

# Poland

## Geography

Location: Central Europe, east of Germany

Area:

total area: 312,680 sq km

land area: 304,510 sq km

Land boundaries: total 3,114 km, Belarus 605 km, Czech Republic 658 km, Germany 456 km, Lithuania 91 km, Russia (Kaliningrad Oblast) 432 km, Slovakia 444 km, Ukraine 428 km

Coastline: 491 km

Maritime claims:

exclusive economic zone: defined by international treaties

territorial sea: 12 nm

Climate: temperate with cold, cloudy, moderately severe winters with frequent precipitation; mild summers with frequent showers and thundershowers

Terrain: mostly flat plain; mountains along southern border

Natural resources: coal, sulfur, copper, natural gas, silver, lead, salt

Land use:

arable land: 46%

permanent crops: 1%

meadows and pastures: 13%

forest and woodland: 28%

other: 12%

Irrigated land: 1,000 sq km (1989 est.)

Environment:

current issues: forest damage due to air pollution and resulting acid rain; improper means for disposal of large amounts of hazardous and industrial waste; severe water pollution from industrial and municipal sources; severe air pollution results from emissions of sulfur dioxide from coal-fired power plants, which also drifts into Germany and the Netherlands

Note: historically, an area of conflict because of flat terrain and the lack of natural barriers on the North European Plain

## People

Population: 38,792,442 (July 1995 est.)

Age structure:

0-14 years: 23% (female 4,349,467; male 4,559,536)

15-64 years: 66% (female 12,849,300; male 12,698,179)

65 years and over: 11% (female 2,693,407; male 1,642,553) (July 1995 est.)

Population growth rate: 0.36% (1995 est.)

Birth rate: 13.34 births/1,000 population (1995 est.)

Death rate: 9.23 deaths/1,000 population (1995 est.)

Net migration rate: -0.52 migrant(s)/1,000 population (1995 est.)

Infant mortality rate: 12.4 deaths/1,000 live births (1995 est.)

Life expectancy at birth:  
total population: 73.13 years  
male: 69.15 years  
female: 77.33 years (1995 est.)

Total fertility rate: 1.92 children born/woman (1995 est.)

Nationality:  
noun: Pole(s)  
adjective: Polish

Ethnic divisions: Polish 97.6%, German 1.3%, Ukrainian 0.6%,  
Byelorussian 0.5% (1990 est.)

Religions: Roman Catholic 95% (about 75% practicing), Eastern  
Orthodox, Protestant, and other 5%

Languages: Polish

Literacy:  
total population: 99%  
male: 99%

female: 98%

## Government

Names:

conventional long form: Republic of Poland

conventional short form: Poland

local long form: Rzeczpospolita Polska

local short form: Polska

Capital: Warsaw

Independence: 11 November 1918 (independent republic proclaimed)

National holiday: Constitution Day, 3 May (1791)

Suffrage: 18 years of age; universal

Flag: two equal horizontal bands of white (top) and red; similar to the flags of Indonesia and Monaco which are red (top) and white

# Economy

Industries: machine building, iron and steel, extractive industries, chemicals, shipbuilding, food processing, glass, beverages, textiles

Agriculture: accounts for 7% of GDP; 75% of output from private farms, 25% from state farms; productivity remains low by European standards; leading European producer of rye, rapeseed, and potatoes; wide variety of other crops and livestock; major exporter of pork products; normally self-sufficient in food

Illicit drugs: illicit producer of opium for domestic consumption and amphetamines for the international market; transshipment point for Asian and Latin American illicit drugs to Western Europe; producer of precursor chemicals

## Transportation

### Railroads:

total: 25,528 km

### Highways:

total: 367,000 km (excluding farm, factory and forest roads)

Inland waterways: 3,997 km navigable rivers and canals (1991)

Pipelines: crude oil 1,986 km; petroleum products 360 km; natural gas 4,600 km (1992)

Ports: Gdansk, Gdynia, Gliwice, Kolobrzeg, Szczecin, Swinoujscie, Ustka, Warsaw, Wroclaw

### Airports:

total: 134

## Defence Forces

Branches: Army, Navy, Air and Air Defence Force