

Projekt współfinansowany przez Ministerstwo Spraw Zagranicznych Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej  
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Ministerstwa Spraw Zagranicznych RP.

# BIULETYN

Regionalnego Ośrodka Debaty Międzynarodowej w Toruniu

2023  
nr 4(69)



## Pomáhame Ukrajincom v Prešove

March 2022 .  
Author: Daria Moroziuk,  
Usage date: 30.08.2023

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STUDYING IN SLOVAKIA



Ośrodek Debaty  
Międzynarodowej  
Toruń



Rzeczpospolita Polska  
Ministerstwo  
Spraw Zagranicznych

# Humanitarian assistance to Ukrainians in The Republic of Poland



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This article is about humanity, sympathy, assistance, and, of course, gratitude.

On 24.02.2022, misfortune came to Ukraine and millions of destinies were shattered. When one neighbor unleashed a bloody war, another

neighbor - the Republic of Poland, immediately took on all possible and necessary assistance. Fast, organized, large-scale, efficient, and simultaneously in all directions and spheres of life. This assistance became and remains to this

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day the largest among all countries of the world. Literally, everyone evinced humanism: ordinary Poles, officials, the country's leadership, and public organizations. And it is not only about money. Sincere sympathy, attention, and care in the first hours and days of the war helped millions of Ukrainians.

In armed conflict, the UN International Court of Justice has defined permissible humanitarian assistance as "the provision of food, clothing, medicines and other humanitarian assistance, but this does not embody the provision of weapons, weapon systems, ammunition or other necessary equipment, vehicles, and materials which may be used to cause serious bodily harm or death".

Humanitarian aid is distinguished from other types of assistance by its free and urgent nature and by the fact that it is used to alleviate the plight of victims by providing urgent large quantities of long-life food, medicines, drinking water, warm clothes, tents for overnight stays, fuel and electricity. It is also the logistical

assistance and management of huge flows of people.

Since March 12, 2022, in the Republic of Poland there is a law on assistance to citizens of Ukraine in connection with the conduct of hostilities on the territory of their state. This is how the new term "temporary protection status" appeared.

If we talk about the status of temporary protection on the territory of Poland, according to paragraph 2 paragraph 1.1 of this law, a Ukrainian who crossed the border after February 24 can legally stay on the territory of the country until March 4, 2024.

With regard to humanitarian aid, Ukrainians are able to get the following from the Polish state:

- PESEL number
- One-time cash assistance
- Social assistance for children
- Medical aid
- Legal work
- Schooling for Ukrainian children
- Education in Polish universities for students from Ukraine

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- Free car insurance

Pesel presents itself as an 11-digit code that serves to identify a specific person. This code encodes date of birth and identity field data is also used for tax purposes and includes a check digit. Having a PESEL number enables a Ukrainian the same rights as native Poles, which embody:

- Opportunity for formal employment;
- Access to health care;
- Entitlement to social assistance;
- Free enrollment of children in kindergartens and schools;
- Opportunity to enroll in higher educational institutions;
- Opportunity to open your own business.

Having received a PESEL, a Ukrainian can register in the Polish mObywatel system (similar to the Diya system in Ukraine), which will enable him/her to use remote administrative services.

It is important to delineate that by obtaining PESEL, a Ukrainian does not become restricted in his rights. He can freely travel, engage in entrepreneurship and live in Poland.

One-time financial assistance is possible only if you have temporary protection status and the Pesel system, the minimum amount of which is 300 PLN. It is assumed to be enough to cover all the necessary expenses on a priority basis: groceries, hygiene products, etc. For this purpose, you should contact the social welfare officer of the municipality where you reside. Assistance is paid to everyone, including children. Assistance from public organizations and local institutions is available on the online service Mapuj Pomoc. The uniqueness of the system is that in addition to searching for assistance, you can take the initiative and offer your help. To do this, you need to go to the site and enter a request and the system will display you the geolocation of local centers. Over 100 help local centers have been logged in all over the country. As far as fundraising is concerned, it is impossible not to mention the British Wonder Foundation, which collaborates with local organizations all over Poland and sets up integration projects for refugees for a period of 2 years. Despite on

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material assistance, local centers in cooperation with the foundation open Polish language courses for adults and children.

The process of adaptation and integration into the new Polish society is an indispensable part of immigration for an immigrant. When seeking for safety in a foreign country, immigrants face various challenges and difficulties, such as finding accommodation, employment, language barriers, etc.

