

GSSR Practical Guide

**2022-2023**



**Welcome To Warsaw!**

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## 1 Arriving

### How to get to GSSR directly from the airport/train station/bus station?

On arriving in Warsaw, you'll need to decide on the method of transport you're going to use to get to your accommodation or GSSR. If you decide to take a bus or train, make sure that you have the correct kind of bus/train ticket. These are available from ticket machines that can be found at train and metro stations and near many bus stops.

ZTM ticket machines have an English-language menu (click the British flag icon) and are easy to use. They accept only Polish currency and payment cards.



**Suggestion:** Buy a full-price (not reduced) ticket for Zone 1. It costs 4.40 PLN, is valid for 75 minutes and you can use it for transfers onto city buses, trams and SKM trains. You must validate the ticket in the first form of transport you use. Timetables for all of Warsaw's public transport can be found in English at [www.wtp.waw.pl/en/](http://www.wtp.waw.pl/en/)

Before arriving in Warsaw, install the 'Jakdojade' public transport application in your phone. It can be used in English and will be very helpful for travel in most Polish cities. Free Wi-fi is available at Warsaw airports and train stations, as well as most cafes and fast-food restaurants.

### Public Transport from Chopin airport

Follow the lines at arrivals to catch a bus [purple], train [green] or taxi [yellow] to the city centre.

#### **Buses**

**Route 175** (04.58-22.58 daily) Chopin airport – City Centre [around 30 mins]. Ordynacka bus stop is 5 mins from GSSR on foot!

**Route 148** (04.41-23.11 daily) Chopin airport – Metro Imielin station [around 35 mins]

**Route 188** (04.46-23.16 daily) Chopin airport – Metro Politechnika station – Wiatraczna [around 35 mins]

**Route 331** (06.08-17.49 Mon-Fri) Chopin airport – Metro Wilanowska station [around 23 mins]

**Night bus N32** (23.16-04.50 daily) Chopin airport – Central Railway Station [around 17 mins]

## Trains

Chopin airport is connected to Warsaw city centre by a fast and convenient rail link [around 25 mins]

**SKM line S2** - red train - (05.55-10.44 daily – departs every 30 minutes)

## Public Transport from Modlin airport



Flixbus will take you from the airport to Metro Młociny (30 mins) Warsaw West [Zachodnia] train station (55 mins) or Chopin Airport (80 mins). Tickets can be bought for 30-40 PLN online or on the bus. Further information can be found at the company website [www.flixbus.pl/](http://www.flixbus.pl/) or you can book a ticket at <https://www.flixbus.co.uk/service/book-bus-ticket>

At Warsaw West/Zachodnia train station find a ticket machine and buy a full-price 20-minute ticket (3.40 PLN). Find the platform for SKM line S2 and travel 2 stops in the Sulejówek-Miłosna direction (NOT Lotnisko Chopina!) to arrive at Warszawa Śródmieście – the city centre (see above for more details on tickets and SKM trains).

## Taxis

Licensed taxis can be found at both Warsaw airports. Tariffs should be clearly displayed in the window or on the side of the car. A basic charge of around 8 PLN will increase by around 3 PLN per kilometre of the journey. You can usually establish the expected cost with the driver beforehand. The fare to the city centre should be around 50 PLN during regular hours, and more expensive during holidays and at night.

If you wish to book a taxi, the companies below can be recommended

Name	Telephone	WWW
ELE SKY TAXI	+48 22 811 11 11	<a href="http://www.eletaxi.pl">www.eletaxi.pl</a>
SUPER TAXI	+4822 578 98 00	<a href="http://www.supertaxi.pl">www.supertaxi.pl</a>
SAWA TAXI	+48 22 644 44 44	<a href="http://www.sawataxi.com.pl">www.sawataxi.com.pl</a>

There are also ride-sharing services available such as:

**Uber** <https://www.uber.com/global/pl/cities/warsaw/>

**Freenow** <https://free-now.com/pl/>

**Bolt-taxi** <https://free-now.com/pl/>

## Exchanging money

Check with your home bank the fees for using your bank card in Poland. It might be possible to withdraw cash from an ATM and you won't need to deal with money exchange. Since the Covid-19 pandemic, you can use contactless payments almost everywhere in Poland. However, it's always useful to carry a little cash with you.

Exchange rates for many currencies are not favourable in Poland. Therefore, if you are bringing foreign currency, it is advisable to bring euros, British pounds or American dollars. Try to avoid exchanging money at airports and train stations as you'll get a very low rate or exchange here (with any currency). Currency exchange points are called 'Kantor' in Polish and there are several in the city centre. There are several kantors in the city centre. You can shop around but they will usually have similar rates. All kantors are closed on Sundays.

