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**UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC
AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION**

**CONVENTION CONCERNING THE PROTECTION OF
THE WORLD CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE**

WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE

Forty-first session

**Krakow, Poland
2 – 12 July 2017**

GENERAL INFORMATION

This document provides important information concerning registration, visas, travel and accommodation, tourist attractions and useful hints.

Further information on the 41st session of the World Heritage Committee is available at the following webpage:

www.41whckrakow2017.pl

WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE

41st session

Krakow, Poland 2 – 12 July 2017

GENERAL INFORMATION



Krakow Wawel Castle, Photo credit: NicoTrinkhaus via Foter.com / CC BY-NC

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Republic of Poland is honoured to host the 41st session of the World Heritage Committee in 2017, and is looking forward to welcoming all the delegates and participants in Krakow, one of the oldest cities in Poland, whose old town was among the first 12 sites inscribed on the World Heritage List.

Bearing in mind both the underlying idea and core values expressed in the World Heritage Convention and the crucial importance of development for our future, the organizers seek to make common responsibility a hallmark of the event. Participants are therefore encouraged to adopt and experience a sustainable approach to the organization of the Committee session, not only regarding their own travel arrangements, but also the logistical set-up or service providers.

This Document has been prepared to give you an overall view of the 41st session and a few useful, practical hints which may make your stay in Poland more comfortable. You are kindly invited to read this information carefully.

2. PURPOSE

The World Heritage Committee is comprised of representatives from 21 States Parties to the *Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage* elected by the General Assembly of States Parties to the Convention.

The current composition of the Committee is as follows:

Angola, Azerbaijan, Burkina Faso, Croatia, Cuba, Finland, Indonesia, Jamaica, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Tunisia, Turkey, United Republic of Tanzania, Viet Nam and Zimbabwe.

For further information, please visit <http://whc.unesco.org/en/committee/>.

The essential functions of the Committee are:

- i. To identify, on the basis of nominations submitted by States Parties, cultural and natural properties of Outstanding Universal Value which are to be protected under the Convention, and to inscribe those properties on the World Heritage List;
- ii. To monitor the state of conservation of properties inscribed on the World Heritage List, in liaison with States Parties; decide which properties included in the World Heritage List are to be inscribed on or removed from the List of World Heritage in Danger; decide whether a property may be deleted from the World Heritage List;
- iii. To examine requests for International Assistance financed by the World Heritage Fund.

The 41st session of the World Heritage Committee will be held in Krakow from 2 to 12 July 2017 at the International Congress Centre (ICE Krakow).

3. SESSION ORGANIZERS

The 41st session is organized by UNESCO with the Republic of Poland.

The Ministry of Culture and National Heritage of the Republic of Poland is the main organizer of the session. Its duties will be executed by the National Heritage Board of Poland, with support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of the Interior and Administration.

The session will be co-organized by the City of Krakow and it will be held at the International Congress Centre (ICE Krakow) in the very heart of the city.

For general logistical and organizational information regarding the 41st session of the World Heritage Committee, please contact the session organizers at contact@41whckrakow2017.pl.

3.1 Contact details of the organizers

For specific requests to the organizers, please find below a list of relevant contacts:

The Ministry of Culture and National Heritage of the Republic of Poland (Warsaw)

Person in charge: Ms Magdalena Gawin

Tel.: +48 22 42 10 499

Email: podsekretarz.gawin@mkidn.gov.pl

National Heritage Board of Poland (Warsaw)

Person in charge: Ms Małgorzata Rozbicka

Tel.: +48 22 826 93 52 ext. 111

Email: info@nid.pl

Person in charge: Ms Katarzyna Piotrowska

Tel.: +48 516 160 661

Email: kpiotrowska@nid.pl

Person in charge: Ms Ewa Pawlak

Tel.: +48 508 288 525

Email: ewapawlak@nid.pl

Polish National Commission for UNESCO (Warsaw)

Person in charge: Ms Aleksandra Waclawczyk

Tel.: +48 22 62 03 355

Email: komitet@unesco.pl

Permanent Delegation of the Republic of Poland to UNESCO (Paris)

Person in charge: H. E. Ms Krystyna Żurek, Ambassador, Permanent Delegate of Poland to UNESCO

Tel.: +33 1 45 68 29 97

Email: dl.pologne@unesco-delegations.org

3.2 Service Contacts

Side Events and Exhibitions, including Catering Requests

If you wish to organize a side event or an exhibition, kindly submit your request to the UNESCO Secretariat focal point, Mr David Martel (d.martel@unesco.org), by 2 May 2017 at the latest.

