



Practical guide for
incoming students



IAESTE
POLAND



Dear IAESTE Trainee,

IAESTE Poland has the pleasure to welcome you to our country. We hope that you will find your stay here interesting and pleasant. Use your visit as a chance to travel around and explore the country. You will surely enjoy the views of the beautiful countryside and the company of friendly people. You will have many opportunities to make new long-lasting friendships while staying together with other IAESTE trainees from all over the world and Polish students. Please be open-minded and help us fulfill the aim of IAESTE - promotion of the international understanding and goodwill among the students of all nations.

We are looking forward to seeing you in Poland! Please read the following information carefully!

If you have any questions or problems, please let us know. If necessary, do not hesitate to contact us.

Best Regards,
IAESTE POLAND



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POLAND

BASIC INFORMATION



Capital city:	Warsaw
Population:	38 422 346
Currency:	Polish Złoty (PLN)
Language:	Polish
Area:	312 679 km ²
Main religion:	Catholicism
Cities:	987
Timezone:	CET (UTC +1)

Basic Polish Words

Dzień dobry - Good morning / good afternoon (jane DOH-brih)

Dobry wieczór - Good evening (DOH-brih VYEH-choor)

Cześć - Hi (cheshch)

Do widzenia - Good bye (doh vee-DZEN-ya)

Proszę - Please / Here you are (PROH-sheh)

Dziękuję - Thank you (jen-KOO-yeh)

Przepraszam - I'm sorry / excuse me (psheh-PRAH-shahm)

Nie rozumiem - I don't understand (nyeh roh-ZOO-myem)

Na zdrowie! - Cheers! / Bless you! (nah ZDROH-vyeh)

Jak się masz? - How are you? (yahk shyeh mahsh?)

Napijmy się! - Let's drink! (Nap yime shie!)



Bucket list

- ☒ eat pierogi
- ☐ see The Wawel Dragon in Kraków
- ☐ go hiking in Zakopane
- ☐ swim in Baltic Sea
- ☒ try real polish vodka
- ☐ attempt to correctly pronounce a polish word
- ☐ find all gnomes in Wrocław (0/397)

Symbols



flag



emblem



Mazurek Dąbrowskiego
polish national anthem



MONEY

The currency in Poland is zloty (PLN)

$$100 \times (1_{gr}) = (1_{zl})$$

Notes and coins are of the following denominations:

Coins: 1, 2, 5, 10, 20, 50 groszy and 1,2,5 zlotys

Banknotes: 10, 20, 50, 100 and 200 zlotys



EXCHANGE

After arrival at the airport in Poland it is recommended to use cashpoint to withdraw PLN, but don't exchange money there as the commission is very high. Later you can buy more zlotys in exchange offices (in Polish called „kantor”) or banks located all over the city.

If you want to use a exchange office, the best way is to go to the shopping center where everything will be done quickly and safely.

estimated exchange prices
(23.04.20)

1 USD = 4.19 PLN

1 Euro = 4.54 PLN

1 GBP = 5.20 PLN

It's possible to pay in euro in Poland in some places in Warsaw, especially in big shopping centers, but it is not recommended.

PRODUCTS

average price in Poland



bread (1 pcs)
2.70 zł



eggs (10 pcs)
5 zł



butter (200g)
4.89 zł



milk (1L)
2.40 zł



chicken (1kg)
15 zł



potatoes (1kg)
1.2 zł



rice (400g)
3.00 zł



sugar (1kg)
2.90 zł



cheese (1kg)
20 zł



vodka (0,5L)
22 zł



wine (1L)
15 zł



beer (0,5L)
2.7 zł

LAW

Things you should know, so you will not get a fine or have problems with the police:



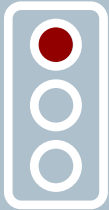
Drinking in public places as parks or streets is forbidden (There are exceptions, ask your LC in Poland).



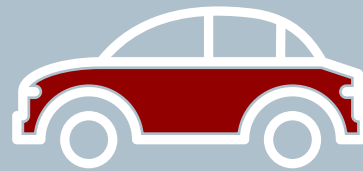
Drugs in Poland are forbidden! If you get caught with any drugs or using them, you will get arrested.



