

**OFFICIAL NAME:**

Republic of Poland (short form: Poland), „Rzeczpospolita Polska” (short form: „Polska”) in Polish

FLAG:

two horizontal stripes of equal width, the upper one white and the lower one red

EMBLEM:

white eagle with a golden crown on a red shield

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE:

Polish

CURRENCY:

złoty, PLN

GOVERNMENT:

parliamentary republic

ECONOMY:

free market economy since 1990

LOCATION:

Central Europe. Poland borders Germany, the Czech Republic, the Slovak Republic, Ukraine, Belarus, Lithuania and Russia. Its northern border runs along the Baltic Sea coast.

CAPITAL:

Warszawa (Warsaw: population 1.7 million, Warsaw agglomeration: 2.5 million)

MAJOR CITIES:

Kraków, Łódź, Wrocław, Poznań, Gdańsk, Szczecin, Bydgoszcz, Lublin, Katowice, Białystok

AREA:

312,685 sq km (9th largest country in Europe)

POPULATION:

38 million, out of which:

- 95% are Poles; among national minorities are: Germans, Belarusians and Ukrainians;
- 62% live in urban areas and 38% in rural areas;
- approx. 90% of Poles declare belonging to the Roman Catholic Church;
- Poland is the seventh largest population in Europe (omitting Russia), and the sixth largest in the European Union.

TIME ZONE:

Poland belongs to the Central European time zone (GMT + 1 hour / UTC + 1 hour), except for between last Sunday in March and last Sunday in October when it switches to daylight saving time.

CALLING CODE:

+ 48

INTERNET DOMAIN:

.pl



A stylized illustration featuring a woman with blue hair and a red smile, holding a large blue magnifying glass. The background is a city skyline with various buildings, bridges, and a red boat on the water. The title 'MAJOR POLISH CITIES' is written in large, dark blue, sans-serif capital letters.

MAJOR POLISH CITIES

WARSZAWA

– the capital of Poland with over 1.7 million inhabitants. It is a business city, to which many Poles migrate searching for education and job opportunities. Thanks to its 50 plus schools of higher education, it has a vibrant spirit and constitutes an important scientific and cultural centre. The city was almost completely destroyed during World War II. Its present architectural landscape has largely been shaped by the years of communism (symbolized by the Palace of Science and Culture) and its entrepreneurial character (skyscrapers).

KRAKÓW

– the former seat of the royal family and capital of Poland until 1596. Its stunning architecture and treasures of art attract thousands of tourists each year. It is considered the cradle of the Polish science because the first Polish university, the Jagiellonian University, was founded here in 1364. Today, it is an important cultural and academic centre with over 730,000 residents.

WROCLAW

– the fourth largest Polish city and the capital of Lower Silesia (*Dolny Śląsk*). Wrocław has a large, beautiful Old Town, whose unique atmosphere is a result of its rich history and astonishing location. It is situated on several islands that are surrounded by the Oder River and its tributaries. Wrocław is a city of students, known for music and theatre festivals, as well as its bustling nightlife.

GDAŃSK

– a major Polish seaport. Together with Gdynia and Sopot it forms a metropolis called Tricity (*Trójmiasto*) with approximately 750,000 inhabitants. It has a beautiful Old Town reflecting its long and turbulent history. It used to be an important Hanseatic city and was owned alternately by Poland and Germany. It is also the city where World War II began and the birthplace of the Polish Solidarity movement (see “Poland after the World War II”).

POZNAŃ

– one of the oldest and largest Polish cities. Thanks to its location on the Paris-Moscow route it has always been an important transport and trade centre. International Trade Fairs have been held here annually since 1925. Today, the city’s economic power peaks due to numerous foreign investments. This, together with a great number of universities and research institutes, makes it the second fastest developing city in Poland.

ŁÓDŹ

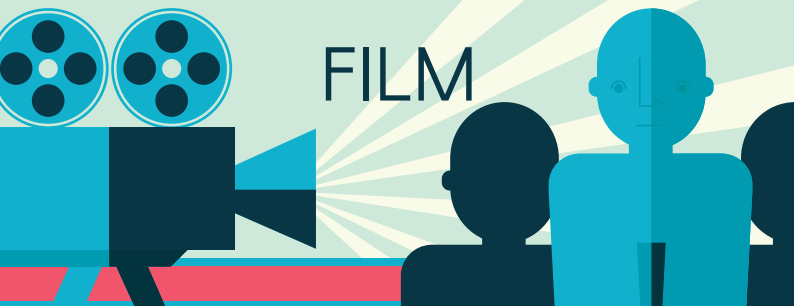
– the third largest city in Poland in terms of the population, located in the centre of the country. In the 19th century it used to be the main industrial power of Poland thanks to its textile industry. Recently, however, it has been turning into a cultural centre, partly because of the Łódź Film School, an internationally renowned Polish film school where most famous Polish actors, cameramen and directors such as Roman Polanski and Andrzej Wajda learnt their profession. In total, the city has over 25 schools of higher education.

THINGS TO DO IN POLAND



YOU SHOULD TRY OR VISIT AT LEAST ONCE:

- Polish food like *pierogi*, *bigos*, *żurek*, *barszcz*, *oscypek*, *placki ziemniaczane*, *kotlet schabowy* or some Polish sweets like *sękacz*, *sernik*, *kremówka* and sweets like *krówka* or *ptasie mleczko* (you can find out more on page 130)
- eating in a *bar mleczny* or in a snack bar, which is similar to Spanish tapas bars, but serves Polish food and drinks
- going by train from Zakopane to Hel... That's challenging! Don't forget to take the Academic Planner with you :)
- sailing in the Masurian Lake District
- canoeing on one of the rivers or canals in Suwalszczyzna or Drawskie region
- skiing and snowboarding in the Tatra Mountains
- wandering in the Bieszczady mountains
- meeting the Polish Bison in Białowieża National Park
- climbing up the Palace of Culture and Science in Warsaw and enjoy a great view from the terrace situated on the 30th floor
- doing windsurfing or kite surfing in the Hel Peninsula
- visiting a real Polish village
- listening to *Hejnal Mariacki* (Cracow's Anthem), which is played by a trumpeter on the highest tower of St. Mary's Church in Cracow and discovering the history of the anthem
- finding out how many dwarfs there are in Wrocław
- supporting Polish football team or at least singing the song which Poles sing after losing a game *Nic się nie stało, Polacy, nic się nie stało...* (No big deal, Poles, no big deal) and supporting our Winter ski jumpers (it's another most popular, even 'national' discipline)
- drawing or dying an Easter egg
- wearing waterproof jacket on Wet Monday during Easter
- challenging yourself and eat as many doughnuts as you can on Fat Thursday
- not going to school on the first day of spring (Truancy Day)
- take part in Polish Juwenalia – student festival
- visit the Gingerbread Museum and bake one by your own
- visit Wieliczka Salt Mine
- visit Amber Museum in Gdańsk



ANDRZEJ WAJDA (born 1926)

film director, laureate of a Lifetime Achievement Oscar, one of the most prominent representatives of the Central European cinema after WW II. Among his best known films are: "Kanał" (1956), "Ashes and Diamonds" (1958), "Man of Iron" (1981), "Pan Tadeusz" (1998) and "Katyn" (2007).



