses.⁹⁷ Men play an ever lessening role as a central presence providing order to the family, and masculinity is increasingly becoming one of the components of the "family dish," losing its autonomous and superior status. Today, the values traditionally associated with masculinity, male work, the man's role in the family and community, and the symbolism of the male body are being renegotiated. At the same time, these renegotiations must be played out at the level of carriers of symbols, including the level of food as material culture and social practice.

Meat consumption usually has a positive correlation with a country's GDP, yet the ratio varies greatly, partly depending on cultural factors. Until the last few years in Poland, we could observe an increase in consumption of meat, with periodic fluctuations caused by economic factors. Since 2008, however, this growth has ceased, and in 2012 there was a 2.6 percent average fall in consumption of all types of meat⁹⁸ and the average person consumed 71 kg of meat.⁹⁹ Data provided by the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations put the amount for 2009 at 76.9 kg, a figure close to the average for developed countries,¹⁰⁰ but lower than that of the majority of the countries of Western Europe and markedly higher than that of the former Soviet republics.¹⁰¹ These indicators again confirm Poland's borderline position between middle-income and high-income countries, in common with economic

indicators. However, if we take into account the aforementioned conservatism of eating tastes displayed by Poles, along with their attachment to traditional gender roles and models, some scepticism is required concerning the anticipated tendency towards a decline in meat consumption. The new food movements, which are critical towards industrial production methods and forms of consumption of meat (healthy eating, vegetarianism, slow food, and animal rights movements), therefore, do not make radical changes to the traditional Polish structure of the family meal. What they may contribute to changing, coupled with economic factors, is the category of meat products itself. Such a process was evident in the Copenhagen studies from the early 1990s. Significant changes are likely in Poland only among the groups that are most susceptible to the influence of Western culture, for example, educated, younger, mobile people and residents of big cities.

The second of the most gendered products in the Polish context is alcohol, whose consumption diversifies the Polish population in terms of sex, age, class, and place of residence. On average, women in Poland drink five times less than men.¹⁰² In the oldest group, more than 65 years of age, the ratio is as much as 13, while in the youngest group (20–44) it is 3.6. This has consequences for health, in the form of higher mortality among men and greater incidence of illnesses connected with alcohol consumption. On average, alcohol use disorders occur in 1,640 women and 10,000 men in a population of 100,000.¹⁰³ Men suffer from liver diseases twice as often and alcohol poisoning as much as ten times more frequently.¹⁰⁴ A very significant factor affecting these relations is education and place of residence, which are strongly linked to alcohol consumption among women. Those with a degree and from large cities drink by far the most, whereas for men the correlation for education is the reverse, while place of residence has no influence. As a result, the level of alcohol consumption among educated residents of large cities displays only minor differences by gender. The change in women's cultural models is therefore accompanied by a loosening of traditional social bonds and weakening of social control in urban communities, as well as social, political, and economic emancipation of women due to education. In men, education also weakens traditional models, and the gender gap in drinking in groups of the highest socioeconomic status is therefore the smallest.

Conclusions

The existing data show profound changes in the food patterns observed in Poland over the last two and half decades. These developments, resulting from recent political and social transformations, situate the country somewhere between the middle- and high-income country model of food patterns. Significant similarities with Western developments can be traced (e.g., a growing importance of processed food and development of a sedentary lifestyle), but at the same time local modifications to the Western patterns are noticeable (e.g., self-provision of food, domestication of

global patterns, strong family and neighbour networks in food consumption, difference in urban and rural lifestyles, and related food patterns).