Smoking near bus stops is also forbidden (you can smoke if you are more than 10 meters away).



Do not cross the road when there is a red light (if you get caught, you will have to pay about 250 PLN, totally not worth it).



European Union driving license is valid in Poland but if you're not from EU and if you want to drive during your internship you should apply for an international driving license.

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY

Ambulance	999
Fire Brigade	998
Police	997
Road Assistance	981
Municipal Police	986
General Emergency Number	112



DOCUMENTS

Student cards respected in Poland



ISIC - International Student Identity Card - discounts of up to 50%

<https://www.isic.org/discounts/>

NOTICE: It is preferable to bring the ISIC Card from your country. There are service centers that do not recognise the Polish ISIC Card (for example the Public Transportation office do not give discounts for Polish ISIC Cards)



IYTC - International Youth Travel Card - foreign travel insurance, discounts on transportation, discounts when purchasing tickets to museums, galleries, educational centers.

You can buy on-line:

<http://www.isic.pl/pl/index.php/it-ic-i-iytc-z-ubezpieczeniem.html>

or in travel agencies.



Euro 26 - CLASSIC or STUDENT.

You can buy the card via the Internet:

<http://euro26.pl/kup-karte/>

or in travel agencies.

VISA

Visa is a document which you may need to stay In Poland.

But first you should check if you need it. There are some countries whose citizens are not required to have visa to enter Poland. The best way to check it is to look on the website of Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. If you need to have it you have to go to the Polish embassy with filled in documents from the website. It also contains a lot of useful information.



To check if you need a visa for entering Poland take a look here:

http://www.msz.gov.pl/en/travel_to_poland/entering_poland

Health care

If you experience any health problems, do not wait – call a doctor.

Public health services:

You will have to cover all the costs of possible treatment in Poland after your visit. Keep all the necessary information and make sure of all the procedures you have to follow in case of emergency. Of course we hope you will never need to use this.

Private health services:

You can also use private health services, the cost usually starts from around 100 zlotys per visit.

Emergency Ambulance Service:

tel.: **999**, from mobile.: **112** (free of charge)



RECOMMENDED

HINTS, USEFUL APPS AND MANY OTHERS

Stores



Mobile company

PLAY

<https://www.play.pl/en/>

You will need a polish phone number. Remember about having another phone with you to put in polish sim card or have one more phone without simlock or have a phone working with 2 sim cards. Sim card costs 5 PLN. We will help you to buy PLAY sim card which is very convenient - free texting and calling inside PLAY and 1 GB of internet for 9 PLN/month (2 euros). At least 20PLN for a month (5 euros) is required to get the incoming and outgoing calls activated.

Taxi apps



**FREE
NOW**



Public transportation



train



bus



metro
(subway)



tram

Public transportation apps



IAESTE
POLAND

CUISINE

If you want to try traditional Polish cuisine, you have to stop counting your calories. Polish traditional foods consists of traditional Slavic fare, but also has influences from Italy and France that date back to the medieval Polish court. The Polish traditional foods you will encounter today are flavorful and complex. Typical dishes are very hearty and often contain a lot of meats, but they have a lighter side, too.



Polish traditional food features many soups, made with mushrooms, broth and beets. If you combine all of these ingredients and you will get a delicious hearty hunter's stew. This stew, called bigos is a combination of cabbage, mushrooms, and various meats — traditionally pork, bacon, and delicious Polish sausage, but today bigos may also contain different types of meat, for example duck.

Pierogi are traditional Polish food staple. They may have come from Russia in the Middle Ages, but they are as Polish as Polish food gets. Dough filled with cheese, potatoes, onions, cabbage, mushrooms, meat (or almost any other ingredient, savory or sweet, that you can think of), pierogi are served steaming hot boiled or fried and are accompanied by sour cream.



Zrazy is Polish traditional food that will stick to your ribs. A filling of bacon, breadcrumbs, mushrooms, and cucumber is rolled inside a seasoned slice of sirloin beef then fried or grilled to allow the flavors to mingle. With a side of mizeria (cucumber salad) you'll have a meal bursting with all the flavors of the best Polish traditional food. This chilled salad is composed of thinly-sliced cucumbers with sprigs of dill in a sour cream and lemon juice dressing.