Some currency exchange/kantor addresses:

**Kantor Hotel Warszawa** (9.00-20.00) - Świętokrzyska 18

**Marszałkowska 99A** (8.00 -20.00)

**Kantor Redar** (10:00-18:00) under Rondo Dmowskiego outside Metro Centrum

## Short-term accommodation

Sometimes it is a good idea to rent a room on **Airbnb** as such Homestays can generally be more comfortable than hostels, and the prices are similar <https://www.airbnb.com/>

For hostels/hotels check also <https://www.booking.com>, <https://www.hostelworld.com>

There are some hostels very close to GSSR, which often provide the most convenient short-term accommodation for students arriving for the first time. The hostels listed below are close to GSSR:

<p><b>Moon Hostel - Warsaw</b></p> <p>Foksal 16            00-372 Warszawa, Poland            Phone: +48 22 468 00 66            Mobile: +48 (0) 505-505-590            E-mail: warszawa@moonhostel.pl  <a href="http://moonhostel.pl/hostel-warszawa/kontakt/">http://moonhostel.pl/hostel-warszawa/kontakt/</a>  <b>Note: 5 minute-walk from the bus stop and 12 minute-walk from the GSSR</b></p>	<p><b>Tatamka Hostel</b></p> <p>Tamka 30 Street            00-355 Warsaw            Phone: +48 22 826 30 95            E-mail: tamka@hostel.pl  <a href="http://www.tamkahostel.pl/">http://www.tamkahostel.pl/</a>  <b>Note: 15minute-walk from the bus stop Ordynacka, as well as from the GSSR</b></p>
<p><b>Okidoki Hostels Sp.z o.o.</b></p> <p>Plac Dąbrowskiego 3 (Dąbrowskiego Square)            00-057 Warsaw            Phone: (+48)228280122            Phone: (+48)224231212            Skype: okidokihostel            E-mail: okidoki@okidoki.pl</p> <p><a href="http://okidoki.pl/wp/kontakt/lang/en/">http://okidoki.pl/wp/kontakt/lang/en/</a>  <b>Note: 15 minute-walk from the GSSR and bus stop</b></p>	<p><b>Hostel Helvetia</b></p> <p>7th Sewerynów Street            00-924 Warsaw            Phone/fax: (+48) 22 - 826 71 08            Mobile (+48) 609 020 145            skype: hostel-helvetia-warsaw            E-mail: info@hostel-helvetia.pl  <a href="http://www.hostel-helvetia.pl">http://www.hostel-helvetia.pl</a></p> <p><b>Note: 4/5 minute-walk from the GSSR</b></p>

## 2 Getting started at GSSR

After arriving in Warsaw and arrange for temporary accommodation, you will need to visit the school. **Aleksandra, Ola, Filipowicz (room 261)** is your primary contact in helping you to deal with all sorts of administrative issues. You might want to set up an appointment with her via [sns@gssr.edu.pl](mailto:sns@gssr.edu.pl).

There are several important things you should pick-up at the GSSR office on your first visit, including – student ID, Wi-Fi password, access to the course registration system and your school e-mail.

**Your PhD student ID** [*legitymacja*] is an official document during your stay in Poland, which will allow you to claim discounts on public transport and trains within Poland (51% discounts are available for Doctoral students younger than 35 years old) and various museums, or gain access to other libraries. This will be available shortly after your arrival. Pick it up and sign it. It is recommended that you carry this document with you at all times.

The school has **Wi-Fi: IFISPAN\_XXX** Password: ifispanXXXRT# (XXX stands for assorted room numbers depending where you seek access. NOTE that capital letters matter!)) Ask at the office for the code to access GSSR facilities.

<https://poczta.adminpan.waw.pl/postfixadmin/users/edit-alias.php>

Like the GSSR Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/GSSR.Warsaw/>

You can find a lot of useful information here about conferences, meetings and events held within and outside of GSSR. Also, this group is a communication platform where you can get to know other students and find answers to many of your questions from your peers.

## Libraries

As a student of the GSSR, you have more or less extended access to libraries in Warsaw. **An English language library** is at your disposal on the third floor of the School building, offering a wide array of books in social sciences, which you can both borrow and read inside the library. The catalog is to be found here:

<http://library.css.edu.pl/cgi-bin/koha/opac-main.pl>

The School library can also lend you books from other libraries that you might not have direct access to, notably the University of Warsaw Library. All you have to do is, ask our librarian, Ms. Lidia Wójcicka.

