

a **STUDENT'S**
GUIDE
IN POLAND

This guidebook was prepared thanks to the collaboration of the Students' Parliament of the Republic of Poland (PSRP), the Foundation for the Development of the Education System (FRSE) and the Erasmus Students Network Poland (ESN Poland).

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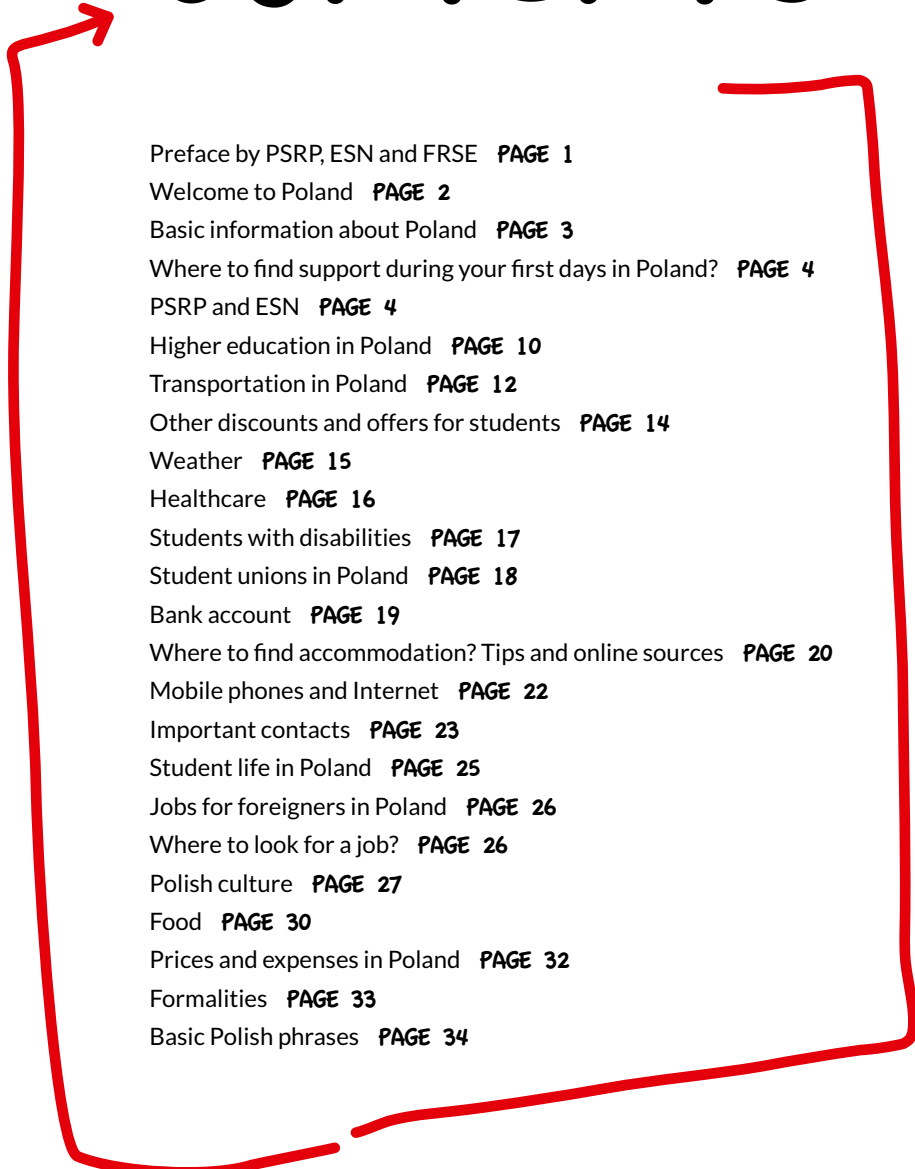


Parlament Studentów
Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej



Erasmus Student Network
Poland

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Parlament Studentów
Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej



Hello,

Together with the Students' Parliament of the Republic of Poland (PSRP), the European Student Network (ESN) Poland we welcome you to Poland. We're glad that you will spend the coming months or even years here – in a country with a rich culture, delicious cuisine and beautiful sights you will often return to.

We are well aware that staying in a foreign country, especially at the very beginning, can be a source of uncertainty and many questions, and that it can be connected with formalities you must take care of to make your time here the best possible.

Take it easy! We're here to help and support you on this wonderful educational adventure, during which you will not only meet amazing people and make new friends but also learn about a new culture, broaden your knowledge, and acquire new competences and skills. We're keeping our fingers crossed for you!

Which is why we have prepared this extraordinary handbook for you. It will help you get to know our country and find out, for example, how to look for a flat or a job, as well as learn about many possibilities Poland has to offer.

If you have any questions or doubts, write to us! And if you are interested in our activities, they are also presented in this handbook. Meanwhile, we wish you good luck, and we're sure you will soon see that choosing to study in Poland was the best decision you've ever made.

*Representatives of the Students' Parliament of the Republic of Poland,
the Erasmus Student Network Poland*

WELCOME TO → POLAND!

Poland is a fascinating country and international students often choose to study here. 'Why?', you ask? There are many possible answers, but some are obvious. Poland is a student-friendly country, with a rich educational offer which allows for the development of competences, skills and knowledge. Here, you can study niche fields as well as take advantage of opportunities offered by student life.

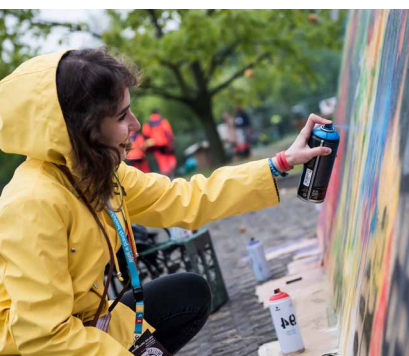
There are many options available to you. If you want, you can join a student organisation or research group, meet new inspiring people, and – in your free time – discover the beauty of a country rich in culture, traditions and openness to others.

What are the advantages of Poland?

Maybe the fact that over a million students are studying here, or maybe that we have many good quality higher education institutions, a multitude of events addressed to students like you, and people who will help you at every stage of your stay.

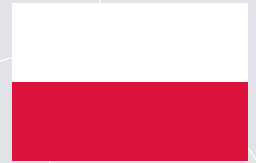
If you want to experience all this, keep up to date with everything that will be happening in your area. Join dedicated groups, come to meetings for international students or contact your exchange or university coordinator. There are many ways to enjoy your stay here and each will allow you to experience first-hand that Poland is a great place for students. Thanks to this handbook, you will be able to learn more about all these possibilities.

Remember, if you come to Poland once, you will always want to return. We are not kidding.



BASIC INFORMATION ABOUT POLAND

REPUBLIC
OF POLAND



**PLN (POLISH
ZŁOTY)**
Currency



.pl
Internet domain



230 V / 50 Hz.
Power plugs and sockets



312 696 sq km
Area



37.97 m
Population

Name: **Republic of Poland** | Capital: Warsaw (**Warszawa**) | Total area: **312,696 km²** | Population: **37.97 million (2019)** | Main rivers: Vistula (**Wiśła**), Oder (**Odra**) | Area code: 0048 (+48) | Cities (between 250,000 and more than 1,000,000 inhabitants): Warsaw (**Warszawa**), Cracow (Kraków), **Łódź**, Wrocław, Poznań, Gdańsk, Szczecin, Bydgoszcz, Lublin, Białystok, Katowice | Main religion: **Roman Catholic** | Government: **Unitary semi-presidential constitutional republic** | Currency: Polish złoty (PLN); EUR 1 = ca. PLN 4.4, USD 1 = ca. PLN 3.9 | Internet domain: **.pl** | Power plugs and sockets: **230 V / 50 Hz.**



WHERE TO FIND SUPPORT DURING YOUR FIRST DAYS IN POLAND ?

Feeling lost after coming to Poland? Don't know where to go, what to do, how to make friends and where to find the foreign student office at your university?

We know that the first days away from home can be a source of nervousness, uncertainty and confusion, but we're here to help you. You've probably already had the opportunity to contact the staff at your new university, and you know the rules for studying in Poland.

Remember that at each university there is a special international relations office, which will support you both in university matters and in those related to student life. Some institutions, such as the University of Warsaw, also have special Welcome Points – dedicated places for international students which will help you in completing the formalities or e.g. registering for courses. They will also provide you with information on student organisations, language courses, as well as sports and cultural activities.

If you want to learn more about us (PSRP and ESN), **READ OUR DESCRIPTIONS:**



PSRP

Parlament Studentów
Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej

The Students' Parliament of the Republic of Poland (PSRP) is an independent and official voice of the student community in our country and an umbrella organisation of student unions from all Polish Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), which can offer you a lot of support during your stay in Poland. To learn more about student unions in Poland, go to p. 20.

PSRP represents students before public authorities as well as abroad. We play a significant role in co-deciding about the student community's position on particular matters, as well as in consulting policies and legal acts concerning youth and their future. Moreover, the Parliament is responsible for organising workshop sessions and events that equip students with skills and knowledge. We support the development of student projects and cultural events, and we defend student rights. PSRP stimulates international student exchange and actively participates in the international student movement by representing Poland in the European Students' Union and in the V4+ Student Alliance.

Currently, our activities concern mainly mental health support, financial aid, the role of students in quality assurance processes and internationalisation of higher education.

Should you have a problem with understanding legal acts and regulations, or questions related to your studies, student rights or anything else concerning your stay in Poland, feel free to write to us at international@psrp.org.pl. We offer support in several languages: English, German, Russian, Belarusian, Ukrainian, Spanish, Italian, Swedish, Norwegian and Catalan.