Kotlet schabowy is a Polish variety of pork breaded cutlet coated with breadcrumbs similar to Viennese schnitzel, but made of pork tenderloin or with pork chop. There's also the Polish variety of the chicken breast cutlet coated with breadcrumbs looking somewhat similar, or the turkey cutlet coated with breadcrumbs made the same way.



Fish dishes are also popular, especially in regional Polish traditional food. Carp, pike, perch, eel and sturgeon are all popular and served in various ways. Pork is the most common meat in traditional Polish cuisine, but chicken, beef, venison, duck, and other meats are seen on restaurant menus today

CUISINE

DESERTS AND DRINKS

For desert, Polish meals will include Polish sernik (cheesecake), szarlotka (apple tarts), ma kowiec (a sponge cake with a poppyseed filling) or eklerka (éclairs). Bakeries in Poland have many of these sweet pastries and deserts to choose from, so be sure to try them all.



Krowki are Polish milk candies. Krowki are made of a peculiar mass, something similar to toffee. These sweets are soft, unusually ductile and gluing palate and teeth together. That is where an unofficial name of candies comes from – mordoklejki what means mouth gluing. An interesting and characteristic feature is a fact that with a passage of time krowki harden from the outside. Fresh krowki are malleable in their entire volume. Over time, they start to crumble, as a result of sugar crystallization.

Beer is very popular in Poland. Among the recommendable brands are Żywiec, Tyskie, Okocim, Lech, Heweliusz and Tatra. It is worth testing the other beers too: Królewskie, Warka, Piast, Brok and Żubr. In pubs beer is often served with raspberry or blackcurrant juice (piwo z sokiem) and drunk using a straw. During colder seasons the popular refreshment is hot beer with cloves and cinnamon, sweetened with honey (piwo grzane).



The most popular alcohol in Poland is vodka. Still, it is considered the drink that makes human contact easy-going and enables discussions about the more difficult topics. If you want to try the most famous brands, choose Żubrówka ("bison vodka") with its characteristic bison label and distilled in Białowieża, the last bison reserve in Europe. Żubrówka has a long blade of special grass in the bottle, which gives the vodka a slight greenish shade and a special flavour.

Compotes are drinks prepared of fruits – usually fresh, sometimes dried. Sugar is added and sometimes cloves are used as a spice. In Poland the most popular fruits are: apples, morello cherries, currants, cherries, strawberries, pears and a rhubarb. Compote is prepared in the summer and stored for the fall and the winter time. It's served cold, together with the fruits. A glass of compote is typical dinner drink in many Polish homes.



There exists one golden rule to eat well in Poland: ask around. Poles often tip one another off as to where the good stuff is, and as a result reputations spread like wildfire. Do not be deceived by serious faces everywhere. Even though Poles are not inclined to smile to strangers, they are consistently helpful, and will selflessly assist you in a quest to find the best neighboring restaurant.

MUST-SEE

HISTORIC PLACES



Wawel
Kraków

Wawel is a fortified architectural complex erected over many centuries atop a limestone outcrop on the left bank of the Vistula river in Kraków, Poland, at an altitude of 228 meters above sea level. The complex consists of many buildings and fortifications; the largest and best known of these are the Royal Castle and the Wawel Cathedral (which is the Basilica of St Stanisław and St Waclaw). Some of Wawel's oldest stone buildings, such as the Rotunda of the Virgin Mary can be dated to 970AD. There are also wooden parts of the complex which date to about the 9th century. The castle itself has been described as "one of the most fascinating of all European castles".



Długi Targ
Gdańsk

Długi Targ (Long Market) used to be the street where the main city market was held, but now it has become a major tourist attraction. Among other objects of interest, it features Neptune's Fountain, which, according to legend, once started spouting Goldwasser, the trademark Gdansk liqueur. The bronze statue of Neptune was made by Flemish artist Peter Husen at the beginning of the 17th century and is the oldest secular monuments in the country. The Golden House, a beautiful 17th-century building with a richly ornamented facade displaying 12 elaborately carved historical scenes can also be seen on Długi.