KRZYSZTOF KIEŚLÓWSKI (1941-1996)

film director and screenwriter, known internationally for his film cycles "The Decalogue" (1988) and "Three Colors" (three films, 1993-94), which received three Oscar nominations.



AGNIESZKA HOLLAND (born 1948)

film and theatre director and screenwriter, best known for her political contributions to Polish New Wave Cinema. Some of her best known pictures are "Europe, Europe" (1990), "The Secret Garden" (1993), "Washington Square" (1997) and the most recent "In Darkness".



ZBIGNIEW RYBCZYŃSKI (born 1949)

cinematographer, director and multimedia artist considered a pioneer in HDTV technology, laureate of the Oscar for Best Animated Short Film for "Tango". He has created many music videos for artists such as Mick Jagger, Simple Minds and for John Lennon's "Imagine".



KRYSZYNA JANDA (born 1952)

actress; she has starred in many Andrzej Wajda's films, such as "Man of Marble" (1976) and "Man of Iron" (1981). Currently, she runs her own theatre in Warsaw.



ROMAN POLAŃSKI (born 1953)

film director, producer, writer and actor. He is best known for his "Rosemary's Baby" (1968), "Chinatown" (1974), "Tess" (1979) and "The Pianist" (2002), for which he was awarded an Oscar.

POLISH FILM FESTIVALS

The Gdynia Film Festival www.fpff.pl/en/festival

Plus Camerimage www.pluscamerimage.pl

International Film Festival Etiuda & Anima www.etiudaandanima.com/

Warsaw International Film Festival www.wff.pl/en/

New Horizons Festival www.nowhorizonsyoty.pl

Krakow Film Festival www.krakowfilmfestival.pl

POLISH OSCARS (ACADEMY AWARDS) WINNERS:

1941 Leopold Stokłowski – Music, Best Original Score – "Fantasie"

1953 Bronisław Kaper – Best Musical – "Lili"

1982 Zbigniew Rybczyński – Best Animated Short Film – "Tango"

1993 Janusz Kamiński – Best Picture – "Schindler's List"

1998 Janusz Kamiński – Best Picture – "Saving Private Ryan"

1999 Andrzej Wajda – honorary Oscar for his numerous contributions to cinema

2002 Roman Polański – Best Director – "The Pianist"

2005 Jan A.P. Kaczmarek – Music, Best Original Score – "Finding Neverland"

2015 Paweł Pawlikowski – Best Foreign Language Film – "Ida"

JERZY STUHR (born 1947)

actor and director. He provided voice to Donkey in Polish dubbed version of Shrek. He held position of rector in Polish Drama School.



PAWEŁ PAWLIKOWSKI (born 1957)

is a Polish BAFTA Award-winning filmmaker. He garnered much acclaim for his BAFTA Award-winning "Last Resort" which he wrote and directed in 2000 and "My Summer of Love", loosely based on Helen Cross' novel, which also won a BAFTA and a string of other awards at festivals around the world. His recent movie "Ida" has been named "a film masterpiece" by New York Times and has gained the fans all over the world.



JANUSZ KAMIŃSKI (born 1959)

cinematographer who has photographed all of Steven Spielberg's films since 1993 "Schindler's List". He won the Academy Award for Best Cinematography twice: for "Schindler's List" and "Saving Private Ryan".





FAMOUS POLISH SCIENTISTS

NICOLAUS COPERNICUS (1473-1543)

was a Renaissance astronomer and the first European to contend that it is the Sun, not the Earth, that is at the centre of the Solar System.

KAROL OLSZEWSKI (1846-1915) and ZYGMUNT WRÓBLEWSKI (1845-1888)

were the first scholars in the world who liquefied oxygen, nitrogen and carbon dioxide from the atmosphere in a stable state (1883). Olszewski was also the first to liquefy hydrogen, achieving a record low temperature of $-225\text{ }^{\circ}\text{C}$ (1884).

MARIA SKŁODOWSKA-CURIE (1867-1934)

was a physicist-chemist famous for her pioneering research on radioactivity. She was the first woman ever to receive the degree of a Doctor of Science and the first female professor appointed at the Sorbonne. To this day, Skłodowska-Curie remains the only woman who received two Nobel Prizes, and the only scientist in history to be awarded two Nobel Prizes in two different fields of study (physics in 1903 and chemistry in 1911).

HENRYK ARCTOWSKI (1871-1958)

was a Polish scientist, oceanographer and Antarctica's explorer whose name has been given to a number of geographical features in Antarctica and in Spitsbergen.

JAN CZOCHRALSKI (1885-1953)

was a chemist who discovered a method of growing single crystals and laid foundations for today's electronics. Without his invention, today we wouldn't have computers, television sets, telephones, microwave ovens etc.

STEFAN BANACH (1892-1945)

was a mathematics prodigy who founded one of the most important mathematical fields – functional analysis. He also founded and led the Lwów School of Mathematics to research this branch of mathematics.

KAZIMIERZ MICHAŁOWSKI (1901-1981)

was an archaeologist and Egyptologist who made many discoveries in Egypt, Sudan and Crimea, and founded Nubiology, an archeological science concerned with the scientific study of Ancient Nubia and its antiquities. Today his work is continued by expeditions of Polish scientists, who have excavated many splendid masterpieces of ancient architecture, art and ceramics, revealing spectacular facts about the ancient reality.

ZBIGNIEW RELIGA (1938-2009)

was a cardiac surgeon and Minister of Health from 2005 to 2007; he was a pioneer in human heart transplantation in Poland. In 2004 together with his team he obtained a prestigious “Brussels Eureka” award at the World Exhibition of Innovation, Research and Technology for developing an implantable pump for a pneumatic heart assistance system.

SYLWESTER POROWSKI (born 1938)

is a physicist who built – with his team – a blue semiconductor laser (2001) with a groundbreaking method, which allows applying the laser in medical diagnostic tests, environmental monitoring and in the production of new generation of televisions, video projectors and various storage media.

ALEKSANDER WOLSZCZAN (born 1946)

is an astronomer who found the first evidence for the existence of an extrasolar planetary system and pulsar planets in 1992 (together with Dale Frail).

