

SAFE HOLIDAYS

GUIDE
DURING YOUR VACATION



RCB

Rządowe Centrum
Bezpieczeństwa

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Composition and implementation
Government Centre for Security



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1
2
3
4
5
6

1. Introduction - p.2
2. Preparation for the trip
 - Choosing a vacation destination - p.4
 - Checking weather conditions - p.5
 - Health and vaccinations - p.6
 - Documents - p.7
 - Insurance - p.8
3. Safety during the journey
 - Rules for traveling by car, plane, train, and bus - p.9
 - Border controls - p.11
4. Safety at the destination
 - Accommodation - p.13
 - Getting around the city - p.14
 - What to watch out for abroad? - p.15
 - Water safety - p.16
 - Mountain safety - p.17
5. Threats and how to protect yourself
 - Thefts and assaults - p.19
 - Natural threats (heatwaves, earthquakes) - p.21
 - Terrorist attacks - p.23
6. Safety in case of emergency
 - Emergency numbers - p.24
 - Contacting the consulate - p.25

1. INTRODUCTION

Holidays are a time for relaxation, discovering new places, and spending time with loved ones. To avoid unforeseen situations and enjoy a peaceful vacation, it's important to remember the basic safety rules and carefully plan the trip to minimize the risk of unpleasant surprises.



Are you planning a trip and want to be prepared for potential dangers?

Read the guide 'Safe Holidays' and be prepared for potential dangers!



6 rules for safe holidays at home and abroad

1. Inform your loved ones about your plans

When planning your trip, inform your loved ones about your travel plans. Regularly update them on your whereabouts.

2. Make copies of important documents

Make copies of documents such as your passport, ID card, and insurance. Keep them separate from the originals.

3. Prepare a first aid kit

Pack a first aid kit and any medication you take regularly.

4. Purchase travel insurance

Make sure the insurance you buy covers medical expenses.

➡ Learn more on page 8.



5. Eat meals only from trusted sources

to avoid food poisoning. Drink bottled or boiled water.

6. Learn how to contact local authorities

Write down and write down contact numbers for local emergency services, the embassy of your country and the nearest hospital.

2. PREPARATION FOR THE TRIP

Choosing a vacation destination

Before making a decision on the place of rest, check on the website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs what are the recommendations for the selected region of the world.

The MFA uses a 4-step warning scale:

ZACHOWAJ (ZWYKŁĄ) OSTROŻNOŚĆ	ZACHOWAJ SZCZEGÓLNĄ OSTROŻNOŚĆ	MSZ ODRADZA PODRÓŻE, KTÓRE NIE SĄ KONIECZNE	MSZ ODRAZA WSZELKIE PODRÓŻE
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Odysseus System

Register your journey in the **Odysseus system**.

For what purpose?

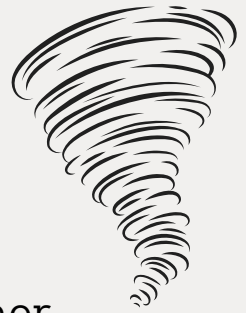
In the event of a crisis situation, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs will be able to contact you, provide necessary information, and offer assistance through the relevant diplomatic or consular post.

Learn more: www.odysseusz.msz.gov.pl

Checking weather conditions

When to go?

When planning a trip, check the weather forecast in the places you are going to visit. Understanding potential hazards such as hurricanes, tornadoes and other extreme weather events can be critical to safety.



Before leaving, check whether the weather conditions of the place you are going are favorable. You can use free applications or websites.



If you are going on holiday in Poland, you can use the forecasts prepared by the Institute of Meteorology and Water Management (IMGW).

Why is it worth checking weather conditions?

- 1 Travel safety** - knowing the weather forecast, you can avoid travel during storms, floods or other extreme atmospheric phenomena.
- 2 Activity planning** - awareness of weather conditions allows you to adjust your plans to the prevailing weather.
- 3 Equipment preparation** - knowing what weather awaits you, you can properly prepare yourself in terms of clothing and equipment.

