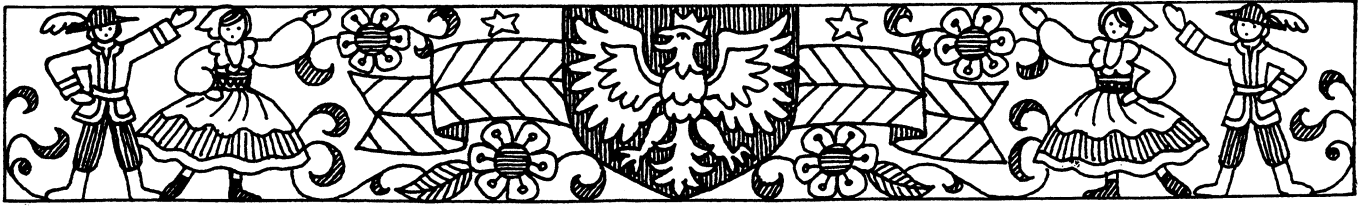


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POLAND





Poland

Poland occupies a region often referred to as the “Heart of Europe.” Poland’s flat plains stretch between two powerful neighbors, Germany and Russia. Geographic location has determined Poland’s destiny through the centuries. Poland vanished from the map of Europe between 1795 and 1918, partitioned among Russia, Prussia, and Austria. In 1918, the country received its independence, as stipulated in President Wilson’s Fourteen Points.

Poland was an independent state until German occupation in 1939. Hitler planned to crush all opposition and eventually annex parts of Poland for “living space” and agriculture. Between 1939 and 1945, more than six million Poles, including three million Jews, were victims of the Nazi plan. Poland’s postwar fate was decided by Churchill, Roosevelt, and Stalin at the Yalta conference in 1945. The country fell under Soviet control after World War II.

Poland’s trade union movement, **Solidarność** (so lee DAR noshch), or Solidarity, was the latest of several grassroots challenges to the Communist system. The events in Poland between 1980 and 1988, from the Gdarisk shipyard strikes to the imposition of martial law, triggered a series of events throughout the Soviet bloc which eventually led to the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989. Today, Poland occupies a unique and advantageous position as the most homogeneous of the former Eastern bloc countries in language, history, and culture.

Official Name—The Republic of Poland (*Rzeczpospolita Polska*), commonly known as Polska

Size—120,728 square miles (312,685 square kilometers), about the size of the British Isles or New Mexico

Population—39 million

Main Cities—Warszawa (Warsaw—capital, population 1,655,000)

Łódź (846,500)	Poznań (590,000)
Kraków (750,000)	Gdańsk (465,400)
Wrocław (643,000)	Szczecin (413,600)

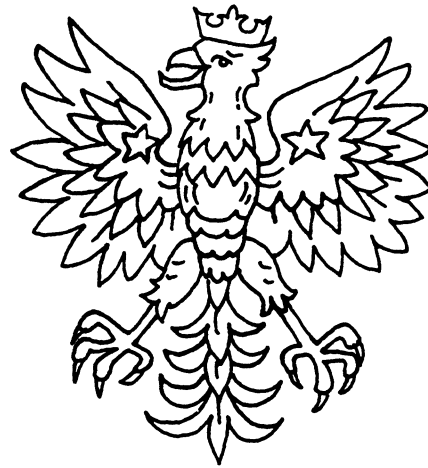
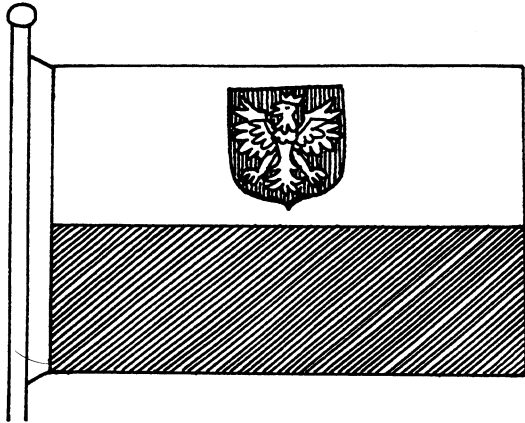
Religion—Roman Catholic (95%); Eastern Orthodox, Protestant, and other denominations (5%)

Languages—Polish (97%); Ukrainian and Belorussian (3%)

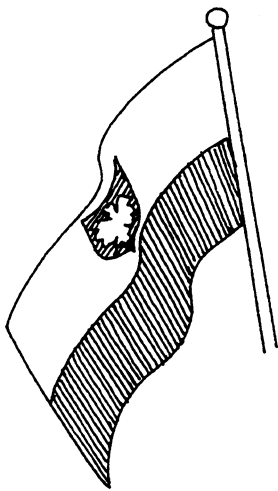
Currency—Złoty (swo-tee). One U.S. dollar equals 3.50 złoty.

Emblem—Polish Eagle

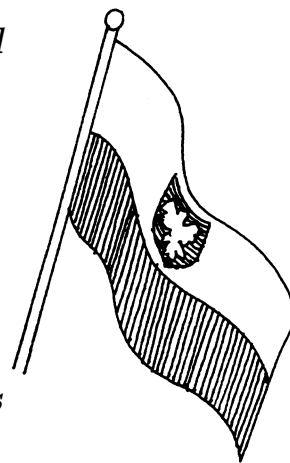
Flag and Coat of Arms—The Polish flag has a broad white stripe on top, the Polish coat of arms featuring a white eagle on a red background in the center, and a broad red stripe on the bottom. The crowned Polish eagle was restored to the flag after November 1991.



National Anthem—“Poland Has Not Yet Perished” (“Jeszcze Polska nie Zginęła”) The song which is now the Polish national anthem was sung by General Dąbrowski’s legions as they marched from Italy to Poland in 1797.



I
*Oh, our Poland shall not perish
While we live to love her;
What the cruel foe has ravished
We'll regain through power.
March, march, Dąbrowski
From Italia's fair lanes,
Back to join the nation,
Back to Poland's broad plains,
broad plains.*



II
*We'll cross Wisła, Warta waters
And our bondage sever
Joining Poland's sons and daughters
We'll be Poles forever!*

Chorus