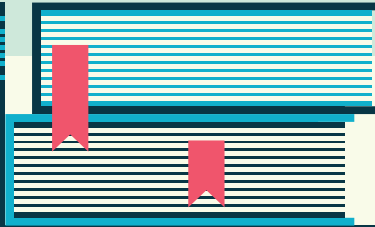
AGNIESZKA ZALEWSKA (born 1948)

is a Professor at the H. Niewodniczański Institute of Nuclear Physics of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Krakow. She has a distinguished career in particle physics and a long association with CERN (European Organization for Nuclear Research). From 1st January 2013 she is a President of CERN council.

ANDRZEJ UDALSKI (born 1957)

is an astronomer and leader of the Optical Gravitational Lensing Experiment. This project, run since 1992, has already brought numerous breakthrough discoveries, including discoveries of many planets outside our solar system. In 2009 the team obtained the prestigious Advanced Investigators Grant of 2.5 million Euro from the European Research Council for continuing the project.

POLISH LITERATURE



When I pronounce the word Future,
the first syllable already belongs to the past.
When I pronounce the word Silence,
I destroy it.

Wisława Szymborska



WITOLD GOMBROWICZ (1904-1969)

avant-garde novelist, playwright and essayist, whose innovative works are admired for their psychological insight and philosophical meaning, conveyed by means of paradox and absurd.



CZESŁAW MIŁOSZ (1911-2004)

poet, prose writer and translator; for over thirty years he was a professor of Slavic Languages and Literatures at the University of California in Berkeley. He received the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1980.



STANISŁAW LEM (1921-2006)

world-famous science fiction writer, philosopher, futurologist and satirist. His works have been translated into 41 languages and sold over 27 million copies. His influence on the science fiction literature is compared to H. G. Wells's.



WIŚLAWA SZYMBORSKA (1923-2012)

Polish poet, essayist and translator, awarded the 1996 Nobel Prize in Literature for her poetic endeavours. Since 2001 she was an honorary member of the American Academy of Fine Arts and Literature, which is the most important American distinction awarded to renowned artists.

RYSZARD KAPUŚCINSKI (1932-2007)

prolific writer and reporter who travelled the world in the search of exotic worlds and described what he saw in his books, e.g. in his best-known reportage "The Emperor". He is the second (after S. Lem) most often translated Polish writer.

ANDRZEJ SAPKOWSKI (born 1948)

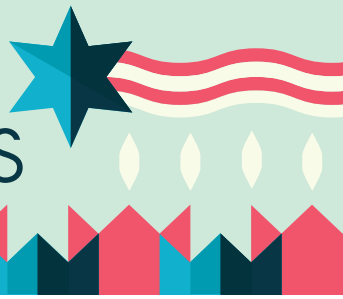
a fantasy writer, is the author of a best-selling book series The Witcher (*Wiedźmin*). This cycle and his other works have made him one of the best-known fantasy authors in Poland. The English translation of his novel Blood of Elves won the David Gemmell Legends Award in 2009, and The Witcher cycle inspired a Polish game publisher to create an action-oriented role-playing game under the same title.



POLISH WINNERS OF NOBEL PRIZE IN LITERATURE:

- 1905 Henryk Sienkiewicz – lifetime achievement as an epic writer
- 1924 Władysław Reymont – realistic novel – "The Peasants"
- 1980 Czesław Miłosz – lifetime achievement
- 1996 Wisława Szymborska – lifetime achievement

CUSTOMS & HOLIDAYS



CUSTOMS AND RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS

FAT THURSDAY

(*Tłusty czwartek*) – the day of eating traditional Polish doughnuts (*pączki*) and Angel Wings (*faworki*): special sugared crispy pastry (celebrated on the last Thursday before the religious period of Lent; 2015 on 12th February).

SHROVE TUESDAY

(*Ostatki*) – the last day of the Carnival when people party before the beginning of Lent (in 2015 on 17th February).

THE FIRST DAY OF SPRING

The day of the spring equinox when people used to burn and/or drown an effigy of Marzanna, who was considered the embodiment of death and winter (“frost maiden”). Today school children play truant on that day (21st March).

EASTER

(*Wielkanoc*) – one of the most important public holidays in Poland, steeped in tradition. People decorate eggs (*pisanek*), which they take in the Easter basket to church on Holy Saturday. On Easter Sunday, when the resurrection of Christ is commemorated, Poles meet at lavish breakfasts and dinners. Many traditional dishes are prepared such as pâtés, soups typical for a particular region (e.g. *żurek*), yeast cake (*babka wielkanocna*) and specially decorated Easter short cake (*mazurek*). On Easter Monday (*lany poniedziałek*) people play tricks on their family and friends by pouring some water on them. In 2015 celebrated on 5th and 6th April.

CORPUS CHRISTI

(*Boże Ciało*) – the day when religious processions are organized across Poland, led by children dressed in white, who scatter flower petals before them (in 2015 celebrated on 4th June).

ALL SAINTS' DAY

(*Wszystkich Świętych*) – on this day people visit cemeteries to light up candles and pray for those who have passed away (1st November).

EVE OF ST. ANDREW'S DAY

(*Andrzejki*) – is a magical night of future-telling, when people pour hot wax into cold water through a key hole and try to read their fate from the shape of the congealed wax (29th November).

CHRISTMAS

(*Boże Narodzenie*) – probably the most celebrated holiday in Poland, mainly because of the Christmas Eve dinner on 24th December (*Wigilia*). On this day families meet at tables filled with typical Christmas dishes, such as red beetroot soup served with small dumplings, pickled herring, dumplings with cabbage and mushrooms, fried carp, and for dessert: poppy seed cake and gingerbread. There are many rituals connected with this evening such as sharing a Christmas wafer before dinner, singing carols and exchanging presents, which lie hidden under the Christmas tree till the end of the meal.

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

3RD MAY (CONSTITUTION DAY)

On this day in 1791 Poland as the first country in Europe and the second in the world proclaimed its modern codified constitution (*Konstytucja 3 maja*).

11TH NOVEMBER (NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE DAY)

On this day in 1918 Poland regained independence after 123 years of partitions.

OTHER HOLIDAYS

LABOUR DAY

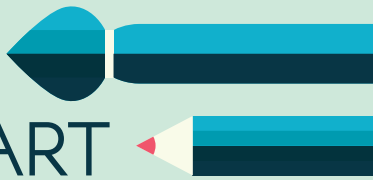
The 1st May has been celebrated in Poland since 1886, when it was established as International Workers' Day by the Second International. After the WW II it became a public holiday and till 1989 the central government organized 1st May marches (*pochody pierwszomajowe*) in all cities and towns. After 1989 the tradition of such marches in Poland was almost entirely stopped, except for small parades still being organized by left-wing parties.

WOMEN'S DAY

The International Women's Day (*Dzień Kobiet*) on 8th March was a public holiday and one of the most important dates in the Polish calendar during the communist regime. Originally, the holiday was meant to mark women's economic, social and political achievements but in the times of the People's Republic of Poland it was used as an occasion to spread the communist ideology. Nowadays the Women's Day is most spectacularly celebrated by feminists, who organise demonstrations and rallies (*manifesty*) in order to fight for the equality of rights of men and women.

