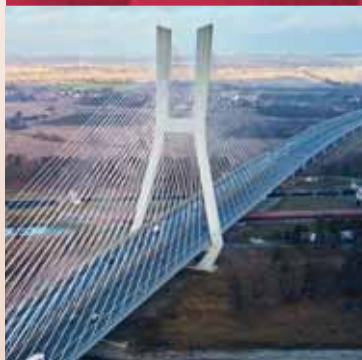


*welcome to*

PCS Guide 2026–2027

# POLAND





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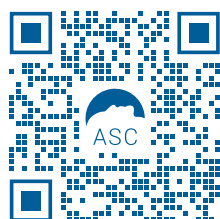
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### Europe Office

#### COMMANDER

Dan "DQ" Quinlan, Lt Col, USAF

#### BUSINESS OPERATIONS MANAGER

John Rodriguez

#### PUBLISHING & MEDIA DESIGN, MANAGER

Carrie Farrell

#### PUBLISHING & MEDIA DESIGN, LEAD EDITOR

Kat Nickola

#### WRITER-EDITORS

Tamala Malerk, Katie Wells

#### GRAPHIC DESIGNERS

Daniela Gammon, Ryyan Joye, Mandy Mills

#### ENGAGEMENT MANAGER

Kay Moncada

#### MARKETING COORDINATOR

Katelin Fry

#### COMMUNITY RELATIONS COORDINATOR

Al Green

#### MULTIMEDIA ADVERTISING, MANAGER

Doug Dougherty

#### POLAND ADVERTISING SALES REPRESENTATIVE

Kevin Work

#### MULTIMEDIA ADVERTISING, CONSULTANTS

Sean Adams, Heidi Bayfield, Kandace Blevin,

Nate Jamison, Jennifer Kordos, Caitlin Weaver

#### ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Danny Padro

#### ADVERTISING OFFICE

OPC 469 Box 12, APO AE 09227-9001

Postfach 1980, 67607

Kaiserslautern, Germany

+49(0)152-5672-5020

#### CONTACT US:

Telephone: +49 (0) 0631-3615-9111

or DSN: 314-583-9111

Email: memberservices@stripes.com

### Washington Office

#### PUBLISHER

Max D. Lederer, Jr.

#### REVENUE DIRECTOR

Scott Foley

#### MULTIMEDIA ADVERTISING, CONSULTANTS

Corey Henderson, Gerard Kelly,

Claudia Stier, Mary Vandenberg

#### ENGAGEMENT DIRECTOR

Chris Verigan

#### PUBLISHING & MEDIA DESIGN, DIRECTOR

Marie Woods

#### PUBLISHING & MEDIA DESIGN, MANAGER

Douglas Gillam, Jr.

#### GRAPHIC ARTISTS

Ellen Cheung, Amy Webb

#### CONTENT DESIGNER

Alyssa McBeth

#### MARKETING COORDINATOR

Saeeda Daniels

#### ADVERTISING OFFICE

633 3rd Street NW, Suite 116

Washington, DC 20001-3050

202-886-0003

#### COVER DESIGN BY

Ryyan Joye

#### FOR PUBLICATION REQUESTS

Stars and Stripes Europe, Advertising

OPC 469 Box 12, APO AE 09227-9001

or email [dougherty.doug@stripes.com](mailto:dougherty.doug@stripes.com)

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# STARY BROWAR

# WELCOME TO POLAND



## EMERGENCY INFORMATION

**112 is the emergency phone number throughout Europe.**

## IN-PROCESSING

Garrison in-processing occurs every Tuesday 9:30-10:30 a.m. and is followed by an off-post housing brief. Culture College is every Wednesday from 8 a.m.- 3 p.m. at Camp Kościuszko in Bldg. 28. This is required for all personnel and contractors are highly encouraged to attend as well. There are three days of classes and activities along with a checklist that soldiers must complete within seven days.

## USAG POLAND NEWCOMERS WEBSITE



## INSTALLATION LOCATIONS

### CAMP KOŚCIUSZKO

Marcelinska 15  
68-001, Poznań

### FOS ŻAGAŃ

Baza Amerykańska Zarska  
68-100, Żagań

### FOS POWIDZ

Witkowska 8  
62-430, Powidz

## SHOPPING

All USAG Poland installations have an AAFES store. They range from traditional stores in buildings to mobile containers and flea-market type rodeos. Check with your local Garrison Support Element for open hours.

There is no commissary available at USAG Poland installations.

## COMMON CHAIN STORE NAMES:

- **Grocery:** Lidl, Żabka, Netto, Tesco, Spar, Kaufland, Auchan Biedronka
- **Supercenters:** Kaufland, Tesco
- **Delivery Meals and Groceries:** Uber Eats, Pyszne, Frisco, Wolt, Glovo
- **Home Improvement:** OBI, Castorama, Leroy Merlin
- **Furniture:** IKEA, Galeria Polskie Meble (Poznań)
- **Budget Clothing:** KiK, Primark, C&A, H&M, TKMaxx
- **Bookshops:** Empik, BookaRest (Poznań), Bookland
- **Discount Shops:** Action, Dealz, TEDI

## LEARNING POLISH

Here are resources available for you to learn Polish.

## ARMY COMMUNITY SERVICES

ACS offers free 10-week basic conversational Polish classes for U.S. military, civilian personnel and their spouses. Classes are in-person at Camp K or via Teams.

## MANGO LANGUAGES

Through the Army MWR library websites, you can access Mango Languages courses and the Mango App to learn Polish for free. Visit [www.dodmwrlibraries.org](http://www.dodmwrlibraries.org) for access.

## MAILING SERVICES

The post office at Camp Kościuszko has basic USPS retail functions where you can mail a parcel or letter out the same way you can at a USPS Post Office in the U.S.

For outgoing mail, it is best to make an account with one of following:

- USPS Click-N-Ship® | [cns.usps.com](http://cns.usps.com)
- Pirate Ship® | [pirateship.com](http://pirateship.com)

As a reminder, the APO service is provided for you as an authorized patron. The Post Office may not be used as part of any home-based business or used to provide a tax-free import for local nationals or others not entitled to the service themselves.

## Size restrictions to APO

Packages may not exceed 66 pounds and size is limited to 42 inches maximum length and 72 inches maximum length and girth combined. Visit the U.S. Postal Service website ([www.usps.gov](http://www.usps.gov)) for additional item restrictions.

Camp Kościuszko:  
Your Name  
PSC 1 650 Box XXX  
APO AE 09103-XXXX

FOS Żagań:  
Your Name  
PSC 1 603 Box XXX  
APO AE 09008-XXXX

FOS Powidz:  
Your Name  
PSC 1 601 Box XXX  
APO AE 09017-XXXX

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*continued from page 6*

## BANKING

Getting a Polish bank account, or a European banking App with an International Bank Account Number (IBAN) is necessary for paying bills and transferring money. It is also helpful for making purchases, getting cash, and managing funds between dollars and Polish złoty.

Poland is a member of the European Union; however, it has not yet adopted the Euro. The Polish currency is the złoty (PLN). A single złoty is worth 100 grosz.

The cost of living is generally lower in Poland than in the U.S. However, you should be aware that you will have upfront expenses as part of your in-processing and establishing yourself in Poland. Discuss your entitlements and allowances with your current finance office for your respective location.

## MONEY EXCHANGES

You can exchange money in banks or Kantors (exchange offices). Banks will likely charge a commission/currency exchange fee, whereas the Kantors (found in malls, rest stops and at the airports) usually provide better exchange rates and don't charge a commission. It is recommended to avoid exchanges located in airports, as they provide less advantageous rates.

## ATMS

An ATM is available at Camp Kościuszko within the M gate.

Throughout Poland, ATMs are widely available.

Check with your CONUS bank or credit union for currency conversion fees and daily limits. Some banks waive international ATM fees.

## DEBIT & CREDIT CARDS

- Some Polish businesses accept debit and credit cards, but some may not.
- It's always best to carry Polish złoty when off installation.
- It is generally better to charge the purchase in the local currency to avoid a poor exchange rate.

## LOCAL BANKS

- mBank: [mbank.pl/en](https://mbank.pl/en)
- ING: [ing.pl](https://ing.pl)
- Millennium: [bankmillennium.pl/en](https://bankmillennium.pl/en)

## MOBILE APPS

These "portable" international banks are a great tool to get local bills paid in złoty, and often with competitive exchange rates and low fees.

- Wise: [wise.com](https://wise.com)
- N26: [n26.com/en](https://n26.com/en)

## LEGAL SERVICES

Your on-installation Legal Office can help with simple notaries and powers of attorney on a walk-in basis. Complex notary services and other legal advice is only available by appointment.

V Corps Legal Assistance Office  
(Camp Kościuszko):  
[vcorps.osja-legal-assistance.mil@army.mil](mailto:vcorps.osja-legal-assistance.mil@army.mil)

Trial Defense Service Europe:  
[usarmy.bavaria.7atc.mbx.trial-defense-services.mil@army.mil](mailto:usarmy.bavaria.7atc.mbx.trial-defense-services.mil@army.mil)  
DSN (314) 599-7737

- Powers of Attorney are recommended for spouses so they may handle paperwork if the military sponsor is not available due to training or deployment.
- Dependents wanting to work while overseas should have their sponsors reach out to their servicing personnel or legal office.
- Tax preparation services are no longer handled by legal offices, but there are numerous free options for simple return preparation.
- Other legal services offered include wills, medical directives, Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (SCRA) issues, estate planning, immigration, debt or credit problems, and other non-criminal issues.
- Assistance with military criminal issues is provided by Trial Defense Service offices.

## CELL PHONES

When you arrive in Poland, put your phone on airplane mode to avoid unexpected charges. Be sure your phone is unlocked by any U.S. carrier before coming to Poland.