Health and vaccinations

One of the key preparatory steps before traveling abroad is **vaccinations**. They can protect us from diseases that are not present in our geographical region.

Before the trip

- 1 Familiarize yourself with the epidemiological situation of the country you are going to.
- 2 Check the climate, sanitary conditions, and travel recommendations.
- 3 Take a supply of regularly taken medicines with you.

Get vaccinated if you are planning a holiday in a tropical or subtropical country!



Learn more on [the Ministry of Health website](#).

European Health Insurance Card (EHIC)



The European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) confirms that you have the right to receive medical treatment during tourist or business trips.

Learn more: [EHIC](#)

Documents

When planning your vacation, remember about the necessary **documents**. Their absence or any discrepancies may lead to inconveniences, delays, or even prevent your holiday plans from being carried out.

Here is a list of essential documents to prepare before every trip, ensuring that your vacation is safe and stress-free:



1. Passport

A passport is the primary identification document required for crossing borders. Before your trip, make sure that your passport is valid for at least six months from the planned date of return.



2. ID card

In European countries (members of the Schengen Area), travel is possible with an identity card. You can check the specific regulations applicable in your destination country [here](#).



3. Visa

Some countries require a visa, that is, a permit to enter and stay. It is worth taking care of this in advance, because the process of issuing visas can be time-consuming.



4. Tickets

Another important document are air, train or bus tickets and confirmation of accommodation reservations. It is good to have them in electronic and printed form.



5. Driver's License

If you plan to rent a car abroad, it is necessary to have a valid driver's license. In some countries, an international driver's license is also required, which can be obtained in Poland at the local district office.



Having the right insurance policy not only provides peace of mind but also financial and organizational support in case of health issues, theft, or other unfortunate events.

What should insurance cover?



Treatment costs

In case of illness or accident abroad, the policy covers the costs of doctor visits, hospitalization, medication, and medical transport back to the country.



Assistance

Provides 24/7 help and support in unexpected crisis situations.



Accident Insurance (pl. NNW)

Protects against financial consequences of accidents that may result in permanent health impairment or death.



Baggage insurance

Entitles you to claim compensation in case of theft, loss, or damage to your baggage during travel.



Personal Liability Insurance (pl. OC)

Protects against financial consequences of damage caused to third parties.



Purchase a policy from a reputable insurance company and make sure it covers all your activities during your stay abroad.



3. SAFETY DURING THE JOURNEY

Rules for traveling by car, plane, train, and bus



CAR

Vehicle preparation:

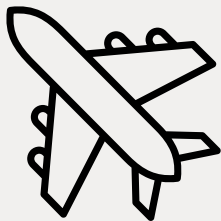
- do a technical inspection;
- check the emergency equipment;
- prepare the necessary documents.

Safe driving:

- remember to wear your seatbelt;
- take breaks to rest.

Route planning:

- update your navigation system (pack maps in case the navigation fails);
- prepare a backup plan.



PLANE

Preparing for flight:

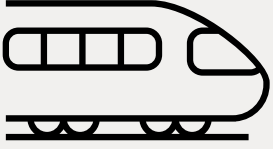
- check and prepare documents;
- check baggage limits.

At the airport:

- check in well in advance for security checks;
- pay attention to worrying situations (for example, left luggage unattended).

During the flight:

- follow flight instructions;
- keep your seat belts fastened.



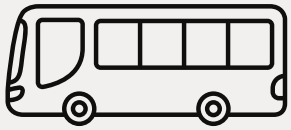
TRAIN

Before the trip:

- buy tickets in advance.

Safety on the train:

- keep valuable items with you;
- follow the travel regulations.



BUS

Before the trip:

- buy tickets in advance.

Safety on the bus:

- follow safety rules;
- keep valuable items with you;
- keep your seat belts fastened.

