

USEFUL INFORMATION – POLAND



GEOGRAPHY

Poland is situated almost right in the geographic centre of Europe. Its territory of 312,883 sq. km. (120,725 sq. miles) makes it the biggest state in Central Europe. The country borders Germany to the west, the Czech Republic and Slovakia to the south, Russia (Kalinnigrad Oblast), Belarus, Ukraine and Lithuania to the east and the Baltic Sea to the north. Poland is predominantly quite a flat country with wide sandy beaches at the seaside, lots of crystal clear lakes and wild forests in the north. The centre of the country is covered by a huge plateau and the south is bordered by a few mountain ranges with the highest being the Tatras (Mt. Rysy is 2,499 meters above the sea level).

CLIMATE

Poland lies in the moderate climate zone, intermediate between marine and continental climates. Polish summer starts in May, and offers lots of sunny days till the end of September.

Average temperatures (Celsius degrees): January: -2, February: 0, March: 5, April: 11, May: 19, June: 21, July: 25, August: 23, September: 21, October: 17, November: 6, December: 2.

PEOPLE

The population of the country is 38,7 million. Almost 2 million live in Warsaw, the capital city. Poland is almost ethnically homogeneous – less than 3% of the population are national minorities: Ukrainians, Belarusians and Germans.

RELIGIONS

More than 90% are Roman Catholic. Among minorities we may find: Orthodox, Protestant, Jewish, Buddhist, Muslim and others.

TIME

The entire Polish territory lies one hour ahead of Greenwich Mean Time.

ELECTRICITY

Poland's power grid supplies 220 V/50 Hz current; round, European-style two-pin plugs are used, 110 V/60 Hz electrical equipment requires an adapter.

TELEPHONES

Direct dial connections with almost all the countries of the world are available across Poland. Mobile telephony range covers more than 95% of the Polish territory.

CURRENCY AND MONEY EXCHANGE

The official Polish currency unit is "złoty", abbreviated "zł". There are the following notes in circulation: 200, 100, 50, 20, 10; and coins: 5, 2, 1 zloty and 50, 20, 10, 5, 2, 1 groszy.

Convertible currencies may be changed into Polish zlotys at banks, hotels and at private currency-exchange offices called "kantory". Major travellers checks are easily changed and all major credit cards are accepted.

TIPS

Giving tips is widely expected, especially in restaurants – an average amount of it should be about 10% of the bill's total value.

BANK HOURS

Monday–Friday: 08:00 – 18:00. Most banks are closed on Saturdays.

TAX REFUND (shopping only)

Value Added Tax – which is 7% or 22% of the total product price – (VAT or PTU in Poland) may be reclaimed in large shopping centres as well as at the airports upon presenting a proof of sale.



MAP OF POLAND



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