In order to find out about how this process looks like from the inside, I managed to communicate with my former classmate Nikita Zhukov who has been living in Poland for 1.5 years.

According to Nikita, he managed to cross the

Polish border quite quickly and immediately a humanitarian bus took Nikita with his mother and younger brother to a temporary shelter. Surprisingly, his family's accommodation was provided by a Russian, who set up maximum comfort and provided care and attention to them.

The documents were processed and all bureaucratic issues and consultations were organized very clearly. Taking into account that there were a lot of people, it took two weeks to derive all the necessary documents.

Nikita visited the humanitarian points as needed and required. Everything was given out quickly, in sufficient quantities, with respect and a kind

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smile.

There were no challenges to learning Polish either. At first, free language courses. After 3-4 months it became much easier to communicate and live in Polish society.

In view of the military situation in Ukraine, the Supreme Sejm of the Republic of Poland permitted the temporarily displaced persons to stay on the territory of the Republic until March 4, 2023. But changes followed in order to receive assistance from the state. For example:

Ukrainians who recently arrived in Poland in 2023 seeking temporary protection must have a Pesel. The government has 30 days to issue it. Until now, the possession of a pesel and its issuance were not obliged;

If an immigrant leaves the territory of the Republic for more than 30 days, the state deprives him or her of temporary protection status and all the privileges that this status confers, namely financial assistance and insurance services. The status is possible to re-establish. The entire process is controlled by the

country's migration service.

a citizen of Ukraine who settled in mass accommodation facilities has the right to stay free of charge for exactly 120 days. If it is longer than 120 days, the citizen is obliged to reimburse 50% of the cost of assistance which was derived in collective accommodation (but not more than 40 PLN per day). And from May 1, 2023 citizens of Ukraine, who as refugees will stay in Poland for more than 180 days, will be obliged to cover 75% of the costs associated with their maintenance in mass accommodation centers (but not more than 60 PLN per day). Even vulnerable citizens will be obliged to pay after 120 days, namely: persons with disabilities and their guardians; Ukrainian refugee pensioners; minors; pregnant women; persons raising a child under the age of 1 year; parents/guardians of three or more children.

every citizen of Ukraine should have an electronic version of documents in the Diia.pl application. Access to the service will eliminate any troubles and inconveniences associated with crossing Polish borders. Diia.pl together with the travel



<https://www.gov.pl/web/polskapomoc/pomoc-psychologiczno-integracyjna-dla-dzieci-w-ukrainie>

document will provide the right for a citizen of Ukraine to cross the border multiple times for a short period of time - for example, for family reasons, to obtain documents or solve professional issues - without the need to obtain a visa. In addition, Poland warned EU and Schengen countries that the presence of documents in the application confirms the legal status of being in the country. Therefore, this electronic document allows Ukrainian citizens to travel unhindered to EU countries and even outside them.

Ukrainian symbols remain visible on Polish streets, be it the flag or the coat of arms, but despite this, the opinion of Poles regarding the migrants has budged for the last 12 months.

The online publication Conversation conducted a survey of Poles aged 16-34 in March 2022 and then again in May-July 2023. The result of the survey demonstrated that in 2022-2023 more and more young Poles - 52% (42% a year ago) - believe that refugees should be granted temporary status with the condition that they will

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return to Ukraine as soon as it is possible from the security point of view.

Approximately 56% of young women aged 16-34 in Poland expressed a desire for an early end to the conflict, in contrast to 49% of young men. The total number of young Poles supporting the integration of Ukrainian refugees in Poland remains stable at 25%. In this group, about 31% of men and 20% of women would prefer this integration option.

The visible gender distinction is probably related to the lesser involvement of men in solving everyday problems of Polish life, such as limited places in public kindergartens or access to health care. This is confirmed by the results of focus groups conducted in 2022.

Different political and social views also play a role in determining attitudes towards the future of Ukrainian refugees. For example, young people who identify as Catholics are 10% more likely to express a desire to see refugees return to Ukraine when this becomes possible.

More than 80% of Ukrainians are grateful to

Poles, and almost three quarters said their opinion of Poles has improved since the Russian invasion, amid active support for Ukraine from the Polish government and society.

The study conducted by the Ukrainian research institute Info Sapiens on behalf of the Polish NGO Mieroszewski Center also included a survey of Ukrainians about the perplexed history of the two countries during the Second World War. The result disclosed opinions that, as the Center's deputy director admitted, "may disappoint Poles".

