



PRESS RELEASE (EMBARGO: 6 February 2019)

Third edition of Contraception Atlas launched at the European Parliament

- All European governments need to do more to meet SDGs for universal access to contraception
- Hat-trick for Belgium, France and UK as they take top spot for third year running
- Poland and Hungary worst performing EU countries

Brussels, 6 February 2019

The Contraception Atlas – a map that scores 46 countries throughout geographical Europe on access to modern contraception, launches its third annual edition today at the European Parliament, continuing to reveal a **very uneven picture across Europe**.

The Atlas stratifies countries by colour according to their access to contraceptive supplies, family planning counselling and online information: green, light green, yellow, orange, red and dark red. **The red and dark red categories indicate extremely poor performance and have been attributed to 12 countries this year, compared with 14 last year.**

“The Atlas serves as a useful indicator of the **extent to which governments prioritise people having autonomy over their reproductive lives. Every country ranked can do more to increase access to contraception** and will reap the benefits, as provision of sexual and reproductive health services leads to a country’s social and economic progress,” said host MEP Ernest Urtasun.

Highlights of this year’s Atlas include **policy changes in Finland and Andorra** to make contraception more accessible by providing reimbursement for young people and contraception without prescription.

“We’re happy to report that across the board, the **standard of online information about contraception is improving**. However, these improvements are oftentimes thanks to NGO’s and other organisation’s websites. There are still only 11 countries that have government-supported websites rated as very good or excellent. We really encourage governments to make this small and cost-effective effort to provide accurate information to their citizens,” said Neil Datta, EPF Secretary.

Despite these successes, many countries across Europe fail to provide any reimbursement for contraception and online information is often lacking. **In Poland, emergency contraception is no longer available without prescription**, catapulting it to the bottom of the rankings by far.

Sen. Petra De Sutter, EPF President, defended the need to improve contraception access: “If you compare the Atlas to population growth statistics, you’ll see that the top scorers correlate, so **contraception isn’t a**

threat to population growth, but rather a means of letting people decide when they want to have children.”

Thanks to successes in presenting the Contraception Atlas around Europe over the past two years, **Italy and Spain have already begun plans to launch their own national atlases** highlighting regional discrepancies to tackle domestic access issues.

In just two years, the Contraception Atlas has become an acknowledged tool of reference for information on contraception in Europe, which is reflected in the Atlas results as more governments and organisations volunteer information, rendering the **2019 Atlas more precise than ever before**.

The findings and more information about contraception in Europe are available at www.contraceptioninfo.eu

Highlights

- **17 countries scored higher than in 2018**
- **14 countries scored lower than in 2018**
- **Albania, Andorra, Finland and Greece most improved countries since 2018**
- **Kosovo and Poland most declined countries since 2018**

About the Atlas

Now in its third year, the Atlas has been produced by the European Parliamentary Forum on Population & Development (EPF) while experts in sexual and reproductive health and rights designed the methodology.

EPF benefitted from the financial support of MSD to undertake original and independent research which is presented in the Atlas. EPF is grateful to numerous expert national organisations and individuals who contributed to gathering the data presented in the Atlas. The scope and content of the European Contraception Atlas is the sole responsibility of EPF.