



Narodowe Centrum Badań Jądrowych
National Centre for Nuclear Research

International Arrivals

Things to do when you get to Poland

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Welcome to NCBJ and welcome to Poland. New international arrivals that join us often have a number of questions about what they need to do and how to do it. The aim of this document is to provide the answers to the most common ones that crop up on arrival. It is mostly written by international employees, with a few edits by our Polish colleagues, so explains what you need to do by people that have done it. It has been written by NCBJ employees at Pastera in Warsaw, so may take a slight Warsaw-centric slant but it aims to be all inclusive.

As a note of caution. The information provided in Chapters 3 and 4 is as accurate as we can make it. However, procedures change over time so it is always worth double checking with official sources.

If you are viewing this document on a computer, you can click on URLs to open them in your browser while clicking on addresses will open a Google Map with the location highlighted.

Chapter 2

Somewhere to live

The most pressing matter international arrivals are likely to have is finding somewhere to call home. This is an unpleasant experience even without the stress of just having moved to a new country. Fortunately, there are a few places where you can look for a flat-share, your own flat (*mieszkanie*) or even a house (*dom*). There are also a couple of things you will need to be aware of when you search for a place to live. These are not anything nefarious but if you are not aware, you may suddenly find yourself spending an extra few hundred zloty per month than you expected. This chapter aims to show you where you can find a place to live as well as what to expect.

2.1 Tips and Tricks

Listings for flats are often done by the number of rooms. A “*jeden/1 pokoj*” or “*kawalerka*” is a single room/studio flat, a “*dwa pokoje*” flat has a bedroom and living room or two bedrooms, and so on.

Beds in smaller furnished flats or studio flats may be pull out beds, where a sofa can be turned into a bed for sleeping. This is something to keep an eye out for if you want a real bed.

Rent is often split into two parts (especially for flats): the rent and the additional rent. Additional rent covers the building administrative fees for the maintenance of the building and shared areas. This can also, but not always, include prepayments for water (hot and cold) and heating. The listed price may or may not include both parts of the rent, so double check before you sign a contract.

Rental prices typically do not include utilities/media other than the water and heating deposit. You will need to find your own internet and pay for electricity separately. Although this is not always the case.

Some properties are sold via an agent that will typically charge you half of one month’s rent. Very rarely, this will be covered by your new landlord/lady but do not count on it. It should be clear if the listing is by an agent.

2.2 Golssary

A quick list of useful Polish words and their English translations. If you are not familiar with the Polish language, these words will change their spelling slightly depending on the context they are used in.

| Polski | English |
|--------------|-----------------|
| Cena (od/do) | Price (from/to) |
| Budynek | Building |
| Domy | Houses |
| Mieszkania | Flats |
| Piętro | Floor |
| Pokoje | Rooms |
| Poziom | Level |
| Sprzedaż | For sale |
| Umeblowane | Furnished |
| Wynajem | For rent |

2.3 Where to find a place

Most places you can look are online and include, but are not limited to, the below.

Morizon

morizon.pl is a Polish site listing houses, flats and rooms for rent and sale. Selection can be filtered by type, sale or rent, price, number of rooms, building floor, “materiałbudowlany” (building material), “kryteria” (criteria, e.g. balcony, terrace, etc.). You can also select the city and city district.

Otodom

otodom.pl is another Polish site listing houses, flats and rooms for rent and sale. The listings can be filtered primarily by type, sale or rent, price and number of rooms. Further filters can be added, including building floor and type of heating.

Gumtree

gumtree.pl is the Polish edition of the Gumtree online market place. There are rooms, flats and houses for rent and sale under the “Nieruchomości” (Real Estate) section. Listings can be filtered by rooms, flats, houses, price, owner or agent and number of rooms. You can also select by city and district.

Olx

olx.pl is another Polish online market place with a large number of adverts for flats and houses to rent or buy. These can be found under “Nieruchomości”. You can then select for flats or houses and further filter your choices. Filters include “Rodzaj zabudowy” (building type, e.g. block, detached house, loft, etc.), “poziom”, “umeblowane”, “liczba pokoi” (number of rooms) and “cena”. You can also select the city and city district.