If you want to keep up-to-date as to what we do, please visit our website and follow us on social media to get to know us better and learn about our projects and activities:

PSRP website (in English): psrp.org.pl/en



PSRP Facebook: fb.com/parlamentstudentowrp



PSRP Instagram: instagram.com/parlament_studentow_rp



PSRP LinkedIn: linkedin.com/company/the-students-parliament-of-the-republic-of-poland



PSRP twitter: twitter.com/psrporgpl

PREVIOUS PSRP PROJECTS:

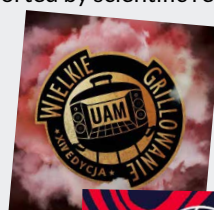
A student home alone: due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we decided to organise a nationwide initiative for students. During the summer semester, we offered them many webinars, workshops, special competitions, exciting books, YouTube channels, activities and surprises. We also fought for student rights and the best quality of distance learning.



Enter your comfort zone with PSRP: we organised webinars conducted by specialists, prepared articles on psychological support, infographics and videos presenting essential information on mental health, and offered individual online help and substantive knowledge resources supported by scientific research.

Noteworthy projects organised by particular student unions:

Great Grilling at AMU (Wielkie Grillowanie UAM) – an event organised by the Student Union of Adam Mickiewicz University and offering a series of concerts, games and integration activities and taking place in May on one of AMU's campuses.



Student Art Week (Studencki Tydzień Sztuki) – a week-long event organised by students of the Jagiellonian University in Cracow during which many artistic activities take place throughout the city.



A town where cultures meet (Miasteczko na styku kultur) – an event organised by the Student Union of the University of Warsaw in cooperation with international students. It is a unique conference and integration for students, which allows everyone to get to know the different cultures and traditions of a multi-cultural university.



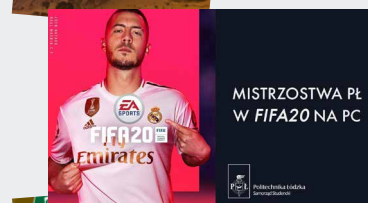
Student Chess Tournament (Studencki Turniej Szachowy) – an event organised by the Forum of Technical Universities, which promoted chess and was a national tournament for all students.



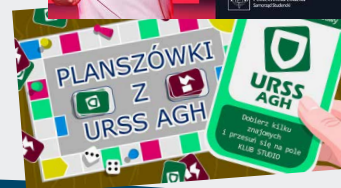
Culture Potions (Mikstury Kultury) – an alternative event initiated and organised by students for students. The student unions from the Universities of Fine Arts Forum have similar aspirations and the willingness to cooperate in promoting young artists.



Become a LUT Champion in FIFA 20 (Zostań Mistrzem Politechniki Łódzkiej w FIFA 20) – many universities organise dedicated sports and e-gaming tournaments. Here is an example of such an event organised by the Student Union of the Lodz University of Technology.



Board games with the Student Union Council of the University of Science and Technology (Planszówki z URSS AGH) – a special evening with games and integration.



THESE ARE JUST SOME EVENTS. STUDENT UNIONS ORGANISE MAY MORE, SO FOLLOW YOUR UNIVERSITY'S STUDENT UNION ON SOCIAL MEDIA.

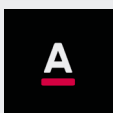


Student unions are also gathered in Forums or Committees, which represent similar types of universities (we mentioned some of them above). They can be an important source of information, because they often cooperate with universities in helping you by organising special events and are your contestant support during the academic year. Check them out. If you want to find out how to contact the student union of your university, write to the Forum / Committee dedicated to that particular type of university. **WE ARE ALL READY TO HELP YOU!**

e.g./ University of Warsaw is a member of the Academic Universities Forum,
Wrocław University of Technology is a member of the Technical Universities Forum,
Poznan School of Economics is a member of the Economics Forum, etc.



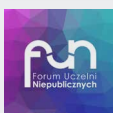
Universities of Economics Forum
fb.com/ForumUczelniEkonomicznych



Universities of Fine Arts Forum
fsua.org.pl or fb.com/ForumStudentowUczelniArtystycznych



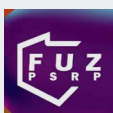
Technical Universities Forum
nowa.fut.edu.pl/ or fb.com/forumut



Academic Universities Forum
funip.pl or fb.com/FUniP.PSRP



Military Universities Committee
kum.edu.pl or fb.com/KomisjaUczelniMundurowych



Medical Universities Committee
kwsmpsrp.org.pl or fb.com/KWSMPSRP



Physical Education Universities Committee
fb.com/kuwfpsrp



Life Sciences Universities Student Unions
fb.com/PSSUR



Higher Vocational Education Schools Committee
fb.com/forum.pwsz.psrp

Private Universities Forum fun.info.pl or
fb.com/forumuczelniniepublicznych



ESN ERASMUS STUDENT NETWORK

is the biggest student association in Europe. Its volunteers make international students fall in love with Poland by organising numerous events focused on e.g. global integration, fun, sports, culture, supporting local communities, improving soft and hard skills, promoting mobility and travelling, and teaching how to live in a more eco-friendly way. Basically, ESN aims to make your stay in Poland even better. Because ESN sections are connected to particular universities, ESN volunteers can often help you regarding your exchange documents (and if they can't, they will show you the way to the international relations office). Visit the ESN website to get more information about our activities and sections.



We encourage you to follow us on

Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/ESNpoland/>),

Instagram (https://www.instagram.com/esn_poland/?hl=pl),

LinkedIn (<https://www.linkedin.com/company/esn-poland-association/>)

and Twitter (<https://twitter.com/esnpoland>).

Ideally, ESN will provide you with your Polish university **MENTOR/BUDDY**, who will lead you at the beginning of your international adventure. You and your Buddy will be in touch even before your arrival in Poland. This volunteer can help with accommodation and other formalities you have to deal with, such as getting registered with the authorities or acquiring a travel card. The first days can sometimes be difficult, but your Buddy will be there to make it easier for you.

As we said, this is the best-case scenario. But even if you were unaware of this possibility before your arrival, you can still get in touch with your local ESN section or the one from your new university. As its main goal is to help international students no doubt you will work something out together!

How do you get your own Buddy? First, follow the ESN section located in the city in which you are going to be living during your exchange on social media. There, you will find all the details of the Mentor Programme. The application period usually begins in July/August.

Apart from sightseeing, arranging your accommodation, getting acquainted with prices in złoty and the Polish language, your first days in Poland should be focused on the university. You should get an e-mail from them about the steps you need to complete, but always search for the international relations office, which is dedicated to students like you. At the start of each semester, universities (and often local ESN sections and student unions) organise a **WELCOME DAY** for new students. We recommend you take part as you can hear many useful tips at this event.

Last but not least, **SOCIALISE!** If you are staying at a dormitory, you will have many students around you from the very beginning. If you are renting a room, acquaint yourself with your flatmates as soon as possible. As time goes by, you will meet more and more people at university and during various events. You should check whether the ESN section organises an **ORIENTATION WEEK** in your city. It is a week full of events for new international students where you can integrate, and learn more about Polish culture and the city which is going to be your new home.

If you find the language, currency or paperwork challenging, don't be afraid to ask for help. You can't know everything from the very beginning, but every day you will familiarise yourself with the new environment and feel more and more comfortable in Poland. This is just the start of a beautiful adventure which will remain in your memory for years!



COUNTRIES OF THE ERASMUS STUDENT NETWORK

www.esn.org



IE

UK

FR

PT

ES



ESN member of CRN Marmara



NO

SE

FI

RU

EE

LV

DK

LT

BY

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UA

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9

HIGHER EDUCATION IN POLAND

THE POLISH SYSTEM OF HIGHER EDUCATION COMPRISES OVER 400 INSTITUTIONS AND MORE THAN 1,300,000 STUDENTS. THE EDUCATIONAL OFFER IS VERY EXTENSIVE, AND IT IS POSSIBLE TO STUDY BOTH IN POLISH AND ENGLISH (THE EXCEPTION ARE LANGUAGE STUDIES - PHILOGOIES - WHERE INSTEAD OF LEARNING IN POLISH, YOU STUDY IN THE GIVEN LANGUAGE)

Soon you will become a student at a Polish university, but before you take up studies here, it is important for you to understand how our higher education system works. In accordance with the requirements of the Bologna Process, it is divided into several stages and is based on the ECTS credits system, which determines students' workload to acquire knowledge, skills and competences.

The higher educational offer is divided into three stages of study - ending with a Bachelor's, a Master's, and a doctoral degree - which you can pursue at private and state universities. What is the difference between these two types of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)?

First and foremost, there are financial differences, as studying at private universities involves fees. Both public and private universities offer full- and part-time studies. In the case of full-time studies, classes are conducted on weekdays, and in the case of part-time programmes, they are typically held between Friday and Sunday. Remember that a diploma obtained in Poland is recognised abroad, especially in countries that also base their education system on the Bologna Process.

The academic year usually begins on 1 October and ends on 30 September. Don't worry though, classes aren't actually held that long. According to the Law on Higher Education and Science, all students have to pass all their exams by the end of September to be able to be promoted to the subsequent year of their studies. Classes usually end in June, and that's when the exams begin. If you are forced to retake one or more of your exams, usually such a resit would take place in September.

Remember that not every subject has to end with an exam. You can pass certain classes by means of essays, projects, group work or other methods of verifying your knowledge and skills - every teacher will inform you what you need to do to pass their class.

CURIOUS WHAT THE INDIVIDUAL TRAINING CYCLES LOOK LIKE?
IF SO, HERE ARE THE DESCRIPTIONS:

1

FIRST-CYCLE STUDIES

LEADING TO A BACHELOR'S DEGREE*

These are studies that can last from three to three and a half years. In order to obtain a Bachelor's (licencjat) or engineering (inżynier) degree, you must earn between 180 and 210 ECTS credits. Studies ending with a Bachelor's degree last three years, and those ending with an engineering degree last three and a half years.

2

SECOND-CYCLE STUDIES

LEADING TO A MASTER'S DEGREE *

These studies last from one and a half to two years and are a continuation of first-cycle studies. To complete them, you must earn between 90 or 120 ECTS credits.

3

THIRD-CYCLE STUDIES

LEADING TO A DOCTORAL DEGREE (PHD)

These are studies that usually last three years and can be carried out at universities and at the Polish Academy of Sciences. They are related to scientific activity and research.