WiFi or data-based international communication is possible with these apps:

- WhatsApp
- Signal
- Facebook Messenger

Polish cell phone carriers offer reasonably priced pay-as-you-go accounts and monthly subscriptions. Accounts, SIM cards and eSIM products can be ordered online or in shops.

## LOCAL PHONE/INTERNET PROVIDERS

- ▶ Orange Polska: [orange.pl/lp/for-foreigners](https://orange.pl/lp/for-foreigners)
- ▶ T-Mobile: [t-mobile.pl/c/na-karte/en](https://t-mobile.pl/c/na-karte/en)
- ▶ Plus: [plus.pl](https://plus.pl)
- ▶ Play: [play.pl/nowy](https://play.pl/nowy) ■





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# GET TO KNOW POZNAŃ

By Erica Fowler and Kat Nickola



Poznań is a vibrant city that blends old traditions with modernity. It is one of Poland's most historically important cities and was once the capital of the Polish state. It was the site of the first Polish coronation, and its people have not shied away from organizing uprisings against oppressive leaders.

## OUT AND ABOUT

The city is home to some world-renowned events like the **BitterSweet Festival** – a massive three-day summer music festival that draws big names to Poznań. There is also the international **Impact Conference** – a large gathering of speakers and leaders who focus on future-minded topics like geopolitics, business, environment and technology.

## HISTORY IN FOCUS

Poznań has lots of museums. Inside the Town Hall is the **Museum of Poznań**, with a fascinating array of displays plunging you into political movements, conflicts

and culture. The **Greater Poland Museum of Independence** oversees five unique branches throughout the city and the **National Museum** houses an archeology department covering European and ancient histories. Also visit **Ostrów Tumski**, or “Cathedral Island” as it's sometimes called, in the middle of the Warta River and home to the 1,000-year-old **Poznań Cathedral** where the first monarch of Poland was baptized.

## ART LOVER

Whatever you do, take a moment to enjoy the large murals that dot the city like a free art gallery. Be sure to check out the 3D mural **Śródka** on the east side of the Warta River. In the city center, the **Imperial Castle** is a cultural center that, despite its name, was only built in the early 20th century. Five blocks away, is the **Royal Castle**, a reconstruction of a 13th-century fortification that was gravely damaged in World War II. It now houses a fantastic **Modern Art Museum**.

## ON THE WATER

Outdoor activity in Poznań is dominated by its four lakes. For a day out in nature, head through **Sołacki Park** to **Rusałka Lake** for beaches and swimming. A trail system offers information boards about the site's history as a World War II internment camp. Biking or jogging further along the trail system can get you to the next lake: Strzeszyn, which also has a small swimming beach.

For more attractions, venture east of the city to **Malta Lake** any time of the year. In summer, **Malta Ski** has a mountain coaster, plus lots of family-friendly attractions, while in the winter you can practice skiing and snowboarding using their one lift. Across the lake, the **Termy Maltańskie** is a big indoor- outdoor water park, or head to the far end for the **New Poznań Zoo**.

If you'd rather be on the water, then **Kierskie Lake** northwest of the airport is for you. It is Poznań's biggest lake and the place for renting boats, water skiing or windsurfing.

## SOCCER MATCHES

If you miss catching a live game, Poznań's football (soccer) team, **Lech Poznań**, plays at Stadion Poznań. They are one of Poland's “big five” teams, winning the Polish league numerous times. The fandom's fervor will have you caught up in the excitement. Buy tickets at [www.lechpoznan.pl](http://www.lechpoznan.pl) ■



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# POWIDZ

## MILITARY COMMUNITY

By USAG Poland Public Affairs



### TORUŃ

This charming Polish town sits on the **Vistula River**, the longest river in Poland. The scenic riverfront is perfect for leisurely walks, boat tours and offers beautiful views of the city's historical skyline.

Did you know Toruń is the birthplace of Nicolaus Copernicus, the man who figured out that the Earth revolves around the sun? Explore his life at the **Copernicus House Museum**, and feel your inner astronomer awaken! Toruń is home to one of Poland's oldest and most prestigious universities, **Nicolaus Copernicus University**, which attracts students and researchers from all over the world. The city has a vibrant academic and cultural scene, with numerous festivals, concerts and events year-round.

Wander through the well-preserved medieval streets of **Toruń's Old Town**, a UNESCO World Heritage site, and be amazed by the stunning gothic architecture. The **Town Hall** and the **Teutonic Castle** are sights you won't soon forget.

If you have a sweet tooth, you're in luck! Toruń is known as the "Gingerbread Capital" of Poland. Indulge in this local delicacy as you explore the city and don't miss the fun, interactive **Museum of Gingerbread**.

### POWIDZ

Powidz is a picturesque town nestled on the shores of stunning **Powidz Lake**. Here, you'll find a water lover's paradise, with opportunities for sailing, fishing and kayaking amidst the sparkling waters. Powidz is located in the **Wielkopolska** region, known for its stunning natural beauty, including vast forests and natural reserves. The area is rich in wildlife, offering a great destination for nature enthusiasts, with plenty of opportunities for hiking and birdwatching.

As you delve deeper into Powidz, uncover its intriguing past. During World War II, Powidz was home to a significant German airfield. After the war, it was used by the Polish Air Force and remains an active military base today. Visitors with an interest in **military history** can explore the area's aviation past, adding an intriguing layer to the town's history.

### GNIEZNO

Just a short trip from Powidz lies Gniezno, a city that resonates with national significance as the birthplace of the Polish state. Step back in time as you wander through its charming streets, imagining a time when kings were crowned within its walls.

No visit to **Gniezno** is complete without experiencing the awe-inspiring **Gniezno Cathedral**, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Marvel at its stunning Romanesque and Gothic architecture and be captivated by the intricate bronze doors depicting scenes from Polish history. ■



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# ŚWIĘTOSZÓW

## MILITARY COMMUNITY

By USAG Poland Public Affairs



There is plenty to discover around the installations in this region near the borders of both Germany and Czechia.

### ŻAGAŃ

Żagań is home to an important military history, particularly in the 20th century. The town is known for its historical military barracks and its connection to the Polish Armed Forces, as well as the presence of NATO military units. The town's military heritage provides an fascinating dimension for visitors with an interest in history, defense, and international relations.

In Żagań, step inside the magnificent **Żagań Castle**, a Renaissance masterpiece that once hosted noble families and now invites you to step back in time to the 16th century.

Uncover the poignant history of World War II. The town's nearby **Stalag XIII-C** was one of the largest POW camps for Allied soldiers, including many Americans. The camp was part of the history surrounding the famous "Great Escape" by British and Commonwealth prisoners, and visitors can learn about the town's role in the war through museums and memorials.

For a moment of tranquility, find respite in the **Żagań Forest**, an area of pristine natural beauty, offering opportunities for hiking, cycling, and nature walks.

### ŚWIĘTOSZÓW

Świętoszów is home to one of the largest military training bases in Poland, which is also used by NATO forces for joint exercises. You can delve into the fascinating world of the military base, tracing its evolution from a strategic Cold War outpost to a modern training ground for Polish and NATO forces. History enthusiasts can uncover remnants of World War II, including **bunkers and installations**, for a tangible connection to the region's wartime past.

For those seeking adventure and breathtaking views, the nearby **Karkonosze Mountains** beckon with hiking trails leading to panoramic vistas and invigorating outdoor experiences.

### BOLESŁAWIEC

Bolesławiec is internationally renowned for its unique and beautiful pottery, often referred to as **Polish pottery**. The town has been producing this distinctive, hand-painted stoneware for centuries. Visitors can explore local pottery shops and even visit workshops where artisans create and decorate the iconic pieces. The annual **Bolesławiec Pottery Festival** is a major event where visitors from around the world come to admire and purchase handcrafted pottery, showcasing the town's enduring craftsmanship. ■

# OFF-DUTY STARTS HERE.



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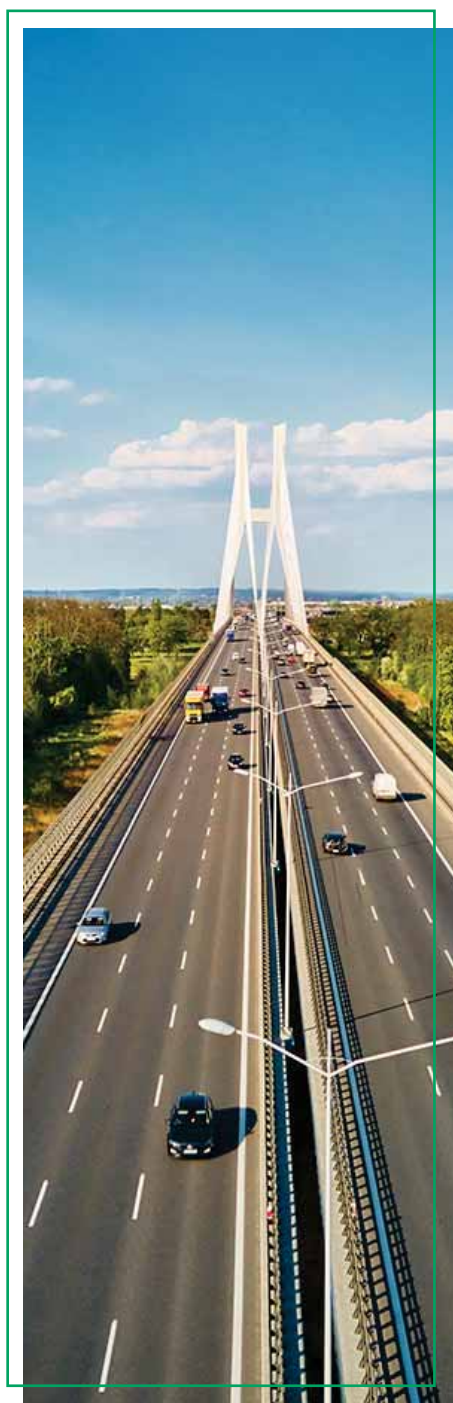
Come visit us at **Witkowska 45**, Powidz.