You also have full access to the **Library of the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology** (<http://archiwum.wfis.uw.edu.pl/bibfis/>). It is located at 3 Krakowskie Przedmieście Street (just across the street from the School), on the first floor. You need a library card, which you can obtain very easily, by bringing a photo and your student card. There is a reading room and you can also borrow books – you need to order them first either over the internet or at the desk in the library. The catalog:

[http://katalog.pan.pl/webpac-bin/220r\\_jfisPL/wgbroker.exe?new+access+top](http://katalog.pan.pl/webpac-bin/220r_jfisPL/wgbroker.exe?new+access+top)

You can also obtain cards giving you access to other libraries across Warsaw, although most of them will not let you borrow books. Here is a short list of such libraries:

**Warsaw University Library** (BUW) – situated 56/66 Dobra street, <http://www.buw.uw.edu.pl/en/index.php>

This is a large library with a wide array of books in several languages. A special feature is the roof-deck / garden – perfect for studying in the summer or just relaxing.

**National Library** (Biblioteka Narodowa) – al. Niepodległości 213, <http://bn.org.pl/en/>

The largest library in Warsaw. You need to order the books in advance and you are given a place in the reading room. The best way is to order them through the internet catalog.

**Koszykowa Street Library** – Koszykowa 26/28, <http://www.koszykowa.pl/>

Not a very large choice of books, but many students appreciate it as a place to study.

You can also explore more specialized libraries. If you are looking for a particular book, a good place to start is the nation-wide Nukat catalog:

<http://www.nukat.edu.pl/> -it will give you a list of all libraries in Poland where books can be found.



Warsaw University Library



### 3 Settling in

Websites where you can find a room or an apartment:

<http://www.oferty.net/>

<http://tablica.pl/nieruchomosci/>

<http://otodom.pl/>

Most resources for searching for an apartment are in Polish. Make use of the translation option in Google Chrome. Moreover, there is a chance that the contact person, listed in the announcement, will not be able to speak English with you. Most likely, you will need a Polish speaking friend in order to call the owners to arrange meetings.

There is also a website **in English** for Erasmus students: <http://erasmusu.com/en/erasmus-warsaw/student-housing>

However, it is rarely updated and prices are usually higher than the options available on other websites.

Please note that autumn is the “hot season” for the real estate market, as a lot of students arrive in Warsaw and are looking for apartments at the same time. Therefore, it is recommended to arrange meetings with owners of potential apartments for the same/next day as your arrival and make a decision quickly.

There are several Facebook groups where you can look for accommodation, as well. You may also find another foreign student to rent an apartment with. Check these groups:

[https://www.facebook.com/groups/warsawrooms/?ref=br\\_rs](https://www.facebook.com/groups/warsawrooms/?ref=br_rs)

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/warszawa.pokoje.mieszkania.wynajem/>

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1829384610708402/about/>

These are useful groups for expats in Warsaw (you also can look for accommodation there, as well as ask other questions about living in Warsaw):

**Note:** It is always recommended that you sign an **agreement**, not only to avoid misunderstandings with the owner of the apartment, but also to make your life easier while obtaining other necessary documents. For example, if you need to apply for public registration and you don't have any signed agreements, the owner of the apartment will need to take part in the registration application process. If you have signed an agreement, his/her presence is not required.

**While looking for an apartment, please pay attention to the following** (note that the price of utilities has increased substantially in recent months):

1. Check whether the offer is provided by **an agency** or by **a private owner**. It is recommended to not use an agency, as the process is typically more consuming in terms of both time and finances. Most agencies require signing a contract and paying for their services before starting the apartment-hunt.
2. Check **what is included** in the price for rent. Quite often the price of utilities is excluded. The price of utilities for a 2-room apartment can vary from **PLN 100** (electricity only) up to **PLN 600 zł** (for all utilities). Internet is typically not included in the price. It's always better to check the final total of all payments at the beginning, before signing an apartment lease.
3. Check the **availability of furniture**. Sometimes you see a fully furnished room in the advertisement, but in reality, the furniture might have been removed by the previous tenant(s).
4. A lot of apartments in Poland have **transitive rooms** [pokój przechodni], it is better to check this while screening offers.
5. Sometimes rooms are offered by the owner, who also lives in the same apartment, other times – by other tenant(s), **who would share** the apartment (without the owner being present in the apartment). It is generally recommended to live without the owner. However, this is a matter of personal choice.