Poles also celebrate the April Fool's Day (Prima Aprilis; 1st April), Child's Day (Dzień Dziecka; 1st June), St. John's Night (*Sobótka*; 21st/22nd June) and St. Nicholas Day (Mikolajki; 6th December).

MUSIC & VISUAL ART



FRYDERYK CHOPIN (1810-1849)

is the best known Polish composer and virtuoso pianist, one of the great masters of Romantic music who was called “the poet of the piano”. Every five years, Poland as the artist’s birthplace organises the renowned International Chopin Piano Competition, which since 1927 has awarded virtuoso pianists for masterful performances of Chopin’s compositions.

KRZYSZTOF KOMEDA (1931-1969)

jazz music composer and pianist, considered the precursor of European jazz due to his 1966 album “Asgmatic”; author of music scores to 65 films (e.g. Polański’s “Rosemary’s Baby”).

WOJCIECH KILAR (born 1932)

classical and film music composer. He has written music scores for over 100 films by Roman Polański (e.g. “The Pianist”), Francis F. Coppola (“Dracula”), Jane Campion, Andrzej Wajda (e.g. “Pan Tadeusz”), and others.

KRZYSZTOF PENDERECKI (born 1933)

composer and conductor of classical music. Many of his pieces have been adapted for soundtracks of films such as Stanley Kubrick’s “The Shining”, William Friedkin’s “The Exorcist”, David Lynch’s “Wild at Heart”, and Andrzej Wajda’s “Katyn”.

CZESŁAW NIEMEN (1939-2004)

singer and composer, key figure in the history of the Polish rock music. In his 1969 album “Enigmatic” he successfully combined the avant-garde with popular music, which meant the beginning of a new era of the Polish rock.

URSZULA DUDZIAK (born 1943)

jazz vocalist; she has worked with the best contemporary musicians including Gil Evans, Bobby McFerrin, Krzysztof Komeda, Michał Urbaniak (her ex-husband), and Sting.

BASIA (Basia Trzetrzelewska, born 1954)

pop-jazz singer and songwriter. She established a successful international recording career during the late 1980s and early 1990s. Some of her hit songs were: “Cruising for Bruising” (1988), “Drunk on Love” (1994), “Half a Minute” (1995).

WŁODEK PAWLIK (born 1958)

GRAMMY award winning pianist and composer. He is a graduate of the Frederic Chopin Academy of Music in Warsaw as well as Hochschule für Music in Hamburg (Germany). He won many music competition’s prizes including the first place in instrumentalist category at the International Jazz Competition in Dunkirk (France, 1984) and a second place at the International Composers’ Competition in Monaco (1988).

MALGORZATA WALEWSKA (born 1965)

opera singer, mezzosoprano who performed in Vienna State Opera e.g. with Luciano Pavarotti. She was recognized as one of ten most famous Poles by the Time Magazine.

LESZEK MOŹDŻER (born 1971)

is famous Polish jazz pianist. He is also a music producer and a film music composer.

TADEUSZ KANTOR (1915-1990)

revolutionary painter, assemblage artist, set designer and theatre director. He’s one of the most renowned figures in the history of the Polish theatre.

MAGDALENA ABAKANOWICZ (born 1930)

sculptor, professor at the College of Fine Arts in Poznań, lecturer at the University of California. She has had over 100 solo exhibitions around the globe and received many awards as well as Honoris Causa doctorates from art schools in both America and Europe. Some of her sculptures are designed for open spaces, such as the “Dragon’s space” in the Olympic Park in Seoul.

IGOR MITORAJ (1944-2014)

famous sculptor and painter; since 1997 he has had 120 solo exhibitions. His (very often gigantic) sculptures of classical inspiration are installed in representative places of many cities, e.g. Paris, Rome, Milan, London, as well as cities in the USA and Japan.

KRZYSZTOF SKÓRCZEWSKI (born 1947)

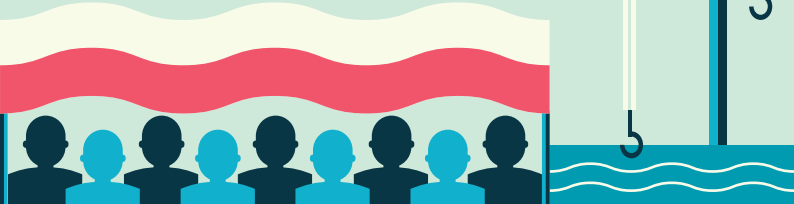
graphic artist who has mainly worked on copper plating for the last 30 years. He has had over fifty individual and two hundred group exhibitions around the world and is the holder of numerous awards.

WILHELM SASNAL (born 1972)

famous contemporary painter whose works are held in the greatest museums of modern art, such as Tate Modern in London. He is the winner of the Vincent van Gogh Biennial Award for Contemporary Art in Europe in 2006.

It is impossible to mention all Polish artists, that’s why we are encouraging you to see more on: www.culture.pl.

POLISH HISTORY AFTER WORLD WAR II



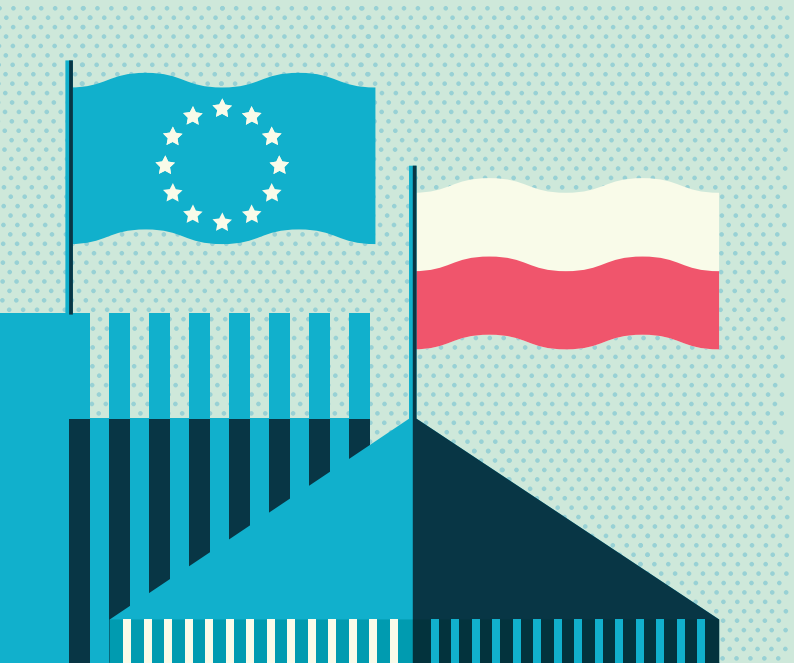
After the World War II, as a result of political frauds and manipulations, Poland became a satellite state of the Soviet Union under the name of The People's Republic of Poland (*Polska Rzeczpospolita Ludowa – PRL*). Although it officially preserved the status of an independent state, Stalin's interventions led to instituting a communist government in Poland with the USSR-controlled Polish United Workers' Party (*PZPR*) soon becoming the only legal party in the country. From 1945 till 1989 the Soviet Union steered both Poland's internal and foreign affairs and kept its Red Army troops on Polish territory. Many of the basic civil rights were confined or broken: freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of movement, the right to assemble, freedom of conscience and religion. Most highest posts in Poland were given to communists nominated by Soviet leaders. All private companies were nationalized and Poland became a centrally-planned socialist economy.