---

SERVING THOSE WHO SERVE.

# TRANSPORTATION

## IN POLAND



Common options that permanent-party personnel use to get around are motorcycles, mopeds, scooter rentals, bicycles and public transport, where available.

### PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Public transportation in Poland is extensive and efficient.

#### THROUGHOUT POLAND

Downloading the free Jakdojade App is useful; it can be used for public transportation planning and purchasing tickets across Poland.

The [polishtrains.eu](http://polishtrains.eu) website is a user-friendly option for buying inter-city train tickets from the many train companies in the country.

#### POZNAŃ

The trams and busses in Poznań are organized by the Zarząd Transportu Miejskiego (ZTM).

#### There are multiple ways to buy tickets:

- Paying with card or cash at ticket machines, available at major tram/bus stops.
- The Jakdojade App
- A PEKA card, which can be used as a debit account for discounted rates or a subscription for unlimited riding.  
[www.ztm.poznan.pl](http://www.ztm.poznan.pl)

### DRIVER'S LICENSES

All military and civilian personnel, their family members and any DOW employees stationed in Poland must get a U.S. Army in Europe (USAREUR) driver's license if they will be driving a privately-owned vehicle (POV) or government-owned vehicle (GOV).

### USAREUR-AF ONLINE DRIVER'S LICENSE TESTING

The USAREUR-AF Driver's Certificate training and exam can be taken on Joint Knowledge Online (JKO). Individuals with a Common Access Card (CAC) can login to JKO and create an account. Non-CAC holders must request a sponsored account by signing up with JKO. Sponsored accounts must use the USER ID and PASSWORD issued by JKO to access the system. Log into JKO and search the catalog for the course code USA 007. The course must be completed before the exam, USA 007B. Once completed, the scores are valid for 60 days. You must apply for a USAREUR license within the 60-day window.

#### ► Getting your License

- ✓ Bring your certificate of completion to the POV registration office, along with your U.S. driver's license, U.S. Forces ID Card, international driver's license, official orders and proof of payment.
- ✓ If over the age of 65, bring a current vision test from an optometrist.

**Note:** USAREUR licenses applications in Poland are routed through registration offices in Germany, so additional processing time may be required.

### INTERNATIONAL DRIVERS LICENSES AND STATE -LICENSE EXTENSIONS

We recommend all personnel obtain an International Driving Permit (IDP) from AAA prior to arrival. Generally, international drivers [from outside of the European Union (EU)] require an IDP for driving in Poland or to rent a vehicle. Make sure your state license is valid throughout your stay, as the military exceptions granted by some U.S. states which allow military members to drive on expired licenses are **not** accepted overseas.

Visit [aaa.com/vacation/idpf.html](http://aaa.com/vacation/idpf.html).



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continued from page 16

## VEHICLE REGISTRATION

Vehicles must be registered within 30 days of importation.

### 1. Submit paperwork

Email PDF copies of the following required documents to [bartlomiej.j.lotocki.ctr@army.mil](mailto:bartlomiej.j.lotocki.ctr@army.mil).

- Current registration document (US or USAREUR-AF). Note: If the vehicle is not currently registered, you must submit the title and a letter from the lienholder bank (if applicable) authorizing registration in Poland.
- Orders or LOI with authorization for POV registration
- Copy of valid U.S. drivers license
- Copy of valid U.S. passport

### 2. Vehicle Inspection

Vehicles must pass a technical inspection before visiting the DMV. Walk-ins are available at the POV office on Monday, Tuesday and Friday.

### 3. DMV Visit

Schedule an appointment at the DMV. Bring all paperwork, inspection pass, valid ID and proof of Polish insurance.

In Poland, all vehicles, even if they are not being driven, must carry insurance.

There are two types of insurance:

- OC – liability insurance (compulsory)
- AC (Autocasco) – full coverage insurance (non-compulsory)

See the POV Registration Office for a list of Polish insurance options. USAA does not currently insure vehicles in Poland.

To insure your vehicle in Poland, it must first be registered in the Polish system, the local DMV, which is done via your appointment with the POV Registration Office.

There is an option to get short term insurance (30+ days) that allows you to drive with your U.S. plates, if needed. With short term insurance you can use the vehicle prior to your Polish DMV registration and before you get a Polish insurance plan, but it is recommended to keep this driving to a minimum.

## SHIPPED VEHICLES

If you shipped a vehicle to Poland, it will take at least 45-60 days to arrive. It's important that you do not send any of your vehicle documents with your HHG. Bring the documents in your personal baggage. Vehicles must be picked up in person at the Poznań-Ławica Airport.

**The owner must bring the vehicle's valid registration documents for pick up.**

### ► Requirements

Make sure you hand-carry the following original documents when traveling overseas:

- ✓ Original title
- ✓ Original Bill of Sale (This is your primary proof of ownership in Poland. If you cannot locate it, ask the dealer for a duplicate.)
- ✓ Current registration document from previous station (the actual registration document, not just a fee payment confirmation).
- ✓ Vehicle recall verification (proof you took care of any factory recalls)
- ✓ Current and valid license plates
- ✓ Driver's record from your previous insurance company covering the last seven years.
- ✓ If you don't have a clear title for your vehicle (i.e. your bank holds a lien on the title), there are additional requirements and paperwork needed prior to shipping your vehicle from the U.S. You will need a prior written bank consent to register the vehicle in Poland. The process to obtain such authorization might take weeks or months, so it is essential that you complete it before shipping your vehicle.
- ✓ If your vehicle is old, or has body damage, it might be difficult to pass the required local inspection, and repairs may be required to complete the inspection.
- ✓ Vehicles shipped directly to Poland must have a valid registration (U.S. plate, import plate, or EU plate).
- ✓ Vehicles must have basic insurance before they can be driven.

## FUEL

There is no gas station on the installation, so you will have to fuel up on the economy. There are no discount fuel cards.

## PURCHASING A CAR

You have the option to buy a new or used car from dealers and private sellers in Poland. Buying a vehicle in compliance with U.S. specification from another military member is tax free. Be aware that vehicles sold in local dealerships are not in compliance with U.S. specification. If you buy a vehicle in Poland, contact your local vehicle registration office for guidance.

- All vehicles are required to be insured and registered (registration first, insurance second) with the POV registration office.
- There is no established value-added tax (VAT) program in Poland. If you wish to purchase a vehicle and take advantage of a VAT program, members can purchase a vehicle from a dealer in Germany and drive or ship the vehicle to their duty station in Poland. ■



### Check out our European Road Guide

This useful guide is loaded with detailed information about driving laws throughout Europe. It includes rules of the road, road signs, accident procedures and how to register vehicles. Bonus content includes key phrases in other languages and a chart of European road signs to make sure you're ready to hit the road.



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- 54529 Spangdahlem  
- 33081 Aviano (PN)  
- 36100 Vicenza

T. +49-631-351 700  
T. +49-6565-957316  
T. +39-331-709 7868  
T. +39-388-633 7539



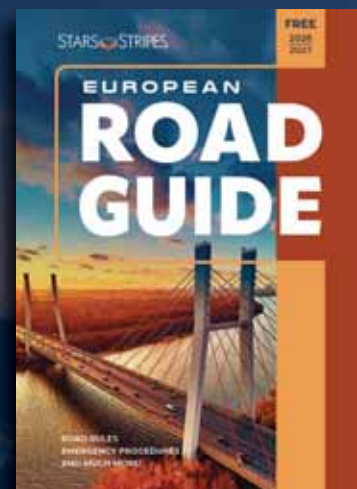
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[erau.edu/powidz](https://erau.edu/powidz)

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# HOUSING

## IN POLAND



Housing in Poland is modern, but you'll have the option of selecting historical apartments and houses as well. Houses and apartments in Poland may be a different size or layout than you are used to; however, the Housing Office will assist you in finding something that fits your needs.

### CAMP KOŚCIUSZKO/POZNAŃ HOUSING OFFICE

Bldg. 28, Room 34  
DSN: 314 538-8822  
COMM: +48 451-071-332  
Email: [usarmy.poznan.usareur.list.asg-p-housing-office@mail.mil](mailto:usarmy.poznan.usareur.list.asg-p-housing-office@mail.mil)

**There is no on-post housing. All personnel will live off post if they are on PCS orders.**

All service members must check in to the Housing Office within 48 hours of their arrival. The Housing Office is a one-stop shop for all personnel who will reside off base. Staff will assist newcomers in locating a residence off base by providing a variety of services.

- Providing a list of approved rental agents and managers.
- Assisting with translation between you and your landlord.
- Negotiating and finalizing your rental contract.
- Covering detailed housing market information.
- Leasing contract administrative services.
- Housing-showing service.

**Prepare to pay up to three months' rent upfront to cover first month's rent, realtor fee and security deposit.**

Ensure that you are financially prepared for this. If you foresee a monetary shortfall before arriving, you are authorized to request one month of advance Overseas Housing Allowance (OHA).

### TEMPORARY LODGING

Upon arrival, Temporary Lodging Allowance (TLA) is received for temporary lodging and meals. You may receive up to 30 days of incoming TLA, with an approved extension up to 60 days. TLA will be paid and processed in 10-day increments (processed by the Housing Office). The Housing Office is able to grant up to a maximum of 60 days of Temporary Quarters Subsistence Allowance (TQSA) for government civilians. For this reason, it is recommended that you ship your HHG early.

- Upon arrival, Temporary Quarter Subsistence Allowance (TQSA) is received for temporary lodging, meals, and laundry.  
**Note:** This entitlement is not automatic.