Ostrów Tumski
Wrocław

Ostrów Tumski is the oldest part of the city that dates back to the 10th century, from which the rest of it has been developed. It is also the most charming one – once a garden, today it is home to a number of historical buildings and monuments of great importance. Moreover, it is surrounded by the Oder river. Taking a walk in this quarter is a must: apart from the aesthetic experience of wandering around this beautiful and calm area, this is where you will find the Gothic Cathedral, the oldest building of the quarter – Church of St Giles, bronze sculptures, gardens, and charming bridges that lead to the rest of the city.



Old Town
Warsaw

A UNESCO world heritage site, the Old Town charms with its colourful townhouses and the exceptional atmosphere of its narrow streets. When in the Old Town Market Square, you will meet a mermaid – the official symbol of the city. Don't forget to see the Barbican, stop by the bell on Kanonia Street, and walk along the old city walls.

You should also visit the Royal Castle. Apart from the royal apartments, the old seat of Polish rulers also houses an art collection with paintings by Rembrandt and Bernardo Bellotto, also known as Canaletto.

Check out old towns in other cities! They are also beautiful.

MUST-SEE

MUSEUMS



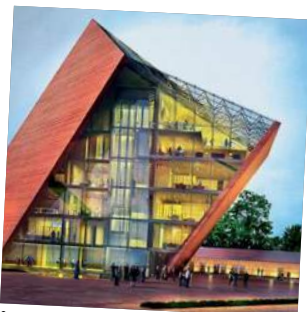
*Copernicus Science Center
Warsaw*

The Copernicus Science Centre is a real treat for science lovers. Have a go at making your own experiments and find out what it felt like for Neil Armstrong to take his first step on the Moon. Find out why we experience fear and learn about the mysteries of the senses. Visit the Heavens of Copernicus Planetarium and watch the incredible show, and don't forget to check out the Robotic Theatre. Once you've seen everything, chill out on the lawn in the Discovery Park. This attraction is not only for children.



*Salt Mine
Wieliczka*

The Wieliczka Salt Mine is located in the town of Wieliczka in southern Poland, lies within the Kraków metropolitan area. Opened in the 13th century, the mine produced table salt continuously until 2007, as one of the world's oldest salt mines in operation. Throughout, the royal mine was run by the Żupy krakowskie Salt Mines company. Commercial mining was discontinued in 1996, because of salt prices going down and also mine flooding. The mine is currently one of Poland's official national Historic Monuments, whose attractions include dozens of statues and four chapels carved out of the rock salt by the miners, as well as supplemental carvings made by contemporary artists.



*Museum of the II World War
Gdańsk*

It is located in a symbolic architectural space, which is also a space of memory, 200 metres from the historic Polish Post Office in Gdańsk and 3 kilometres across the water from Westerplatte Peninsula, both of which were attacked in September 1939. In total there are over 2,000 exhibits on display spread over three narrative blocks: 'The Road to War', 'The Horrors of War', and 'The War's Long Shadow'. This is divided into 18 thematic sections, which is reflected in the layout of the exhibition rooms.



*Memorial and Museum
Auschwitz-Birkenau*

All over the world, Auschwitz has become a symbol of terror, genocide, and the Holocaust. It was established by Germans in 1940, in the suburbs of Oswiecim, a Polish city that was annexed to the Third Reich by the Nazis. Its name was changed to Auschwitz, which also became the name of Konzentrationslager Auschwitz. The direct reason for the establishment of the camp was the fact that mass arrests of Poles were increasing beyond the capacity of existing "local" prisons.

The post-camp relics are protected by the Museum created in 1947. The Memorial today is i.a. the Archive and Collections as well as research, conservation and publishing center.



MUST-SEE

NATURE, WILDLIFE



The Masurian Lake District

The Masurian Lake District (Polish: Pojezierze Mazurskie) is a lake district in northeastern Poland within the geographical region of Masuria. The Lakeland extends roughly 290 km eastwards from the lower Vistula to the Poland–Russia border, and occupies an area of roughly 52,000 square kilometres. The lakes are well connected by rivers and canals, forming an extensive system of waterways. The 18th-century Masurian Canal links this system to the Baltic Sea. The whole area is a prime tourist destination, frequented by boating enthusiasts, canoeists, hikers, bikers and nature-lovers. It is one of the most famous lake districts in Central Europe and a popular vacation spot, with the highest number of visitors every year.