Facebook

There are a number of facebook groups that share listings for flats. A quick google should bring up a number of different ones for where you want to live.

Chapter 3

District Office

The people in the “Urząd Dzielnicy” (district office) will often speak English if you cannot already speak Polish. The guard on the door, however, will probably not. If they give you trouble getting in, show them any documents you are trying to hand in and they will let you in or find someone who can speak English to help you. Locations of the district offices in Warsaw can be found on this website: <https://rezerwacje.um.warszawa.pl/> under “Dzielnice m.st. Warszawy”. Prebooking an appointment is not necessary.

3.1 Registering with the District

Once you have found somewhere to live, you will need to register with your district office if you are staying in Poland for more than three months. *This is not the same as registering your stay in Poland.* This will require you to fill in a short form with your name, address, date of birth, place of birth, phone number and email address. You will also need to sign it and you may need to get the owner of your property or the lease holder to sign it (you can sign this part yourself if you have a contract with the owner). You will also need to bring your rental contract or ownership document as well as your ID (if you are an EU citizen) or passport. Non-EU citizens will also need to bring their visa or residence card. More information and the document needed can be found on the Polish Government’s website (in Polish): <https://www.gov.pl/web/gov/zamelduj-sie-na-pobyt-staly-lub-czasowy-dluzszy-niz-3-miesiace>. The document itself can be found directly at: <https://www.gov.pl/attachment/5988b679-cd8a-4dab-92ca-49b35f43d5aa>.

If you are a non-EU citizen, it is useful to get an official certificate of residency once the application is approved. It may be useful when registering for stay in Poland. You will need to pay for it but it is relatively cheap at about 10 zloty.

3.2 PESEL Number

This is your identification number in Poland. It is used for things like paying taxes, which is why NCBJ will ask for it when you start. While registering with the district, if you don't already have a PESEL number you will be issued one (make sure to ask). It will be given to you on the spot and you can use it right away. Once you receive it, take it to your division secretary so it can be entered into the NCBJ system.

Chapter 4

Registering your stay in Poland

To register your stay in Poland, you will need to go to the województwo (voivodeship/province) office. Like the district office, the people here will speak English while the guard on the door probably will not. The guard will let you in without any trouble but may regulate the entry at busy times. Just wait until they wave you through. For people in Mazowieckie (Warsaw and Otwock) the office is:

Marszałkowska 3/5,
00-624 Warszawa

For people in Łódź the office is:

ul. Piotrkowska 103,
90-425 Łódź

The Polish Government website has a lot of information about how to register, but most of it is in Polish: <https://www.gov.pl/web/uw-mazowiecki/procedury2>. The sections below describe what you will need to bring and by when.

4.1 EU Citizens

All EU citizens must register within three (3) months of arriving in Poland. A decision should be made within 30 days from submitting all the documents. The needed documents are summarised below but full details can be found here (in Polish): <https://www.gov.pl/web/uw-mazowiecki/rejestracja-obywatela-ue>

Two forms need to be filled in (in Polish), one containing your details that can be found here: <https://www.gov.pl/attachment/2164a4dc-8c98-4ba1-a5b8-1526a68de643>, as well as a second form to confirm when you arrived in Poland

that can be found here: <https://www.gov.pl/attachment/712afc82-b5d2-420d-b70e-4b72975ee7ad>.

You need to take your official ID or passport that confirms your identity and citizenship. This includes a photocopy/scan of your ID along with a copy of every page with a visa or entry/exit stamp in your passport.

You will also need to provide four (4) passport style photos that were taken in the last six (6) months: 35 mm × 45 mm showing your face. There is a machine in the Mzowieckie office that will take these photos for you for a charge of about 25 zloty.

If you are an employee, you will need to bring your NCBJ contract and a copy of it. If you are a student, you will need to bring proof you are studying in Poland, a document proving you have health insurance and proof you have money.