## Finding a room or an apartment

**When signing the agreement for renting an apartment, please pay attention to the following:**

1. It is common practice that you should pay the owner a **deposit fee** [kaucja]. The amount, on average, it is equal to **one-month's rent**. The deposit will be **given back** to you when you leave the apartment, with proof that nothing in the property was damaged.
2. **Minimal period of stay:** Usually the owners are interested in long-term tenants, sometimes they won't agree to rent an apartment for less than half a year or even one year. Sometimes it is possible that the owner agrees for an indefinite period of stay. It is important to discuss both options.
3. **Terms of cancellation:** In general, it is necessary to inform the owner about the time of rent termination one or two months before you leave. However, some contracts (especially those with a definite duration) might not include any cancellation options at all. It is always better to check directly with the owner.

## Prices

Cheaper rooms and apartments may be found in different Warsaw districts.

**Remember** that electricity/gas bills and/or utilities may be added onto this price.

Price estimates can be obtained using information from <https://rentberry.com/pl/apartments/s/warsaw-poland> .

## Location overview

Śródmieście (central district). If you find accommodation in this part of the city – you can typically walk to the GSSR or it won't take you any more than **15 minutes** by public transport. Accommodation here is usually **more expensive** than in other districts and are taken quickly.

Rather close to the center are: Żoliborz, Wola, Ochota, Mokotów, and Praga. If you live there, it will usually take you from 15 min to 40 min to get to the GSSR by public transport. There is a **stereotype**, that living on the right bank of the Wisła river (Praga district) is less safe than living on the left bank. However, people living in Praga don't usually agree with this stereotype. Praga Południe, specifically, has the charm of pre-war Warsaw.

Further from the center are: Ursynów, Bielany, Bemowo, Wilanów, Ursus, Białołęka, Rembertów, Targówek, Wawer, Ursynów and Bielany. These might be good options if the accommodation is situated close to the metro station. There are obviously no traffic jams on the metro and it will take you typically no more than **45 minutes** to get to the GSSR. There are direct buses from Bemowo to the GSSR. However, due to the high probability of traffic jams, be prepared for an-hour long commute. Accommodation in Wilanów is typically more expensive compared to other districts. It will usually take you about an hour to get to the GSSR. From Ursus (left bank), Białołęka, Rembertów, Targówek, Wawer (right bank) it will usually take you an hour or more to get to the center.

Finally, there is the option of living in one of Warsaw's suburbs - towns located just outside of Warsaw or its administrative borders. Pro's include: lower prices and typically **more quiet** neighborhoods. Con's include: Much longer daily commute to the GSSR. However, all of these accommodation options should be given specific consideration depending on your needs and preferences. Sometimes, the suburbs are well connected to the Warsaw city center by extensive train lines, and travel time may be as short as **40 minutes**.



Two views of Praga Północ – a popular district for student rentals

## 4 Getting around in Warsaw, Poland and beyond

Public transport in Warsaw runs 24/7. The transportation system is well developed and thanks to the mobile applications and descriptions of routes at every stop, your chances of getting lost are very low!

It is recommended that you use the website [jakdojade.pl](http://jakdojade.pl) and download the **free Jakdojade application** to your Smartphone. Using it is very easy: you just type the address of your departure and destination points and get directions with the quickest connections with a detailed schedule. It has information about all the different kinds of public transportation in Warsaw: buses, trams, metro and SKM (quick city train). Usually, public transport follows the schedule, however, it is safer to note that sometimes the vehicle may arrive 2 minutes earlier, or up to 5 minutes later than scheduled.

### Warsaw City Card

As soon as you get your student ID (see 'Getting started'), it is recommended that you purchase a **Warsaw City Card** (Warszawska Karta Miejska, WKM). As long as you are a doctoral student and below 35 years old, you are entitled to a **51% discount** on public transport long-term tickets (30 or 90 days) with this card. (For MA student the discounts are up to 26 years old.) Metro Nowy Swiat-Uniwersytet is the closest place to GSSR where you can purchase this card. Other places to make this purchase are shown on the ZTM website: <http://www.ztm.waw.pl/pop.php?c=500&l=2>

Find information in English about Warsaw public transport at [www.ztm.waw.pl/index.php?l=2](http://www.ztm.waw.pl/index.php?l=2)



### City bikes

During the warmer season (starting from spring to autumn) it might be a good idea to travel around in Warsaw by **bicycle**. The city has well-distributed bicycle lanes, is fairly flat and has a well-developed system for renting public bicycles, which are available in many locations throughout Warsaw. In order to **rent a bicycle**, you have to register on the website: <https://veturilo.waw.pl/en/>