Looking at these developments through a gender lens offers further insights. Similarly to the Western European case, the data on food choices and food-related behaviour confirm the existence of a gender gap: men and women differ in their dietary choices and their attitudes towards food. Nonetheless, in the Polish context, this gap seems to be particularly wide as a consequence of the recent gender transformations and the existing cultural models, defining femininity and masculinity in a traditional way. Food patterns both reflect the existing gender roles and also reproduce them through sustaining the gender order, also through its imprints on women's and men's bodies and health. For men, the association of masculinity with meat consumption strengthens the health risks of being overweight and having high cholesterol and heart diseases. Femininity, on the other hand, often burdens women with the role of family carer, thus bonding and exposing them to food. Women's foodwork also translates into the attitudes towards food in general and to the specific products (e.g., low calories and fattening products) interlinking the nutritional and psycho-cultural dimension. In other words, gendered symbolism of particular foods like alcohol, meat, sugar, and refined carbohydrate products results in serious health issues for both men and women.

The reviewed data clearly indicate an intervening effect of such variables as age and class but also urban and rural settings. For example, the growing significance of health food awareness and beauty regimes has a stronger impact on younger, better-educated, and urban women. They are more willing to emancipate and reject or modify the traditional food patterns than older, less educated, and rural women. Similar correlations are visible with the growing level of alcohol consumption. This time, emancipation means questioning the borders between genders, as a higher consumption of alcohol is closely connected with masculinity.

Along with the growing economic development, the sedentary lifestyle will be more widespread, as suggested by the presented data. This development causes growing challenges to the public health and related policies. The existing significant differences of food patterns between men and women clearly suggest that the category of gender in particular needs to be taken into consideration in drafting new policies regarding public health.

Notes

1. Mary Douglas, *Natural Symbols: Explorations in Cosmology*, 3rd ed. (London: Routledge, 2003), 29.
2. Marcel Mauss, "Techniques of the Body," *Economy and Society* 2, no. 1 (February 1973): 70–88.
3. Eugene N. Anderson, *Everyone Eats: Understanding Food and Culture* (New York: New York University Press, 2005); Carole Counihan, *Around the Tuscan Table: Food, Family, and Gender in Twentieth Century Florence* (New York: Routledge, 2004).