### OFF-POST HOUSING

Houses can range from fully furnished to unfurnished. Do not ship your U.S. washer, dryer, microwave, oven or refrigerator due to different voltage requirements. Poland uses a different voltage than the U.S.; be sure to look at your appliances to see if they are dual voltage or not. Poland is 220V and the U.S. is 110V. Purchase plug adapters and transformers in advance for electronics that are dual voltage. There are no loaner services available; however, a majority of the apartments are equipped with washing machines. Dryers are typically not available and storage space is limited. It is a common practice in Poland to have a heated drying rack.

Traditionally in Poland, a lease agreement would have collateral, which would be another owned property of the tenants or permanent quarters elsewhere. Landlords want the ability to remove someone for non-payment after three months. With this condition, called "okazjonalny" (meaning "occasional"), in the lease, it gives them that leverage. Ask the Housing Office to review your lease **before** signing. The contract should be in English if you do not know Polish.

- Private homes are assessed by the Housing Office or found by a realtor.
- You are responsible for rent and utilities.
- You will receive Overseas Housing Allowance (OHA) or Living Quarters Allowance (LQA).
- The Housing Office will provide you with the lease agreement based on what allowance you are authorized (LQA, OHA or per diem).

### ► House Hunting Online

Polish websites for house hunting:

- [www.otodom.pl](http://www.otodom.pl)
- [www.olx.pl](http://www.olx.pl)
- [gratka.pl](http://gratka.pl)
- [gratka.plsuper-apartments.pl](http://gratka.plsuper-apartments.pl)

### ► House Hunting in Person

Stop by the Housing Office to get an approved real estate agency listing. There will be more private rentals to select from by talking to the staff than online.

If you elect to use a real estate agent to locate housing, **you may not be reimbursed**. Civilian employees may have the opportunity to claim partial reimbursement. Please consult the Garrison Housing Office or your Civilian administrator before agreeing to utilize a real estate agent.

### VIEWING A HOME

- Go in person to the Housing Office to request a date and time to view a home.
- If utilizing the real estate agency, which is also available in the Housing Office, the agency will be the one to show you a home.
- Many apartments in Poland come fully furnished with a bed, refrigerator, washer (no dryer), dresser/closet and television.
- It is important that you **do not sign** any lease agreement until the Garrison Housing Office has reviewed it.

## RENT AND UTILITIES

The tenant pays the landlord/property management directly. This includes rent and utilities such as electricity and water.

- It is preferable to pay via a certified check or an electronic fund transfer using an IBAN.
- The first month's rent is due on the move-in date.
- Rent is due every month on the move-in date.
- Keep a record of all your rental and utility payments.
- The electric bill will be maintained under the landlord's name, so you pay it alongside your rent amount.

## TELEVISION AND STREAMING SERVICES

- **AMERICAN FORCES NETWORK (AFN)**  
Provides programming from current U.S. networks, movies, and sports programming via its streaming service at AFN Now. Download the App and sign up at [afn-now.myafn.mil](http://afn-now.myafn.mil).
- **STREAMING SERVICES**  
Show availability will be based on your location. Example providers include Amazon Prime, Netflix and Hulu.

## ALLOWANCES

Service members on PCS orders typically receive a monthly OHA.

- You must aggressively seek off-post housing while at TLA. You are required to view three listings within the first 15 days and then a minimum of five listings each additional week while on TLA.
- Your OHA rate is based on your rank and location. Visit [www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/oha.cfm](http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/oha.cfm) to get the current OHA amount.
- Another financial entitlement is Dislocation Allowance (DLA). DLA is used to offset or reimburse expenses due to a PCS. Talk to the Finance Office for more information.

## GOVERNMENT CIVILIAN PERSONNEL ON PCS/TCS ORDERS TYPICALLY RECEIVE A MONTHLY LQA

You should have received an LQA Determination of Eligibility from the Civilian Human Resources Agency. If not, please see your civilian administrator prior to locating temporary lodging. TQSA may be approved up to 60 days and submissions must be made every 30 days.

## MOVE-IN HOUSING ALLOWANCE (MIHA)

MIHA is a one-time allowance to cover the move-in costs associated with moving into a new place at the start of a PCS.

- Use [www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/oha.cfm](http://www.defensetravel.dod.mil/site/oha.cfm) to get the current MIHA amount.
- Check with the Housing Office for any other allowances you may be entitled to.
- Military and civilian personnel on long-term TDY orders receive per diem.
- Personnel should consult with their Organizational Defense Travel Official to determine if "Rental/Contract" housing is authorized. If authorized, please visit the Housing Office to determine your options.

## HOUSEHOLD GOODS

Contact your local transportation office when you have your orders to schedule your three authorized shipments (total weight cannot exceed 18,000 lbs.). Ship light as many of the apartments or homes are fully or partially furnished.

Three shipments:

- Unaccompanied Baggage (UB) up to 350 lbs.
- Household goods (HHG) being shipped to Poland.
- Non-Temporary Storage (NTS). Since NTS is authorized for this location, you may want to leave some of your larger furniture and appliances in storage for the duration of your overseas tour.

Once your household goods arrive, make sure every box that was shipped has arrived. Mark each item off your inventory list as everything is being unloaded.

## INSPECT YOUR HOME

In order to avoid liability for damages to your home or property caused by the movers, take note of the damages on your household goods paperwork. Note everything that isn't right such as missing boxes or damaged goods. Be sure to make copies of all the paperwork and take pictures of any damages.

## FILING A CLAIM

You have 75 days to submit a notice of loss or damage report in the Defense Personal Property System from the scheduled delivery date. From that point, you will have nine months to submit your claim in order to be eligible for a full replacement value.

- Be sure to have photos and receipt purchases of your damaged goods.
- Keep any paperwork until all claims are processed.

## APPLIANCE TIPS

- You will need a power converter/transformer to use your American electronics (110-v plug) in your Polish home.
- Transformers are to be negotiated with the landlord.
- Check with your landlord for specifications on appliance size. ■

# HEALTHCARE IN POLAND



## CAMP KOŚCIUSZKO TROOP MEDICAL CLINIC

Camp Kościuszko, Poznań, Bldg. 1  
DSN: 314-538-8731  
Comm: +49 152-3463-2277

### 24-HOUR NURSE ADVICE LINE

- Call: 00-800-4759-2300
- [www.mhsnurseadvice.com/home](http://www.mhsnurseadvice.com/home)

There are no emergency care services on post.

Emergency off post: **Dial 112**  
ZW Polish Military Police: **+48 724-940-311**

## POLISH HEALTHCARE FACILITIES

For services other than active-duty primary care, patients are referred to a host-nation medical facility.

Polish facilities offer the highest quality medical care. Although there are a few differences in cultural and medical practices, Troop Medical Clinic staff work in collaboration with Polish medical partners, ensuring a positive outcome and experience for all patients. Linguists are available to accompany you to your off-post medical appointments.

The MyCare Overseas™ Beneficiary App is a tool for TRICARE users while stationed or traveling overseas. It gives you access to provider lists, referrals, claims portal, emergency contact information and translations assistance. [www.tricare-overseas.com/beneficiary-app](http://www.tricare-overseas.com/beneficiary-app)

## DENTAL CARE

Soldiers should contact the Troop Medical Clinic for guidance regarding dental care. Phone: +49 152-3463-2277

Civilian employees with dental insurance should contact their carrier for information about using their benefits overseas. Carrier will provide a list of participating dentists and explain the process to gain access to care.

## MENTAL HEALTH

All installations across USAG Poland have dedicated space for counseling and support.

### CHAPLAIN

Chaplains offer counseling for all personnel regardless of religious preference. Discussions with chaplains are 100 percent confidential. In addition, the chapel offers retreats and classes in life skills, marriage and family topics and personal resiliency.

### MILITARY & FAMILY LIFE COUNSELOR (MFLC)

MFLCs provide free non-medical sessions with child behavioral specialists, are anonymous and may occur in individual, couple, family or group settings.

Call the MFLC in your region:

- Bemowo Piskie Training Area (BPTA):  
+1 314-303-6295
- Drawsko Combat Training Center (DCTC):  
+1 314-708-7646
- Nowa Dęba: +1 314-964-6544
- Jasionka: +1 314-791-5733
- Powidz: +1 804-720-9823
- Poznań, Bierdrusko: +1 757-525-5190 /  
+1 518-976-037
- Skwierzyna: +1 347-677-2756
- Toruń: +1 252-675-3899
- Trzebień, Bolesławiec: 575-285-3008
- Żagań, Karliki, Świętoszów:  
+1 469-744-7487 / +1 525-245-248

### MILITARY ONESOURCE

Military OneSource provides free and confidential non-medical counseling over the phone, secure video or online chat.

- [www.militaryonesource.mil](http://www.militaryonesource.mil)

### BEHAVIORAL HEALTH OFFICE

The behavioral health office is available for active-duty service members and offers mental health assistance and programs.

- Camp Kościuszko: + 49 152-3463-2277

### WOUNDED WARRIOR PROJECT (WWP)

WWP offers a range of free mental health programs for active-duty service members, Post-9/11 veterans, and their families.

- [www.woundedwarriorproject.org](http://www.woundedwarriorproject.org)

### MILITARY CRISIS LINE (MCL)

Available 24/7 for free confidential mental health support.

- Call: 844-702-5495
- DSN: 988
- Text: 838255
- Online chat: [www.veteranscrisisline.net](http://www.veteranscrisisline.net) ■



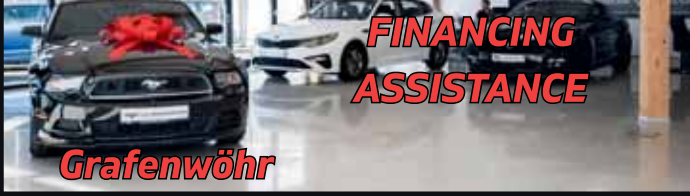
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# SUPPORT ORGANIZATIONS

## MWR

Visit [poland.armymwr.com](http://poland.armymwr.com) for details on gyms, recreational facilities and special events at your installation.

