



OSAC Country Security Report

Poland

Published: April 3, 2025

This report is intended to supplement the [U.S. Department of State Poland Travel Advisory](#) and [Poland International Travel Information Page](#).

Embassy & Consulate Contact Information

[U.S. Embassy Warsaw](#)

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Tel: +48 (22) 504-2000, Emergencies:

+48-22-504-2639. Hours: 0830 – 1700, Monday – Friday

[U.S. Consulate General Krakow](#)

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Telephone: +48 (12) 424-5100

American Citizens Services: +48 (12) 424-5129

Emergency After-Hours Telephone: +48 (22) 504-2000

[U.S. Consular Agent Poznan](#)

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OSAC Country Chapter(s)

The OSAC Country Chapters in Warsaw and Kraków are active.

Contact [OSAC's Europe team](#) with any questions.

Poland Travel Advisory

The current U.S. Department of State Travel Advisory at the date of this report's publication assesses that travelers should exercise normal precautions (Level 1) when traveling to Poland.

Review OSAC's report, [Understanding the Consular Travel Advisory System](#).

Crime

The U.S. Department of State has assessed Warsaw and Kraków as being **LOW**-threat locations for crime directed at or affecting official U.S. government interests.

The U.S. Department of State has not included a Crime “C” Indicator on the Travel Advisory for Poland.

The crime emergency line in Poland is **112**. This emergency number is available free of charge throughout the European Union (EU), both from landlines and mobile phones. It can also be dialed from a phone without a SIM card. English speaking operators are available when requested during calls.

Review the U.S. Department of State’s Crime Victims Assistance [brochure](#).

Crime: General Threat

Poland has one of the lowest crime rates in Europe. However, there was a slight increase in reported crimes in 2025. This increase has been attributed to a rise in inflation and the cost of living. It is crucial to note that, while comparatively rare, instances of theft, assault, and other serious offenses do occur.

In Poland, residential burglary trends have evolved over recent years, demonstrating a shift in the methods employed by criminals. Predominantly, burglars exploit vulnerabilities in the physical security of residences, such as poorly secured doors and windows, or inadequate lighting that provides cover of darkness. Often, these illicit activities spike during vacation seasons when many houses are vacant. Moreover, there is a noticeable pattern of burglaries being committed in the late afternoon or early evening, when residents are typically away, commuting or engaged in after-school activities. It is essential to be informed about these trends to enhance residential security and mitigate the risk of burglary.

Organized crime in Poland, despite its decline since the late 1990s, continues to persist with a focus primarily on cross-border illicit activities. Given Poland's strategic location along the eastern border of the Schengen Zone, it has inadvertently become a hotspot for diverse criminal operations. Particularly prevalent are the trafficking of stolen vehicles, drugs, cigarettes, and human beings. These operations, often sophisticated and well-coordinated, pose significant challenges to authorities. Despite robust regulation, the gaming and casino industry is not immune to this influence. Some establishments have been linked to organized crime, indicating a potential avenue for money laundering and other illicit financial activities. The continuing presence and complexity of these organized crime elements underscore the multifaceted challenges Poland faces in its efforts to ensure national security and public safety.

Crime: Areas of Concern

In Poland, various forms of theft, including pickpocketing, represent the most common type of crime. This issue significantly impacts not only the locals but also tourists from the U.S. and other countries. Areas with large crowds, such as Kraków's Market Square and Warsaw's Old Town, have become hotspots for these petty crimes. In these bustling locations, thieves often find it easy to blend in, carrying out their illicit activities undetected. Transit hubs like train stations are particular targets, with travelers burdened by luggage becoming an easy mark. These criminals often operate in groups, skillfully creating diversions to rob their unsuspecting victims. Public buses and trams are also common locations for these incidents. Passports and personal items from luggage, backpacks, or purses are typically the most frequently stolen items.

While Poland is generally considered a safe country, there are instances of assault, primarily in nightlife settings. Often fueled by alcohol, these incidents tend to occur between the late-night hours of midnight and 6:00 a.m. According to reports from the U.S. Embassy, there has been an alarming trend of exorbitant credit card bills linked to nightclubs, particularly those in city centers, suggesting the practice of paying in cash to avoid such circumstances. Additionally, incidents of aggression and physical assault by nightclub security staff have been reported. To mitigate risks, travel in groups, particularly when visiting popular nightlife areas or tourist spots like the Market Square in Kraków or Old Town in Warsaw. Exercising restraint in alcohol consumption and avoiding confrontations can significantly reduce the likelihood of such incidents.