4. Marjorie L. DeVault, *Feeding the Family: The Social Organization of Caring as Gendered Work* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 15–16; Patricia Allen and Carolyn Sachs, “Women and Food Chains: The Gendered Politics of Food,” *International Journal of Sociology of Food and Agriculture* 15, no. 1 (2007): 2; Ulrich Beck and Elisabeth Beck-Gernsheim, *Individualization: Institutionalized Individualism and Its Social and Political Consequences* (London: Sage, 2002), 102–3.
5. Kate Cairns, Josée Johnston, and Shyon Baumann, “Caring about Food: Doing Gender in the Foodie Kitchen,” *Gender & Society* 24, no. 5 (January 10, 2010): 602–3.
6. Allen and Sachs, “Women and Food Chains,” 3; Kurt Lewin, “Forces Behind Food Habits and Methods of Change,” in *The Problem of Changing Food Habits: Report of the Committee on Food Habits 1941-1943*, vol. 108, Bulletin (Washington, DC: National Academy of Science, National Research Council, 1943), http://www.nap.edu/openbook.php?record_id=9566&page=35; Michelle Zimbalist Rosaldo, “Women, Culture, and Society: A Theoretical Overview,” in *Woman, Culture, and Society*, ed. Michelle Zimbalist Rosaldo and Louise Lamphere (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1974), 17–42.
7. Cairns et al., “Caring about Food,” 595.
8. Valérie Fournier, “Fleshing out Gender: Crafting Gender Identity on Women’s Bodies,” *Body & Society* 8, no. 2 (January 6, 2002): 57.
9. Robert W. Connell, “Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept,” *Gender & Society* 19, no. 6 (December 1, 2005): 851.
10. Deborah Lupton, *Food, the Body and the Self* (London: Sage, 1996), 11.
11. Jo Little, Brian Ilbery, and David Watts, “Gender, Consumption and the Relocalisation of Food: A Research Agenda,” *Sociologia Ruralis* 49, no. 3 (July 2009): 204.
12. Mark Conner, Charlotte Johnson, and Sarah Grogan, “Gender, Sexuality, Body Image and Eating Behaviours,” *Journal of Health Psychology* 9, no. 4 (January 7, 2004): 506; Carole Counihan, “Gendering Food,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Food History*, ed. Jeffrey M. Pilcher (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), <http://www.oxfordhandbooks.com/view/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199729937.001.0001/oxfordhb-9780199729937-e-6>.
13. Conner et al., “Gender, Sexuality, Body Image,” 506.
14. Drummond and Drummond, “My Dad’s a ‘Barbie’ Man and My Mum’s the Cooking Girl,” *Journal of Child Health Care*, (November 21, 2013): 3.
15. L. F. Monaghan, “Big Handsome Men, Bears and Others: Virtual Constructions of ‘Fat Male Embodiment,’” *Body & Society* 11, no. 2 (June 1, 2005): 81–111.
16. Noortje van Amsterdam, “Big Fat Inequalities, Thin Privilege: An Intersectional Perspective on ‘Body Size,’” *European Journal of Women’s Studies* 20, no. 2 (May 1, 2013): 159.
17. Jemál Nath, “Gendered Fare? A Qualitative Investigation of Alternative Food and Masculinities,” *Journal of Sociology* 47, no. 3 (January 9, 2011): 274.
18. Little et al., “Gender, Consumption and the Relocalisation of Food,” 205.
19. Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1984), 185–87.
20. Cairns et al., “Caring about Food,” 603.
21. *Ibid.*
22. Little et al., “Gender, Consumption and the Relocalisation of Food,” 212.
23. Conner et al., “Gender, Sexuality, Body Image,” 207.
24. Artur Potocki et al., “Zmiany sposobu żywienia ludności Polski Południowej (Galicji) na tle przemian polityczno-gospodarczych w XIX i XX wieku,” *Hygeia Public Health* 47, no. 4 (2012): 518–24.
25. *Ibid.*
26. Janine R. Wedel, *The Private Poland* (New York: Facts on File Inc., 1986), chap. 2.
27. Drakulić 1992, quoted in Kathy Burrell, “The Political and Social Life of Food in Socialist Poland,” *Anthropology of East Europe Review* 21, no. 1 (2003): 189.
28. Éva Fodor, “Gender in Transition: Unemployment in Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia,” *East European Politics and Societies*, no 11. (1997): 470–500.