### Army Community Service

From family readiness to financial health—and much more—Army Community Service (ACS) delivers programs tailored to your needs. They help maintain community readiness and resiliency through a wide range of educational opportunities, special events, individualized counseling services and other offerings. For the Financial Readiness Program and Relocation Readiness Program, please email [usarmy.poznan.id-europe.mbx.fmwr-army-community-service@army.mil](mailto:usarmy.poznan.id-europe.mbx.fmwr-army-community-service@army.mil).

### Fitness Facilities

There are fitness facilities available at all USAG Poland installations.

### Library

You can access thousands of e-books and audiobooks via the Libby App. In addition, the library offers access to online video streaming, fitness classes and foreign language lessons.



Here is a step-by-step guide to accessing the Libby app with a DOW ID.

### Outdoor Recreation (ODR)

Camp Kościuszko | Bldg. 28  
ODR offers trips and tours around Poland and Europe, starting from a variety of installations.

### Recreation Centers

MWR recreation centers are the hub for relaxation, entertainment and community engagement. Designed to support soldier morale and readiness, the centers offer a variety of programs, activities and services tailored to enhance your quality of life. Whether to unwind after duty, connect with friends, or explore new hobbies, there is something for everyone. From gaming and movie nights to workshops and special events, the Rec Center is here to help you make the most of your free time.

## RED CROSS

The Red Cross offers well-being services for all members of the military community. They support deployments, offer training resiliency courses and workshops, and a variety of special events throughout the year. In addition, the Drop Zone pantry has free snacks and hygiene items that have been donated to the Red Cross.

The Red Cross offers assistance handling emergency situations with family back in the U.S. and emergency communication with service members in Poland. It is available 24/7 with details at [redcross.org/HerocareNetwork](http://redcross.org/HerocareNetwork).

- Camp Kościuszko  
Bldg. 3, Rooms 3-5  
DSN: 314-538-2911  
Facebook: American Red Cross FOS Poznań-Camp Kościuszko

## USO

The United Services Organization (USO) offers family programs, seasonal and weekly events, local area information and much more. There is often a snack bar, computers, DSN access, printers, Wi-Fi, gaming and a place to relax.

- USO Powidz | Witkowska 8, 62-430 Powidz  
[poland.uso.org/usopowidz](http://poland.uso.org/usopowidz)
- USO Drawsko Pomorskie | LSA Konotop, 78-500 Drawsko Pomorskie  
[poland.uso.org/dpta](http://poland.uso.org/dpta)
- USO Żagań | Forward Operating Site (FOS) Sweitoszow, Koszarowa 7, 59-726 Świątoszów | Supports multiples FOS locations including Żagań, Karliki, Sweitoszow, Bolesławiec and Trzebień  
[poland.uso.org/zagan](http://poland.uso.org/zagan)
- USO Bemowo Piskie | Ul. Kętrzyńskiego, 12-230 Bemowo Piskie | Also supports service members in Lithuania, Estonia and Latvia | [poland.uso.org/bpta](http://poland.uso.org/bpta)

## SHARP

### Sexual Harassment / Assault Response and Prevention

#### Camp Kościuszko

V Corps SHARP Representatives  
Bldg. 1, second floor, first door on the right.

- Operation Atlantic Resolve SHARP Hotline: +49-162-133-0182 or DSN 314-538-8725
- V CORPS Ft Knox SHARP Hotline: DSN: 502-851-3779

### U.S. Army Europe and Africa 24/7 Sexual Assault Hotlines:

- DSN: 314-53-SHARP (537-4277)
- +49 (0)611-143-53-SHARP (537-4277)
- SHARP hotline (Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia): DSN: 314-569-4567
- +49 (0)9641-70-569-4567

**DOD Safe Helpline:** 1-877-995-5247  
[safehelpline.org](http://safehelpline.org)

**Chapel:** A Chaplain can provide confidentiality but cannot take a report and will not notify command.

## VOTING OVERSEAS

Register to vote at [FVAP.gov](http://FVAP.gov). At the website, you can select your state of residency and request an absentee ballot.

## U.S. EMBASSY

The U.S. Embassy provides emergency assistance, visa and passport services and travel advisories. As part of the Department of State's representation of American interests in Poland, resources regarding business, education and culture are also part of their mission. Visit [pl.usembassy.gov](http://pl.usembassy.gov) for more information.

- After-hours emergency services for U.S. citizens: Tel: +48 22 504 2000

### U.S. Embassy Warsaw

Aleje Ujazdowskie 29/31  
00-540 Warsaw  
Tel.: +48 22 504 2000  
[pl.usembassy.gov/embassy-warsaw](http://pl.usembassy.gov/embassy-warsaw)

### U.S. Consulate General Krakow

ul. Stolarska 9  
31-043 Kraków  
Tel.: +48 12 424 5100  
[pl.usembassy.gov/u-s-consulate-general-krakow](http://pl.usembassy.gov/u-s-consulate-general-krakow)

### Consular Agency Poznań

Camp Kościuszko  
Tel: +48 61 851 8516  
[pl.usembassy.gov/consular-agency-in-poznan](http://pl.usembassy.gov/consular-agency-in-poznan) ■

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- Veteran Topics
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# MAJOR POLISH HOLIDAYS

Expect closures on national holidays and be sure to grab your groceries as well as other wants and needs the day prior.

## JAN. 1: NEW YEAR'S DAY

In Poland, many believe that this first day of the year is a reflection of what the rest of the year will be like; that is why you don't want to work on this day.

## JAN. 6: EPIPHANY

Also known as "Three Kings' Day," this holiday celebrates the three wise men who traveled to meet Jesus at his time of birth. Today, Three Kings processions occur throughout Poland. After the procession, many Polish families will mark their doorways with C+M+B and the current year with blessed chalk, symbolizing protection and blessings for the household.



## FEB. 4, 2027: TŁUSTY CZWARTEK (FAT THURSDAY)

A day all about sugary indulgence, this annual holiday gives you one last chance to spoil yourself before the restrictions of Lent. Begin by eating Polish deep-fried donuts: *pączki*.

## MARCH 28–29, 2027: EASTER HOLIDAYS

People prepare baskets with bread, sausage, sweets, eggs and butter in the shape of a lamb. On Easter Sunday, they bring these baskets to church to be blessed before eating the contents at family breakfast. Easter is also celebrated with egg decorating and trimming the home with various flowers, branches and holiday-themed items. On Easter Monday, Polish people celebrate Śmigus Dyngus, where men and boys pour water on local women; legend has it that a good soaking means a better chance of finding a husband. Women can retaliate the next day.



## MAY 1: LABOR DAY

Dating back to the labor union movements, this holiday celebrates the achievements of workers with a day off.

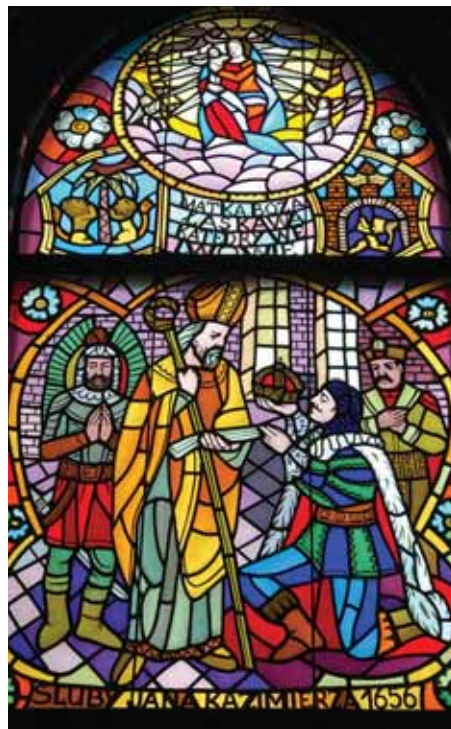


## MAY 3: CONSTITUTION DAY

Known as Święto Trzeciego Maja in Polish, this day celebrates the signing of Europe's first modern constitution.

## MAY 16, 2027: WHITSUN / PENTECOST

Commemorating the descent of the Holy Spirit upon followers of Jesus Christ, this holiday occurs seven Sundays after Easter. Religious Polish people celebrate by attending special masses. Some regions have folk customs such as processions, singing, festivals, concerts and dancing.



## MAY 27, 2027: CORPUS CHRISTI

Celebrated 60 days after Easter, this holy day called Boże Ciało in Polish, commemorates the Catholic practice of bread and wine becoming the body and blood of Christ. Processions occur in cities throughout Poland.

### AUG. 15: ASSUMPTION DAY AND POLISH ARMED FORCES DAY

This is both a religious and public holiday. Assumption Day commemorates the movement of Mary, mother of Jesus, body and soul into heaven. Polish Armed Forces Day commemorates the 1920 Battle of Warsaw. In Warsaw, there is a large military parade annually.



### NOV. 11: POLISH INDEPENDENCE DAY

Flag displays, wreath ceremonies and local parades occur in towns throughout Poland, though Poznań observes differently; see below. The main celebrations take place in Warsaw with patriotic ceremonies, the massive Independence March and a street festival.

### NOV. 11: ST. MARTIN'S DAY

Poznań, unfortunately, was left as a German territory while Poland was granted independence on Nov. 11, 1918. Therefore, they focus on St. Martin's Day with a special festival town, musical performances, a parade and appearances from the saint. In Poznań, St. Martin even has a croissant named after him, *rogal świętomarciński*.



### DEC. 27: THE NATIONAL DAY OF THE GREAT POLAND UPRISING

After being denied independence, Poznań knew they must take it by force, so an uprising began on Dec. 27, 1918, ultimately ending in victory. This day is celebrated in Poznań with speeches, musical performances, laying of wreaths and more.