For registration, you need a minimum deposit (PLN 10 – activation fee and at least PLN 10 for services) and your mobile telephone number. After the online registration process, you can take bicycles from any self-service rental station and bring them back to any station. The **map of rental station** locations is here: <https://veturilo.waw.pl/en/map/>

The first 20 minutes are free of charge. The fee for each following hour grows gradually, but you can ride a bike for 1 hour for as little as 2 PLN. Information on fees and regulations is here: <https://veturilo.waw.pl/en/price-list/>

Information about travelling to towns/villages situated close to Warsaw (**Mazovia region**) can be found here: <http://www.mazowieckie.com.pl/en/> and <https://www.intercity.pl/pl/>

## Trains



Trains are a convenient and fast way to travel between Warsaw city centre and the suburbs. They usually run every 30-60 minutes from further locations and every 20 minutes from closer ones. If you're going beyond travel zone one, you are required to purchase a full-fare train ticket. PhD students younger than 35 years old travelling in Poland are eligible for 51% discounts, but this reduction does not apply to MA students. For zoning information please check the map here: <http://www.mazowieckie.com.pl/en/diagram-of-railway-lines/>

You can also purchase train tickets at the ticket offices or machines, at most stations, or even from the train attendants in the first train car (you must buy your ticket as soon as you board the train). Information about schedules of train and tickets is available at <http://rozkład-pkp.pl/bin/query.exe/en;http://intercity.pl/en/>

At the Central Railway Station [Dworzec Centralny] you can find a client services centre, where you can get advice on the most convenient and cheapest routes.

## Long-distance buses

For travelling around Poland, it is recommended to use FlixBus (former Polski Bus), which is considered to be **less costly** than other bus companies. Ticket prices average 30-40 PLN to reach the cities of Wrocław or Gdansk. The quality of buses is fairly high. Information can be found here: <https://www.flixbus.pl/>

If you choose to travel with other bus companies or by train, it is recommended to use the following web-site for planning your trip: <http://en.e-podroznik.pl/>

## Driving in Poland

Driving licenses held by citizens of the European Union, European Economic Area (EEA) and states that are parties to the Vienna Convention on Road Traffic are accepted in Poland. Holders of driving licenses issued in these countries do not have to pass an exam to get a new Polish license. The only difference is in how these documents are accepted. EU and EEA citizens may simply drive vehicles in Poland using their own driving license. However, citizens of states which are parties to the Vienna Convention have to apply for a Polish driving license, without having to take the written test on Polish road traffic regulations. Their document will be held by the Traffic Authority of the provincial authority until the new one is issued.

To drive a car in Poland, non-EU citizens, non-EEA citizens and citizens other than those from states that are parties to the Vienna Convention on Road Traffic (e.g. USA, India) must obtain an international or Polish driving license. A state/national driving license without an International Driving Permit (IDP) is not enough. To obtain a Polish driving license, foreigners must pass a written exam (foreigners who do not speak Polish should use and pay for the services of a sworn translator) and pay the examination fee.

Once they receive their Polish driving license, foreigners must return their state/national driving license to the local office that issues such documents. The Polish authorities will send the foreign driving license to the Embassy with a request that the document be returned to the relevant office in the foreigner's country of origin.

The foreign driving license will be taken away from the foreigner applying for a Polish driving license when the Polish document is issued.

Note: Both non-EU and EU citizens who do not hold a driving license and intend to obtain one in Poland, should pass all written exams and driving tests carried out by the provincial authority (the license issuing authority) in Poland.

### **To obtain a Polish driving license, a non-EU citizen should submit the following documents:**

1. Application on a special form (forms can be obtained in the provincial authority office); Statement on the intent to stay in Poland for at least 185 days in a calendar year (statement is then attached to the application form);
2. One photograph (3.5 x 4.5 cm);
3. Confirmation of registration in Poland;
4. Residence Permit or visa ([see relevant section](#));
5. Copy of the foreign driving license (sometimes with a sworn translation);
6. Proof of payment for the application.

## 5 Get connected

### Mobile phone operators in Poland

Klucz: <http://www.klucz.net/>  
(provides informational support on registration and other documents)

The most popular operators are:

Orange: <http://www.orange.pl>

Play: <http://www.play.pl>

You can easily buy a SIM-card at most shops; signing a contract is not obligatory. It is possible to change your operator without changing your number.  
If you want to have a contract, and you are not a Polish citizen, you have to get a Polish residence permit (Karta pobytu. Information regarding that you can find below). However, it is a long process. It might take several months or half a year to receive your Karta pobytu, so you have to buy a prepaid sim-card in order to have a mobile number in Poland. In most mobile phone offices, you will find an English speaking representative to help you to find the best option for you. The closest mobile company office to the school is Orange ul. Świętokrzyska 3.