Time goes by, everything alters, conditions and rules become stricter when obtaining necessary documents and residence of Ukrainian citizens in Poland.

According to the Research Laboratory of the University of Warsaw and the Academy of Economics and Humanities in Warsaw, the percentage of Poles who consider it their duty to assist their neighbors has descended from 62% to 42%. 35% of Poles surveyed support the provision of aid, but in January there were 47% of



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such people.

A quarter of Poles say an unequivocal "no" to additional aid to Ukraine. In addition, the percentage of those who strongly support aid to refugees in Poland has fallen from 49% to 28%.

There is also an arousing group of those who want Ukrainians to return to their country after the end of the war - this opinion is already

expressed by about 70% of Poles (in January 2023 there were 53% of such people)

What are we able to infer? Let us be grateful to the Republic of Poland for assisting us to pass this terrible historical epochal period of time. Let us esteem and understand Polish traditions, the requirements of order, discipline and conscientiousness.

*Illia Sherstiuk*

## **Resources:**

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## Humanitarian assistance to Ukrainians in Slovak Republic



*March 2022 , Author: Daria Moroziuk, Usage date: 30.08.2023*

More than a year and a half has already passed since Russia started a bloody war in Ukraine. As soon as the war began, the Slovak Republic was one of the first to condemn the war. President Zuzana

Chaputova supports the idea of Ukraine's accession to the European Union and was not afraid to visit Kyiv in the first months of the war, speaking in the Ukrainian Parliament.

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From the very beginning, Slovakia was ready to accept Ukrainian refugees, taking care of families and even orphans who fled into the country by the thousands.

At the borders, Ukrainian refugees could receive first aid, where they were helped by both citizens of Slovakia and representatives of various humanitarian organizations. As well as rescuers, military and police.

The Slovak government has passed a law according to which refugees can apply for temporary protection. This law includes measures related to health care, benefits, employment and more. Children can attend Slovak schools, language courses are open. Refugee assistance centers have also opened in many cities.

Slovakia ranks among the largest providers of humanitarian aid to Ukraine in terms of GDP per capita. The assistance thus provided was in the form of medicines, tents, sleeping bags, hygiene items, computer equipment, food, clothing, and concrete poles. In winter, electric and thermal

generators were also sent.

Not only the government of Ukraine, but also the refugees who are still on the territory of the Slovak Republic are very grateful for the assistance and support provided at such a difficult and important hour. She was one of the first countries to speak out against the war.

In my article, I would like to tell and describe what types of assistance and services every refugee is entitled to, as well as share my own experience in this area. This assistance typically includes:

**1. Shelter and Accommodation:** Slovakia has provided temporary shelters and accommodation facilities for Ukrainian refugees who have crossed the border. These facilities aim to offer a safe and secure environment for individuals and families. At the very beginning, as soon as the war began, headquarters were equipped on the border where refugees could stay for the night, after which they were distributed to families who were ready to accept refugees or completely gave their housing for use. After that, large centers, hotels, hostels were provided in the

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cities where the refugees could stay for a long time. Later, under a program from the UN, refugees could rent an apartment for which the owner received compensation. At the moment, the situation has changed, many centers are closed due to low demand, as many have already returned to Ukraine.

**2. Food and Necessities:** At the beginning of the war, humanitarian organizations in Slovakia distributed food, clean water and basic necessities to Ukrainian refugees. In our city, several such points have been opened. Caring people brought various products, hygiene products, as well as clothes to the aid points. Any person with refugee status could apply and get the help he needed. When our relatives came to us, they were also given help for each person, it included various cereals and pasta, a lot of different canned food, salt, sugar, legumes, as well as household chemicals and everything a person needs for hygiene. Also, people with special needs could contact the help center and ask to find one or another specific thing.

**3. Medical Care:** After crossing the border, people were waiting for an ambulance to provide first aid if necessary. Ukrainian departments were opened at hospitals where there were Ukrainian-speaking doctors who could provide assistance that a person needed, or issue a referral to the right doctor, and for people with chronic diseases, it was possible to take a prescription for the necessary drugs. Every refugee has insurance that covers only emergency assistance.