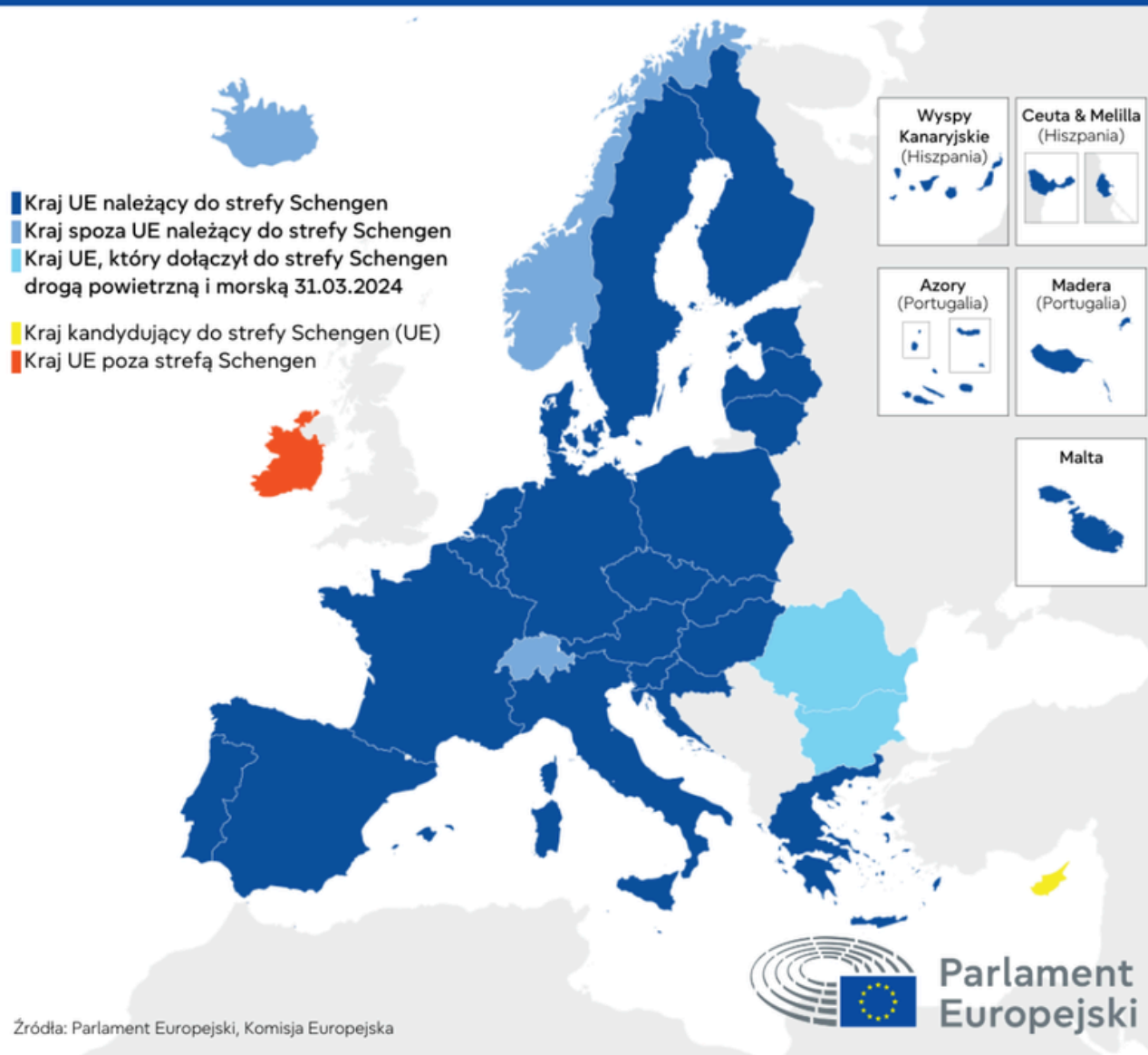


Border controls

Schengen Area

The Schengen Area allows free movement between its member countries without the need for border checks.