### Internet providers

Typically, apartments for rent already have an Internet connection. If they don't, you can purchase a connection via:

UPC: <http://www.upc.pl/>- one of the most popular and fastest cable Internet providers, or other providers:

Multimedia: <http://www.multimedia.pl/>(cable)

Vectra: <https://www.vectra.pl/>(cable)

HETAN: <http://www.hetan.pl/>(via Satellite)

Netia: <http://www.netia.pl/>(xDSL)

Neostroda:

<http://www.orange.pl/kid,4002009501,id,4002235565,title,Neostroda,article.html>

Dialog: <http://www.dialog.pl/>(ADSL)

Multimo: <http://multimo.telestrada.pl/>(DSL)

Usually you have to sign an agreement (either for an unlimited or a defined period). In case of signing an agreement for a defined period (**1 year or more**), you will most probably be offered **lower prices**. Please pay attention to the period of cancellation and agreement termination. (For UPC – 2 months).

There is typically an installation fee. When changing your apartment, you can usually transfer your Internet connection without having to pay for an additional installation fee. However, resigning from the agreement may involve charges.

In case you cannot install an Internet connection due to the absence of technical requirements at your building (which is a rare case in Warsaw), you might consider purchasing **mobile internet**, which is offered by all mobile providers, but is usually more expensive and slower than regular landline connections.

## 6 Smart money

Choosing your bank will largely depend on your expected activities. But there are several tips you might find helpful:

### **Cost for opening an account.**

Most banks charge you when you are about to open an account and activate a card. However, some may have promotions – they open your account for free, with some conditions (e.g. you would have to spend a certain amount monthly to pay with your card at stores, or receive an indicated sum on your account every month).

Internet banking: Make sure your bank provides convenient Internet banking. (Not all banks in Poland provide internet banking in English.) This is a useful tool to open additional accounts, transfer amounts between your existing accounts, and carry out payments. You can perform all these tasks at your home, or even when traveling abroad.

### **Network and personnel**

It is nice when the bank is located close to your home or university. A widespread network of ATM's is equally important. The same applies to staff and keep in mind that a good bank does not have long lines.

### **Language**

In banking matters, it is crucial to understand everything in full. Make sure your bank's employees speak English, and the internet banking service provides an English menu. This will help you to avoid mistakes caused by a lack of understanding.

### **Rating**

You have to feel safe when giving your money to a financial institution. If you plan to invest in bigger funds, you might be attracted to higher rates offered by new and less recognized banks. In any case, you might want to check the information on Polish banks' rating first before you make your choice.



## 7 Getting your documents in order

Upon arrival, you can reside in Poland on the basis of your student visa obtained in your country of origin. However, no later than the last day before the visa expires, you must apply for a Permit for temporary residence for study (you can also get a new visa, but this should be done at a Polish consulate in your country of origin).

### Validity of permit

The first permit is issued for 12 months and subsequent ones for up to three years, or, if your academic programme is shorter, until completion of your studies plus three months.

### Where to apply?

In Warsaw, you should apply for this permit (or any other immigration-related document) in the Department of Foreigners of the Mazovian Voivodship Office at ul. Marszałkowska 3/5.

### What documents to submit?

- 1 three completed application forms
- 2 four current colour photographs
- 3 Valid travel document (passport with current student visa) - you must provide 2 copies of the entire document
- 4 Confirmation of temporary registration [*meldunek*], or legal title to the premises (e.g. lease agreement, certificate issued by a dorm containing details of fees, confirmation of university including information on accommodation in a dorm with specification of fees)
- 5 Document confirming valid health insurance
- 6 Receipt confirming payment of the required fee for issuing the residence permit
- 7 Confirmation of enrollment at the university
- 8 Confirmation of payment of the study fee if required (or confirmation of government scholarship from the university where applies)
- 9 Document confirming sufficient financial means for covering costs of living and return as well as costs of studies (if required)

If you present documents in a language other than Polish, you must also plan on providing translations by a certified sworn translator. For more information, visit