Sporting events in Poland, particularly soccer matches, have occasionally been marred by instances of violence. These disturbances, often led by hooligan elements within the fanbase, can escalate into serious conflicts and violence.

When traveling in Poland, it's crucial to ensure the safety and security of your finances. Always opt to change your money at banks or legitimate exchange kiosks (*kantor*), and use ATMs located at commercial banks, large hotels, shopping malls, or airports to maximize security and minimize potential fraud. Do not display cash or other valuables unnecessarily in public view. Credit cards are also widely used and accepted in nearly all establishments and businesses.

In Poland, drug-related crimes are a matter of concern, albeit with a negligible threat of violence. The bulk of violence associated with drug trafficking is largely restricted to those directly participating in the illicit activities, posing minimal risk to innocent bystanders. Poland serves primarily as a trans-shipment hub for drug trafficking across Europe, with amphetamines, marijuana, and synthetic drugs constituting the primary substances used domestically. According to authorities in Poland and neighboring countries, in recent years, there has been a surge in the illicit production of synthetic drugs, notably methamphetamine. Despite this rise, it remains unclear whether the increased production is geared towards local consumption or distribution to neighboring countries.

Review OSAC's reports, [All That You Should Leave Behind](#), [Hotels: The Inns and Outs, Considerations for Hotel Security](#), [Taking Credit](#), and [Our Two Cents: Petty Crime Basics and How to Minimize the Risk](#).

Kidnapping Threat

The U.S. Department of State has not included a Kidnapping "K" Indicator on the Travel Advisory for Poland.

While Poland is generally considered a safe destination for travelers, instances of kidnapping, albeit rare, do occur, primarily targeting wealthy individuals or their family members for ransom. These incidents, while statistically infrequent, underscore the necessity for heightened vigilance, especially among the affluent populace. Despite these occurrences, the U.S. Department of State has not deemed it necessary to include a Kidnapping "K" Indicator on its Travel Advisory for Poland, reflecting the overall low risk of such incidents for travelers and the general public. However, it is always prudent for individuals to stay aware of their surroundings and maintain a low profile, regardless of their financial status.

Review OSAC's reports, [Kidnapping: The Basics](#) and [Active Shooter and Kidnapping Response Tips](#).

Terrorism

The U.S. Department of State has assessed Warsaw and Kraków as being **LOW**-threat locations for terrorism directed at or affecting official U.S. government interests.

The U.S. Department of State has not included a Terrorism "T" Indicator on the Travel Advisory for Poland.

Despite the general trend in many parts of the world, Poland has remained largely untouched by terrorism. A teenager was arrested in December 2025 and convicted in early 2026 for allegedly planning a terror attack against a Christmas market. It is important to remain vigilant, as global terrorism dynamics continue to evolve and change unpredictably.

State-sponsored sabotage attacks remain a concern. In November 2025, a rail line in eastern Poland used for transporting aid to Ukraine was targeted by an explosive device. Three Ukrainian citizens were arrested for causing an explosion, with investigations suggesting they were tasked by Belarusian or Russian intelligence.

Political Violence and Civil Unrest

The U.S. Department of State has assessed Warsaw and Kraków as being **LOW**-threat locations for political violence directed at or affecting official U.S. government interests.

The U.S. Department of State has not included a Civil Unrest “U” Indicator on the Travel Advisory for Poland. Civil unrest can develop quickly without prior notice, often interrupting logistics and services. Avoid demonstration activity, as even those planned to remain peaceful have the potential to turn violent.

Elections/Political Stability

Poland is a republic with multiparty democracy. The bicameral parliament consists of an upper house (Senat) and a powerful lower house (Sejm). The president and the Council of Ministers headed by the prime minister share executive power.

Poland held presidential elections in 2025, electing Karol Nawrocki of the Independent Party in a runoff. The election was deemed free and fair. The next parliamentary elections are scheduled for 2027.

Protests & Demonstrations

Demonstrations are a regular occurrence, but are generally orderly and peaceful. They can range from a few individuals to thousands. Polish Independence Day celebrations typically occur on November 11 and includes many demonstrations, rallies, and marches in downtown Warsaw. Violent incidents have occurred in previous years during these demonstrations, which have attracted national groups, sometimes espousing xenophobic slogans. The event, in the past, has also drawn far-right sympathizers from other European countries. Football supporters with far-right slogans as well as anti-abortion rights groups have also been present in past events. Climate-change activists have also tried to draw attention to their cause by placing themselves along the march’s route.