### DEC. 31: SYLWESTER (NEW YEAR'S EVE)

Historically, this day honors St. Sylvester. In modern times, while the saint is still recognized, the new year is celebrated with fireworks, drinking, night markets and sweets. Several cities will also host a formal ball known as bal sylwestrowy. ■



### NOV. 1: ALL SAINTS' DAY

This is a day of remembrance; Polish people travel to their hometowns and visit the cemeteries of their relatives. They bring decorative votive candles called *znicze* and millions of them light up cemeteries across Poland for a week. Expect heavy road traffic as people travel to and from their hometowns.



### DEC. 24-26: CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS

These holidays officially begin with Wigilia, a Polish tradition that starts when the first star is spotted in the sky on Christmas Eve. Wigilia involves a deep cleaning of the house followed by a family dinner featuring 12 dishes which represent the 12 apostles.

Check out the holidays, festivals, and concerts coming to Poland.



# Discover POLISH FOOD

From well-known pierogis and kielbasa to traditional soups and bread, Polish cuisine is full of hearty comfort food. Here are some traditional Polish dishes to try.



## BREAKFAST

**Kasza Manna** | This simple porridge is a staple in Polish kids' (and busy adults') diets. Its base consists of only three ingredients: Semolina, milk and sugar, plus any toppings you prefer such as jam, nuts or honey.

**Racuchy z Jabłkami** | Simple pancakes with apples; thinly sliced or grated apples are added to pancake batter and fried.

**Kielbasa Breakfast Skillet** | This savory breakfast is made from sliced Polish sausage and potato pancakes as a base with other skillet ingredients such as eggs, vegetables and cheese added.

## LUNCH

**Żurek** | This sour rye soup dish has been served in a bread bowl since its inception. Known as a hangover solution, it consists of fermented rye, egg and sausage.

**Zapiekanki** | These open-faced baguette sandwiches are made with a combination of meats, mushrooms, peppers, cheese and topped with ketchup.

**Rosół** | This hearty soup is a great way to use leftovers with onion, celery, chicken, parsley and leeks.

## SNACK

**Oscypek** | You can only find this cheese in Poland and is uniquely created from smoking sheep's milk, then shaping it into ovals or barrels.

**Powidło** | This Polish plum butter has a tasty kick with spices and no added sugar, and is great on Polish rye bread.

**Naleśniki** | Polish crêpes can be sweet or savory and stuffed with meats, cheeses, vegetables, jams or chocolate.

## DINNER MAIN COURSES

**Gołąbki** | This traditional pork, rice and onion-stuffed cabbage is topped with tomato purée, and makes a great main dish or appetizer.

**Kotlet Schabowy** | A fried and breaded pork cutlet, this is a Polish take on German schnitzel.

**Ryba Po Grecku** | This fish dish is made from tilapia, perch or pike and smothered in a vegetable and tomato sauce.

**Kielbasa** | A Polish sausage can be made with whatever meat is at hand. It goes great with potatoes, pasta or rice.

## SIDE DISHES

**Kluski Śląskie** | These dumplings hail from Poland's southwest region of Silesia and incorporate potatoes and bacon.

**Mizeria** | This cucumber salad is similar to tzatziki in taste with vinegar, sour cream, dill and seasonings that go great with a meat and potato dish.

**Pierogi** | These dumplings are the most popular Polish dish. Stuffed with savory fillings such as cheese, meats or vegetables, there is a pierogi recipe for everyone.

## DESSERT

**Pączki** | Polish donuts are made from a sweet fried dough and filled with jam, cream, chocolate or lemon curd.

**Sernik** | Using Polish twaróg cheese, this cheesecake is delicious topped with fruits or chocolate.

**Pierniki** | These gingerbread treats are both a dessert and a souvenir from the city of Toruń. Found mostly at Christmas, they are available in cookie or cake form.

## POLISH WORDS FOR RESTAURANTS

- **Kawiarnia:** Coffee shop
- **Pijalnia:** Drinking room for specialty beverages such as mineral water (Wód Mineraln), vodka (Wodki), beer (Piwa) and wine (wino).
- **Restauracja:** Restaurant
- **Gospoda:** Traditional tavern or pub serving alcohol and food. ■

# Navigating POLISH GROCERY STORES

By Kimberly Kephart

I am going to be honest with you, my first trip to a Polish grocery store was a bit intimidating. Fresh off the airplane, I went into a local Carrefour in Bydgoszcz. Everything was in Polish! Not only that, but the lady at the checkout was speaking Polish so fast that I froze. Tears were shed. Lucky for you, reader, I have a short and simple guide to help you at the grocery store.

You can pay in cash *złoty*, the currency of Poland, but cashiers may ask for exact change, or *groszy*, especially small shops. Luckily, contactless debit and credit cards work almost everywhere.

Also, bring your own bag to the grocery store. You'll hear the cashier say "*masz torbę?*" which means: Do you have a bag?

## Vegetables and Fruits

Polish vegetables are called *warzywa* and fruits are *owoce*. What I love about Poland is the abundance of fresh in-season vegetables and fruits. You'll often find loose items, not prepackaged items. This is, of course, a nod to sustainability. You'll find young cabbage, beets, an abundance of mushrooms and rhubarb. You'll find a plethora of potatoes as well. When spring rolls around, you can get fresh cherries at inexpensive prices. As with many European markets, remember to weigh your items and put a sticker on them. Scales are readily available for you to use.

## Flour

Poland has a plethora of flour types suited for different needs. Flour is called *mąka*.

- Tortowa (type 450): A cake flour recommended for sponge cakes.
- Universal (type 480): A soft, refined white flour used for general baking, closest in mineral and gluten content to an American all-purpose flour.
- Stronger White (type 550): Recommended for coffee cakes, fruit breads and muffins.
- Spelt (630): Whole grain flour that is high in protein with a nutty and slightly sweet flavor.
- Rye (type 720): Used in making traditional Polish rye bread.
- Bread (type 750): Used for making crusty bread loaves.
- Ancient Grain (Einkorn): Lower in gluten and higher in protein than modern wheat.



## Beverages

Poland is known for its vodka and often has a whole aisle devoted to different types. You can't go wrong with Zumbrowka. Beer is also popular in Poland with brands like Żywiec, Okocim, Tyskie and Żubr. There is a great craft beer scene in Poland, and you'll find a lot of it on the shelves in the grocery store.

What I love about Poland is the abundance of sparkling water, which is called *gazowana*. You can find light (*lekko*) and strong (*mocny*) varieties as well. Looking for still water? It's simply called *niegazowana*.

When you are shopping in Poland, you'll notice that Poles tear open beverage packs and take individual bottles. You can do the same; there is no need to buy an entire package.

## Foreign Imports

Of course, you might be looking for comfort foods. Maybe you want some peanut butter or are craving tacos. Large stores will often have specialty aisles, and some cities have stores devoted to foreign imports. My best advice is to peruse your nearest grocer and get familiar with the layout. Stores like Lidl will have "America Week" where you'll find a European take on American products. ■

# FAMILIES

## in Focus



There is not a large military community of families or on-base services for dependents at installations in Poland. This means that an assignment to Poland can be a great way to fully immerse your family into European life. It can also mean significant challenges.

Currently, only dependents aged 18 and over are permitted on command-sponsored orders to select USAG Poland locations. This includes both spouses and adult children.

### SPOUSES

If a spouse chooses to join their military sponsor in Poland, they should be aware that finding local employment will be difficult. Remote work from a U.S. employer, however, is a viable option.

Spouses may decide to immerse themselves in local Polish life, volunteer, pursue online educational advancement or travel. If you are interested in writing for Stripes Europe

about your experiences in Poland, visit [europe.stripes.com/lifestyle/submissions](https://europe.stripes.com/lifestyle/submissions) for details on how to become a contributing writer.

### KIDS IN POZNAŃ

There are not any on-installation facilities for children in Poland, and children under 18 years of age are not currently supported with command sponsorship. If you choose to bring your kids to Poland for a visit, they will have an opportunity to experience a new culture.

Great places to take the kids in Poznań:

#### Lake Malta

There are many fun options in the park around this lake that lies just east of downtown, a quick and fun tram ride away. There are trails and playgrounds in **Millenium Park** on the north side of the lake. Just beyond that is the **Termy Maltańskie pool complex** with indoor and outdoor swimming, slides and a spa. The city's modern **New Zoo** is on the far east side of the lake, and in summer, a small **historic train** can take you the length of the lake to reach the zoo. South of the lake are seasonal **paid attractions** like a ropes course, alpine slide, inflatable playground, mini golf and one-slope ski hill.

#### Historyland

This museum presents the history of the area with impressive interactive LEGO® exhibits, perfect for brick-loving fans of all ages.

#### Croissant Museum

More of a comedy show blended with a culinary workshop, families can learn about local Poznań culture, how to make croissants, and, of course, have a taste of this local specialty. Get tickets for the daily 2 p.m. English-speaking show.

#### Stare (Old) Zoo

This free zoo is the oldest in Poland and walking distance from both Camp Kościuszko and the popular hotels at the edge of downtown Poznań. It offers a look at a few interesting

animals in an aged city park. Some indoor exhibits and a kid's ropes course charge a small fee.

### PETS IN POLAND

Pets younger than three months are not allowed to enter Poland. Visit the USDA website for all details, [www.aphis.usda.gov/pet-travel](https://www.aphis.usda.gov/pet-travel). Before you ship or travel with your pet to Poland, you must obtain:

- An ISO-compliant microchip
- A rabies vaccination taken after the microchip implant and at least 21 days before arrival in Poland.
- An EU Health Certificate, which cannot be older than 10 days before arriving in Europe. Military vets are usually familiar with this certificate, but civilian vets may need several weeks to order the certificate from the Department of Agriculture.