Strefa Schengen w 2024 roku



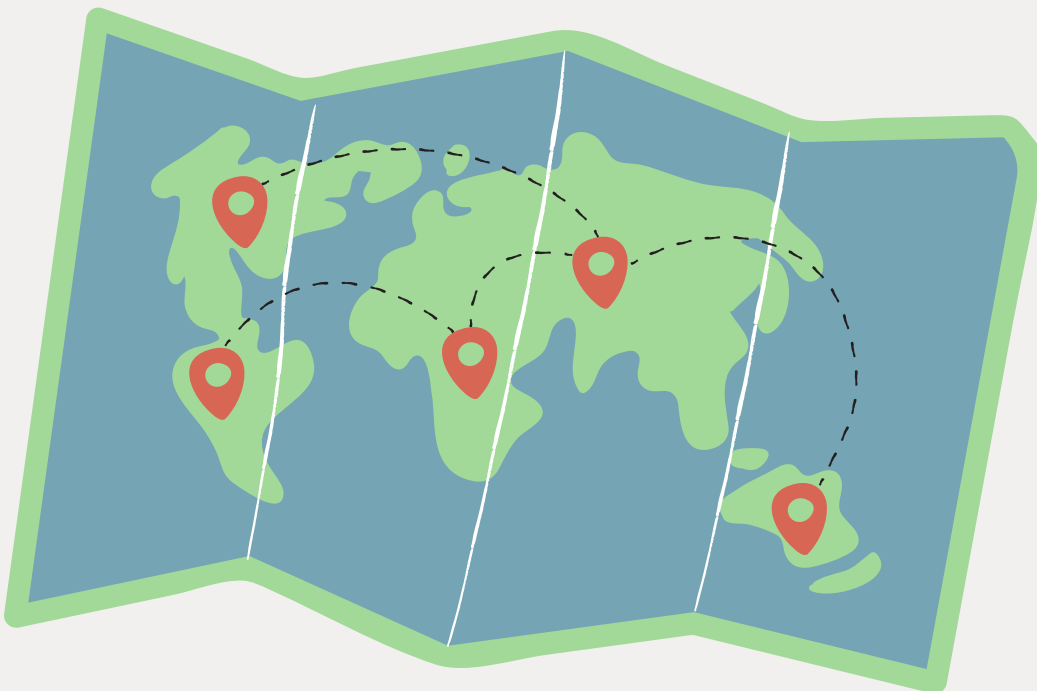
Learn more about [the Schengen Area](#).

Countries outside the Schengen Area

In countries where border control is strengthened, the following points should be kept in mind:

1. Documents - make sure you have a valid passport and visa (if necessary).
2. Prohibited items - make sure you do not carry items that are not allowed.
3. Customs policy - read the policy in force in a given country.

To check what documents are necessary to cross the border of the country you are going to, visit the website of [the Ministry of Foreign Affairs](#).



4. SAFETY AT THE DESTINATION

Accommodation

What to consider when choosing accommodation?

1 Choosing accommodation
Check reviews, prices, and the reliability of the host.

2 Localization
Check if the location is safe.

3 Security
Make sure the doors have functional locks and avoid leaving valuable items in plain sight.

4 Contact information
Note down the address of your accommodation. If you're traveling abroad, check the address of the nearest diplomatic or consular mission.

➡ Learn more on page 25.



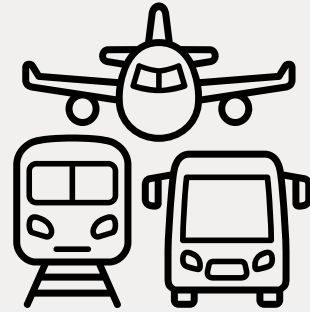
Route planning and preparation



- Install maps and navigation apps on your phone.
- Mark on the map the locations of important points (hospitals, cash machines, petrol stations).