Tension between Poland and Ukraine translated into protests in 2023, 2024, and early 2025 over the issue of the importation of Ukrainian grain onto Polish domestic markets and unfair competition by Ukrainian counterparts. Later in 2025, pro-Palestine protests and anti-immigration protests made up the majority of public demonstrations. Some of these protests did turn violent, resulting in clashes with police or counterprotests, but more often demonstrations primarily cause traffic delays.

Avoid areas where you see heavy police presence or crowds assembling; exercise caution if within the vicinity of any large public gatherings; and stay away from demonstrations. The U.S. Embassy is located near the prime minister’s chancellery, Parliament, various government ministries, and other embassies. While demonstrations rarely target U.S. interests/policies, the U.S. Embassy faces a major north-south traffic artery often used by demonstrators, and experiences disruptions from popular demonstrations. Traffic and public transportation may also be affected and disrupted during large demonstrations.

Demonstrations in Kraków are much less frequent, and typically draw much smaller crowds than Warsaw. The U.S. Consulate General in Kraków is near the German and French Consulates.

Occasionally, small demonstrations target these diplomatic missions, but they generally have little impact on Consulate operations.

Review OSAC's report, [Surviving a Protest](#).

Anti-U.S./Anti-Western Sentiment

Expressions of anti-U.S. sentiment are notably minimal if present at all.

Law Enforcement

The Polish National Police (PNP) is the primary law enforcement agency in the country, functioning at both regional and municipal levels. The PNP falls under the administration of the Ministry of Interior and encompasses the Antiterrorist Operations Bureau (BOA). The BOA is a specialized unit focused on counter-terrorism activities and is instrumental in maintaining public order and security at both the national and local levels.

Running in parallel to the PNP, the Polish Border Guard (Straż Graniczna or SG) is another entity under the Ministry of Interior and Administration. Their responsibility lies in securing national borders and addressing issues related to irregular migration.

Bolstering the country's internal security further is the Internal Security Agency (Agencja Bezpieczeństwa Wewnętrznego or ABW). This agency primarily focuses on counterintelligence and potential terrorist threats, but it also has the authority to counteract organized crime and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

Fighting against corruption in Poland is the responsibility of the Central Anticorruption Bureau (Centralne Biuro Antykorupcyjne or CBA). The CBA specifically targets corruption within government entities, businesses, and financial sectors, with a particular focus on transactions involving public funds.

It's important to note that despite these security forces being effectively controlled by civilian authorities, there have been documented instances of abuses committed by some members of these law enforcement entities.

Police Response

In Poland, it is not necessary to be proficient in Polish when interacting with police and emergency services. The operators staffing the **112** call centers are typically proficient in multiple languages, English included, offering significant assistance to non-Polish speakers. Furthermore, the professionalism and cooperative nature of Polish police officers are commendable, ensuring all interactions are handled with utmost respect and efficiency. Police response time is comparable to the U.S., but can be affected by poor weather, number of incoming calls, as well as traffic and construction.

Transportation Security

Road Safety

In recent years, driving conditions in Poland have seen considerable improvements due to advancements in infrastructure. However, caution remains a necessity for drivers. The country's road accident rate surpasses the average of the European Union, with high-speed driving, risky overtaking maneuvers, and occasional disregard for traffic regulations being the primary contributors. Travelers are therefore strongly advised to stay vigilant and strictly adhere to local driving laws to ensure their safety. Extra attention should be given to the increased construction projects, as well as pedestrians and bicyclists, to maintain safe driving practices.

Poland experiences unpredictable weather that can lead to problematic road conditions. Incidents of flooding, causing closures of bridges and significant disruptions to road travel, are not uncommon. Moreover, driving in Poland's mountainous regions during winter can be challenging due to the narrow, twisty roads with narrow shoulders. Therefore, the usage of snow tires and/or tire chains is highly recommended for drivers during the colder months.

The legal blood alcohol limit is set at 0.1 mg/L (0.02%). Driving under the influence can result in significant penalties, including fines, probation, and even imprisonment. The severity of the penalties depends on the level of alcohol in the bloodstream. For alcohol levels ranging from 0.1 mg/L to 0.25 mg/L, fines of 2,500 - 30,000 zł or up to 30 days in jail may apply. At higher levels, above 0.25 mg/L, the consequences become more severe, with imprisonment for up to three years. In cases involving accidents, penalties are even harsher, with the severity depending on the alcohol level and accident impact. Injury-related accidents can lead to imprisonment for three years, while fatal accidents can result in five to 16 years of imprisonment. It is important to note that these laws apply not only to motor vehicles, but also to electric scooters and bicycles. Additionally, driving under the influence of drugs is strictly prohibited.