By mid 1960s this system had already brought a downturn in the economy and the counter-measures taken in 1970s only deepened the crisis. This led to massive strikes in 1980, which forced the government to concede. On 31st August protesting workers from the Gdańsk shipyard managed to sign a social contract with the government, the so called August Agreement (*Porozumienie sierpniowe*), which made possible the creation of "Solidarity" (*Solidarność*), the first independent trade union. Supported by the majority of the population and led by charismatic Lech Wałęsa, Solidarity soon became too strong to be tolerated by the communist regime. On 13th December 1981 the newly nominated Prime Minister, Wojciech Jaruzelski introduced martial law (*stan wojenny*). It brought to the nation further limitation of various civil liberties, internments, imprisonments, job losses, food rationing and other repressions. Many of these did not stop after the martial law was officially suspended in July 1983.

Although Solidarity was banned in 1982, it still remained strong as an underground organisation and represented the opposition in negotiations with the ruling party in 1989. The Round Table Talks, as they were called, focused on ways to improve the economic system and democratise the political process in Poland. The talks resulted in signing an agreement, which allowed for conducting partially free parliamentary elections in June 1989. After Solidarity received the majority vote, and an oppositionist, Tadeusz Mazowiecki, was elected the Prime Minister, the country's name was changed to the Republic of Poland (*Rzeczpospolita Polska*). Subsequently, the Polish constitution was amended. This was the beginning of the fall of the whole communist block and the birth of a new democracy, with a free-market economy and a strong, 38-million nation ready to fight back for its place in Europe.

As the leader of the opposition movement which forced the major change, Lech Wałęsa was acclaimed as a national hero and elected the President of the new Republic for the 1990-1995 period. Even though his presidency was criticised, he will be remembered by many generations as the man who returned freedom to Central and Eastern European societies and played a major part in ending the cold war. For the successful establishment of *Solidarność*, which was a breakthrough achievement on the way to liberty of millions of Europeans, he was chosen the Men of the Year by the Time Magazine in 1981 and awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1983. He has received many honorary degrees and remains a respected figure in the world of international diplomacy.





However, Wałęsa himself suggested that the change wouldn't have been possible without the spiritual inspiration from one man: John Paul II (Karol Wojtyła – 1920-2005). He was the first Polish Pope and his election in 1978 had a great impact on the oppressed Polish nation. It gave people hope and moral strength, and ensured that Poland's difficult political situation is noticed by the world. Through his teachings and deeds John Paul II, made an enormous contribution not only to the collapse of the Iron Curtain, but also to a positive change in the lives of thousands of people from all continents. For this he was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize in 2004. Poland will always remember him as the harbinger of freedom.

FIND OUT MORE ABOUT POLISH HISTORY:

The Animated History of Poland is an eight minute animated film presenting the history of Poland from the Middle Ages to the present times. Tomasz Bagiński, a BAFTA Award winner and Polish master of animation best known for The Cathedral (2002), an Oscar-nominated short movie, is the director of the film.

POLAND IN EU:

While the 1st May has traditionally been celebrated in Poland as the Labour Day, in 2004 this date became important for Poles for an entirely different reason. On 1st May 2004, after 10 years of preparations Poland, together with 9 other countries, joined the European Union. Since 1999, the Polish Robert Schuman Foundation has organized the Schuman Parade (*Parada Schumana*) as a symbol of Poland's integration with Europe. It is meant to be a cheerful celebration of the idea of a unified Europe. The Schuman Parade is usually organized on 9th May, which has been established the Europe Day by the EU.

DID YOU KNOW THAT...

Jerzy Buzek was President of the European Parliament between 2009 and 2012. In 2014 Donald Tusk, the former Prime Minister of Poland has been elected the President of the European Council.



DID YOU KNOW THAT...

In Poland there operate 427 museums with a statute or rules and regulations approved by the Minister of Culture and National Heritage. If you would like to understand Polish history, you should visit the Warsaw Rising Museum, the Museum of Polish Jews in Warsaw, the Polish History Museum in Krakow and European Solidarity Center in Gdańsk (opening in June 2014).

WORLD HERITAGE SITES IN POLAND

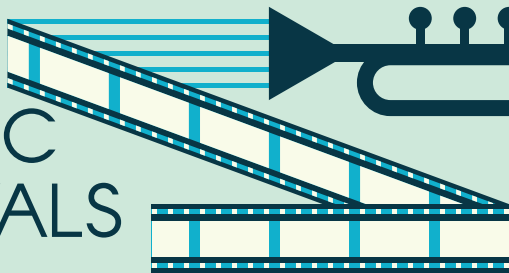
- Auschwitz-Birkenau German Nazi Concentration and Extermination Camp (1940–1945)
- Białowieża Forest / Belovezhskaya Pushcha (with Belarus)
- Castle of the Teutonic Order in Malbork
- Centennial Hall, Wrocław
- Churches of Peace in Jawor and Świdnica
- Cracow's Historic Centre
- Kalwaria Zebrzydowska: the Mannerist Architectural and Park Landscape Complex and Pilgrimage Park
- Muskau Park, Park Mużakowski (with Germany)
- Medieval Town of Toruń
- Historic Centre of Warsaw
- Wieliczka and Bochnia Royal Salt Mines
- Wooden Churches of Southern Lesser Poland
- Old City of Zamość
- Wooden Tserkvas of Carpathian Region in Poland and Ukraine



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

If you want to find out more, visit: www.nimoz.pl

FILM & MUSIC FESTIVALS



THE GDYNIA FILM FESTIVAL

(*Festiwal Polskich Filmów Fabularnych w Gdyni*), organised since 1974, is an annual film festival, one of the biggest film events in Poland. It is primarily the showcase of Polish cinema – the best films of the year, the most influential filmmakers, vital topics. The newest Polish films compete in Gdynia for the Golden Lions award.

THE PLUS CAMERIMAGE

The International Film Festival of the Art of Cinematography Plus Camerimage is the greatest and most recognized festival dedicated to the art of cinematography and its creators – cinematographers. Initially held in Toruń, then in Łódź, and since 2010 – in Bydgoszcz. It takes place at the end of November every year. Golden, Silver and Bronze Frogs are awarded in various categories such as Best Cinematography, Best Student Work, Short Documentary Film, Best Polish Film, Best Music Video and other.