TYPES OF HEIS

IN POLAND:

- Universities of Economics
- Universities of Fine Arts
- Technical Universities
- Academic Universities
- Military Universities
- Medical Universities
- Physical Education Universities
- Life Sciences Universities
- Higher Vocational Education Schools
- Private Universities

*IN

Poland, there are also long-cycle programmes: they last five or six years and cannot be divided into first- and second-cycle studies. They apply to the following fields: Law, Canon Law, Medicine, Pharmacy, Dentistry, Veterinary Medicine, Psychology, Medical Analysis, Art Conservation and Production and Photography.

TRANSPORTATION IN POLAND

You must be wondering how you can travel around Poland or to the city where you will study. Don't worry, we've prepared useful information which will help you learn what your student ID is useful for and how to travel inexpensively and comfortably.

REMEMBER THAT A STUDENT ID (BOTH THE POLISH ONE AND THE INTERNATIONAL STUDENT IDENTITY CARD - ISIC) ENTITLES YOU TO A 51% DISCOUNT ON SELECT MEANS OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT (MAINLY TRAINS AND PUBLIC BUSES OPERATING IN TOWNS)

TRAINS

You can always find the most convenient train connection between two cities using <https://rozkład-pkp.pl/en/> or <https://koleo.pl/en/>, but please note that in Poland we have many train companies (which compete with one another and do not sell joint tickets), so consult the list below to check which one works in your area:

<https://www.pkp.pl/en/> - Polish State Railways (PKP) - long-distance connections
<https://polregio.pl/en/> - Regional Trains (PolRegio) - short-distance connections
<https://www.mazowieckie.com.pl/en/> - Koleje Mazowieckie (Mazowieckie Voivodeship)
<https://www.skm.warszawa.pl/en/> - Szybka Kolej Miejska (Warsaw)
<https://www.wkd.com.pl/en/> - Warszawska Kolej Dojazdowa (Warsaw)
<http://www.skm.pkp.pl/> - Szybka Kolej Miejska (Gdańsk, Gdynia, Sopot)
<https://www.kolejeslaskie.com/en/> - Koleje Śląskie (Śląskie Voivodeship)
<https://www.kolejedolnoslaskie.pl/> - Koleje Dolnośląskie (Dolnośląskie Voivodeship)
<https://koleje-wielkopolskie.com.pl/> - Koleje Wielkopolskie (Wielkopolskie Voivodeship)
<https://malopolskiekoleje.pl> - Koleje Małopolskie (Małopolskie Voivodeship)
<https://lka.lodzkie.pl/> - Łódzka Kolej Aglomeracyjna (Łódź Voivodeship)
<https://arriva.pl/en> - Arriva (Kujawsko-Pomorskie, Pomorskie, Mazowieckie, Warmińsko-Mazurskie Voivodeships)

On top of the student discount, train companies offer many promotions, enabling you to save even more. They often introduce promotional offers for people who purchase their ticket early, e.g. one month before the trip (special ticket prices or discounts).

PUBLIC CITY TRANSPORT

Check the details on carriers' websites, because often you can find interesting special offers for students, such as semester travel cards.

To efficiently use this means of Polish public transport, we encourage you to try the <https://jakdojade.pl> website, where you can find the best connections between two points in a given city or town. There is also an app version for Android and Apple devices.

If you are looking for interesting alternatives, we also recommend travelling around Poland and abroad using buses or planes.

BUSES

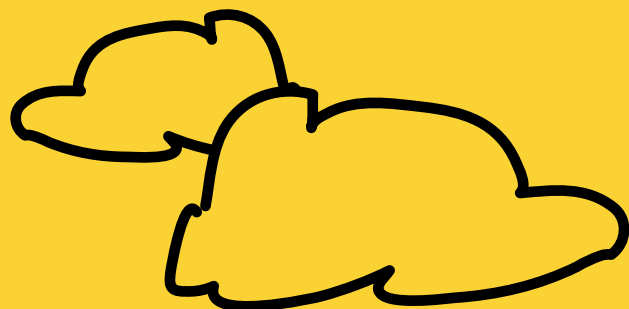
<https://www.flixbus.com/> – Flixbus
<https://www.sindbad.pl/en/home> – Sindbad
<https://www.eurobus.pl/> – Eurobus
<https://pkspolonius.pl/> – Polonus
<https://luxexpress.eu/en> – Lux Express
<https://www.regiojet.com/> – RegioJet
Motor Transport Company (PKS) – Timetables can be found here: <https://en.e-podroznik.pl/>

PLANES

We currently have twelve passenger airports you can use to travel around Poland and internationally. These are:

1. Warsaw Chopin Airport (formerly known as Okęcie Airport) (WAW)
2. Warsaw Modlin (WMI)
3. Wrocław (WRO)
4. Poznań Ławica (POZ)
5. Kraków Balice (KRK)
6. Katowice Pyrzowice (KTW)
7. Łódź Lublinek (LCJ)
8. Gdańsk Rębiechowo (GDN)
9. Bydgoszcz (BZG)
10. Rzeszów Jasionka (RZE)
11. Szczecin (SZZ)
12. Zielona Góra (IEG)

In Poland, you can use all the best-known air lines, such as Ryanair, Wizzair, KLM, Turkish Airlines, British Airways, Iberia, Brussels Airlines, etc. LOT is our domestic carrier, offering numerous local and international flights. You can check their website at <https://www.lot.com/pl/en/>.



OTHER DISCOUNTS AND OFFERS FOR STUDENTS

At your university you will receive a student ID card which, besides confirming your status, entitles you to various discounts. The most important one, mentioned above, entitles you to reduced prices (**UP TO 51% OFF**) on select means of public transport, including long-distance trains.

WHERE ELSE CAN YOU USE YOUR STUDENT ID TO GET A DISCOUNT?

- CINEMAS, THEATRES, MUSEUMS,
- CERTAIN RESTAURANTS, PUBS AND CAFÉS,
- VARIOUS ENTERTAINMENT PLACES, E.G. BOWLING ALLEYS, ESCAPE ROOMS, ICE SKATING RINKS OR GYMS.

NOTICE that some places offer discounts for students on certain days of the week (or on some days student discounts can be higher – in Poland Thursday is usually such a day).

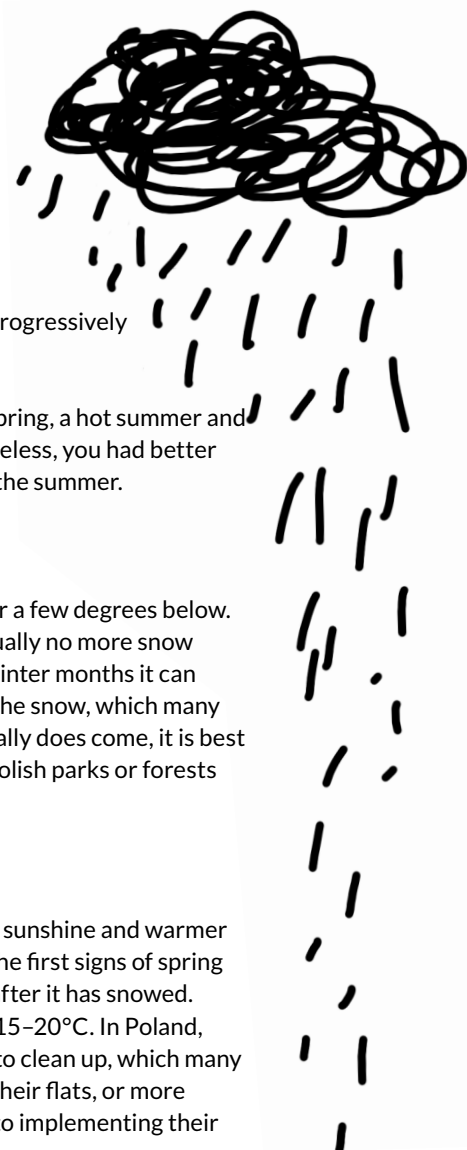
WE ALSO RECOMMEND an ESNcard – a card for members of the ESN network. It is used as a student discount card in many countries in Europe, and it also works in regard to events and trips organised by ESN. If you want to get discounts at Ryanair, FlixBus, Uniplaces, and many more, go to <https://card.esn.pl/>. The ESNcard costs PLN 40 and is valid for one year.

To receive your discount, show your student ID or ESNcard to staff upon making payment!





WEATHER



The climate in Poland is continental. It is milder along the Baltic coast and becomes progressively more continental towards the south, i.e. the further away you are from the sea.

Traditionally, Poland was a country with four regular seasons – a cold winter, a mild spring, a hot summer and a colourful autumn – yet now the seasons are shifting due to global warming. Nonetheless, you had better prepare the right clothes, so you don't freeze in the winter and melt from the heat in the summer.



WINTER

The temperature is around freezing or a few degrees below. Unfortunately, nowadays, there is usually no more snow for Christmas, and during the three winter months it can appear only a few times. However, if the snow, which many people love and excitedly wait for, finally does come, it is best to go sledging from hills in beautiful Polish parks or forests clearings.



SPRING

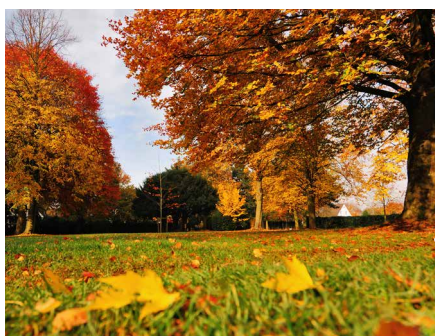
After a cold winter, it is time for some sunshine and warmer days. The world comes to life again. The first signs of spring might be crocuses bravely blooming after it has snowed. Typically, spring temperatures reach 15–20°C. In Poland, it is often said that spring is the time to clean up, which many people take literally, spring-cleaning their flats, or more metaphorically, finally getting round to implementing their New Year's resolutions.