Means of transportation

- Public transport - For safety reasons, avoid traveling alone at night.
- Taxis and ride-sharing - Use services from reputable taxi companies or ride-sharing apps. Check the vehicle's registration number and the driver's ID before getting in, and share your route with a close person.
- Rental vehicles - Rent vehicles only from trusted companies, check the vehicle's technical condition before renting, and always carry the vehicle documents and your driver's license with you.



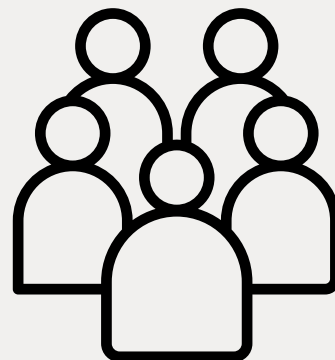
Access to information



- Always keep your phone/power bank charged.
- Note down and save local emergency numbers.
- Learn a few basic phrases in the local language.

Precautions

- Be cautious in crowds, especially in tourist areas where pickpockets may operate.
- Keep valuables close to your body.
- Stay alert and aware of your surroundings.



What to watch out for abroad?

➡ Be careful when taking photos, recording videos, and using binoculars. Such actions can be negatively perceived by the authorities of some countries, especially near military facilities.

In extreme cases, this can even lead to arrest.



➡ Avoid participating in demonstrations and be careful during large gatherings.

➡ Follow local laws and customs.



Raised thumb

In countries like Poland, France, and the USA, a raised thumb is used to signal "hitchhiking" or that everything is fine. However, in Greece and Iran, this gesture has an offensive connotation.



Circle gesture

In English-speaking countries and Europe, the circle gesture made with the thumb and index finger means "OK." In Japan, it signifies money and may be interpreted as a request for a bribe. In the Middle East, it is seen as a symbol of the "devil's eye," while in Brazil, it is equivalent to showing the middle finger. In Greece and Turkey, it is considered an offensive term for a homosexual.



Victory gesture

In Poland, the letter "V" formed by the index and middle fingers signifies victory. However, in Asia, Australia, and the UK, when the gesture is shown with the palm facing inward (towards the speaker), it carries the same meaning as raising the middle finger.



Fig

In Poland, it is a symbol of refusal. In ancient times, it meant the sexual organs. In Turkey, Indonesia, China, India and Russia it has obscene and offensive meanings.

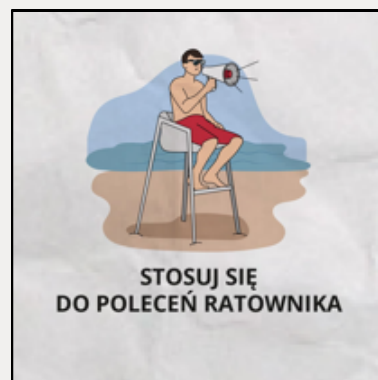
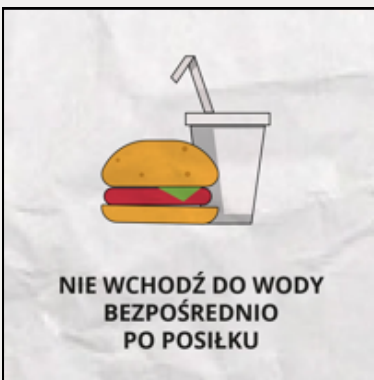
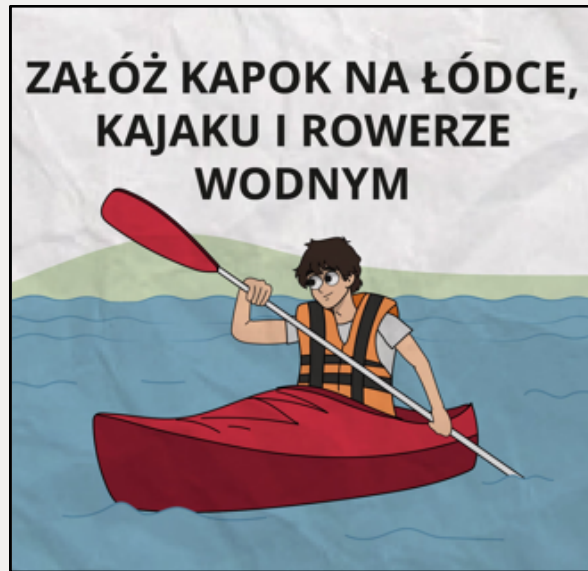