THE ETIUDA & ANIMA

International Film Festival Etiuda & Anima organized in Kraków since 1994, is the oldest film festival in Poland which presents the achievements of students of film and art school students from all over the world, as well as works of fine-art animation films creators. The main events of every annual festival are the two contests which give the festival its name.

THE WARSAW FILM FESTIVAL

(*Warszawski Festiwal Filmowy*) is a major film festival held every October in Warsaw (since 1985). The festival is host to the International Federation of Film Critics awards for enterprising filmmaking in Central and Eastern Europe. In 2009 it became one of 14 events recognized by the International Federation of Film Producers Associations as international film festivals.

THE NEW HORIZONS FESTIVAL

in Wrocław presents uncompromising, innovative and original cinema from all over the world that explores new horizons in film language, expression and storytelling. The festival has 4 competitive sections: International Competition, Polish Short Film Competition, European Shorts Competition, Films On Art International Competition.

PKO OFF CAMERA INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF INDEPENDENT CINEMA

organized since 2008 in Cracow. During the Festival are organized seminars, meeting with artist, debates and workshops. The aim of the PKO OFF Camera is to let festival audience and authors meet each other to initiate the dialogue.

THE KRAKOW FILM FESTIVAL

is one of the oldest film events dedicated to documentary, animation and short fiction films in Europe. During 7 festival days viewers have an opportunity to watch about 250 films from Poland and abroad. Films are presented in competitions and in special sections like retrospectives, thematic cycles, archive screenings. The films awarded at Krakow are automatically eligible for the European Film Awards and the Oscars in the short films categories.

THE JAROCIN FESTIVAL

was the biggest rock music festival in the Warsaw Pact countries in the 1980s. Its format was based on the American Woodstock Festival. The event, however, was not only about music. Many people felt that it was the only place and time when the communist authorities allowed citizens some freedom. It is considered a cradle of the Polish rock, heavy metal, punk and reggae music scenes and the place where many great Polish bands, such as Dżem or Kult made their debuts.

THE JAZZ JAMBOREE FESTIVAL

one of Europe's largest and oldest jazz festivals, organized in Warsaw since 1958. The Festival has hosted almost all of the world's greatest jazz artists, including Duke Ellington, Miles Davis, Dizzy Gillespie, Ornette Coleman, Ray Charles, Keith Jarrett, Wynton Marsalis, Joe Henderson, Kenny Garrett, Joe Williams, Dave Brubeck, Gerry Mulligan, Stan Getz, US3, Diana Krall and others.

THE OPEN'ER FESTIVAL

is an open-air music and performing arts festival which takes place in Gdynia (every year in June-July). The first edition of the festival was organized in Warsaw in 2002 as Open Air Festival. During the festival alternative and pop music fans from more than 30 countries are meeting, enjoying the best performances of artists.

THE MALTA FESTIVAL

is one of the most important artistic festivals in Europe. The festival is held in Poznań in June-July every year. It is named after Malta lake in Poznań, where the first outdoor performances took place. The programme involves among others outdoor stage performances, ballet performances, film projections, concerts and meetings with artists. World-class artists perform in a small halls, as well as on market squares, in parks, factories and halls.

POLISH CUISINE



Polish cuisine has over years been influenced by many cooking traditions and varies across the country. Some of the Polish specialties are:

- soups such as beetroot soup (*barszcz*), beet leaves soup (*botwinka*) or sour soup made from rye flour and mushrooms, served with potatoes, diced sausages and hard-boiled eggs (*żurek*);
- *bigos*, considered the Polish national dish, which is a traditional stew of cabbage and meat;
- smoked meats, such as the famous Polish sausage (*kielbasa*), which comes in many kinds;
- various sorts of delicious dumplings (*pierogi*) stuffed with meat, cabbage and mushrooms, cottage cheese and potatoes or fruits;
- breaded pork cutlet (*kotlet schabowy*);
- pancakes (*naleśniki*) with sweet or spicy filling or popular potato pancakes (*placki ziemniaczane*);
- *osypek*: cheese produced in the mountains from ewe's milk, which is the most famous Polish regional delicacy;
- delicious pastries and cakes, such as typically Polish apple pie (*szarlotka*), gingerbread (*piernik*), poppy seed cake (*makowiec*), donut (*pączek*) or cheesecake (*sernik*).

Traditional Polish cuisine is often described as hearty and meat-based, but Polish tables have also been laden with vegetables and fruit across the ages. This is because Poland is a perfect land for growing food and today you can still easily get fresh, high quality produce.

Restaurants in Poland serve all types of international cuisine nowadays and there is plenty to satisfy vegetarian tastes, but many specialize in typical Polish food, offering traditional and regional dishes in rustic style interiors.

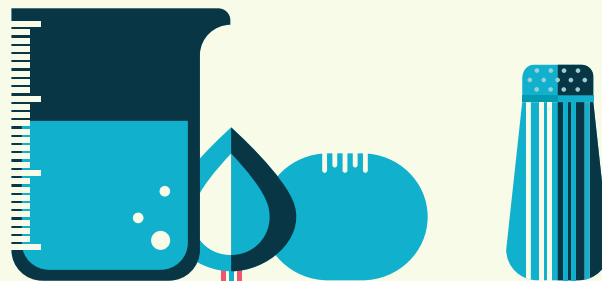
Potato Pancakes

Ingredients:
500 g potatoes
1 onion
1 garlic clove (optional)
1 egg
2 spoons of wheat flour
salt and pepper
oli (for frying)

Directions:

- 1 Peel and grate potatoes.
- 2 Peel and grate onion.
- 3 Put potatoes and onion in a strainer and drain from moisture. Put it in a large bowl.
- 4 Add garlic, egg, flour, salt and pepper and mix thoroughly.
- 5 Pour oil on frying pan and heat it.
- 6 Use spoon to put mixture on frying pan.
- 7 Fry it on both sides until it's brown and crisp.

You can eat potatoe pancakes with cream, vegetables or other toppings. Use your imagination, the sky is the limit here.



For more information on Polish cuisine, visit:

- www.kuchniapolska.net (in Polish)
- www.polishfoodinfo.com (in English)
- www.tastingpoland.com (in English)
- Polish English food glossary: polish-cuisine.blogspot.com

POLISH SPORTSPEOPLE

1
2
3

KRZYSZTOF BARANOWSKI (born 1938)

sailor, journalist and teacher. He is the first Pole who has twice single-handed sailed the globe (in 1972-1973 and 1999-2000).

WANDA RUTKIEWICZ (1943-1992)

Alpine and Himalayan mountain climber. She was the first European woman and the third woman in the world who has reached the summit of Mount Everest.