**4. Legal and Administrative Assistance:** Let's start with the fact that the need for legal assistance for Ukrainian refugees was of a different nature, it consisted only in obtaining refugee status or housing rental agreements, a little later people needed an extension or execution of documents that they could do with the consul, since he came once per month to every major city in Slovakia. At the moment, a branch of the passport service of Ukraine has opened in Bratislava, where any Ukrainian can apply for a new civil passport, foreign passport, birth certificate or driver's license. And also in

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March 2022 , Author: Daria Moroziuk, Usage date: 30.08.2023

each center there is a lawyer who will help you or direct you to the right person in any situation.

**5. Cash assistance:** In Slovakia, refugees may be provided with cash assistance depending on their status and situation. This usually includes a cash allowance or stipend for basic living needs such as food, accommodation and other expenses. The amount of financial assistance in Slovakia depends on the number of Ukrainian family members and their age. However, the amount cannot exceed 380 euros per family per month.

Payments per month:

- €80 for an adult;

- €160 euros - for children under 3 years old;
- €60 for children from 3 to 18 years old.

Families with a person with a disability can receive additional funding.

An application for financial assistance is submitted along with the application for temporary protection status.

Also in Slovakia, an additional payment for winter needs was introduced. This will be a one-time recalculation of 150 euros per person, with a maximum of 400 euros per family.

Aid to Ukrainians was accrued from May to September. Ukrainian citizens were financially

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supported by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), UNICEF and the Slovak Red Cross.

Compensation for housing for Ukrainian refugees in Slovakia is valid until May 31. But the government of the country is prolonging it until December 31, 2023.

EUR 10 per night per person over 15 years of age;  
EUR 5 per night per person under 15 years of age.

For more than a year, the Slovak authorities have been compensating the living expenses of Ukrainians both to individuals and hotel owners. Approximate monthly expenses are around 7.3 million euros. More than 25,000 Ukrainians receive subsidies for housing in the country.

**6. Collaboration with International Organizations:** Slovakia has collaborated with international organizations like the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and other NGOs to coordinate efforts and maximize the impact of their assistance.

The Slovak Red Cross is doing its best to help the most vulnerable groups of the population as

effectively as possible. Although we are helping people arriving in Slovakia as a result of the armed conflict in Ukraine, we have not changed the scope of our assistance to our fellow citizens. The Slovak Red Cross operates exclusively on the territory of the Slovak Republic, with the exception of a few cases that we have dealt with at the border in cooperation with the Ukrainian Red Cross. Volunteers, staff and members of the Slovak Red Cross have been helping to mitigate the impact of the Ukrainian humanitarian crisis since the end of February 2022. They work mainly, but not exclusively, in Red Cross societies across Slovakia. In the first weeks, they also worked at three border crossings - Ubl'a, Vysne Nemecke and Velke Slemence - and later in large centres and temporary accommodation centres.

**7. Temporary protection status:** A citizen of Ukraine can apply for temporary protection status immediately after entering the territory of the Slovak Republic. Family members of a citizen of Ukraine can apply for temporary protection status if they lived in Ukraine before February 24,

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2022.

Foreigners with permanent residence in Ukraine can receive temporary protection in Slovakia only on the condition that they cannot return to their country.

Applying for temporary protection status takes no more than 20 minutes. The temporary protection status allows Ukrainians to work in Slovakia, study at schools and universities. Refugees also have access to health care, housing, the right to meet material needs and financial benefits. The Slovak government has extended the period for granting temporary protection to refugees from Ukraine until March 4, 2024. The status will automatically continue.

When applying for temporary protection status (dočasné útočisko), it is important not to confuse this status with refugee status (azyl). People who fear persecution on racial, national or religious grounds, or because of their political views in their home country, can apply for refugee status. It can also be granted for humanitarian reasons, by decision of the Slovak authorities.

**8. Community activities:** There are a few community activities and programmes in Slovakia aimed at the integration and support of refugees.

Some of them include:

1. Language courses and education - organisations and volunteers provide refugees with opportunities to learn the country's language, as well as education to improve their skills and adapt to their new environment. In the city of Prešov, we conducted Slovak language courses in at least two centers, the age groups varied from school-age children to the elderly. Classes were held two or three times a week for an hour and a half.
2. Cultural exchange and activities - various events, festivals and cultural programmes allow refugees to learn about the culture of the country, communicate with locals and share their culture. Refugee assistance centers have a schedule of events for a week, a month, half a year and a year. Cultural evenings are held, as well as the refugees themselves arrange some

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kind of holidays.

**3. Labour integration** - job search assistance and training programmes help refugees find employment opportunities and integrate into the country's economic life. Every refugee has the right to work, for this there are employment centers, as well as many official websites where you can find a job that suits you.