Open hand gesture

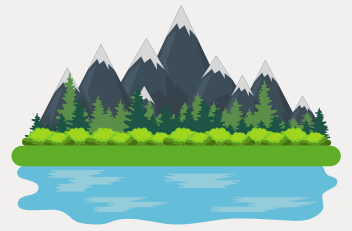
In Greece, the open hand gesture is a symbol of strong dislike. In Japan, it is used to rudely signal someone to go away or to shoo them.

Water safety

Holidays by the water are an opportunity for relaxation and fun, but it's important to remember basic safety rules. Whether you're spending time at the sea, lake, or river, exercising caution and following the tips below will help avoid dangerous situations and allow you to fully enjoy your vacation.



Safety rules



1. Route planning and information

It is important to thoroughly plan your hiking route, inform a close person about your plans, and provide an estimated time of return.

2. Weather conditions

Monitoring the weather forecast is crucial. Sudden weather changes can significantly increase the risk, especially in high mountains.

3. Equipment

Always have appropriate and situation-appropriate equipment, such as a map, compass, flashlight, food, water, a first aid kit, and clothing suited to the weather conditions.

4. Skills and experience

In the mountains, having the right skills is essential. If you lack experience, consider hiking in valleys or taking a guide with you.

5. Avalanche warnings

During the winter season or in high-altitude areas, ensure your safety and follow all safety recommendations regarding avalanches.

6. Environmental responsibility

Respect nature and leave minimal traces of your presence. Protecting the natural environment is vital for future generations.

Mountain safety

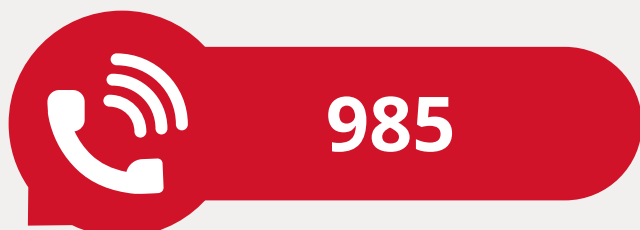
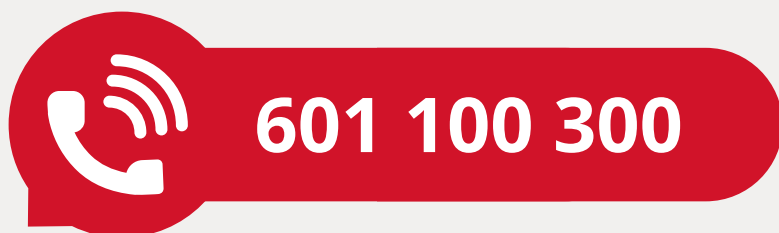
Take with you:

- 2-3 sizes of adhesive bandages
- one small roll of adhesive tape
- 2-3 bandages
- elastic bandage
- sterile ready-to-use dressings
- a small plastic bottle of hydrogen peroxide
- one triangular bandage
- aluminum emergency foil blanket
- one pair of protective latex gloves



Remember that safety in the mountains depends largely on your preparation, awareness of threats and the ability to cope with various weather and terrain conditions.

RESCUE NUMBERS IN THE MOUNTAINS



Learn more on the website
[the Mountain Volunteer Rescue Service \(pl. GOPR\)](#)

5. THREATS AND HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF

Thefts and assaults

How to protect yourself from theft?

