



Fundusze Europejskie

**Welcome to Lubuskie
Province, in Poland!**



Fundusze Europejskie
dla Lubuskiego



Rzeczpospolita
Polska

Dofinansowane przez
Unię Europejską



Lubuskie
Warte zachodu

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WE PROVIDE FREE SERVICES

Polish Language Course

at the level: from A1 to B2

First Contact Assistant Support

concerning: individual issues related to residence and work in Poland: the education system, health, social security including social benefits, transportation, taxes and other matters of daily life in the new country, the rules for the continuation of legal residence in Poland, legal work and employment of third-country nationals.

Sworn translation of documents

Legal advice

Professional training

Psychological advice

Integration meetings

Information and adaption meetings

Career counseling

WE INVITE YOU



Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are giving you an educational brochure on the rights and obligations of foreigners staying in Poland. This publication was created with the aim of facilitating your daily life in a new country - a place that may be becoming your new home.

The information collected here will help you understand the most important aspects of life in Poland - both formal and legal, social and customary. We hope that the information it contains will make it easier for you to adapt and function in our country on a daily basis.

If, after reading the brochure, you have doubts about the presented regulations or need additional assistance, we encourage you to contact the Center for Integration of Foreigners Zielona Góra (CIC). At the CIC you will receive free and professional assistance from first contact assistants. In addition, at the Center you have the opportunity to use computers and access the Internet, which can be helpful in dealing with official matters or searching for information.

Remember that knowing your rights and responsibilities is key to full integration and comfort in your new environment.

We wish you good luck and success in Poland.

The team of the Center for Integration of Foreigners Zielona Góra

The background features a large light blue rectangle on the right and a smaller medium blue rectangle on the left. A horizontal bar composed of two dark blue segments is positioned between the two main rectangles.

**Welcome to
Lubuskie province,
Poland!**



How do you choose a place to live, work and live in Poland with your family?

Choosing the right place to settle in Poland depends on several factors: the availability of work, the cost of living, the level of education and health care, security and the quality of everyday life. Also important for many foreigners is how easy it is to integrate and find their way into the local community.

Choose consciously!

Before you decide where to live: make a list of your needs: work, children's education, peace of mind, access to doctors. Consult with people who already live in the region.

Identity document - PASSPORT

Every foreigner staying in Poland must have a valid **passport** (or other equivalent document).

Passport validity:

- Check the expiration date before any official matter (e.g. legalization of stay, bank, PESEL).
- If your passport **expires**, immediately contact **your country's embassy or consulate** in Poland and apply for a new document.
- Remember: you cannot legally extend your stay or complete important formalities without a valid identity document.



1. Finding and safely renting an apartment

Where to find:

- **Real estate agencies** - may add an additional “agent’s commission” (usually equal to one rent).
- **Websites:** e.g. OLX, Otodom, Gratka, Gumtree, Morizon and others - mainly available in Polish, but some ads have descriptions in English (“ENGLISH BELOW”).
- **Facebook** - groups like “Apartments for rent + [city name]”.
- **Directly from the owner** - often the cheapest and easiest form, but you have to be careful.

What to be careful for:

- Sign a rental agreement that includes:
 - about the details of the parties to the agreement,
 - about the address and description of the apartment,

Your first steps in Poland

- about the amount of rent and additional charges (e.g., electricity, water, garbage),
- about the amount of the security deposit - how much and when it will be returned,
- about the date of payment for rent,
- about the term of the lease and the terms of termination.
- Check whether the owner actually has the right to rent the premises:
 - you can ask for the property deed or land register number (check online: <https://ekw.ms.gov.pl>)
 - pay attention to the correspondence of data: the name of the owner with the lease agreement.
- You can conclude the contract with a **notary** (this gives you more protection, but is not mandatory).

Advance payment vs. deposit - the difference:

- **Advance payment** - can be recovered if the contract is not signed.

- **Down payment** - if you cancel, you do not recover the amount paid.

Avoiding additional costs:

- Check whether the ad includes full costs (rent, administrative fees, utilities).
- Avoid unlicensed brokers or those requiring “upfront no contract” payments.

2. PESEL number

What is it?

PESEL is an individual identification number - necessary for many things: National Health Service, Social Security, school, vaccinations, banking, trusted profile.

How to obtain a PESEL?

- Go to the municipality/city hall.
- Take your passport and residence document.
- Fill out an application (can be submitted online).
- For those with UKR status - PESEL number with UKR status is issued automatically after registration.

Error in PESEL data - what to do?

- Check the data in the register (e.g., after receiving a decision or a copy).
- If the data is wrong (e.g., a typo in the

name), apply for a correction - take your passport and a document confirming the correct data.

- The application is made at the same office where you obtained your PESEL or the closest one for your current place of residence.

UKR status - how not to lose it and what to do if it is lost?

• How not to lose it?

- Do not leave Poland for more than 30 days.
- Report residency and address changes.

• How to get it back?