SUMMER

According to the calendar, summer starts at the end of June, but the temperature usually rises significantly already at the beginning of May. Perfect timing for our traditional long holiday weekend! Polish summer differs from the Spanish or Italian one in that it is milder and damper.

INTERESTING FACT: in Poland, there is **NO SIESTA**, so even in the hottest weather we work as usual.



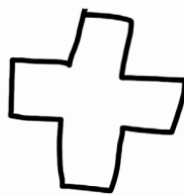
AUTUMN

In autumn, it is advisable to dress warmly, because it is usually cold and wet. Yet this can be the most colourful time of the year in Poland, so on sunny days it is worth going to the park to enjoy the beautiful, varied colours of autumn leaves.



TIP: It is worth carrying an umbrella (even a small one) with you, because you never know when it might rain.

HEALTHCARE



The structure of the healthcare system in Poland is complex and offers a wide range of medical treatments and support (procedures, urgent visits, psychological support, hospital stays, etc.).

There are both public and private healthcare centres in Poland, and access to them will depend on the insurance you have obtained in your country. Please read all the rules below as this can help you understand how the healthcare system works here.

In the case of EU citizens: to be able to access free health services in Poland, you should have valid health insurance in your country and request a European Health Insurance Card (EHIC).

In the case of non-EU citizens: you should purchase international medical insurance before coming to Poland. If this is impossible, you can also sign an insurance agreement with our National Health Fund – NFZ (<https://www.nfz.gov.pl/>). In this case, you will be obliged to pay a monthly fee (PLN 55.80 – EUR 13). By purchasing such insurance, you will be able to access healthcare on the same terms as Polish citizens.

To purchase such insurance, you will need:

- A valid passport,
- A valid visa or residence permit,
- A confirmation of your student status, which you can get at the students' office of your university,
- Registration of residence,
- PESEL (personal ID) number (if applicable) – if you are interested in obtaining a PESEL number, please follow the instructions in the link:

<https://www.gov.pl/web/gov/uzyskaj-numer-pesel--usluga-dla-cudzoziemcow-en>.

When the agreement is signed, you will be obliged to submit a filled in and signed ZUS ZZA form (health insurance form – <https://www.zus.pl/wzory-formularzy/firmy/dokumenty-zgloszeniowe-i-rozliczeniowe/-/publisher/details/1/formularz-zus-zza/305061>) to the local office of the Social Security Institution (ZUS). There is one exception which allows you to be entitled to insurance in Poland free of charge. If you have a Polish Card or Polish family roots, you can be covered by insurance that is used by every Polish citizen (in this situation, the university should register you for insurance purposes).

And what documents do you need to be able to sign this kind of insurance agreement?

- A filled in and signed application form,
- A copy of the Polish Card or a certificate confirming your Polish origin,
- A confirmation of your student status, which you can get at the students' office of your university.

If you have prepared all the documents, contact your university so that it can submit them to the appropriate authority.

Remember that in addition to the above-discussed health insurance, you can also buy private insurance, which may comprise a broader range of services.

If you have any questions, write to us or contact your university!

STUDENTS WITH **DISABILITIES**

Many universities in Poland offer facilities and support for students with disabilities who want to broaden their knowledge and develop skills and competences. We are doing our best to provide the best learning environment for students in this group and to integrate each one into the academic community. Therefore, while in Poland, you can take advantage of the many support mechanisms available – they are presented in this chapter. Before you decide where to go, you can check if the particular university can provide you with the necessary tools. There is a special platform – <https://mapped.eu/> – which can give you an insight into the accessibility of the facilities of the institution you are going to attend. On this website, you can find basic information about the conditions at universities in Poland as well as testimonials from people like you who decided to study in Poland. Don't hesitate to contact your coordinator or the specific university to learn more details.

Taking into account the differences between universities, each may offer different solutions and forms of support. Therefore, we recommend that you contact your university for more details. The best source of information will be specially designated offices or persons whose job is to support students with disabilities – such organisational units and individuals can be found at most Polish universities.

You are probably wondering what kind of support universities usually offer. **WE WILL TRY TO ANSWER BASED ON EXAMPLES.**

ONE FORM of support are the previously mentioned specially designated offices or persons. They can help you with both formal and non-formal matters and can be a source of knowledge about the university. They can also help you adapt your curriculum to your specific needs as well as provide you with a special assistant – a person who will help you throughout your studies and who will also rent equipment for you to facilitate your learning. **OTHER**

means of support, offered by some universities, are dedicated language courses, special means of transportation, adapted infrastructure and equipment to help you in the learning process (e.g. Braille inscriptions, induction loops, special ramps, lifts, large screens and special parking spaces). Higher Education Institution

OFTEN ALSO offer special sports activities, as well as the possibility of joining sports groups and taking part in events, trips and seminars for students with disabilities. At some universities **YOU CAN ALSO** get additional financial support. In Poland, there is no single scholarship for people with disabilities from the exchange programme. You need to check your university's individual offer. Sometimes there can be no information about this on the website, so the best option is to send an enquiry by e-mail.

Universities can also help you with your classes. Depending on the solutions adopted, you can change the date / time of an exam or course, adjust its form and the requirements related to its implementation. Libraries and reading rooms may also have appropriate equipment, such as scanners, computers, enlargers, Braille printers or readers. If you plan on living in a dormitory, many universities have ones that are adapted to various types of disabilities. We recommend contacting the university directly to obtain information on such accommodation.

An essential element is also psychological support. If you have a problem with learning, are struggling to manage your time or have trouble dealing with stress, anxiety or negative emotions, immediately check if there is a specialised psychologist's office for students at your university. If you are not sure, please contact us at international@psrp.org.pl, and we will try to help you.

HERE ARE SOME PSYCHOLOGICAL CENTRES OPERATING AT CERTAIN POLISH HEIS:

SOWA (Jagiellonian University) –
<https://sowa.uj.edu.pl/contact-us>

Psychological Counselling Centre of UW
(University of Warsaw) – <https://en.uw.edu.pl/psychological-counselling-centre-of-uw/>

Warsaw School of Economics (SGH) – <https://ssl-student.sgh.waw.pl/en/psychologicalassistance/>

Warsaw University of Technology (PW) – <https://www.pw.edu.pl/engpw/News/Psychological-Assistance-at-WUT>

Poznań University of Medical Sciences (UMP) –
<https://pums.ump.edu.pl/student-zone/medical-psychological-assistance.html#counseling-and-psychological-services-caps>

Maria Curie-Skłodowska University (UMCS) –
<https://www.umcs.pl/en/counselling,15039.htm>

REMEMBER, IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT A SPECIFIC UNIVERSITY'S OFFER, PLEASE CONTACT THE EXCHANGE COORDINATOR OF YOUR STUDIES IN POLAND, WHO SHOULD PUT YOU IN TOUCH WITH THE APPROPRIATE PERSONS.

STUDENTS' UNION IN POLAND

LITERALLY TRANSLATED AS UNIVERSITY STUDENT SELF-GOVERNMENT (SAMORZĄD STUDENCKI/STUDENTÓW), a student union represents all the students of a given university. According to Article 110 of the Polish Law on Higher Education and Science, a student union consists of every student of a given university, as well as its exclusive and legal representatives. Each student union is headed by a president, an executive body and a control committee. Often there are also councils on the faculty level, which are the closest to students. The main role of a student union is to represent the interests of students during negotiations with university officials and to monitor the quality of education in order to improve educational quality assurance.

Additionally, student unions participate in student cultural life. A great example of this is their responsibility for **JUWENALIA**, a long-standing tradition of holding spring concerts dedicated to students but open to everyone. These events can gather tens of thousands of people. The task of the student union is to organise Juwenalia – from finding the necessary funds to inviting the artists. Another great responsibility of student unions is handling everything to do with scholarship funds. Union members have a lot of work with scholarship applications, but they do it all in order to help other students.



REMEMBER TO CONTACT YOUR
UNIVERSITY STUDENT UNION:
if you:
HAVE A PROBLEM RELATED TO YOUR STUDIES,
NEED ANY HELP,
WOULD LIKE TO ASSIST WITH
ORGANISING EVENTS,
LIKE TO JOIN A STUDENT UNION,
HAVE SOME IDEAS WORTH PUTTING
INTO PRACTICE.

ALL UNIVERSITIES' STUDENT UNIONS ARE UNITED IN THE STUDENTS' PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND (PARLAMENT STUDENTÓW RZECZPOSPOLITEJ POLSKIEJ – PSRP). It also supports university student unions both individually and collectively by means of training sessions on PSRP events. There is also a Commissioner for Student Rights, who helps students in difficult individual cases against the university.

The Student Parliament of the Republic of Poland is also a part of The European Students' Union. ESU is the umbrella organisation of 46 national student unions from 40 countries and represents students on the European level.

ACCOUNT

It is up to you whether you wish to open a bank account while you are here, but it is worth knowing that Poland is a leading country in terms of the availability of banking services. Payment terminals, contactless payments or payments carried out over the phone or by means of specially generated codes are our staple diet, so you don't need to worry about making sure you have cash with you at all times.

IN POLAND, YOU CAN QUICKLY PAY WITH A FOREIGN CARD - NOT JUST A DEBIT CARD FROM YOUR COUNTRY BUT ALSO POPULAR CARDS WITH THE POSSIBILITY OF CURRENCY CONVERSION, SUCH AS REVOLUT.

Revolut is an app-based banking alternative, and it offers ATM withdrawals, online payments and secure currency exchange using only real exchange rates (without any hidden fees banks usually charge).

Of course, you can also use a credit card from your country, but make sure it works in Poland. It'll be easier if you have a Chip & PIN card as they are the most common here. Also, check your cash withdrawal limit to avoid annoying surprises.

If you do decide to open an account with a Polish bank, be prepared for **AN EXTENSIVE RANGE OF OFFERS** related to this type of service. It's best to compare offers from several banks regarding card fees, account maintenance, etc.