If you plan on drinking while out, consider the use of a taxi (or ride-hailing services such as Uber) or public transportation, both of which are readily available and inexpensive.

You must have a U.S. driver's license and International Driving Permit (IDP) in order to drive in Poland. U.S. citizens cannot obtain IDPs in Poland. If you stay in Poland for more than six months and continue to drive, you must obtain a Polish driver's license.

Use of seat belts and headlights is compulsory. The law prohibits the use of cellular phones while driving, except for hands-free models. The law prohibits making a right turn on a red light. A green arrow allows you to turn but does not give you the right of way. Polish law requires that a first-aid kit, safety reflecting triangle sign, and a fire extinguisher be always carried in every vehicle.

When a U.S. citizen is stopped for a traffic violation in Poland, they are subject to the traffic laws of Poland, much like any other resident or visitor. The offender may be issued with a fine,

which is typically expected to be paid immediately. Should there be any dispute over the violation, or failure to pay the fine, the matter could escalate to a court hearing.

Review OSAC's reports, [Road Safety Abroad](#), [Driving Overseas: Best Practices](#), and [Evasive Driving Techniques](#); and read the U.S. Department of State's [webpage on driving and road safety abroad](#).

Public Transportation Safety

Public transportation in Poland is widely acknowledged for its safety, efficiency, and reliability. In urban environments, taxis can be conveniently hailed from major hotels and designated stands or can be pre-booked via telephone. It is useful to note that most taxi drivers speak English and accept credit card payments. However, when hailing taxis on the street, be cautious to avoid cabs without company names or telephone numbers displayed, as these cabs may not have meters, leading to inflated rates. Instead, choose taxis that are identifiable by the company name and phone number displayed on the light bar. Ensure the taxi is equipped with a working meter and that the driver activates it at the commencement of your journey. It is wise to ignore offers from unverified taxi drivers near airport arrival terminals, preferring instead taxis from designated stands. Internet-based ride services like Uber are legal, widely used, and convenient in Poland. However, longer wait times may be experienced in less densely populated areas. Poland has a sophisticated rail system with a remarkably low number of accidents, reinforcing the country's reputation for reliable and safe public transportation.

Aviation Concerns

The U.S. Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has assessed the Government of Poland's Civil Aviation Authority complies with safety standards established by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO).

Review OSAC's Report, [Security in Transit: Airplanes, Public Transport, and Overnights](#).

Maritime Security

Mariners planning travel to Poland should check for U.S. maritime advisories and alerts at the Maritime Security Communications with Industry [web portal](#). Information may also be posted to the U.S. Coast Guard homeport website, and the NGA broadcast warnings.

Travelers with Special Considerations

For [specific traveler concerns](#) in Poland, review the local laws and circumstances on the U.S. Department of State's Country Information Page.

- [Women Travelers](#)
- [Gay and Lesbian Travelers](#)
- [Accessibility Needs](#)

- [Studying Abroad](#)
- [Faith-Based Travel](#)

Rule of Law, Arbitrary Detention, Official Harassment, Corruption, & Transparency

The U.S. Department of State has not included a Risk of Wrongful Detention “D” Indicator on the Travel Advisory for Poland.

The law provides criminal penalties for corruption by officials, and criminal prosecutions for official corruption occurred. There were reports of corruption that resulted in legal action. In January 2024, two Polish lawmakers – both Members of Parliament (MP) from the ousted PiS party – were arrested on corruption charges inside the country’s Presidential Palace. They were sentenced to two years in prison and banned from sitting as MPs for five years over their role in a scandal over secret deals between the Agriculture Ministry and Polish business that ultimately led to the early collapse of PiS’s first government.

The government does not restrict or disrupt access to the internet or censor online content, and there have been no credible reports that the government monitors private online communications or email without appropriate legal authority. The law authorizes the Internal Security Agency to block websites without a prior court order in cases relating to combating, preventing, and prosecuting terrorist crimes; to shut down telecommunications networks when there is a terrorist threat; and to conduct surveillance of foreign nationals for up to three months without a court order.

There have been reports that journalists have been subjected to violence, harassment, or intimidation by authorities due to their reporting.

Health Concerns

The U.S. Department of State has not included a Health “H” Indicator on the Travel Advisory for Poland. Review the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s (CDC) country-specific [Travel Health Notices](#) for current health issues that impact traveler health, like disease outbreaks, special events or gatherings, and natural disasters.