**4. Social groups and support networks** - the establishment of community groups, clubs and organisations allows refugees to share experiences, help each other and find social support. There are many different groups and communities where refugees communicate, help each other, find the necessary information, buy or sell things. For example Telegram, Facebook.

**5. Assistance with documentation** - the organisations help refugees to obtain the necessary documentation, rights and access to social services. Assistance to refugees with paperwork can be provided by the refugee center, which has a legal specialist, as well as the migration police.

**6. Psychological support** - the provision of psychological support and counselling helps refugees cope with the stress of relocation and adaptation. Each center has a psychologist who can help in person or there are weekly evenings with a psychologist where the problems faced by refugees are discussed, for example, problems in integrating in a new country, traumas due to war.

**7. Sports and recreation** - sports and recreational activities promote the physical and psychological well-being of refugees and help them integrate into society. In Slovakia there are various sections that anyone can sign up for, but also help centers tear off these sections themselves so that children find friends and also have no problems with not knowing the language in another country.

**9. Education:** In Slovakia, refugees have access to education at different levels, according to their needs and qualifications. The following are some aspects of education for refugees in Slovakia:

1. Language courses - for successful adaptation and integration, refugees are given the



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opportunity to learn the language of the country. Language courses help them to learn the words and phrases they need to communicate and understand the culture.

2. Education for children - refugee children have the right to education in local schools. They can attend primary, secondary and tertiary schools, depending on their age and level of education.

3. Adult education - refugees who have reached the age of majority can receive education in adult education institutions, colleges or universities if they fulfil the requirements.

4. Professional training - refugees can also receive vocational training and qualifications to improve their chances of employment and successful integration.

5. Specialised programmes - some organisations and educational institutions may provide specialised programmes for refugees, considering their needs and characteristics.

6. Access to higher education - in some cases, refugees may be granted access to higher education at universities in the country.

It's important to note that the specifics of Slovakia's support for Ukrainian refugees can change based on the evolving situation, government policies, and international agreements. For the latest and most accurate information on how Slovakia is currently assisting Ukrainian refugees, I recommend checking with official government sources, international humanitarian organizations, or reputable news outlets.

Slovakia has supported and continues to support Ukraine in all available ways. Thanks to the solidarity of the Slovaks, a huge number of Ukrainian families did not remain on the street. The Slovak government effectively helps refugees on the territory of the republic and does everything possible to make Ukrainian refugees feel at home. Slovakia has also made significant progress in integrating refugees into its culture. In conclusion, like all the refugees helped by Slovakia, I would like to express my gratitude for all the assistance provided.

*Daria Moroziuk*

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## Studying in Poland: Opportunities and Advantages for Ukrainians



*Adrian Grycuk - Praca własna, CC BY-SA 3.0 pl, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=78344754>*

More and more often today's graduates of Ukrainian secondary schools, having completed secondary education, wish to continue their studies in one of the European countries. Getting a quality European higher education can be the first step to a successful career, which can be built not only in Ukraine, but also in any other country. Studying in Poland after 11th grade for Ukrainians - the most affordable option for obtaining higher education at the European level. Education in universities in Poland is conducted according to the system provided by the Bologna process. It consists of two stages: Bachelor's

degree (3-4 years, depending on the direction) and Master's degree (1.5-2 years). Upon completion of the Master's degree, those who wish can complete a 4-year doctoral program and receive a doctoral degree. The main advantages of the Bologna system of education are:

- 1) training on modern international programs with obtaining a bachelor's or master's degree and a diploma with a European supplement (Diploma supplement);
- 2) flexibility of the curriculum - it is made individually, taking into account the wishes of students who have the right to choose the most

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necessary disciplines from the variable part of the curriculum;

3) use of the unified European system of students' work record ECTS (European Credit Transfer System), ensuring their mobility, which provides the opportunity to transfer to another university of any EU country; the possibility of internship in international companies with subsequent employment in them.

Studying in Poland after the 11th grade can be continued in public or private universities, academies and other higher education institutions of the country. The peculiarities of studying in them include:

1) the possibility of enrollment twice a year, for which there are summer and winter admission campaigns. Summer enrollment begins on May 1 and lasts until mid-July (in some universities - until the end of August), and classes begin on October 1. The winter campaign covers the period from November 1 to February 28, and classes begin on March 1;

2) availability of a "zero" course - "zeruvka". Studying in Poland for Ukrainians after the 11th grade begins with this preparatory course, if you

do not have a good knowledge of Polish or

3) English. Zeruvka lasts from six months to a year. During this period foreign students learn Polish language, major subjects and adapt to life in Poland;

4) two forms of study: stationary, with attendance 5 days a week from 8:00 to 16:00, and correspondence courses, with attendance 2 times a month on weekends;

5) five-point system of knowledge evaluation.