4.2 Non-EU Citizens

All Non-EU Citizens¹ must register no later than the last day of your legal stay in Poland. It costs 440 zloty to submit the application (stamp duty) and 50 zloty to receive the residence card. Any of the required documents listed below that do not say you need a copy, it is recommended to take a copy of them anyway. The needed documents are summarised below but full details can be found here (in Polish): <https://www.gov.pl/web/uw-mazowiecki/praca-i-pobyt>.

Two forms need to be filled in (in Polish), one containing your details that can be found here: <https://www.gov.pl/attachment/609b4f8e-3eb6-433e-b1cd-f5552867b4f0>, and an appendix to be filled in by NCBJ that can be found here: <https://www.gov.pl/attachment/a778f31a-f397-433a-b219-a567f104261c>. Two copies of both documents are also needed.

You need to take your passport that confirms your identity and citizenship. This includes two photocopies/scans of your passport along with two copies of every page with a visa or entry/exit stamp.

You will also need to provide four (4) passport style photos that were taken in the last six (6) months: 35 mm × 45 mm showing your face. There is a machine in the Mzowieckie office that will take these photos for you for a charge of about 25 zloty.

You need to provide proof that the 440 zloty stamp duty has been paid.

You need to provide documents for the starosta competent of the application from NCBJ (if it is required) as well as proof that NCBJ can afford to pay you.

Proof of having somewhere to stay is required. This can be your rental contract, the conformation certificate from Chapter 3.1 or a certificate from your hotel.

Proof you have settled any taxes and a certificate stating you have no tax arrears is also required.

¹Now Brexit has happened, this includes British Citizens.

Chapter 5

Utilities

5.1 Phone Number

It is recommended to have a Polish phone number. It may be cheaper than roaming on a simcard from another country and it is useful for your bank and contact with various government offices and utility companies. The four largest mobile companies are (in order of size) Orange, Plus, T-mobile and Play. All offer SIM-only or SIM+PHONE deals and contracts or pre-paid. You will have to provide your ID when you buy your simcard as the Polish government wants to know who has what phone number.

5.2 Banks

The major banks include PKO BP, Bank Pekao, mBank, ING, Santander and Millennium Bank. Other banks are available. If you were not already aware, multi-national banks, like ING or Santander, typically will not move your account from one country to another.

All banks offer an app for your phone and will include BLIK. BLIK allows you to quickly pay for things online or in shops with a six digit code. BLIK also lets you send money to someone else if you have a Polish phone number and know the other person's Polish number. This is why it is recommended to have a Polish number, even if it is just for BLIK.

5.3 Internet

If your rental place does not have an internet connection, there are a few larger internet providers including UPC, Vectra, Orange and Play. Other providers are available. All providers offer different speeds and prices to match your needs, although many require 12 or 24 month contracts.

5.4 Profil Zaufany

A Profil Zaufany, or Trusted Profile, is an electronic log in used by the government. With it, you can log in online to deal with taxes or the public medical care. While not necessary to have, it can be very useful. The trusted profile can be provided through your bank, including all those listed above, or it can be applied for online: <https://pz.gov.pl/pz/registerMainPage>. If you have a Polish ID with an electronic layer and an NCF reader (for example in your phone) it can be done fully online. Otherwise, to complete the application you will need to go to a registered office, which are listed in the Profil Zaufany pages.

5.5 Health Insurance

Health insurance is mandatory for people studying or working in Poland. For employees, you are covered by the Narodowy Fundusz Zdrowia (NFZ) which is paid through compulsory health insurance contributions (a fancy way of saying you pay through taxes). You can of course also take out a private health insurance policy but you will still contribute to NFZ through taxes.

For students, as you don't pay taxes you do not make automatic payments for NFZ, you are not necessarily covered by NFZ. For EU citizens, if you have a valid European Health Insurance Card you are eligible for free health services in Poland and are considered to have health insurance. EU citizens who are not insured in their home country will be insured by NCBJ for the Polish government cost. Non-EU citizens can sign an insurance agreement with NFZ and pay monthly contributions or take out a private health insurance policy.