Once you arrive, it is important to find a local Polish veterinarian and acquire an EU pet passport. There is no vet available on USAG Poland installations.

#### Vaccinations

Poland accepts 1-, 2- and 3-year vaccines. The following vaccines must be kept current.

#### Dogs

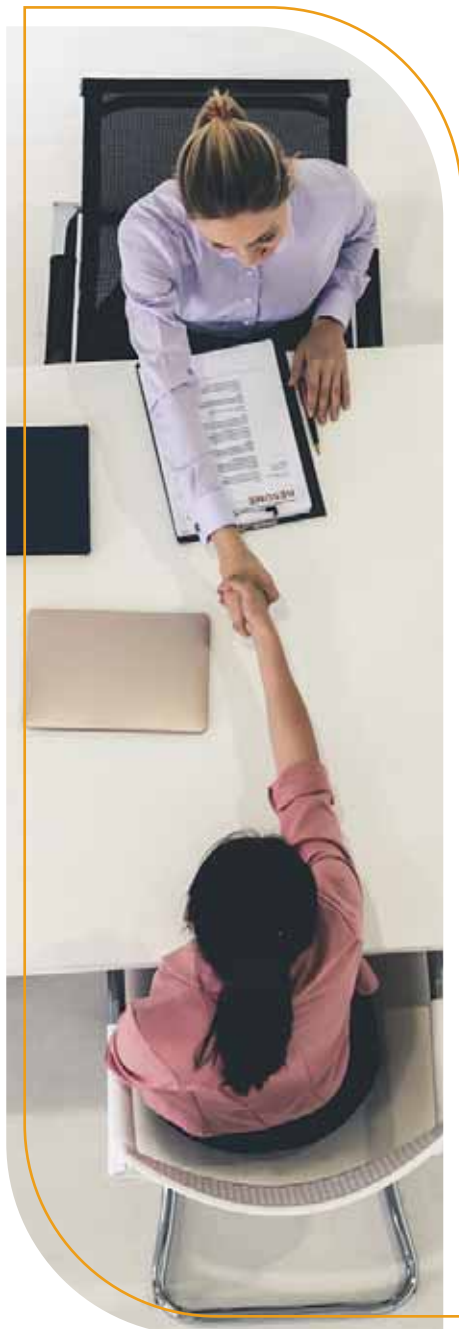
- Rabies vaccination
- Distemper combo vaccination (DA2PP)
- Leptospirosis vaccination in the pet's life time. Two doses, a primary and a booster.

#### Cats

- Rabies vaccination
- Feline distemper (FVRCP) vaccine

During the summer months, be sure to keep your pet hydrated and possibly provide booties to protect their paws on the hot urban ground. For airline travel, note that most airlines will not ship pets during the summer months. ■

# PERSONAL ENRICHMENT



Service members and civilian personnel can find many opportunities to gain a new perspective, leadership skills, emotional intelligence and mentorship inside of and beyond their units.

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

### Camp Kościuszko V Corps Retention Forward Career Counselors

Bldg. 1. Room 123-124

For more Army retention and career opportunities information, install the Go Reup mobile app on the Google Play or the App Store.

### Army Personnel Testing Center

USAG Poland has opened a Testing Center at Camp Kościuszko to help soldiers achieve their career goals without needing to travel to Germany. For more information, email [usarmy.poznan.id-europe.mbx.aces@army.mil](mailto:usarmy.poznan.id-europe.mbx.aces@army.mil).

- Some of the tests offered
  - Defense Language Aptitude Battery (DLAB)
  - Defense Language Proficiency Test (DLPT)
  - Armed Forces Classification Test (AFCT)
  - English Language Comprehension Exam
  - Oral Proficiency Interview
  - Selection Instrument for Flight Training
  - Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB)

## VOLUNTEERING

Volunteering is a wonderful way to get involved in your community. Volunteering can help you gain experience and network in the military world, but also in your host nation.

- Find volunteer positions on your installation by visiting the Army Community Services website. Search for positions in the Volunteer Management Information System (VMIS). [vmis.armyfamilywebportal.com](http://vmis.armyfamilywebportal.com)
- Do you enjoy writing or photography? Learn how to contribute for Stars & Stripes Europe at [StripesEurope.com/lifestyle/submissions](http://StripesEurope.com/lifestyle/submissions).

## EDUCATION

Taking the time to advance your education can help you excel in the future. Educational opportunities come with a variety of programs at online universities partnered with the DOW. Learn more about your educational options with the Education Counselor at Camp Kościuszko.

### Education Counselor

Camp Kościuszko

Bldg. 28, Room 26

DSN: 314-652-0010 ■

# Building POLAND'S PAST at HISTORY LAND

By Tamala Malerk

Fire-breathing dragons, massive naval battles and an actual bear with a designated military rank all await you at Historyland, where giant, sometimes room-sized, interactive LEGO® installations tell the history of Poland. Here, an afternoon of fun is just a 20-minute walk, or a six-minute tram ride, from Camp Kościuszko in Poznań.

A LEGO® figure of a knight, about the size of a child, stands guard at the entrance door to Historyland. Upon entry, purchase your tickets, hang up your bag and jackets, and the attendant will demonstrate how to use the audio guide for the 10 exhibits. The audio guide is essential and is available in multiple languages, including English.



The exhibition allows you to travel through time. At the beginning of each exhibit, you will find a stand featuring information about how many LEGO® bricks it took to make the model, how long it took, and fun facts about the model and the event it is displaying.

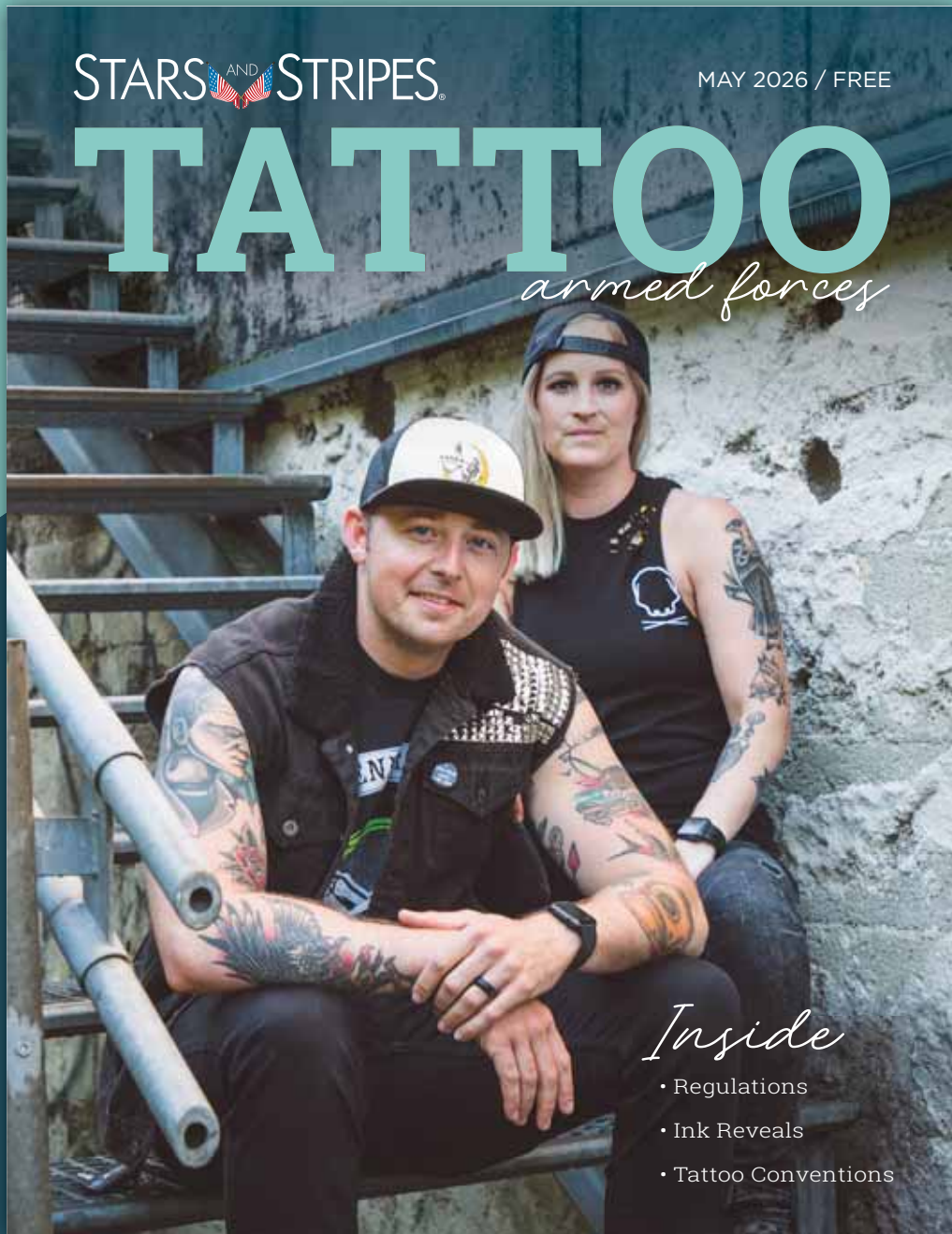
The tour begins with the settlement of Biskupin. Colloquially known as “The Polish Pompeii,” the remains of the 2,700-year-old Biskupin settlement in northern Poland hid underground until its discovery by a schoolteacher in the 1930s. This first exhibit is low-tech enough to help you get used to using the audio guide so you can follow along with the upcoming displays, which feature a variety of interactive technologies including spotlights, short films, virtual reality and motion-detection.