The medical emergency lines in Poland are **112** and **999**. Ambulance services are widely available. The standard of care in major cities may lag healthcare in the United States; in small villages, it may be limited. Emergency services may be lacking in small towns and rural areas. Physicians are generally well-trained, and many younger doctors speak English (while nurses and staff may not). While medication and treatment are generally substantially less costly than in the United States, doctors and hospitals often expect cash payment prior to treatment. Private hospitals usually require advance payment or proof of adequate insurance before admitting a patient. Patients bear all costs for transfer to or between hospitals.

Find contact information for available medical services and available air ambulance services on the U.S. Embassy website. The U.S. Department of State strongly recommends purchasing international health insurance before traveling internationally. Review the U.S. Department of State's [webpage](#) on health insurance overseas.

See OSAC's [Guide to U.S. Government-Assisted Evacuations](#); review OSAC's reports, [The Healthy Way](#), [Shaken: The Don'ts of Alcohol Abroad](#), [Health 101: How to Prepare for Travel](#), and [Fire Safety Abroad](#); and visit the U.S. Department of State's webpage on [Your Health Abroad](#) for more information.

Vaccinations

Review the CDC [Travelers' Health](#) site for country-specific vaccine recommendations.

Issues Traveling with Medications

Prescription medication in Poland is reliable, but sometimes unavailable. Always carry your prescription medication in original packaging, along with your doctor's prescription. Check with the [Ministry of Health](#) to ensure the medication is legal in Poland.

U.S. Customs and Border Protection and the Food and Drug Administration are responsible for rules governing the transport of medication back to the United States. Medication purchased abroad must meet their requirements to be legally brought back into the United States. Medication should be for personal use and must be approved for use in the United States. Please visit the U.S. Customs and Border Protection and the Food and Drug Administration websites for more information.

Review OSAC's report, [Traveling with Medication](#).

Water Quality

Food and water standards in Poland are similar to those in the United States. Most travelers do not need to take special food or water precautions beyond what they normally do at home.

Review OSAC's report, [I'm Drinking What in My Water?](#)

Natural Disasters

The U.S. Department of State has not included a Natural Disaster "N" Indicator on the Travel Advisory for Poland.

Cities in Poland have higher air pollution levels than major U.S. cities. Especially in Kraków, levels are often above U.S. health-based standards in the winter. Air quality is often good to moderate during warmer months. Visit the European Environment Agency's [website](#) for information on air quality in Poland.

Cybersecurity

The government does not restrict or disrupt access to the internet or censor online content, and there are no credible reports that the government monitored private online communications or email without appropriate legal authority. The law authorizes the Internal Security Agency (ABW) to block websites without a prior court order in cases relating to combating, preventing, and prosecuting terrorist crimes; to shut down telecommunications networks when there is a terrorist threat; and to conduct surveillance of foreign nationals for up to three months without a court order.

Globally, cybersecurity is an increasing concern due to the prevalence of digital infrastructure in both public and private sectors. Poland, like many other nations, has experienced a range of cyber threats, including phishing scams, malware attacks, and data breaches. Since Russia's invasion of Ukraine, private organizations and Polish government websites have consistently been targeted by Russian cyberattacks, and 2025 saw a 250% rise in attacks from 2024. In December 2025, an unprecedented, destructive cyberattack targeted the national energy grid, knocking out power for hours.

Review OSAC's reports, [Cybersecurity Basics](#), [Best Practices for Maximizing Security on Public Wi-Fi](#), [Traveling Abroad with Mobile Devices](#), and [Guide for Overseas Satellite Phone Usage](#).

Counterintelligence Issues

There are no counterintelligence issues unique to private-sector operations in Poland.

Since the 2022 Russian invasion of Ukraine, there have been reports of espionage activity inside Poland. Since 2022, over 40 people have been arrested on charges of espionage or sabotage of Polish critical infrastructure. In 2025, eight individuals were charged with attempted sabotage and ties to Russian intelligence services.

Import/Export Restrictions

A variety of goods and commodities are subject to import (and export) restrictions to protect the safety and lives of humans, animals and plants, safeguard national security, or to protect artistic, cultural or intellectual property. Examples are restrictions and controls on the import of certain food products, drugs, pharmaceuticals, environmentally hazardous products, seeds, weapons, explosives, and antiques. Polish Customs enforce strict regulations concerning the export of items such as works of art.

A country-specific listing of items/goods prohibited from being exported to the country or that are otherwise restricted is available from the U.S. International Trade Agency [website](#).

Additional resources and reports can be found in the [OSAC Traveler Toolkit](#).