REMEMBER that as a foreigner, you will have to provide certain documents and, in most cases, to visit the bank in person. You will need your identity card and a certificate confirming your status as a student at a university in Poland. The bank may also ask you for additional documents, such as a rental agreement (if you are renting a flat or room) or a residence visa.

WONDERING WHERE TO OPEN AN ACCOUNT? We can't really answer that as there are many banks here and new offers appear almost every day.

Below you can find a list of the most popular banks in Poland:

<https://www.pkobp.pl/> - PKO BP Bank
<https://www.pekao.com.pl/> - Pekao Bank
<https://www.santander.pl/> - Santander Bank
<https://www.aliorbank.pl/> - Alior Bank
<https://www.ing.pl/> - ING Bank
<https://www.mbank.pl/> - mBank
<https://www.bankmillennium.pl/> - Millennium Bank
<https://www.getinbank.pl/> - Getin Bank
<https://www.bnpparibas.pl/> - BNP Paribas Bank
<https://www.credit-agricole.pl/> - Credit Agricole Bank
<https://nestbank.pl/> - Nest Bank

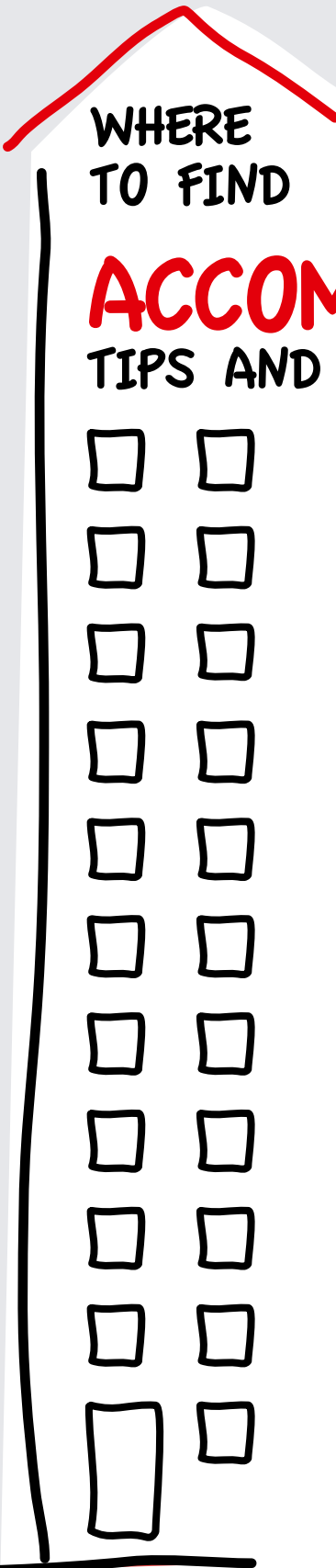
You can also use various comparison websites to help you choose the best offer (they are only available in Polish, but you can translate them via numerous platforms):

<https://kontomania.pl/>
<https://www.rankingkontosobistych.pl/>
<https://www.tanie-konto.pl/>

BANK

zł

€



WHERE
TO FIND

ACCOMMODATION?

TIPS AND ONLINE SOURCES

Finding accommodation is not easy, but here are some tips to help you find the perfect place to stay in Poland. In this process the aim is to avoid any unpleasant experiences and find a place where you can relax and spend time with friends.

Most international students live either in student dormitories or in flats.

DORMITORIES

In Poland dormitories (**DORMS**) are divided into state and private ones. **STATE DORMS BELONG TO PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES.** Thus, when you enrol at a public university, you should be able to apply for a place in one of this institution's dormitories. In private dorms, students from various private universities live together.

State dorms usually offer single, double or triple rooms with an area of approximately **15–20 m²**. They are furnished with everything necessary for living and studying: beds (traditionally provided with pillows, blankets and linen), desks for studying or computer work, and shelves and cabinets for personal belongings. The rooms have Internet access and some of them have a fridge.

In most state dorms, each floor is divided into segments comprising 2 or 3 rooms and a shared bathroom. On each floor, there is usually an open access kitchen, a laundry room and a place to dry your clothes. You can also count on there being a dining room, a dedicated place to study and a gym.

Private dorms provide rooms or even small flats (sometimes they include bathrooms or kitchenettes) with higher-quality conveniences such as high-speed Internet access, a larger gym, and the building being enclosed or even offering a 24-hour security service.

Usually, the cost of accommodation in state dorms ranges between **EUR 80–100 PER MONTH** for a shared room. **IN PRIVATE DORMS**, it will be **MORE EXPENSIVE, AROUND EUR 250–350 PER MONTH.** Before your arrival, make sure to check the amount of the deposit you are obliged to pay at the beginning of your stay.

FLATS

An alternative option for international students is renting a whole flat or just a room. It shouldn't be much more expensive than dorms if you rent the flat together with friends and divide the total rent amount among yourselves.

THERE ARE MANY WAYS TO GO ABOUT THIS - HERE ARE SOME TIPS:

- Join groups on Facebook that are dedicated to renting a flat,
/e.g. **Wynajme mieszkanie** [insert the name of the city you will be living in], etc.,
- Remember that the flat should be situated in a well-connected location,
- Don't overpay, so compare prices and ask about them on forums, e.g. on Facebook,
- Do not send any advance payments before arriving in Poland – the best solution is to come to here a few days earlier and look for a flat or room directly on the spot,
- If you can't find a flat via a Facebook group, you can also try rental websites such as:
<https://www.olx.pl/> – OLX Poland
<https://www.gumtree.pl/> – Gumtree Poland
<https://www.otodom.pl/> – Otodom.pl
<https://gratka.pl/> – Gratka.pl
<https://pepehousing.com/> – Pepehousing



In our experience, the easiest way to find a flat is to join dedicated groups on Facebook as here you will find ads from the above-mentioned rental websites. There is no shortage of offers, so you can find many great places. But remember that renting a flat by yourself is the most expensive option, so if you have a limited budget, the best solution is to rent a room in a flat with other persons.



Unfortunately, sometimes scams do occur. That's why you have to be cautious and pay attention to every detail while looking for a place to stay.

HERE ARE SOME TIPS TO HELP YOU AVOID DISAPPOINTMENT:

- Set aside enough time to look through ads,
- Check who owns the rental property,
- Visit the flat before you sign anything or move in,
- Bring a friend with you – that way you won't be as vulnerable to a landlord pressuring you into accepting terms you don't want to,
- Ask your Polish friends or your Mentor/Buddy to explain prices and standards to you,
- Get an agreement clearly stating information such as: how much the rent is, how long you can live there and what the terms are for giving notice, being asked to move out, etc.,
- **Never pay anything without getting a written rental agreement beforehand,**
- Make sure that the property (e.g. address, description) is consistent with what is said in the rental agreement,
- Document any already existing defects by means of photos before signing the agreement, so you are not charged for them later.

REMEMBER THAT IF IT SEEMS SHADY OR TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE, IT PROBABLY IS.
IN SUCH A CASE, DON'T SIGN OR PAY ANYTHING.



When you decide to share a flat, it is a good idea to talk with your flatmates about rules regarding cleaning, noise levels, and having parties. These are usually issues on which people disagree, which in turn can create a bad atmosphere between flatmates. It's better to set the rules beforehand than resolve conflicts later on.

MOBILE PHONES AND INTERNET

Internet and phone access is essential for you to be able to communicate with friends, your family and your university.

Poland has a well-developed mobile and Internet network, however, due to numerous service providers, choosing the best options can be quite time-consuming. Especially since each provider offers many promotions and discounts.

Don't worry, in this chapter we will give you information on the most popular companies offering such services.

PLEASE REMEMBER THAT ACCORDING TO POLISH LAW, EVERY PHONE NUMBER MUST BE REGISTERED. You will need an ID to do this, so don't forget to take it with you when you go to sign your agreement and activate your new number. You can do this in providers' showrooms or in some stores, although this depends on individual providers' policies.

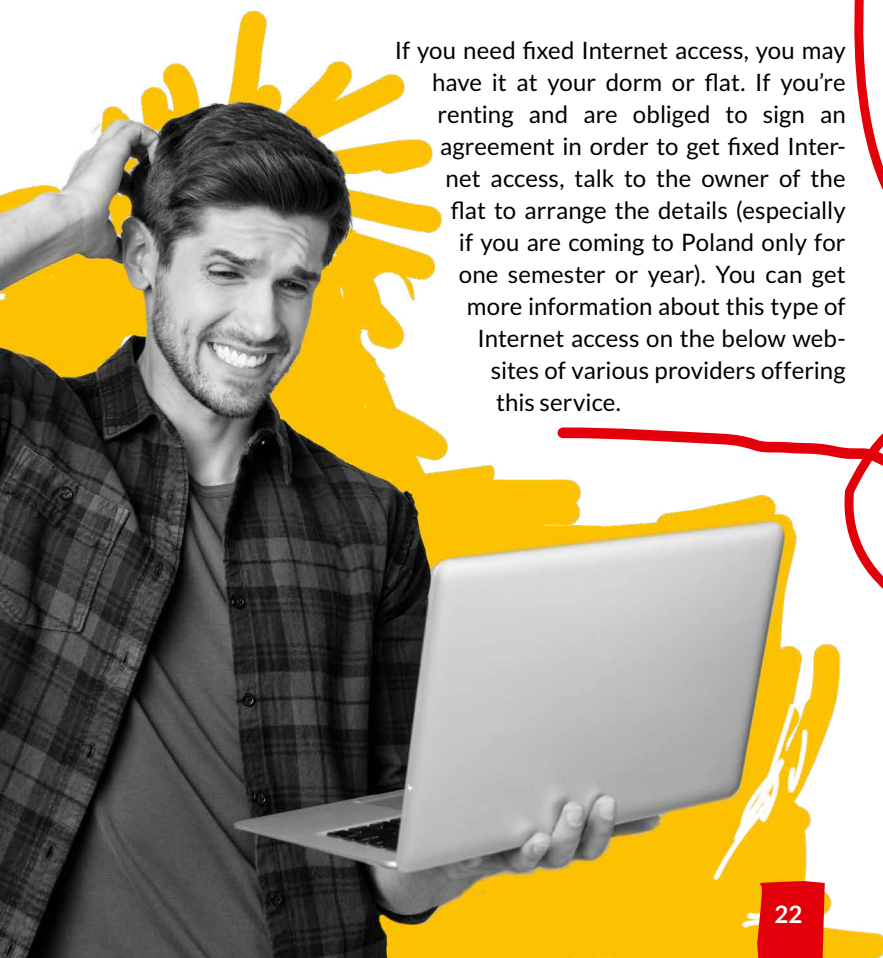


When it comes to the Internet, Poland has quite broad access to the Wi-Fi network. You can easily connect to it in most cafés, libraries, universities and other public spaces. Many universities in Poland also have access to the eduroam network, so if you have your login details, you can easily use them to surf the Internet on campus.