1

Safe storage of documents and valuables

- Keep passports, money, credit cards and other valuables in your hotel safe (if any).
- Use hidden sachets or money straps that you wear under your clothes.
- Avoid carrying large amounts of money with you.

2

Be careful in the crowd

- In crowded places, such as fairs, metro stations or tourist attractions, be especially vigilant. Pickpockets usually prowl here.
- Keep your bags closed in front of you.
- Do not leave bags and backpacks unattended.

3

Use technological security

- Install apps to locate your phone in case of theft.
- Use passwords and PINs to secure your devices.
- If possible, use payment cards instead of carrying cash.



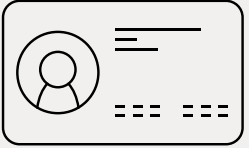
What to do in case of assault or theft?

Notify the relevant services




The first step is to report the assault or theft to the police. They will issue a certificate of the report, which will be necessary to obtain any potential compensation.


Reserves documents and PESEL number



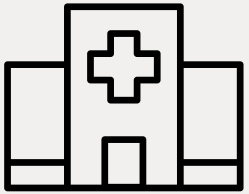
Lost documents or payment cards please register at no. +48 828 828 828*.

If a document is lost or stolen abroad, it should be reported to the consulate. If the consulate is unavailable, report it at a diplomatic mission of another European Union member country.

 Learn more on the p. 25

To block your PESEL number, visit the official website at gov.pl.  [Block your PESEL number](#)

Autopsy



In case of injury, you should immediately go to the hospital or other medical facility. The certificate obtained there may be useful when applying for compensation.

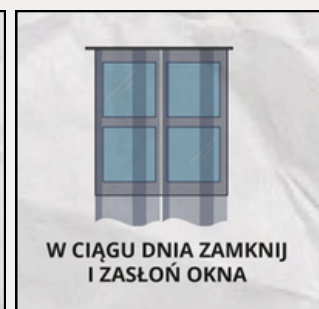
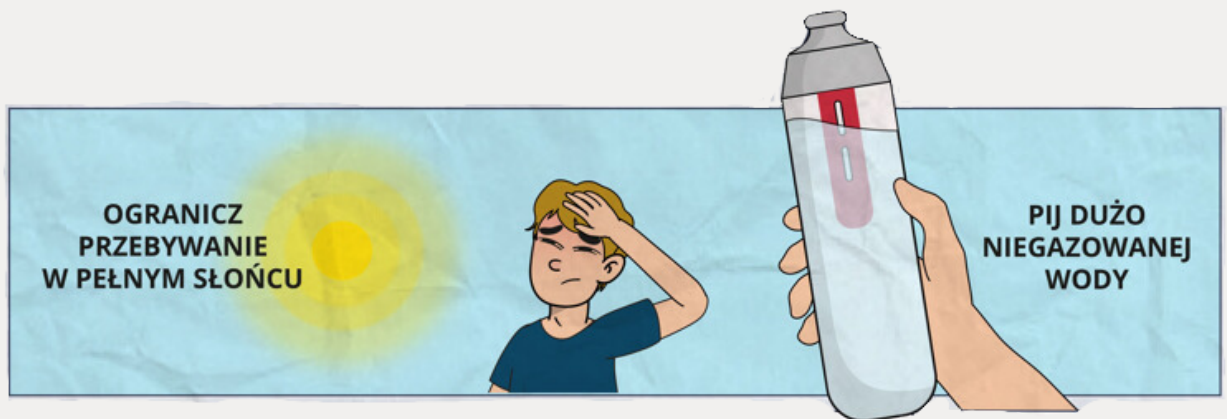
Contact the insurer



Contact your insurer and report a theft or assault. Prepare the policy number, details of the incident and the police report.