- If you have lost your UKR status, you can regain it at the municipal office by submitting an application and documents confirming your return from Ukraine (e.g. stamp in your passport).

Keep in mind that regaining UKR status will not always be possible, refer to current regulations.

3. Trusted profile

What is it?

A trusted profile allows you to take care of official matters online: at ZUS, NFZ, tax office, ePUAP, mobile applications (e.g. mObywatel).

Why is it worth having one?

- Saves time - you will do many things from home.
- Necessary to obtain, for example, family benefits from ZUS, online registration, e-prescription, PIT.

How to set up?

- Through electronic banking, online bank.
- At a confirmation point (municipality office, ZUS, NFZ).
- It is available in **Polish**, and in the application also in English.

4. Health insurance

- **Public (NFZ)** - available to people working legally, students, people enrolled by the family, e.g. a husband can enroll his wife and children.
- **Voluntary** - if you are not working, but want to use NFZ without paying extra, you

must sign a contract with NFZ and pay a monthly premium.

- **Private** - purchased individually from private insurance companies.
- **Travel insurance** - recommended for trips abroad.

5. Bank and opening an account

There is a developed network of banks in Poland. It is worth choosing the one that will suit your needs. What to be careful about?

- Monthly and transfer fees.
- Does the bank support in Ukrainian/Russian/English language?
- The ability to open an account online.

What documents do you need?

- passport or residence card
- PESEL (not always mandatory, but helpful)
- address of residence in Poland
- in some banks - confirmation of student or employee status.

6. Legal work in Poland

To work legally in Poland as a foreigner, you must meet **three basic conditions**:

1. Work permit

You must have a **work permit** or **be exempt from this requirement**, such as when:



- you have **UKR status** (temporary protection for Ukrainian citizens),
- you have **a permanent residence permit, long-term EU resident, refugee status, subsidiary protection or humanitarian permit.**

Check whether your situation requires a **work permit** - if in doubt, ask at the district labor office or the Center for Integration of Foreigners.

2. Legal residence in Poland

Your stay in Poland must be legal. This means that:

- you have a valid visa, temporary residence permit or other legal residence title,
- you have not exceeded the permitted period of stay (e.g., if you entered without a visa in visa-free traffic),
- you reported your stay to the office in a timely manner.

3. Employment contract or Contract of mandate (written!)

You must sign a **written contract** before you start work:

- Employment contract - gives you more protection (e.g. paid vacation, guaranteed minimum wage, notice period),
- Contract of mandate - is also a form of legal employment, but gives fewer rights.

!!! Never work without a signed contract - **then you have the status of illegal work ("in the black")**, which risks loss of residence and legal problems.

Your **employer is obliged to:**

- sign a **written contract** with you (before you start working),
- report you to the Social Insurance Institution (**ZUS**) - this guarantees you insurance,
- pay **premiums** for you:
 - **health** - you have the right to medical care in the National Health Fund,



- **pension and disability** - you build your pension and pension rights.

Note: Illegal work is a risk!

Working “illegally” (without a contract) means:

- no health insurance - you have no right to free medical care,
- no contributions - you have no right to a pension or other benefits,
- no legal protection - you will not recover your salary in case of fraud,
- the possibility of **losing your right to stay** in Poland.

Never agree to work illegally - your rights begin with a signed contract!

7. Child care - rights and obligations of the parent/guardian in Poland

Children residing legally in Poland have the right to receive **health care** on equal terms as Polish citizens, provided that:

- they are covered by health insurance (e.g., through a parent working legally in Poland, social programs or international agreements),
- or are in a situation where they are provided with medical assistance under social or humanitarian care.



Health responsibilities:

- Children aged 0-19 are subject to **mandatory immunizations** (in accordance with Poland’s immunization calendar). These vaccinations are **free of charge** and performed at clinics (POZ).
- Newly arrived children often have to undergo **balance examinations** (age-appropriate health checks).
- It is recommended that the child be registered immediately with a family doctor (paediatrician) upon arrival in Poland.

Compulsory schooling and education In Poland it is in force:

- **Compulsory schooling and education** - from 7 to 18 years of age (grades I-VIII of

elementary school and secondary school or other form of education).

- **Compulsory annual preschool preparation** - applies to 6-year-old children.

This obligation also applies to **foreign children**, regardless of their migration status. **Parents are obliged to** enrol their child in an educational institution and ensure their child's regular attendance.

Districting and school enrolment

Public elementary schools in Poland operate under the system of **districting**, which means that the child is guaranteed a place in the institution **closest to the place of residence** according to the availability of places.

To enrol a child in a school you must:

- submit an application to the **secretary's office of the institution** (preferably a district one),
- present the **child's identity document** (e.g. passport),
- indicate the **address of residence**,
- if possible, provide **certificates or documents confirming previous education** (if available).

In the absence of documents, the school may conduct an **interview** or a diagnostic

test to determine the child's educational level.