IRENA SZEWIŃSKA (born 1946)

athlete who won 7 Olympic medals (3 gold) and took part in 5 editions of Olympic Games. In her long career she broke world records ten times. She was also the first woman to ever complete the 400 m race in under 50 seconds.

MAREK KAMIŃSKI (born 1964)

famous polar explorer. He is the first person ever to reach both poles and the only traveller who has achieved this in a single year without external assistance (in 1995).

ROBERT KORZENIOWSKI (born 1968)

racewalker who has won four Olympic gold medals (for 50 km and 20 km) and twice won the title of the World 50 km Walking Champion.

ADAM MAŁYSZ (born 1977)

one of the greatest ski jumpers of all time. He has won 38 World Cup competitions and as one of only two men ever won the overall World Cup four times. He has also gathered more titles in World Championships than any other ski jumper in the world.

JUSTYNA KOWALCZYK (born 1983)

cross country skier, is a double Olympic Champion and a double World Champion. She is a triple winner of the FIS Cross-Country World Cup and the only skier who won the Tour de Ski four times in a row. Kowalczyk is one of only two female skiers to win the World Cup three times in a row and she holds the all-time record for the most wins in Tour de Ski with 14 competitions won and 29 podiums in total.

MAJA WŁOSZCZOWSKA (born 1983)

is a Polish mountain biker. She became world champion in Elite cross-country mountain biking in 2010. In the 2011 world championships Maja looked like she was about to retain the title, but finished in second place after losing over a minute to the eventual winner Catharine Pendrel due to a flat tire.

KAMIL STOCH (born 1987)

Polish ski jumper. He is the 2014 double Olympic champion in the normal hill and large hill as well as the 2013 and 2014 World champion in the large hill. On 26 January 2013 he became the joint Polish ski flying record holder (tying the mark held by Piotr Żyła) with a jump of 232.5.

ROBERT LEWANDOWSKI (born 1988)

is a Polish footballer who plays for German Bundesliga club Bayern Munich (before Borussia Dortmund) and the Poland national football team as a striker. Having previously played for Delta Warsaw, Legia Warsaw and Lech Poznan, he joined Dortmund in 2010. He is renowned for his excellent play in Champions League 2013.

AGNIESZKA RADWAŃSKA (born 1989)

is a Polish professional tennis player. As of 27 May 2013, she is ranked world no. 4. She is the first Polish player in the Open Era to reach the singles final of a Grand Slam (the 2012 Wimbledon Championships), the first Pole to claim a WTA singles title (the 2007 Nordea Nordic Light Open). She won the WTA Award for Most Impressive Newcomer in 2006, and has been voted the WTA's most popular player for two consecutive years (2011–2012) in polls held by WTATennis.com.

OTYLIA JEDRZEJCZAK

is a Polish swimmer, who won the gold Olympic medal in 2004, two gold medals in World Aquatics Championship and eight medals in European Aquatics Championships.



The Poland national men's volleyball team won several medals in international competitions. The team has competed in the FIVB (Fédération Internationale de Volleyball) World League since 1998. It's most recent success is gold medal at the World League in 2012 and 2014.

POLISH LANGUAGE

Polish belongs to West-Slavic group of the Indo-European family of languages. It is classified as an inflected and synthetic system. As an individual language, Polish evolved in the 10th century and played an important role in the establishment and development of the Polish state. Until the 14th century, Polish existed only in the form of several regional spoken variations. As a literary, superregional language, Polish was distinguished in the 15th and 16th centuries, which is demonstrated by the extensive collection of Renaissance literary works.

The number of people speaking Polish as their mother tongue exceeds 45 million, of which 38 million live in Poland. Large groups of Poles and ethnic Poles have been living outside Poland for many generations, mainly in the USA, Canada, Australia, Germany, UK, France, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Lithuania and Ukraine. Today, Polish is gaining popularity as a foreign language taught at language schools and in academic centres across Poland and worldwide.

ENGLISH-POLISH ONLINE DICTIONARIES:

www.ling.pl (multilingual dictionary: Polish-English, German, French, Spanish, Italian, Russian)
www.polish.slavic.pitt.edu
www.dictionary.pl
www.dict.pl
www.poltran.com
www.getionary.pl
www.portalwiedzy.onet.pl/tlumacz
www.bbc.co.uk/languages/polish



CZEŚĆ!	HELLO/HI!
DZIEŃ DOBRY	GOOD DAY
DOBRY WIECZÓR	GOOD EVENING
DOBANOC	GOOD NIGHT
DO WIDZENIA	GOOD BYE
PRZEPRASZAM	I'M SORRY/EXCUSE ME
DZIĘKUJE	THANK YOU
DZIĘKI!	THANKS!
PROSZE	PLEASE
TAK	YES
NIE	NO
CO SŁYCHAĆ?	HOW ARE YOU?
W PORZĄDKU	I'M FINE
NIE MÓWIĘ PO POLSKU	I DON'T SPEAK POLISH
NIE ROZUMIEM	I DON'T UNDERSTAND
POPROSZE, TO	COULD I HAVE THIS?
KTÓRA GODZINA	WHAT TIME IS IT?
CHCESZ?	WOULD YOU LIKE...?

HIGHER EDUCATION IN POLAND



Poland was among 29 countries which signed the Bologna Declaration in 1999. Since then, many legislative changes have been introduced to adjust the Polish higher education system to the Bologna Process action lines. “Bologna tools” such as the three cycle study system, ECTS and the Diploma Supplement are now legally binding for all Polish higher education institutions. Currently, Poland is working towards the full implementation of the National Qualifications Framework.

Students in Poland may study either at university type institutions or at non-university higher education schools (which may not award the doctoral degree). Both types of HEIs offer study programmes in various academic disciplines. Students enrolled at Polish higher education institutions can choose between full-time and part time studies. Full time is the standard mode and is usually free of charge in state higher education institutions. The courses may take the form of lectures, practical classes, workshops, seminars, laboratory classes and practical placements.

FOREIGN STUDENTS IN POLAND:

The annual number of foreign students in Poland has rapidly been growing for the last few years to reach nearly 10,772 in 2012/2013. Since 1998, Poland has also been a host country for students participating in the Erasmus program.

Higher education institutions hosting foreign students generally offer courses of Polish language and culture.

Higher education institutions in Poland offer the following educational possibilities:

FIRST CYCLE PROGRAMMES

leading to the professional title of licencjat (Bachelor type), of 3 to 4 years duration, and leading to the professional title of inżynier (“engineer” - Bachelor degree), of 3.5 to 4 years duration.

SECOND CYCLE PROGRAMMES

of 1.5 to 2,5 years duration, leading to the professional title of magister or an equivalent degree (Master’s degree), accessible for graduates of first cycle studies.