The Tatra Mountains

The Tatra Mountains is a mountain range that forms a natural border between Slovakia and Poland. This is the highest mountain range in the Carpathian Mountains. The Tatras should not be confused with the Low Tatras which are located south of the Tatra Mountains in Slovakia. The most famous tourist destination is Zakopane, but the developed tourist base also includes Kościelisko, Poronin, Biały Dunajec, Bukowina Tatrzańska, Białka Tatrzańska, Murzasichle, Małe Ciche, Ząb, Jurgów, Brzegi. The highest point in the Tatra Mountains that can be freely accessed by a labeled trail is Rysy.



Białowieża Forest

Białowieża Forest (polish: Puszcza Białowieska) is one of the last and largest remaining parts of the immense primeval forest that once stretched across the European Plain. The forest is home to 800 European bison, Europe's heaviest land animal. Guided tours into the strictly protected areas of the park can be arranged on foot, bike or by horse-drawn carriage. Approximately 120,000–150,000 tourists visit the Polish part of the forest annually (about 10,000 of them are from other countries). Among the attractions are birdwatching with local ornithologists, the chance to observe rare birds, pygmy owl observations, watching bison in their natural environment and sledge as well as carriage rides, with a bonfire.



Baltic Sea

Discover the Polish Baltic coast with beautiful lagoons, picturesque lakes, high cliffs, walking dunes and wide beaches covered with powdered, almost white sand.

Beaches of the Polish Baltic coast are wide, soft and white or gold, some of them are utterly peaceful and almost not commercialized. They are hidden by densely coastal pine forests and therefore difficult to reach. From July onward, the sea water temperature is 16-18° C. For most people this is warm enough to cool down during the hot Polish summer. In the small villages you can enjoy fresh fish: smoked, roasted or baked. If you are lucky you can find amber on the beach, when the sea calms down after a storm.



TRAVEL TIPS

YOU NEED TO KNOW BEFORE VISITING POLAND



Don't call it Eastern Europe (it is not, and you WILL be corrected)

With no clear-cut definition of what constitutes 21st century Eastern Europe, it may be tempting to bundle up all the countries which used to be under the Soviet influence during the Cold War together. However, this division forgets other geo-cultural factors such as religion and completely dismisses the recent political and economic developments. So, unless you are referring to a specific historical concept, Poland is in Central Europe.



It is not as cold as you think

Before you start fearing running into a polar bear in the middle of Warsaw, brush up on your geography. Poles do not live in the North Pole. Located in the transitional

zone between oceanic and continental climates, Poland may have quite cold winters, but it also has really hot summers.



Try to learn a few words

Even though the array of bizarre vowels and consonant combinations may be intimidating at first, learning a few phrases could help you break the ice with the locals.

Don't get discouraged or upset if your pronunciation makes them laugh, as poking fun at others is a sign of friendship in Poland.



Tap water is safe to drink

In line with European Union regulations, the tap water is safe to drink, however older generations still approach this fact with a pinch of salt. Similarly, asking for a glass of

tap water in some restaurants will earn you a weird glance from the waiter, but an increasing number of venues are catching up to meet Western standards and will accommodate your request.



Do not ask people how they are doing unless you really want to find out

Polish people rarely say things they don't mean, so when your Polish friend asks you what's up, they really want to hear all about your day. Polish language does not have an equivalent of the standard English "how are you/fine, thank you" exchange, making the concept rather foreign to Polish speakers..



Take your shoes off

When invited to a Pole's house always take your shoes off. Unless they explicitly tell you that you can leave them on. Which also means that you should remember to put





on socks without holes on your next trip to Poland. However sometimes when it is more official meeting or party you will not have to.



Do not come empty-handed

When invited to a Polish house party always bring something for everyone to share. Chocolate, cake or a bottle of alcohol are all a great choices. Traditionally, guests should hand the gift to the female head of the family, but with changing housing arrangements this custom is no longer so strictly followed.



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Enjoy your visit in Poland!