The academic year in Polish universities lasts 10 months and is divided into two semesters, which end with sessions. Winter semester covers the period from October 1 to February 15, spring semester - from March 1 to June 20. The system of education in Polish universities provides for vacations three times a year:

- December 20 to January 2 - Christmas vacation;

- from February 23 to March 1 - semester holidays;

- from June 20 to October 1 - summer vacation.

Many students use summer vacations for exchange studies or internships in the UK, USA, Italy, Holland, France, Spain and other countries.

The most striking example is the ERASMUS+



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program.

The Erasmus program promotes cooperation between countries, providing exchange of students and teachers around the world. The program promotes academic development as well as research on the quality obtained in the countries of education participating in the program. Educational institutions in Europe that offer higher quality higher education will be better staffed to meet all the requirements of the business world.

Advantages of higher education in Poland for Ukrainians after 11th grade:

The popularity, which today enjoys admission to universities in Poland among graduates of secondary schools in Ukraine, is explained by a number of advantages of obtaining higher education in this country for Ukrainians. The main ones are:

- the opportunity to get a European-style diploma, which is recognized in the EU countries, does not require additional confirmation and gives the opportunity to get a job in Europe;

- affordable cost of studies - lower than in other European countries, and also quite comparable with the prices for education in Ukraine;

- almost complete absence of language barrier, thanks to the similarity of Polish and Ukrainian languages - after a few days in Poland you will be able to understand the people around you and even communicate in Polish;

- possibility to choose the language of teaching - Polish or English;

- high quality of education, which is provided under the Bologna system, meets European standards and is ensured by the use of the latest world methods;

- easier admission procedure - the average grade point average is taken into account only in public universities, and entrance exams are taken only for admission to medical universities. Admission to private universities in Poland, such as the WNB, is conducted in the order of priority of application. And the interview can be done via Skype;

- powerful material and technical base of any

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Polish university and highly professional teaching staff;

- the most affordable cost of living among European countries. In addition, students in Poland are provided with benefits for travel by rail and public transport, visiting laboratories, cinemas, museums and youth events;

- the possibility for students of stationary form of education to get a part-time job without any permits and time restrictions.

In addition, studying in Poland for Ukrainians after the 11th grade gives invaluable work experience in foreign companies, which can be obtained through internships or part-time work. With a diploma issued upon graduation from a Polish university, academy or higher school, you can quickly find a job in any European country and even obtain Polish citizenship in the future, thanks to living in Poland during your studies.

Advantages of studying in Poland:

- Territorial proximity to Ukraine and the possibility to travel home more often.
- The cost is not much more than in Ukrainian

universities, but the quality is many times better.

- Polish diplomas are quoted in all countries that are part of the European Union. In Ukraine, employers also prefer to hire workers with European education.

- Polish hostels are in much better condition than in our homeland.

- The mentality of Polish people is close to ours, so the period of adaptation will pass quickly and painlessly.

- Polish universities have close relations with universities in Great Britain, Germany, many students go on exchange programs to these countries.

- The Polish government actively encourages the employment of students, thus giving them the opportunity to pay for their education.

- After graduating from university in Poland, a student from Ukraine can get a job without a work visa.

- Schengen visa, which is obtained by citizens of Ukraine, enrolled in a Polish university, gives the opportunity to travel throughout Europe.

# Studying in Poland: Opportunities and Advantages for Ukrainians

- A completely new circle of acquaintances.
- To enroll in a Polish university it is not necessary to pass an external independent test, which is mandatory for admission to a Ukrainian higher education institution. Here admission is based on the points in the certificate and as a result of the interview.
- After graduating from the university you have the right to get a graduate card. This card allows you to attend the university and after graduation, go to the gym for free and enjoy discounts in those institutions that participate in the program for a particular university.

Disadvantages of studying in Poland:

- Perhaps the most important one is that in order to enter a Polish educational institution and to study successfully in it, you need to know Polish or English perfectly. And you should start studying them long before enrollment.
- Upon admission, it will be necessary to pass an

exam in English or Polish. The scores obtained in the exams will be taken into account when calculating the average score of the certificate.