29. Jerzy J. Wiatr, *Socjologia wielkiej przemiany* (Warsaw: Krajowa Agencja Promocyjna, 1999), 85.
30. Krystyna Romaniszyn, *Rzecz o pracy i konsumpcji. Analiza antropologiczna* (Kraków: Nomos, 2007), 30.
31. Rosalie Bakken, Marzena Jeżewska-Zychowicz, and Mary Winter, "Household Nutrition and Health in Poland," *Social Science & Medicine* 49, no. 12 (December 1999): 1677–87.
32. Rebecca Kanter and Benjamin Caballero, "Global Gender Disparities in Obesity: A Review," *Advances in Nutrition: An International Review Journal* 3, no. 4 (2012): 491–98.
33. A public poll conducted in 2011 showed that 65% of the respondents rejected or strongly rejected ritual slaughter, mostly for reasons of animal welfare or because it is seen as unethical, un-humanitarian (see Małgorzata Omyła-Rudzka, *Opinie na temat dopuszczalności tzw. uboju rytualnego* [Warsaw: CBOS, 2013], <http://badanie.cbos.pl/details.asp?q=a1&id=4828>). Between 2006 and 2013, the number of people taking the welfare of laying hens into account when purchasing eggs more than doubled from 13% to 32% (see Małgorzata Omyła-Rudzka, *Postawy wobec zwierząt* [Warsaw: CBOS, 2013], <http://badanie.cbos.pl/details.asp?q=a1&id=4837>). However, at the same time, 65 percent do not think about the welfare/protection of the animals that meat products come from when they buy them (see European Commission, "Attitudes of Consumers Towards the Welfare of Farmed Animals," *Special Eurobarometer* 229 [2005], http://ec.europa.eu/food/animal/welfare/euro_barometer25_en.pdf).
34. Gert Spaargaren, Peter Oosterveer, and Anne Loeber, "Sustainability Transitions in Food Consumption, Retail and Production," in *Food Practices in Transition*, vol. 3, *Changing Food Consumption, Retail and Production in the Age of Reflexive Modernity* (New York: Routledge, 2012), 2.
35. Małgorzata Fidelis, "Equality through Protection: The Politics of Women's Employment in Postwar Poland, 1945-1956," *Slavic Review* 63, no. 2 (2004): 301.
36. Fidelis argues that these alternative identities were chiefly available during Stalinism, whereas later they were always subordinated to the maternal identity. *Ibid.*, 303.
37. Małgorzata Fidelis, "'Are You a Modern Girl?': Consumer Culture and Young Women in 1960s Poland," in *Gender Politics and Everyday Life in State Socialist Eastern and Central Europe*, ed. Shana Penn and Jill Massino (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 172.
38. Fidelis, "Equality through Protection," 303; Yvonne Galligan, Sara Clavero, and Marina Calloni, *Gender Politics and Democracy in Post-Socialist Europe* (Barbara Budrich, 2007), 22.
39. Burrell, "The Political and Social Life of Food in Socialist Poland," 190.
40. EVS, *European Values Study 1990: Integrated Dataset. ZA4460 Data File Version 3.0.0* (Cologne: GESIS Data Archive, 2011).
41. Valentine M. Moghadam, "Gender and Revolutionary Transformation: Iran 1979 and East Central Europe 1989," *Gender & Society* 9, no. 3 (June 1, 1995): 336.
42. Joanna Bator, *Wizerunek kobiety w reklamach telewizyjnych* (Warsaw: Instytut Spraw Publicznych, 1998); Mira Marody and Anna Giza-Poleszczuk, "Changing Images of Identity in Poland: From the Self-Sacrificing to the Self-Investing Woman?," in *Reproducing Gender: Politics, Publics, and Everyday Life After Socialism*, ed. Susan Gal and Gail Kligman (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000), 151–75; Beata Łaciak, *Obyczajowość polska czasu transformacji czyli wojna postu z karnawalem* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Trio, 2005), 210–19.
43. Renata Rasińska, Iwona Nowakowska, and Alicja Głowacka-Rębała, "Postrzeganie własnego ciała przez młodzież akademicką," *Zdrowie Dobrostan* 3 (2013): 113–24; Wojciech Strzelecki, Marcin Cybulski, Maja Strzelecka, and Anna Dolczewska-Samela, "Zmiana wizerunku medialnego kobiety a zaburzenia odżywiania we współczesnym świecie," *Nowiny Lekarskie* 76, no. 2 (2007): 173–81.
44. Aleksandra Jasińska-Kania, "Zmiany wartości Polaków a procesy transformacji, europeizacji i globalizacji," in *Wartości i zmiany. Przemiany postaw Polaków w jednoczącej się Europie*, ed. Aleksandra Jasińska-Kania (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Scholar, 2012), 337; Aleksandra Jasińska-Kania, "Poles' Values," *Academia* 23, no. 3 (2009): 8–11.
45. Małgorzata Omyła-Rudzka, *Kobieta w życiu publicznym* (Warsaw: CBOS, 2013), <http://badanie.cbos.pl/details.asp?q=a1&id=4792>.

46. Rafał Boguszewski, *Kobieta pracująca* (Warsaw: CBOS, 2013), <http://badanie.cbos.pl/details.asp?q=a1&id=4786>.

47. Natalia Hipsz, *O roli kobiety w rodzinie* (Warsaw: CBOS, 2013), <http://badanie.cbos.pl/details.asp?q=a1&id=4788>.

48. Ibid.; Joanna Szczepańska, *Kobiety i mężczyźni o podziale obowiązków domowych* (Warsaw: CBOS, 2006), <http://badanie.cbos.pl/details.asp?q=a1&id=3641>.