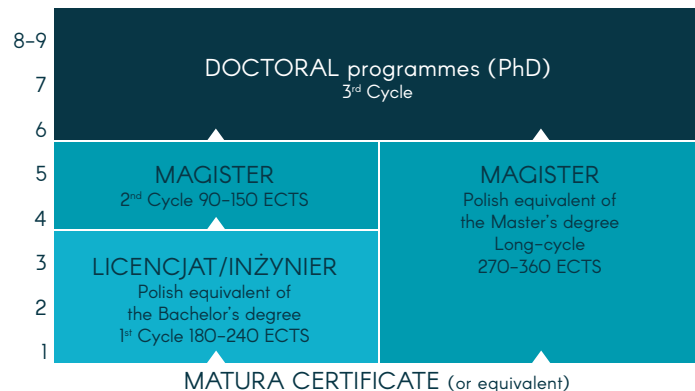
LONG-CYCLE PROGRAMMES

(or one-tier degrees) of 4.5 to 6 years duration, leading to the professional title of magister or an equivalent degree (Master’ degree).

THIRD CYCLE PROGRAMMES

are doctoral programmes provided by university-type schools as well as some research institutions (principally the Polish Academy of Sciences).

Students enrolled at Polish higher education institutions can choose between full-time and part-time studies. Full time is the standard mode and is usually free of charge in state higher education institutions. The courses may take the form of lectures, practical classes, workshops, seminars, laboratory classes and practical placements.



EXAMS & GRADING

fail



FORMALITIES



EXAMS AND ASSESSMENT

February is the month when the first examination session (*sesja*) within the academic year takes place. It usually starts in late January after the classes finish and lasts for two or three weeks, during which students have to take written and oral exams (*egzamininy*). Some teachers agree to organize additional examinations for volunteers before the official examination period begins (*zerówki*) to give them an opportunity to better manage their learning and review.

Between the first session and the summer semester students have a two-week winter break. The summer semester continues until late June, which is the time when the second examination session takes place. The second examination session is usually more difficult because many examinations cover material from two semesters. In the case of a failure students can resist these exams in September.

In order to complete a semester each student has to obtain at least pass marks for all assessments within the semester, regardless of their form (including projects, integrated placements etc.). The most often used assessment scale envisages for the following grades: very good (5), good plus (4+ or 4.5), good (4), satisfactory plus (3+ or 3.5), satisfactory (3), fail (2) (for detailed information on the grading scale used by a particular school check its current ECTS course catalogue). If someone fails at an exam, they have to retake it during the repeat examination period (*sesja poprawkowa*) right at the beginning of the summer semester.

STUDENTS FROM THE EU COUNTRIES

If you are an EU/EEA student, you only need your ID document (e.g. identity card or passport) to enter Poland. If you are planning to stay for longer than three months, you need to register at the regional administration office (*Urząd Wojewódzki*). For that you will need to submit specific documents required by the relevant office and in return you will receive a document confirming your right of residence in Poland. One of the necessary preconditions for obtaining the right of residence is the possession of health insurance (e.g. the European Health Insurance Card).

STUDENTS FROM NON-EU COUNTRIES

If you come from a non-EU/EEA country, you should check with your local Polish consulate what documents apart from passport (e.g. visa) you need before you leave for Poland. If you obtain a visa you will not need to register your stay upon your arrival.

WORK

While EU/EEA students are eligible to work in Poland, non-EU/EEA students need to apply for a work permit, which is granted only if no EU citizen can fill the position.

MEDICAL CARE

In order to get free medical care in Poland EU/EEA students need to have the European Health Insurance Card (EKUZ), for which they apply in their home country. Non-EU/EEA students need to purchase a private health insurance policy.

For more information, visit:

National Health Fund www.nfz.gov.pl

STUDENTS LIFE



LIVING COSTS

Monthly living costs: of an average student in Poland: 300 – 700 EUR.

Monthly rent: dormitory 70 – 120 EUR; room at a private apartment 150 – 300 EUR.



dormitory:
70-120 EUR



room at
private apartment:
150-300 EUR



energy and gas
monthly:
30 EUR



full-price
monthly ticket:
20-40 EUR



haircut:
men 7 EUR
women 12 EUR



lunch at a canteen:
2-4 EUR



coffee in a café:
1.7-3 EUR



beer at a pub:
1.5-3 EUR



cinema ticket:
5-6 EUR



bread:
0.6 EUR



ham:
6-7 EUR/kg



cheese:
6 EUR/kg



mineral water:
0.5 EUR/1.5 lt



milk: 0.8 EUR



apples:
0.8 EUR/kg

DISCOUNTS

Students aged below 26 are entitled to discounts on most means of public transport in Poland (with some differences in the discount rate under specific conditions allowing for the discount):

National railway (PKP) – 51% discount for 2nd class tickets in all types of trains except EuroCity; necessary document: a valid student card from a Polish higher education institution;

Municipal transport: usually 50% discount; necessary document: a valid Polish student card (sometimes the International Student Identity Card – ISIC).

ACCOMMODATION

Students can stay at a dormitory or rent a private room. Dormitories are usually cheaper, but you need to apply early to get a room or bed, and remember that standards may vary significantly.

UNIVERSITIES

Many Polish higher education institutions offer courses in foreign languages, mainly English. For a list of study programmes available in foreign languages see: www.go-poland.pl, www.studyinpoland.pl

For details on all study programmes and courses offered by a particular Polish school of higher education, you should look at its ECTS course catalogue.

You can check which Polish universities participated in the Erasmus programme in the past at www.erasmus.org.pl.

STUDENT ORGANISATIONS

There are many student organisations in Poland, some operating nation-wide, some regionally and other only at specific schools of higher education. Among them are academic sports and tourist organisations, student corporations and science clubs. As an international student you may especially be interested in visiting websites of: ESN, AEGEE, AIESEC, the Students' Parliament of the Republic of Poland (*Parlament Studentów Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej*) and the National Representation of Doctoral Students (*Krajowa Reprezentacja Doktorantów*).

Erasmus Student Network (ESN) Poland is a non-profit student organization which activities are carried out by 33 sections in all of the biggest academic centers in Poland. Their goal is to support and develop international student exchange programs by representing interests of students toward the relevant institutions, cooperate with National Agency and realising national projects such as Discover Europe or ESNOLYMPICS. Their motto is: "Students helping students"! If you want to know more about ESN Poland check their website www.esn.pl or like their fanpage on facebook: ESNPoland

POLISH VOLUNTARY SECTOR

Poland has over 50,000 registered voluntary organisations operating in fields such as sport, social care, health protection, culture and education. It is estimated that around 18% of Poles are involved in voluntary work. For more information, visit: www.ngo.pl

For more information, visit:

www.go-poland.pl
www.nauka.gov.pl
www.erasmus.org.pl
www.krasp.org.pl
www.studyinpoland.pl