If you need fixed Internet access, you may have it at your dorm or flat. If you're renting and are obliged to sign an agreement in order to get fixed Internet access, talk to the owner of the flat to arrange the details (especially if you are coming to Poland only for one semester or year). You can get more information about this type of Internet access on the below websites of various providers offering this service.

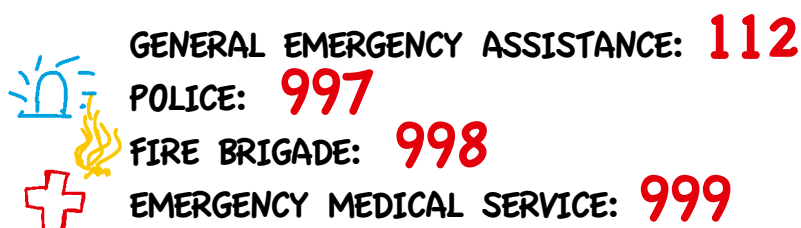
Orange – <https://www.orange.pl/view/eng>
Play – <https://www.play.pl/en/>
Plus – <https://www.plus.pl/eng>
T-Mobile – <https://www.t-mobile.pl/>
Heyah – <https://www.heyah.pl/>
Lycamobile – <https://www.lycamobile.pl/en/>
Mobile Vikings – <https://mobilevikings.pl/en/>
nju mobile – <https://www.njumobile.pl/>
Plush – <https://www.plushbezlimitu.pl/in-english>
Red Bull Mobile – <https://www.redbullmobile.pl/>
Virgin Mobile – <https://virginmobile.pl/>

Vectra – <https://www.vectra.pl/>
UPC – <https://www.upc.pl/>
Netia – <https://www.netia.pl/pl/>
Inea – <https://www.inea.pl/>
Multimedia – <https://www.multimedia.pl/>



IMPORTANT CONTACTS

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY, YOU NEED TO KNOW THESE PHONE NUMBERS:



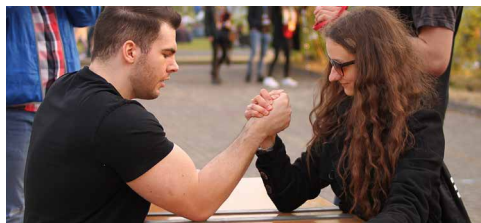
If you find yourself in an emergency and you need an ambulance, the police or fire service,
THE EASIEST THING TO DO IS CALL 112.

The emergency call centre operator will ask for your name, address and the phone number you are calling from. They will send appropriate help immediately.

Do not use this number unless it is a real emergency and you need the aforementioned services – if you use it unnecessarily, you will prevent the emergency services from quickly responding to people in real need.

OTHER USEFUL NUMBERS

- Energy emergency service: **991**
- Gas emergency service: **992**
- District heating emergency service: **993**
- Water supply emergency service: **994**
- Road assistance: **981**
- Municipal police: **986**
- Helpline of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs: **(+48) 22 523 88 80**
- Helpline of the National Health Fund: **800 190 590**
- Helpline of the Commissioner for Human Rights: **800 676 676**
- Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights: **(+48) 22 556 44 40**
- Helpline of the Commissioner for Patient Rights: **800 190 590**
- International Organisation for Migration: **(+48) 22 490 20 44**



STUDENT LIFE IN POLAND

FINALLY, YOU HAVE ARRIVED.
SO NOW WHAT?

AS A STUDENT, you will most likely be living in a dorm or a flat share, which makes it much easier to integrate while cooking or studying. Sometimes dorms arrange activities for students living in them. It is also a popular idea to ask people from different countries and cook **INTERNATIONAL DINNERS** - THAT WAY EACH WEEK STUDENTS TRY THE CUISINE OF A NEW COUNTRY.

The Local Erasmus Student Network and student unions organise **MANY CULTURAL EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES** that put together Polish and international students. Such events create a platform for the exchange of customs, cultures and experiences between students of different nationalities and often result in beautiful friendships.

YOU CAN ALSO CHECK OUT CAMPUS PUBS - they often organise pub quizzes or karaoke nights and have some excellent food promotions on certain days.

IT IS SAID THAT STUDENT LIFE STARTS AFTER 8 P.M. Preferred places on the city map are pubs or nightclubs. This is particularly popular at the beginning of the academic year, when universities organise the so-called **OTRZESINY** (usually in October or November). This is an event dedicated primarily to first-year students as their introduction to student life, but in fact each student, regardless of their age, is looking forward to it, as it is usually the best student club party of the year.



MAY IS THE TIME FOR JUWENALIA, THE BIGGEST STUDENT EVENT.
THESE ARE 2 OR 3 DAYS OF MUSIC FESTIVALS COMBINED
WITH MANY ATTRACTIONS SUCH AS FOOD TRUCK FESTIVALS,
FACE PAINTING OR SPORTS COMPETITIONS.
THE BIGGEST POLISH MUSIC STARS PERFORM, AND STUDENT BANDS SUPPORT THEM!
IT IS STUDENTS WHO ORGANISE THE ENTIRETY OF JUWENALIA.
ALSO, YOU DON'T HAVE TO STUDY AT THE SPECIFIC UNIVERSITY
TO BE ABLE TO ATTEND ITS EVENT.
THIS MEANS YOU CAN TRAVEL AROUND POLAND.

ENJOYING JUWENALIA ORGANISED BY VARIOUS INSTITUTIONS!

BUT student life is not just about parties. It is also about developing an interest in research, for example. There are special groups at universities where students can broaden their knowledge by organising research or conferences.

IF you are an athlete, there is also something special for you -- from cheering on a local football, basketball or volleyball team to active sports. Universities have sports sections, which hold try-outs in October.

AS YOU CAN SEE, there are many possibilities so you will surely find something that suits you. It is definitely worth taking up activities and developing your passions, because in this way you create unforgettable memories and make great friends. **AFTER ALL, THEY SAY THAT STUDYING IS THE BEST TIME OF OUR LIFE - SO IT'S WORTH TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THAT!**





JOBS FOR FOREIGNERS

IN POLAND

If you like Poland so much you'd like to stay here longer and you wish to find a job, we encourage you to visit International Jobs in Poland (both the Facebook page and the webpage), where ESN Poland publishes job and internship offers for foreigners. Thanks to cooperation with various international companies, ESN can offer many multilingual jobs as well as some online courses, webinars and tips about improving your curriculum or LinkedIn profile. ESN tries to focus on professionalism and efficiency, and aims to help you and make it easier for you to find opportunities in Poland.

WHERE TO LOOK FOR A JOB ?

We understand if you wish to combine your job with your studies. Of course, this is possible if your schedule allows you to take up a job after classes or on weekends. But before you decide to look for work, make sure you can legally take up employment in Poland.

This link will provide you with all the details:

<https://udsc.gov.pl/en/cudzoziemcy/obywatele-panstw-trzecich/chce-pracowac-w-polsce/>

You meet all the conditions? Well then, now you're probably wondering how to go about finding that job, so let us describe all your options. Much depends on the specificity of the work you would like to do. Sometimes you can simply bring your CV to a particular place and hand it in there and then, but the most popular way to tackle finding a job is using the Internet.

HERE ARE SOME WEBSITES WITH JOB OFFERS:

Pracuj.pl – <https://www.pracuj.pl/>

Indeed – <https://pl.indeed.com/>

infopraca.pl – <https://www.infopraca.pl/>

LinkedIn – <https://www.linkedin.com/>

Careers in Poland – <https://www.careersinpoland.com/>

Of course, **MANY COMPANIES PUBLISH JOB OFFERS ON THEIR OWN WEBSITES**, so if you are interested in a particular firm or position, company sites are a great place to look.

POLISH CULTURE

Polish culture is vibrant and old. Our Slavic identity is multifaceted and stems from a history rich in events, as well as the influence of other cultures and significant individuals.

Poles are very proud of their country, so it is essential that you respect the place you will be living in for the coming months or years. At the same time, take advantage of all that Poland has to offer, because here you can not only see beautiful sights but also learn about people who have contributed to the world in various fields.

The best way to experience and understand Polish culture is to talk to Polish people. Ask them about customs, national holidays and anything and everything you find interesting or different from what you are used to.

While you are in Poland, visit various places – such as museums, castles or historical tenements – and become acquainted with the place you will be living in. Travel, explore, taste, and pay attention to details and interesting cultural elements. Curious about what to see? What to visit? Where to go and how to diversify your weekend plans in Poland?

HERE IS A LIST OF OUR RECOMMENDATIONS!