- The curriculum in Poland is designed for the ability to think, analyze, express your own opinion, so one "rote learning" here will not get away.
- Be prepared that even after a long stay in this country, your accent will show that you are a foreigner. This is due to the peculiarities of pronunciation in the Polish language.
- If you graduate from a little-known university, then when applying for a job, be prepared to take an additional exam to confirm your qualifications. This is the end of the disadvantages, as you can see the advantages are much more. So take a risk and you will definitely succeed!

*Vladyslav Piroh*



# Studying in Poland: Opportunities and Advantages for Ukrainians

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## Studying in Slovakia



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In the modern world there are endless options for self-realization for young people. However, higher education is still at the top of the list. In the past, it was hard to imagine how one could study in another country, because many of our parents did not have such an opportunity. For them, the opportunity to study outside their city was already an honor and a source of pride. For our generation are open many more doors, education abroad is quite an achievable goal,

sometimes studying in a foreign university is even cheaper than in the native one. So, in my article I would like to describe some of the advantages of studying in another country on my own experience. I will talk about a country named Slovakia.

Slovakia is a small country in central Europe, which offers high quality education and unique cultural heritage. Slovakia ranks 36th in the WGEO World Living Standards Index, followed by

# Studying in Slovakia

Poland in 37th place and Lithuania in 49th place. The standard of living in Slovakia has been growing at the fastest pace in the Visegrad Four over the past 10 years. Today, Slovakia is a prosperous European country, ranked 7th among 125 transforming countries in terms of democracy and market economy by the German independent agency Bertelsmann. All of this is the result of 15 years of quiet market reforms. Today, the Slovak Republic has excellent prospects for economic development: in recent years, it has demonstrated intensive GDP growth, and foreign investors are actively investing in its market. In this article, let's look at a few of the main advantages, we will also touch on the disadvantages, which although not many, but still there are.

## **Free education at state universities**

Of course, the first place in the list of advantages should be the cost of tuition, and all because in Slovak language it is completely free for all foreign students. When you enter university, you can study for free for 5 years. You can spend them

as you wish, but usually it is enough to get a bachelor's and a master's degree. Of course, do not forget that if you interrupt your studies for any reason, you will have to pay after these 5 years.

Also do not forget that Slovak universities are working hard to develop programs in English to attract foreign students. Although tuition in English is not free, it is quite affordable compared to the rest of Europe. For example, a year of study in English in Slovakia can cost from 700-2000 euros per year, while in other countries it can go up to 20000 euros per year. Also do not forget about the ISIC student card, which gives free travel on trains in Slovakia, discounts on public transportation and museum tickets, and much more. It is also important that ISIC works in almost all countries.

## **European level of diploma**

When it comes to education, the first thing you should pay attention to is its quality. Slovakia has been providing quality and affordable education for quite a long time. Many Slovak universities are

# Studying in Slovakia

ranked in international rankings of the best universities. Higher education in Slovakia is based on the Bologna system, recognized by the whole world, so diplomas obtained in Slovakia are recognized without additional confirmation not only in the countries of the European Union, but also in the USA, Canada, Great Britain, Australia, New Zealand. Recognition of a diploma is a serious advantage for further employment abroad.

Slovakia offers a wide range of study programs, from business and engineering to social sciences and humanities. In addition, universities in Slovakia provide a supportive academic environment with small class sizes and dedicated professors who are passionate about teaching. These factors ensure that students receive a high-quality education that will prepare them for their future careers.

## **Exchange programs**

Moreover, Slovak universities actively participate in the Erasmus+ program, giving the opportunity

to participate in student exchange programs and internships in other European countries. This gives an opportunity to broaden your horizons, learn a new language, get to know another culture and develop your intercultural skills. For example, I am currently on an internship in Poland, where I am writing this article. For me, this is a huge advantage for my future career as well as for my cultural and spiritual development. There is just a short list of programs that you can take part in:

## **Studying abroad**

Erasmus+ can offer you support during your period of study abroad: whether this is in an Erasmus+ Programme country or in an Partner country.

## **Traineeships abroad**

Erasmus+ supports traineeships (work placements, internships, etc.) abroad in a Programme or Partner country for students enrolled in higher education in a Programme Country. These opportunities are also open to

# Studying in Slovakia

recent graduates.

## **Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degrees**

Erasmus Mundus Joint Masters are offered by multiple higher education institutions and run across various countries. They are distinguished by their academic excellence and by the high-level of integration of the courses. There are also scholarships for students to take part in these prestigious programmes.