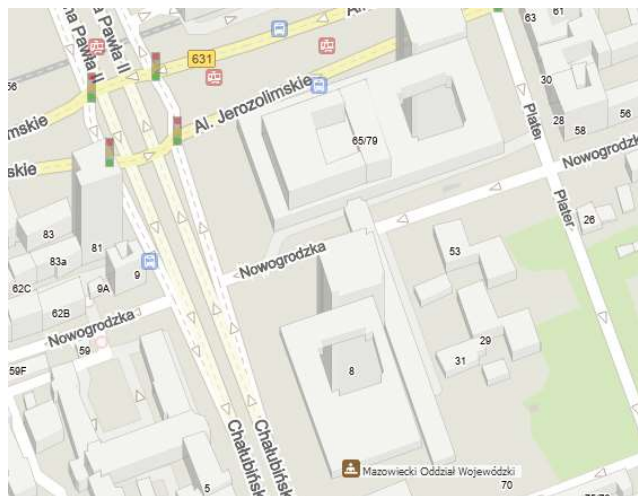
<http://www.forummigracyjne.org/en/>

After submitting your application, you will be granted a national visa valid for the time of the procedure. If you are a full-time student and you have a residence permit, you are entitled to work in Poland without a specific permit.

**If you need to consult a lawyer, you may find free help at the Foundation for Somalia, ul. Bracka 18/63.** (They advise any international residents at no charge). Visit them to make an appointment. The lawyer accepts visitors at Foundation for Somalia every Wednesday. More information here: <http://fds.org.pl/>

## 8 Health insurance and medical care

Foreign students are required to have valid health insurance. There are several possible ways to achieve this



a) Buy insurance with NFZ (the National Health Fund). Follow the steps below:

1. Go to the **NFZ** office, which is situated at **ul. Chalubińskiego 8**, working hours are **Monday-Friday, 8.00 – 16.00**<http://www.nfz-warszawa.pl/>

In NFZ, you should sign an agreement for voluntary health insurance. In order to be eligible for student rates of **46,80 zł / month** (from July 2013, [http://www.nfz-warszawa.pl/index/pacjent/ud/tab\\_sk](http://www.nfz-warszawa.pl/index/pacjent/ud/tab_sk)), you should prove that you study in Warsaw and you are a non-EU citizen. You'll need your passport, confirmations from the school, and apartment contract.

2. Go to **ZUS** (intermediary agency that collects money for all the social and state health insurance). Information on addresses and working hours of ZUS offices in Warsaw can be found here: <http://www.zus.pl/default.asp?id=1866&p=2&mig=Warszawa&lng>

In ZUS you have to fill out **two forms**:

1. **ZZA** – Initial form, should be filled out only once;
2. **DRA** – declaration of payment, should be filled out according to the frequency of payments (usually monthly). You should make payments to the provided account before the 15th of each month.

3. Go to the closest (the most convenient) public hospital and register there for getting medical services. Please note that you can change the hospital where you are registered twice a year. You can terminate your agreement any time by providing written notice at the office of NFZ. Please note that you have to pay the full price for the first and last months irrespective of the date when you sign and/or terminate the agreement.

## b) Buy private insurance

You can buy insurance for traveling abroad in your country of origin, or choose a Polish company. Some examples of private insurance companies in Poland are:

PZU: <http://www.pzu.pl/produkty/indywidualna-opieka-medyczna>.

Signal Iduna: <http://www.signal-iduna.pl/indywidualne-ubezpieczenia-zdrowotne>

Aviva: <http://www.aviva.pl/zycie-i-zdrowie/pakiet-medyczny-badz-zdrow.html>

Some private clinics also offer insurance that covers their own services.

For instance Luxmed (<http://www.luxmed.pl/en.html>), or Medcover (<http://www.medcover.pl/en/default.aspx>).

## c) European students should acquire a European Health Insurance card (EHIC)

you should apply for it in your country of origin before departure. Once in Poland, you have to register with the Polish National Health Fund (NFZ) – just go there with the European Insurance Card as well as your identity card.



## Other important information

You have to declare a **'first contact doctor'** (the best choice being one close to home or school) through which you must pass to take an appointment with a specialist in case of need. For any special consultation or operation you will need a referral [skierowan-ie].

Appointments with generalists can be taken freely, as well as those with gynecologists, dentists, oncologists, dermatologists, optometrists and psychiatrists.

There are also private clinics and doctors – it is easier to get an appointment with them and the quality of service is most often very good, but they are not covered via the standard insurance and can be quite costly (expect a basic consultation to cost

250 - 300 PLN/consultation.)

## 9 Polish life

### Important national holidays

1 January – New Year's Day

6 January – 'Three Kings'

17-18 April (2022) – Easter  
Sunday/Monday

1 May – Labour Day

3 May – May 3<sup>rd</sup> Constitution Day

3 June – Corpus Christi

1 November – All Souls

11 November – Polish Independence Day

24 December – Christmas Eve

### Polish food

Traditional dishes include pierogi (dumplings), bigos (a cabbage-based dish), barszcz (clear, beetroot soup) or żurek (sour soup). Don't hesitate to try some!