MUSEUMS:

Centrum Nauki Kopernik
(Copernicus Science Centre), Warsaw:
<http://www.kopernik.org.pl/en/> – experimental museum

Cosmos Muzeum, Warsaw:
<http://cosmosmuzeum.pl/> – illusions and contemporary art

Muzeum Polskiej Wódki (Polish Vodka Museum), Warsaw:
<https://muzeumpolskiejwodki.pl/en/>

Muzeum Powstania Warszawskiego
(Warsaw Rising Museum), Warsaw: <https://www.1944.pl/en>

Neon Muzeum, Warsaw: <http://www.neonmuzeum.org/english>

Museum of Illusion, Warsaw: <https://swiatiluzji.pl/en/home/>

Auschwitz & Birkenau, Cracow: <http://auschwitz.org/en/>

Wieliczka salt mine, Cracow: <https://www.wieliczka-saltmine.com/>

Workshop & Stained Glass Museum, Cracow:
<https://muzeumwitrazu.pl/language/en/>

Hydropolis – Water Knowledge Centre, Poznań:
<https://hydropolis.pl/en/>

Croissant Museum and Experience, Poznań:
<http://rogalowemuzeum.pl/en/>

Museum of the Second World War, Gdańsk:
<https://muzeum1939.pl/en>

The Living Museum of Gingerbread, Toruń:
<https://muzeumpiernika.pl/en>

THEATRES:

Roma Musical Theatre, Warsaw:
<https://www.teatrroma.pl/en/home-page-new/>

National Opera, Warsaw:
<https://teatr Wielki.pl/en/>





CASTLES:

Wawel Royal Castle, Cracow:
<https://wawel.krakow.pl/en>

Barbican Castle Museum, Cracow:
<https://www.muzeumkrakowa.pl/branches/barbican>

Royal Castle in Warsaw – Museum:
<https://www.zamek-krolewski.pl/en>

Malbork Castle Museum:
<http://www.zamek.malbork.pl/en>



OTHER PLACES WORTH VISITING:

Krupówki, Zakopane – a beautiful commercial street
in a Polish mountain town

Morskie Oko, Zakopane – a breathtaking lake
surrounded by mountains

Energylandia, Zator near Cracow – amusement park
full of roller coasters: <https://energylandia.pl/en/>

SkyTower, Wrocław – the tallest building in Poland
with an amazing panoramic view:
<https://galeria.skytower.pl/punkt-widokowy>

Chałupy, Hel – a wonderful town on the Polish coast,
perfect for windsurfing

Mazury – Polish lake district, great for a long weekend



VISITING INTERESTING PLACES IS NOT EVERYTHING. IF YOU WANT TO LEARN ABOUT FAMOUS POLES,
THEIR ACHIEVEMENTS AND IMPACT ON POLISH CULTURE, IT IS WORTH DOING A BIT OF RESEARCH ON
THE PERSONS LISTED BELOW

FESTIVALS:

OPEN'ER FESTIVAL – it takes place in Gdynia (city located on the Polish coast) at the end of June / beginning of July. If you are a fan of rock, pop, indie rock and alternative music, you should definitely take part in this event:
<https://opener.pl/en/>

POL'AND'ROCK FESTIVAL – one of the biggest free music festivals in Europe. Every year at the beginning of August in a small town called Kostrzyn around 400,000 people gather for the 4-day festival. What kind of music can be heard there? Definitely rock and metal, but also folk and reggae:
<https://en.polandrockfestival.pl/>

ORANGE WARSAW FESTIVAL – as can be deduced from the name, this festival takes place in Warsaw. Performers include artists from pop to alternative ones. All the information can be found on the festival website:
<https://orangewarsawfestival.pl/en>

OFF FESTIVAL – this alternative music festival takes place in Katowice, the main city of the Silesia Region. It is an annual event, usually organised at the end of August. More information can be found here: <http://off-festival.pl/en/>

KRAKÓW LIVE FESTIVAL – it takes place in Cracow, and is perfect for fans of many different music genres as well as Polish and international stars:
<https://livefestival.pl/en/artists>

IMPACT FESTIVAL – for lovers of heavy sounds. It takes place in a different location every year at the beginning of June:
<https://impactcee.com/impact/2020/>

SUNRISE FESTIVAL – this is a festival of electronic music, which takes place in Kołobrzeg at the end of July:
<https://sunrisefestival.pl/en/>

SPECIAL DAYS CHARACTERISTIC FOR POLAND:

GRANDMOTHER'S DAY – 21 JANUARY

GRANDFATHER'S DAY – 22 JANUARY

WOMEN'S DAY – 8 MARCH

CONSTITUTION DAY – 3 MAY

MOTHER'S DAY – 26 MAY

CHILDREN'S DAY – 1 JUNE

FATHER'S DAY – 23 JUNE

BOYFRIEND'S DAY – 30 SEPTEMBER

GIRLFRIEND'S DAY – 22 OCTOBER

INDEPENDENCE DAY – 11 NOVEMBER



LITERATURE

Adam Mickiewicz
 Juliusz Słowacki
 Wisława Szymborska
 Czesław Miłosz
 Olga Tokarczuk
 Ryszard Kapuściński
 Stanisław Lem
 Witold Gombrowicz
 Władysław Reymont
 Henryk Sienkiewicz
 Jan Kochanowski

ART

Roman Opałka
 Edward Dwurnik
 Wojtek Bagiński

Jan Matejko

Zdzisław Beksiński
 Aleksander Gierymski
 Olga Boznańska
 Magdalena Abakanowicz
 Katarzyna Kobro
 Wilhelm Sasnal

MUSIC

Fryderyk Chopin
 Krzysztof Penderecki
 Karol Szymanowski
 Stanisław Moniuszko
 Wojciech Kilar
 Tomasz Stańko
 Włodek Pawlik
 Michał, Mika Urbaniak

FILM – DIRECTORS

Andrzej Wajda
 Krzysztof Kieślowski
 Roman Polański
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 Małgorzata Szumowska
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FILM – ACTORS

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 Joanna Kulig
 Daniel Olbrychski
 Tomasz Kot

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Robert Lewandowski
 Marcin Gortat
 Robert Kubica
 Agnieszka Radwańska
 Adam Małysz
 Kamil Stoch
 Justyna Kowalczyk

SCIENCE

Mikołaj Kopernik
 Maria Curie-Skłodowska
 Jan Heweliusz
 Ignacy Łukasiewicz
 Michał Banach



Many people say Polish cuisine is one of the best in the world. We definitely agree, and in this chapter we will prove to you that our food is not only delicious but also very diverse.

Want to know if meat or vegetarian options prevail in our cooking? Meat and flour dishes are definitely the winners here, but don't worry – there is also plenty for vegetarian and vegan food enthusiasts.

Before you acquaint yourself with the most popular dishes, it's worth mentioning that the food scene in Poland is extremely rich and you will be able to find cuisines from nearly all over the world (although this may be a bit more difficult in smaller towns). If you're curious about how much you have to pay for food, go to the Prices section further on.





READY? THEN LET'S GET STARTED. BUT BE CAREFUL - POLISH DISHES ARE SO DELICIOUS THAT IN A MOMENT YOU MIGHT WANT TO PICK UP YOUR LUGGAGE AND FLY TO POLAND EARLY TO TRY THEM IMMEDIATELY!

PIEROGI

half-moon dumplings made of dough with stuffing, such as sauerkraut, mushrooms or cottage cheese, and formed into a triangle or a semi-circle

BIGOS

a dish made with sauerkraut, vegetables and chopped meat of various kinds

KOTLET SCHABOWY

breaded pork cutlet usually served with potatoes and fried beets

ZUREK

a soup based on sourdough made from bread or flour

GOLĄBKI

minced meat with rice wrapped in cabbage leaves

KOTLET MIELONY

minced cutlet, usually served with potatoes and fried beets or cucumber salad

BARSZCZ CZERWONY

also known as red borscht, i.e. beetroot soup

ZUPA POMIDOROWA

tomato soup

ZUPA OGÓRKOWA

pickled cucumber soup

ZUPA GRZYBOWA

mushroom soup

OGÓRKI KISZONE

cucumbers pickled in brine comprising oak leaves, peppercorns, horseradish, garlic cloves and salt

ŚLEDZIE

herring, which can be prepared with various marinades

SERNIK

cheesecake

MAKOWIEC

poppy seed cake

PIERNIK

gingerbread made with the addition of honey and spices; the most popular ones are toruńskie pierniki (Toruń gingerbread), i.e. traditional gingerbread manufactured in the city of Toruń since the Middle Ages

NAPOLEONKA/KREMÓWKA

cream pie made of two layers of puff pastry and a whipped cream / buttercream / vanilla pastry cream filling, usually sprinkled with powdered sugar; it owes its popularity to Pope John Paul II, its avid enthusiast

WUZETKA (WZ)

chocolate cream pie with a touch of whipped cream on top

ZAPIEKANKA

the most famous Polish street food; imagine slicing a small baguette in half lengthwise and putting mushrooms and cheese (there can also be other ingredients) on top, and then sliding it into the oven until it is hot and crispy; zapiekanka is served with ketchup or mayonnaise, and it's a 'must-try' in Cracow's Kazimierz district

ROGAŁ ŚWIĘTOMARCŃSKI (ST. MARTIN CROISSANT)

a big and bulky crunchy croissant with a white poppy seed filling and frosting; it is eaten especially in the region of Poznań around 11 November, i.e. St. Martin's Day

CEBULARZ

round wheat dough pancake with chopped onion on top

These are just some things you can try in Poland. Even writing this chapter we immediately started craving some of these!

If you are wondering whether there is a food delivery system in Poland, we can assure you there is. Here are the most popular portals:

<https://www.uber.com/pl/pl/> - Uber

<https://glovoapp.com/pl> - Glovo

<https://pizzaportal.pl/> - Pizza Portal

<https://www.pyszne.pl/> - Pyszne.pl

<https://wolt.com/pl/> - Wolt

<https://glodny.pl/> - Głodny.pl

ENJOY POLISH FOOD -
IT WILL BECOME
YOUR FAVOURITE!

€ PRICES AND EXPENSE IN POLAND

PLN(zł)

Poland is a price-diverse country. It should not surprise anyone that prices of some services or products may be higher in larger cities. This applies to rent and groceries as well as prices in restaurants, public transport, etc. In this chapter, we have prepared a list of helpful items to allow you to assess whether Poland is a cheap or expensive country for international students.