Once you get your bearings, maneuver through the various rooms featuring famous battles and events throughout Poland’s history. The Battle of Grunwald takes up two halves of an enormous room, allowing you to walk between opposing sides while listening to the tale of the battle. Further exhibits give you even more immersive experiences. Put on a pair of VR goggles and soar above the monastery at Jasna Góra. Stand on an interactive cockpit and use motion detection to learn about the defense of Westerplatte. At the Wawel Cathedral, learn how an enormous fire-breathing dragon was defeated.

After your adventure through Poland’s history, return your audio guide in the gift shop where there is also a series of free LEGO® displays. This means you can come back to shop for LEGO® kits and check out the models on display whenever you want.

Historyland is for people of all ages. I enjoyed going by myself as a fully-grown adult, and families will have a blast, especially in the dedicated kids play room. You can get tickets onsite; however, this place gets busy during popular tourist times, so I recommend buying tickets online in advance at [www.historyland.pl](http://www.historyland.pl). ■



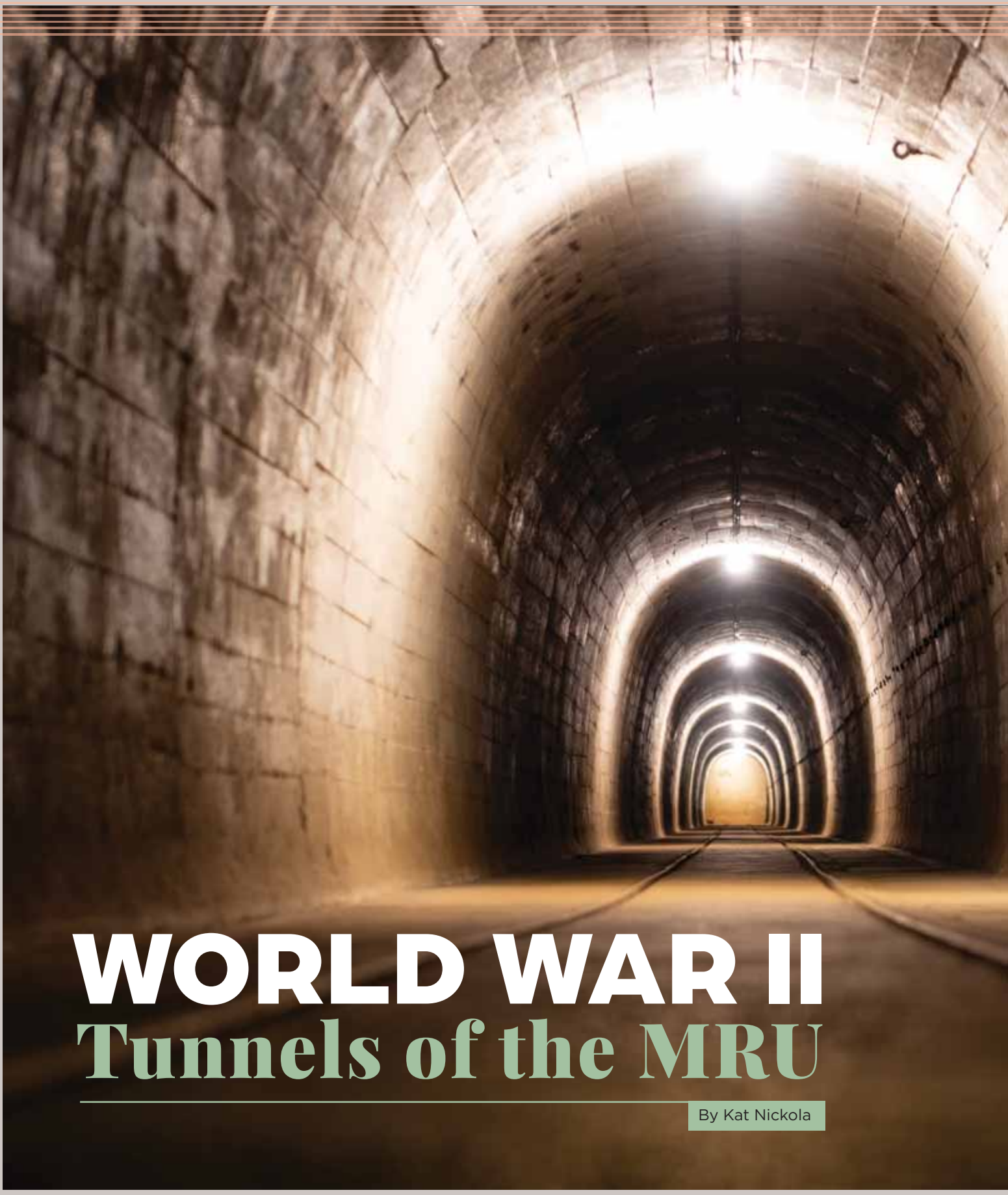


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A photograph of a long, arched stone tunnel. The walls are made of rough-hewn stone blocks. A series of bright lights are mounted along the top of the tunnel, creating a strong perspective effect as they recede into the distance. The floor is dark and appears to be made of dirt or gravel.

# **WORLD WAR II** **Tunnels of the MRU**

By Kat Nickola



After World War I, the Treaty of Versailles explicitly prevented Germany from building fortifications along their borders. But plans to secretly secure the eastern border with Poland were being hatched as early as 1927, and with Hitler's rise to power as Chancellor in 1933, development took off. The "Ostwall," or eastern wall, was established as a series of waterway barriers. However, a strip of land between the Oder and Warta rivers was a gateway that needed extra defense. This Festung im Oder-Warthe-Bogen, or fortified Oder-Warthe arch, between the rivers was built piecemeal beginning in 1934.



The secret construction project was 80km long and appeared to be unrelated structures and anti-tank barriers. The true secret though, was below ground where over 35 kilometers of tunnels connected the buildings in the central section. There were workshops, storage spaces, social areas and barracks large enough to house 24,000 soldiers. Train tracks and stations were built in the underground space and a primary road connected it all together.

At the start of World War II, efforts were needed elsewhere, so the project was halted with much of the aboveground work left unfinished. The front didn't see much action during the war and facilities were used as a Daimler aircraft engine factory. Finally, in January of 1945, the small crew stationed there was overrun by Russian forces.

The central section was centered around the town of Międzyrzecz and is now called the Międzyrzeczki Fortified Region or MRU. Aboveground bunkers are still visible in the fields and forests southwest of Międzyrzecz.

There are also two access areas open to the public with guided tours on the underground portions. It is a 10-minute drive between them.

- The **MRU Museum and Fortifications** has year-round underground tours that range in length and adventure. [www.bunkry.pl](http://www.bunkry.pl)
- The **Boryszyńska Loop** offers various walking or biking tours of the underground spaces from April to October. [www.bunkry24.pl](http://www.bunkry24.pl)

The MRU tunnels were highly suspected of being the hiding place for Nazi treasures and stolen artworks, however, as of now, none have been found. The tunnels were abandoned after the war and most ground-level buildings were destroyed or looted. As a result, the MRU is now the largest bat refuge in Europe with thousands of nocturnal residents from 12 different species. ■

# Skiing in Szczzyrk

Story and Photos by Kat Nickola





**S**kiing down from the Skrzyczne peak, I looked around and got that funny feeling of being the odd one out. Not as an American at a Polish ski resort. And not for having fairly mediocre skills. Instead, I realized that I was surrounded by snowboarders! As far as I could tell, mine were the only two skis on the #21 slope at the time. It was a fleeting moment, but I did notice a way higher ratio of skiers to boarders than at a typical resort, which, as a newbie boarder made me smile.

Whether you snowboard or ski, the Szczyrk Mountain Resort in the Silesian Beskids mountains is the best in Poland. As the largest downhill resort in the country, it has just over 36km of slopes. This isn't a huge place, but big enough for a great weekend trip. In the summertime, the resort converts into a bike park and hiking destination, shuttling mountain bikes and families (including dogs) uphill on the gondolas.

With three starting points along the valley and a free ski shuttle, it isn't difficult to find a place to stay near to the slopes. Note that if you buy the discounted GoPass online at the Szczyrk resort website, you can only pick up your tickets at the central Szczyrk gondola. This can be done ahead of the day your lift pass activates. You can also buy tickets for the entire resort at the other two valley gondolas, but only in person at the ticket counter and without the GoPass discount.

My friend and I stayed at a family-run hotel near the Skrzyczne gondola, after arriving during a snowstorm the night prior. On ski day, I had no set plan other than to figure out how to get on the slopes. It was shockingly fast and easy. I simply walked across the street to the nearest ski rental hut and sauntered out 10 minutes later with my boots and helmet on, skis and poles in hand. I left my shoes at the shop. Right around the corner I bought my electronic ticket card at the window, stuffed it in my pocket and walked through the turnstile onto the gondola. At the top, I clamped down my boots, clipped in and was on my first run within 30 minutes of breakfast.

The slopes were nice, and varied from long trails to short, steep sections. In early January, the snow was still a bit fresh with a few patchy spots; I ended up on a closed trail at one point, but it was simply ung-

roomed. The day was crispy and sunny, and bitter cold in the morning. I'm glad I brought my heavier layers and bright goggles.

At noon, I stopped at one of the four mountain restaurants for a tasty stew and French fry dish with a beer. I selected it based on the convenient photos, since very little English was spoken, but employees were all so nice and happy to work with me to figure things out.

I explored the entire resort in a single day, with few lift lines and plenty of downhill time. At the end of the day, I slid right to the front door of the rental shop, dropped off my kit and put on my shoes to walk back across the street for a nice hot tub soak at the hotel.

Szczyrk is easily accessible via a comfortable five-hour intercity train from Poznań to Bielsko-Biała, where you can arrange a rental car, taxi or take bus 120 for the half-hour ride to Szczyrk. Without traffic, driving from Poznań or Powidz takes roughly six hours, and from Żagań it is about five hours. ■

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