Most shops in Poland are closed on Sundays (except for Żabka convenience stores). However, occasionally there are 'trading Sundays' when shops are open.



## 10 What's that in Polish?

A few words and phrases that will help you get by as you pick up the local language

Dzień dobry!	<b>Hello!</b>
Cześć!	<b>Hi!</b>
Dobry wieczór!	<b>Good evening!</b>
Dobranoc!	<b>Goodnight!</b>
Do widzenia!	<b>Good bye!</b>
Przepraszam	<b>Sorry</b>
Dziękuję / Dzięki	<b>Thank you / Thanks</b>
Proszę	<b>Please</b>
Tak / Nie	<b>Yes / No</b>
Jak się masz?	<b>How are you?</b>
W porządku	<b>I'm fine / Everything is ok</b>

Nie mówię po polsku.	<b>I don't speak Polish.</b>
Nie rozumiem.	<b>I don't understand.</b>
Która jest godzina?	<b>What time is it?</b>
Jak dojechać do....? Jak dojść do....? (if on feet)	<b>How to get to....?</b>
Jak się nazywasz?	<b>What's your name?</b>
Nazywam się....	<b>My name is...</b>
Skąd jesteś?	<b>Where are you from?</b>
Jestem z....	<b>I'm from...</b>

pokój	<b>room</b>
mieszkanie	<b>apartment</b>
kawalerka	<b>studio / one room apartment</b>
wynajem	<b>rent</b>
współdzielenie	<b>sharing</b>
współlokator	<b>roommate</b>
nieprzechodni pokój	<b>intransitive room</b>
wyposażone mieszkanie	<b>furnished apartment</b>

media	<b>utilities</b>
prąd	<b>electricity</b>
kaucja	<b>deposit</b>
umowa na czas nieoznaczony	<b>contract for an indefinite period of time</b>
meldunek	<b>registration</b>
Czy oferta jest aktualna?	<b>Is the offer still valid?</b>
Kiedy mogę zobaczyć mieszkanie?	<b>When can I see the apartment?</b>

## 11 Enjoy your stay

### Parks and gardens

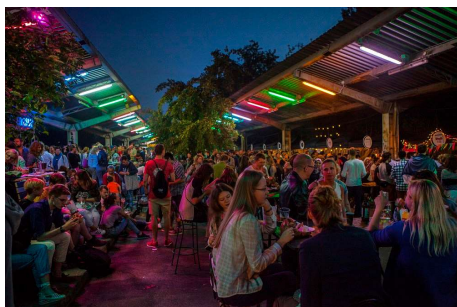
There are many parks and gardens to visit, making Warsaw one of the greenest cities in Europe. Especially recommended are the **Royal Łazienki** palace and park (on Aleje Ujazdowskie) and **Wilanów** palace and park in the south of the city (both accessible on bus route 180 from outside GSSR); the **Saxon Gardens** (near Plac Piłsudskiego); and **Królikarnia** park and lakes in Mokotów district. Across the river in Praga is English-style **Skaryszewski** Park and **Warsaw Zoological Gardens**. Finally, don't forget the University library **roof garden** when you want a break from studying.

### Cinemas

Aside from the multiplex cinemas that can be found in most large shopping malls (the nearest is in 'Złote Tarasy' near Warsaw central station), there are cinemas screening independent and arts films in the centre (Kino Muranów, Kino Luna, Kino Iluzjon). Visiting Kinoteka at the Palace of Culture also give you a glimpse inside the famous building in the heart of Warsaw.

### Cafes/Bars

There are many lively and interesting bars and cafes all over Warsaw – the Powiśle and Praga Północ districts are particular popular among students. During warmer weather the bars on the riverside are very popular. You can find a great guide to Warsaw café/night life and eating out in magazines such as 'Warsaw Insider' [https://issuu.com/valkea\\_media/docs/warsaw-insider-september-2021-301](https://issuu.com/valkea_media/docs/warsaw-insider-september-2021-301) (link to September 2021 issue) and 'Warsaw In Your Pocket' <https://www.inyourpocket.com/warsaw>



Street food at the old Warsaw Główny station



An old ticket hall converted into a café/bar

### Museums

Aside from Old Town and the Royal Route of Krakowskie Przedmieście, you can absorb Polish culture and history in the city's many fascinating museums. Of particular interest are the **Chopin Museum** and the **Copernicus Science Center** (both accessible from ul. Tamka behind GSSR), **Polin Museum** of the History of Polish Jews (ul. Anielewicza) and the **Warsaw Rising Museum** (ul. Grzybowska).