→ HOUSING

Monthly rent for a studio flat: **EUR 350–500**
Monthly rent for a furnished flat for two people: **EUR 400–600**
Monthly rent for a room in a flat share: **EUR 150–240**
Monthly rent for a shared room in a state dorm: **EUR 80–100** / private dorm: **EUR 250–350**
Monthly payment for utilities* (like electricity, gas, heating): **up to EUR 45**
Monthly payment for fixed Internet access: **EUR 8–20**
Home cleaning products: **EUR 3–10**
* can be included in the rent

→ FOOD

Tomatoes (1 kg): **EUR 1–2**
Potatoes (1 kg): **EUR 0.5–1.5**
Apples (1 kg): **EUR 0.7–1.5**
Oranges (1 kg): **EUR 1.3–2**
Eggs (12): **EUR 1.5–2.5**
Milk (1 litre): **EUR 0.5–1.2**
Polish cheese (1 kg): **EUR 4–7**
Jam (1 kg): **EUR 5–10**
Bread (400–500 grams): **EUR 0.6–1.5**
Beer (0.5 litre): **EUR 0.6–2**
Wine (0.75–1 litre): **EUR 3–20**
Water (1.5 litres): **EUR 0.2–1**
Juice (1 litre): **EUR 0.8–2**

→ TRANSPORTATION

1 litre of gas: **EUR 1.1–1.5**
One-month travel card (with a student discount): **EUR 8–13**
Single fare bus / tram / metro ticket (with a student discount): **EUR 0.5–0.8**

PERSONAL CARE ←

Private doctor's appointment: **EUR 30–50**
Antibiotics: **EUR 6–20**
Other medication: **EUR 3–20**
Shampoo: **EUR 1.2–5**
Toothpaste: **EUR 1–5**

LEISURE / ENTERTAINMENT ←

Dinner for one person (cheap): **EUR 6–10**
Dinner for one person (expensive): **up to EUR 25**
Lunch with a drink: **EUR 6–10**
Fast food: **EUR 4–8**
Cinema ticket: **EUR 5–8**
Theatre ticket: **EUR 10–50**
Beer in a pub: **EUR 2–3**
Wine in a pub: **EUR 3–5**
Cigarettes: **EUR 3.5–4**



FORMALITIES

FORMALITIES ARE SOMETIMES ONE OF THE BIGGEST PROBLEMS FOR STUDENTS COMING TO A NEW COUNTRY. IN THIS CHAPTER, WE WILL HELP YOU UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW AND DO BEFORE COMING TO POLAND. REMEMBER ALL THE STEPS MENTIONED HERE AS THEY ARE REALLY IMPORTANT! IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS, PLEASE CONTACT YOUR UNIVERSITY OR US IN POLAND. WE WILL DO EVERYTHING TO HELP YOU!

EU CITIZENS: you need to have a valid document proving your nationality (ID or passport).

BOTH EU AND NON-EU CITIZENS:

if you are coming to Poland for less than 3 months, you do not have to register anywhere. However, if you are coming here for a semester or the entire study period, you must remember that registration is compulsory for your stay to be legal. Please find a Voivodeship Office dedicated to where you will be living to carry out the registration procedure. Here are the contact details of all the 16 Voivodeship Offices in Poland: <https://www.bip.gov.pl/subjects/index/7489> (the offices are located in Wrocław, Warsaw, Opole, Katowice, Kielce, Bydgoszcz, Rzeszów, Białystok, Gdańsk, Lublin, Gorzów Wielkopolski, Łódź, Ceacow, Olsztyn, Poznań and Szczecin).

NON-EU CITIZENS:

if you are from outside the EU, you are obliged to have a valid passport with a visa (depending on the country you are coming from).

HOLDERS OF A SCHENGEN VISA (TYPE C) – issued when the planned stay in the Schengen area does not exceed 90 days in each 180-day period.

HOLDERS OF A NATIONAL VISA (TYPE D) – entitles you to enter the territory of Poland and stay here – either continuously or in the form of several consecutive visits – for more than 90 days; the period of validity of a national visa may not exceed 1 year.

What documents are needed when applying for a C or D type visa?

- Valid passport,
- Filled in and signed visa application,
- Photograph,
- Valid proof of payment for the visa,
- Document confirming medical travel insurance,
- Document confirming the purpose of your stay (studies, international exchange),
- Document certifying adequate financial resources to cover the costs of living,
- Other documents that can be essential in terms of granting visa.

Please note that Poland is a Schengen area country, so a visa will allow you to travel around Europe (but only to other countries within the Schengen area).

TEMPORARY RESIDENCE PERMIT

To receive a temporary residence permit you need to provide the following documents:

- Filled in and signed application form,
- Four photographs,
- Photocopy of a valid travel document confirming
- Document proving your status as a student in Poland,
- Valid proof of health insurance,
- Valid proof of having enough financial resources to study and live in Poland.

The first temporary residence permit for your first year of studies is granted for a period of 15 months. If your studies are covered by an EU programme or a multilateral programme, including mobility measures or an agreement between at least two HEIs providing intra-EU mobility, the first permit is granted for a period of 2 years.

If your studies justify your stay in Poland for a period shorter than 1 year, the first permit is granted either for the entire academic year or for the duration of the studies extended by 3 months.

Subsequent temporary residence permits for the purpose of acquiring an education in the form of studies is granted for the period of study extended by 3 months, but not longer than for a total of 3 years.

Stamp duty: **PLN 340**

Fee for issuing a residence card: **PLN 50**

Foreigners whose purpose of stay is to attend secondary school or a university are entitled to a PLN 25 reduction in the fee for issuing a residence card.

WHAT ELSE?

After completing all the formalities at the office, you will need to deal with some more at your university. You will certainly be required to sign some papers, present documents, and pay a fee for your new student ID card and for additional services that may be involved in your stay in Poland.

Remember, each HEI has different requirements, so the best solution is to contact your university before you arrive and prepare all the necessary documents earlier. It will save you stress and allow you to come to Poland with greater confidence. Meeting deadlines is also extremely important – keep on top of all communications so you don't miss anything important.

BASIC POLISH PHRASES

Although Poland is now your new home, you may have a bit of a struggle understanding and speaking Polish. **HERE ARE SOME USEFUL PHRASES IN OUR BEAUTIFUL LANGUAGE.**

Good morning – Dzień dobry [dʑɛɲ dɔbɾɨ]

Hello – Cześć [tʂɛʦtʂɛ]

Thank you – Dziękuję [dʑɛŋkujɛw]

Goodbye – Do widzenia [dɔ vʲidʑɛɲa]

I don't speak Polish – Nie mówię po polsku [ɲɛ muvʲɛw pɔ pɔlsku]

How are you? – Jak się masz? [jak ɕɛw maʂ?] / **Jak tam?** [jak tam?]

Nice to meet you – Miło cię poznać [mʲiɫɔ tɕɛw pɔznatɕ]

My name is... – Nazywam się... [nazɪvam ɕɛw]

I am from... – Jestem z... [jɛstɛm z]

I like Poland – Lubię Polskę [lubʲɛw pɔlskɛw]

I am a student (male) – Jestem studentem [jɛstɛm studɛntɛm]

I am a student (female) – Jestem studentką [jɛstɛm studɛntkɔw]

I'm sorry / Excuse me – Przepraszam [pʂɛpraʂam]

Please – Proszę [prɔʂɛw]

Help! – Pomocy! [pɔmɔʦɨ]

Can you help me? – Możesz mi pomóc? [moʒɛʂ mʲi pɔmɔʦ]

Where is...? – Gdzie jest...? [gdʑɛ jest]

a railway station – dworzec kolejowy [dvɔʒɛʦ kɔlɛjɔvɨ]

a bus station – dworzec autobusowy [dvɔʒɛʦ autɔbusɔvɨ]

an ATM – bankomat [bankɔmat]

Can you repeat that please? – Czy możesz powtórzyć? [tʂɨ moʒɛʂ pɔftuzɨʦɛ] /

Czy może Pan powtórzyć? [tʂɨ moʒɛ pan pɔftuzɨʦɛ] – **to a male**

Czy może Pani powtórzyć? [tʂɨ moʒɛ pɔɲi pɔftuzɨʦɛ] – **to a female**

Sorry, I don't understand – Przepraszam, nie rozumiem [pʂɛpraʂam, ɲɛ rɔzumʲɛm]

How much does it cost? – Ile to kosztuje? [ɨlɛ tɔ kɔʂtɯjɛ]

Why so expensive? – Dlaczego tak drogo? [dlɔʂɛgɔ tak drɔgɔ]

One reduced ticket please – Poproszę bilet ulgowy [pɔprɔʂɛw bʲilet ulgɔvɨ]

One beer please – Poproszę piwo [pɔprɔʂɛw pʲivɔ]

A coffee please – Poproszę kawę [pɔprɔʂɛw kavɛw]

A tea please – Poproszę herbatę [pɔprɔʂɛw hɛrbatɛw]

Bless you! / Cheers! – Na zdrowie! [na zdɔrvʲɛ]

In English, regardless of whom you address – a friend or a professor at the university – you always use the pronoun you. However, in Polish, we clearly distinguish between the informal and formal you. When speaking to a friend, you would use the informal ty, yet when addressing a teacher, a shop assistant or the receptionist at your dorm, you would use the formal Pan (masculine) or Pani (feminine).

REMEMBER – EVERY POLISH PERSON WILL APPRECIATE YOUR ATTEMPTS TO SPEAK IN OUR LANGUAGE! SO DON'T BE SHY-
KEEP CALM, AND LEARN POLISH!

THANKS FOR READING THIS HANDBOOK!
WE'RE KEEPING OUR FINGERS
CROSSED FOR YOUR STAY
IN POLAND.
WE HOPE YOU WILL
FALL IN LOVE WITH OUR COUNTRY.

This image shows a full page of blank, lined paper. It features approximately 30 horizontal blue or grey lines spaced evenly apart, typical of notebook paper. The lines extend across the entire width of the page, leaving small margins at the top and bottom. There are no vertical lines, text, or other markings on the page.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.



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