49. Maria Barlik et al., *Budżety gospodarstw domowych w 2012* [Household budget survey in 2012] (Warsaw: Central Statistical Office, 2013); Maria Barlik and Krystyna Siwak, "Metodologia Badania Budżetów Gospodarstw Domowych" (Warsaw: Central Statistical Office, 2011).

50. Francesco Branca, Haik Nikogosian, and Tim Lobstein, eds., *The Challenge of Obesity in the WHO European Region and the Strategies for Response* (Copenhagen: World Health Organization, Regional Office for Europe, 2007).

51. Central Statistical Office, "Budżety gospodarstw domowych w 2011 roku" (Household budgets survey in 2011), 2012; Krystyna Siwiak, ed., "Sytuacja gospodarstw domowych w 2012 roku w świetle wyników badania budżetów gospodarstw domowych" (Warsaw: Central Statistical Office, 2013).

52. European Commission, "Health and Food," *Special Eurobarometer 246*, 2006, http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_publication/eb_food_en.pdf.

53. Joanna Lewandowska, *Upodobania kulinarne, nawyki żywieniowe i zachowania konsumenckie Polaków* (Warsaw: CBOS, 2005), www.cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2005_K_173_05.PDF

54. Joe Smith and Petr Jehlička, "Stories around Food, Politics and Change in Poland and the Czech Republic," *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 32, no. 3 (2007): 395–410. Ibid., 400.

55. Maria Barlik et al., *Budżety gospodarstw domowych w 2012* (Household budget survey in 2012) (Warsaw: Central Statistical Office, 2013).

56. Carole Counihan, *Around the Tuscan Table: Food, Family, and Gender in Twentieth Century Florence* (New York: Routledge, 2004).

57. Edyta Suliga, "Zachowania zdrowotne związane z żywieniem osób dorosłych i starszych," *Hygeia Public Health* 45, no. 1 (2010): 44–48.

58. Ibid.; Anna Waśkiewicz, "Jakość żywienia i poziom wiedzy zdrowotnej u młodych dorosłych Polaków—badanie WOBASZ," *Problemy Higieny i Epidemiologii* 9, no. 2 (2010): 233–37.

59. Jane Wardle et al., "Gender Differences in Food Choice: The Contribution of Health Beliefs and Dieting," *Annals of Behavioral Medicine* 27, no. 2 (2004): 107–16.

60. European Commission, "Health and Food," *Special Eurobarometer 246*, 2006, http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_publication/eb_food_en.pdf.

61. Wardle et al., "Gender Differences in Food Choice: The Contribution of Health Beliefs and Dieting."

62. OBOP, *Zdrowy Polak*, 2011, http://biuro-prasowe.enel.pl/assets/PDF_informacje/Zdrowy_Polak_-_raport_ENEL-MED.pdf; Antonina Ostrowska, *Styl życia a zdrowie: z zagadnień promocji zdrowia* (Warsaw: Wydaw. IFiS PAN, 1999), 60.

63. Bertus H. Forslund, et al., "Snacking Frequency in Relation to Energy Intake and Food Choices in Obese Men and Women Compared to a Reference Population," *International Journal of Obesity* 29, no. 6 (2005): 711–19.

64. Cf. Elena Fotiadou, and Maria Babajimopoulos, "Snack Patterns of Greek Adults 20–50 Years of Age," *Journal of Foodservice* 17, no. 5–6 (2006): 197–20; Sarah C. Grogan, Russell Bell, and Mark Conner, "Eating Sweet Snacks: Gender Differences in Attitudes and Behaviour," *Appetite* 28, no. 1 (1997): 19–31.

65. Brian Wansink, Matthew M. Cheney, and Nina Chan, "Exploring Comfort Food Preferences across Age and Gender," *Physiology & Behavior* 79, no. 4–5 (September 2003): 739–47.