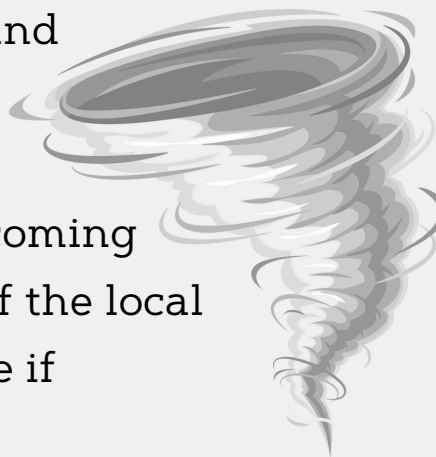
How to survive the heat?

High temperatures during the holidays can be not only burdensome, but also dangerous to health. Following a few simple rules can help you avoid heatstroke, dehydration, and other heat-related problems.



Hurricanes, cyclones, typhoons

- Regularly track weather forecasts and warnings against hurricanes, cyclones or typhoons.
- In case of a warning against an upcoming hurricane, follow the instructions of the local authorities. Be prepared to evacuate if necessary.
- Protect your property from strong winds and floods, for example by placing protective materials on windows.



CURIOSITY

Hurricane: North, Central and South America and the Caribbean

Cyclone: region of the Indian Ocean and the Pacific Ocean

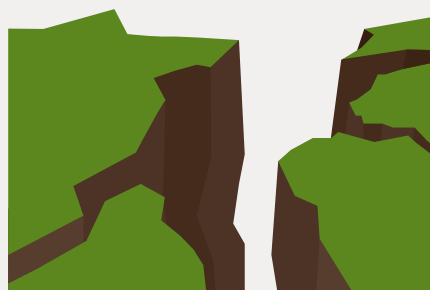
Typhoon: the Pacific region, including around Taiwan, the Philippines, Japan and China

Earthquakes

- Before you travel, learn about local procedures for dealing with earthquakes.
- During an earthquake, hide under a solid table or furniture, avoid windows and cracked walls.

Learn morej:

[Polish Geological Institute](#)



Terrorist Attacks

Check on the website of **the Ministry of Foreign Affairs** whether the country you are going to is not threatened by a terrorist attack.

 [Ministry of Foreign Affairs](#)

The MFA regularly publishes safety warnings and recommendations for travellers in different countries. If the MFA advises against travel to a specific country or region due to the high risk of terrorist attacks, give up the trip for your safety.



NIE DOTYKAJ PRZEDMIOTÓW POZOSTAWIONYCH BEZ OPIEKI

NA CO ZWRÓCIĆ UWAGĘ

- NIETYPOWE ZACHOWANIA OSÓB
- POJAZDY ZAPARKOWANE W NIETYPOWYCH MIEJSCACH
- ANONIMOWE PRZESYŁKI

JAK NAJSZYBCIEJ ODDAĆ SIĘ ZE STREFY ZAGROŻENIA

JAK REAGOWAĆ

- O SWOICH PODEJRZENIACH POWIADOM SŁUŻBY
- STOSUJ SIĘ DO POLECEŃ SŁUŻB
- ZACHOWAJ SPOKÓJ

5. SAFETY IN CASE OF EMERGENCY

Emergency numbers

If you are at risk of life, health and safety, **call 112**, which is an emergency number in every EU country. Before traveling outside Europe, check your local emergency number.





The Consul will provide support when

- you will lose your passport and want to receive a temporary passport to return to the country;
- you need help with an arrest or hospital stay;
- you are looking for an attorney or translator;
- you need urgent contact with your family in Poland (sudden and justified situation);
- you need financial support to return to Poland (after returning to the country, the amount received must be returned).



The Consul will not provide support for

- covering financial obligations;
- complaints of hotel services;
- search for personal belongings;
- booking airline tickets, hotels, admission tickets to sports events.



If you are in a country outside the European Union where there is no Polish embassy or consulate, you have the right to receive consular assistance from other EU member states on the same terms as nationals of those countries.

Check where [the Polish embassy or consulate is located](#).

RCCB

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