## **Admission to universities without exams**

Upon completion of preparatory courses accredited by the Ministry of Education of Slovakia, prospective students have the opportunity to enter some faculties of public higher education institutions without taking entrance exams. You can learn more about such higher education institutions and faculties directly on the website of each university and academy. In addition, in Slovakia, applicants have the right to register an unlimited number of applications for admission to universities, and admission to a university is 100% reliable.

## **Scholarships at universities in Slovakia**

International students have the right to apply for a scholarship during their studies, and a scholarship is paid under the National Scholarship Program approved by the Government of the Slovak Republic. In addition, each university has its own scholarship programs. The main condition for receiving a scholarship is successful study.

The most popular one, by far, is the International Scholarships for All Degrees financed by the country's government. These 48 scholarships are available for both Bachelor's and Master's degree students and provide:

- A monthly scholarship (€280)
- A study commencement stipend (€35)
- A study completion stipend (€100)
- A monthly stipend for public universities (€80)

Of course, you have to work hard to get a scholarship. Of course, the scholarship will not be enough to cover all expenses, so many choose to find a part-time job.

Foreign students who have received a residence

# Studying in Slovakia

permit while studying in Slovakia have the right to work officially for 20 hours a week. The average salary that a student can receive allows them to cover living expenses and student travel throughout Europe. Obtaining a residence permit is one of the easiest ways to officially immigrate to Europe. Also, many employers prefer to hire students because of the loyal taxes for them.

## **Research Opportunities**

Slovakia is a center of excellence in scientific research with a long tradition of academic inquiry and research. As an international student, you can join a highly qualified research team at a leading university and take part in innovative research projects that address some of the most pressing global issues of our time.

Many Slovak universities offer research opportunities for international students, allowing them to work closely with world-renowned scientists and researchers in their field. From cutting-edge technologies to innovative therapies, research programs in Slovakia are diverse and offer opportunities for students with

different backgrounds and specializations.

One of the many advantages of conducting research in Slovakia is membership in prestigious international research organizations and networks such as CERN, JINR, ESA, ICGEB, CESSDA EUREKA and COST. These organizations provide state-of-the-art research facilities, equipment and resources necessary for conducting high quality research. Slovak research groups are recognized for participation in national and European grants and often participate in international project consortia.

If you are interested in conducting research in this country, there are many resources available to help you find a suitable research group. You can browse through a sample list of research groups in Slovakia to find a group that matches your research interests and goals. With state-of-the-art research institutes supported by outstanding scientists, you will have the opportunity to gain valuable research experience and make a significant contribution to the academic community.



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### Disadvantages

Although there are significantly more advantages, the disadvantages are still present.

1) The need to know the Slovak language. Although it is not difficult to learn the language, but its knowledge is the main task. Because without it you will not be able to study or work.

2) Outdated bureaucratic system. While in Ukraine everything is digitalized and simplified, in many European countries there is still an old bureaucratic system. Slovakia is not an exception. You will have to deal with it all the time, a lot of documents to get a bank card, to apply for a visa, to move into dormitories, to buy a bus pass and so on.

3) Outdated teaching model, although Slovakia is trying to modernize its curricula, but it doesn't always work out. There are a lot of adult teachers with an old approach and with outdated information that is no longer relevant.

4) A rather important argument is also that although Slovakia is in the European Union, the level of salaries is significantly lower compared to Western European countries. Although the cost of living and food here is significantly lower, but due to the crisis prices are growing very much, unlike wages.

### Conclusion

Despite the numerous disadvantages, Slovakia is an excellent option for those who are looking for budget and most importantly quality education in Europe. Slovakia is a beautiful young country that is rapidly developing. If you are looking for a country with affordable higher education, with a wide range of study programs, a country where many universities are highly rated in international rankings and actively participate in international research and exchange programs, Slovakia is your choice.

*Maksym Synieruk*



pon.-pt.  
**8:00-16:00**

zapraszamy

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ul. św. Józefa 23/35  
87-100 Toruń

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Międzynarodowej w Toruniu

ul. św. Józefa 23/35  
87-100 Toruń

tel.: 56 610 71 34  
fax: 56 610 72 01

[www.rodm-torun.pl](http://www.rodm-torun.pl)

Redakcja naukowa

Jan Wiśniewski  
Krystian Chołaszczyński  
Wojciech Grzywacz



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