66. Nickie Charles and Marion Kerr, *Women, food, and families* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988): 110.

67. Ibid., 154–57; Ingrid Kiefer, Theres Rathmanner, and Michael Kunze, "Eating and Dieting Differences in Men and Women," *Journal of Men's Health & Gender* 2, no. 2 (June 2005): 194–201.

68. OBOP, *Zdrowy Polak*.
69. Ostrowska, *Styl życia a zdrowie*.
70. Mary Douglas, "Deciphering a Meal," *Daedalus* 101, no. 1 (1972): 61–81; Jack Goody, "The Recipe, the Prescription and the Experiment," in *Food and Culture: A Reader*, ed. Carole Counihan and Penny Van Esterik, 2nd ed. (Abingdon: Routledge, 2008), 76–90.
71. Patricia Pliner and Shelly Chaiken, "Eating, Social Motives, and Self-Presentation in Women and Men," *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology* 26, no. 3 (1990): 240–54.
72. Rebecca Kanter and Benjamin Caballero, "Global Gender Disparities in Obesity: A Review," *Advances in Nutrition: An International Review Journal* 3, no. 4 (2012): 491–98.
73. Branca et al., *The Challenge of Obesity*, 8.
74. Julie A. Pasco, Geoffrey C. Nicholson, Sharon L. Brennan, Mark A. Kotowicz, "Prevalence of Obesity and the Relationship between the Body Mass Index and Body Fat: Cross-Sectional, Population-Based Data," *PLoS One* 7, no. 1 (2012): e29580.
75. Zbigniew Kulaga et al., "The Height-, Weight-, and BMI-for-Age of Polish School-Aged Children and Adolescents Relative to International and Local Growth References," *BMC Public Health* 10, no. 1 (March 4, 2010): 109.
76. Eurostat Commission, *European Health Interview Survey: Between 8 Percent and 25 Percent of Adults Are Obese across Member States; No Systematic Differences between Women and Men* (Brussels: Eurostat Commission, 2011), http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_STAT-11-172_en.pdf.
77. Maria Jodkowska, Anna Oblacinska, and Izabela Tabak, "Overweight and Obesity among Adolescents in Poland: Gender and Regional Differences," *Public Health Nutrition* 13, no. 10A (2010): 1688–92.
78. Eurostat Commission, *European Health Interview Survey*.
79. Wardle et al., "Gender Differences in Food Choice: The Contribution of Health Beliefs and Dieting"; Christine Ton Nu, Patrick MacLeod, and Jacques Barthelemy, "Effects of Age and Gender on Adolescents' Food Habits and Preferences," *Food Quality and Preference* 7, no. 3 (1996): 251–62.
80. Elżbieta Sygnowska et al., "Spożycie produktów spożywczych przez dorosłą populację Polski. Wyniki programu WOBASZ," *Kardiologia Polska* 63, no. 6 (2005): 1–7; Suliga, "Zachowania zdrowotne związane z żywieniem osób dorosłych i starszych."
81. OBOP, *Zdrowy Polak*.
82. European Commission, "Health and Food."
83. Arthur Wynn, "Inequalities in Nutrition," *Nutrition and Health* 5, no. 1–2 (1987): 79–94.
84. J. Irala-Estevez et al., "A Systematic Review of Socio-Economic Differences in Food Habits in Europe: Consumption of Fruit and Vegetables," *European Journal of Clinical Nutrition* 54, no. 9 (2000): 706–14.
85. Gun Roos et al., "Disparities in Vegetable and Fruit Consumption: European Cases from the North to the South," *Public Health Nutrition* 4, no. 1 (2001): 35–44.
86. Ritva Prättälä et al., "Gender Differences in the Consumption of Meat, Fruit and Vegetables Are Similar in Finland and the Baltic Countries," *The European Journal of Public Health* 17, no. 5 (2007): 520–25.
87. OBOP, *Zdrowy Polak*.
88. L. Holm and M. Møhl, "The Role of Meat in Everyday Food Culture: An Analysis of an Interview Study in Copenhagen," *Appetite* 34, no. 3 (2000): 277–83.
89. Robert W. Connell, *Gender and Power: Society, the Person and Sexual Politics* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1987).
90. Brendan Gough, "'Real Men Don't Diet': An Analysis of Contemporary Newspaper Representations of Men, Food and Health," *Social Science & Medicine* 64, no. 2 (2007): 326–37.
91. Brendan Gough and Mark T. Conner, "Barriers to Healthy Eating amongst Men: A Qualitative Analysis," *Social Science & Medicine* (1982) 62, no. 2 (2006): 387–95.
92. W. H. Courtenay, "Constructions of Masculinity and Their Influence on Men's Well-Being: A Theory of Gender and Health," *Social Science & Medicine* (1982) 50, no. 10 (2000): 1385–1401.