Access to special education

Children with disabilities have the **right to special education** in Poland:

- can attend special kindergartens, schools or integrated classes,
- **a diagnosis and an evaluation of the need for special education**, issued by public **psychological and pedagogical clinics**, are required,
- assistance is provided **free of charge**, and schools may provide, among other things, an additional support teacher or therapeutic classes.

Learning the Polish language - obligation and support

Learning the Polish language is a key factor for the proper integration of a child into the Polish education system. Therefore:

- Public schools are required to **organize free lessons in Polish** as a foreign language - **a minimum of 2 hours per week**, for up to **12 months**.
- Children can also benefit from **remedial classes** in other subjects if they have learning difficulties.

Parents should ensure that the child **actively participates in Polish language lessons**, and **support the child in learning and interacting with peers**, which facilitates adaptation and development.

Summary - what should parents do?

- **Register the child at the local health clinic, take care of immunizations.**
- **Register the child for school or kindergarten (preferably district).**
- **Ensure participation in Polish language classes.**
- **If necessary - contact the psychological-educational counselling centre.**
- **Maintain contact with the school, attend meetings and meetings with teachers.**

8. Rules of social life in Poland!

If you have settled in Poland, it is important to know and follow the basic rules of social life that apply to all residents - regardless of nationality, language or religion. Respect, safety and social coexistence are the foundation of peaceful life in our country.

1. observance of the law

- In Poland, there is **equality before the law** - everyone, regardless of their background, must obey civil, criminal,

administrative or family laws.

- Ignorance of the law does **not absolve one from responsibility**. It is worth familiarizing yourself with the most important laws that apply to foreigners.
- Crimes such as theft, violence, abuse of loved ones, drug trafficking, illegal labor or driving under the influence of alcohol/ drugs are severely punished.

2. Anti-violence

- In Poland, there is no acquiescence to **physical, mental, sexual or economic violence**, including within the family.
- If you witness or are a victim of violence, you have the right and duty to report it to the police or to the Municipal Social Assistance Center.
- There are **free assistance** centers for victims of violence, also available to foreigners. If necessary, contact the Foreigner Integration Center you will receive information on how to act.

3. Counteracting addiction

- Alcohol and cigarettes are legal, but their abuse can lead to health and social problems.
- Possession of drugs is **illegal** - regardless of quantity. This also applies to cannabis.

- People struggling with addiction can access **free counselling and support groups**.

4. Respect others

- Respect others, regardless of their gender, age, religion, orientation, colour, nationality or disability.
- Courtesy, punctuality and calm communication are highly valued in interpersonal **relations**.

5. Everyday culture

- In public places (offices, schools, shops) it is advisable to use polite forms: good morning, please, thank you, excuse me. *dzień dobry, proszę, dziękuję, przepraszam*
- Queues are respected - do not shove or skip others.
- Behave calmly in public places.
- In offices, behave courteously, even if procedures are difficult or require patience.
- Smoking in public places (e.g. bus stops, offices, hospitals) is **prohibited** in Poland.

6. Help and support

- In an emergency call **112** - the call is free.
- Need legal, social, psychological help? Report to the **Centre for Integration of Foreigners, MOPS, NGOs**.

In Poland, as in any country, there may be situations in which someone experiences hate speech - that is, offensive, hostile statements or behaviour based on nationality, skin colour, language, religion, origin, sexual orientation or other characteristics.



What is hate speech?

Hate speech is speech or actions that:

- **humiliate**, insult or degrade other people,
- **Encourage violence or aggression**,
- **spreads hatred** towards social groups,
- appear on the internet, in the street, at work, school, transport or in offices.



What to do if you are confronted by hate speech?

Do not react with violence - do not respond with aggression to aggression.

Keep yourself safe - if you feel threatened, leave the scene.

Save evidence - take a photo, screenshot, remember the date, place, appearance of the person.

Report the matter:

- to the police - emergency number - phone 112 or 997,
- to the prosecutor's office - hate speech may be a crime,
- to the **Centre for Integration of Foreigners** - we will support you and help you report the case,

Hate speech on the Internet?

- Report it to a portal administrator (e.g. Facebook, YouTube, TikTok).
- Report it to the **cyber police** or **NASK CERT Polska**.
- Do not share further - report, block, delete.

Poland has a law against hate speech. No one has the right to insult or discriminate against you. You have the right to respect and protection.

IMPORTANT

Note: The educational brochure is not a source of law.

The authors have made every effort to ensure that the content of the brochure is in compliance with applicable laws. However, please note that the publication deals with typical situations and the most common cases, so it may not fully apply to individual cases.

The number and type of documents that may be requested by administrative authorities in the course of proceedings to legalize residence and work in POLAND, health and education cases may differ from those given in the brochure, depending on the specific case.

In case of any doubt, it is recommended:

- contact the relevant administrative body (e.g., Provincial Office, Office for Foreigners),
- familiarize yourself with the law,
- take advantage of the free assistance of the Center for Integration of Foreigners in Zielona Góra.



DEVELOPMENT:



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EDUCATIONAL BROCHURE

COPY FREE OF CHARGE

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