93. G. Roos, R. Prattala, and K. Koski, "Men, Masculinity and Food: Interviews with Finnish Carpenters and Engineers," *Appetite* 37, no. 1 (2001): 47–56.
94. Ostrowska, *Styl Życia a Zdrowie*.
95. John Coveney, *Food, Morals, and Meaning: The Pleasure and Anxiety of Eating*, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 2006).
96. Holm and Möhl, "The Role of Meat in Everyday Food Culture: An Analysis of an Interview Study in Copenhagen."
97. Jensen K. O'Doherty and Lotte Holm, "Preferences, Quantities and Concerns: Socio-cultural Perspectives on the Gendered Consumption of Foods," *European Journal of Clinical Nutrition* 53, no. 5 (1999): 351.
98. Krystyna Siwiak, ed., *Sytuacja gospodarstw domowych w 2012 r. w świetle wyników badania budżetów gospodarstw domowych* (Warsaw: Central Statistical Office, 2013).
99. Anna Bogumił et al., *Statistical Yearbook of Agriculture Branch Yearbooks* (Warsaw: Central Statistical Office, 2013).
100. UN Food and Agriculture Organization, *Food Outlook. Global Market Analysis*, Food Outlook. Global Market Analysis (UN Food and Agriculture Organization, 2012).
101. For data, see Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (http://faostat3.fao.org/faostat-gateway/go/to/download/G1/*E)
102. Bogdan Wojtyniak et al., "Gender-Specific Mortality Associated with Alcohol Consumption in Poland in Transition," *Addiction* 100, no. 12 (2005): 1779–89.
103. World Health Organization, *Country Profile - Poland*, 2009, http://ec.europa.eu/health/alcohol/policy/country_profiles/poland_country_profile.pdf.
104. Wojtyniak et al., "Gender-Specific Mortality Associated with Alcohol Consumption in Poland in Transition."

Ewa Kopczyńska is an assistant professor at the Institute of Sociology (Jagiellonian University, Krakow). Her primary interest is sociology of eating patterns and food systems, investigated with anthropological bias. Recently she has finished a project concerning small-scale winemaking in Lubuskie region, "Wine Histories, Wine Memories and Local Identities in Western Poland," in: Rachel E. Black, Robert C. Ulin (eds.), *Wine and Culture. Vineyard to Glass* (2013). Currently she is doing research on Polish traditional and novel food systems, food self-sufficiency, households' nutritional safety strategies and food networks.

Katarzyna Zielińska is an assistant professor at the Institute of Sociology at Jagiellonian University in Krakow. Her academic interests focus on gender and politics in Central Eastern Europe, transformations of collective identity and religion in the context of the EU. Recently she co-edited *Collective Identity and Democracy in the Enlarging Europe*, Peter Lang, 2012, (with Magdalena Góra and Zdzisław Mach) and *Democracy, State and Society: European Integration in Central and Eastern Europe*, Jagiellonian University Press, 2011 (with Magdalena Góra). Currently she is leading the project 'Religion in Polish Politics in the Context of the European Integration'.