You will receive a form to fill in with details regarding the type of event or exhibition your country would like to organize, indicating the characteristics of the required space as well as catering and technical needs.

Further to the review of your request, you will be put in contact with the Host Country organizers for any relevant information and details concerning the organization of the event (date, technical assistance, catering, etc.). Please note that the organizers reserve the right to indicate the space in which the event requested will take place. Though diverse, the space available in the International Congress Centre (ICE Krakow) is limited and it may occur that the organizers may not be able to accept all the applications.

For logistical queries, you may contact the organizers of the session via side.events@41whckrakow2017.pl.

Tours and Excursions

Guided visits to Krakow as well as fee-based day trips are being organized in cooperation with professional tour operators. Please be informed that pre-booking is mandatory for all participants. You may find detailed information on the webpage of the 41st Committee session: www.41whckrakow2017.pl.

Contact: tours@41whckrakow2017.pl.

4. PARTICIPANTS AND REGISTRATION

4.1. Participants

The main participants of the 41st session of the World Heritage Committee are the **21 members of the Committee**.

The **States Parties to the Convention**, which are not members of the Committee, are invited to attend the sessions of the Committee and its Bureau as Observers.

Non-States Parties to the Convention who are Member States of UNESCO or of the United Nations maybe permitted by the Committee, upon written request, to attend the sessions of the Committee and its Bureau as Observers.

Representatives of the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM), the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) will attend the sessions of the Committee in an advisory capacity.

The United Nations and organizations of the United Nations system, as well as other international governmental and non-governmental organizations, permanent observer missions to UNESCO and non-profit-making institutions having activities in the fields covered by the Convention, according to criteria defined by the World Heritage Committee, may, upon written request and at least 15 days prior to the start date of the session of the Committee,

be authorized by the Committee to participate in the sessions of the Committee as Observers.

Notwithstanding the overall responsibility of the Host Country is to ensure efficient functioning of the session and the security of all participants including VIPs. It is understood that the embassies and/or consulates of the countries whose nationals are among the participants to the session are also in charge of any assistance that may need to be provided to their nationals.

4.2. Registration

Please note that all requests to participate in the 41st session of the Committee **must be submitted online** through the official website: www.41whckrakow2017.pl. Online registration will be open once the official invitation letters are sent by the World Heritage Centre.

All delegates and those who wish to attend the 41st session as Observers are kindly requested to register as soon as possible and preferably before 9 June 2017. This will allow the session organizers sufficient time to process the information, and make the necessary arrangements.

To register, please use the registration code provided in the invitation letter addressed to either the Permanent Delegation, National Commission or your organization.

If you have not received the registration code, please contact your Permanent Delegation or National Commission. Contacts are available at www.unesco.org/new/en/unesco/worldwide.

Once you have registered online and your accreditation has been granted, you will receive an email confirming your registration.

Should you require any assistance or encounter any problems with the online registration, please contact us at registration@41whckrakow2017.pl.

Media

Please be informed that registration is mandatory for all media representatives. For instructions, please see chapter 9 of this document or the media section of the webpage.

For any further questions, kindly contact media@41whckrakow2017.pl.

5. PROTOCOL

The Host Country, in cooperation with diplomatic missions of the countries concerned, is in charge of all matters relating to protocol and the reception of VIPs. Should you require any help from us, please send an e-mail at protocol@41whckrakow2017.pl. Please make sure to contact us as soon as possible to ensure we can meet your requests.

6. ACCOMMODATION

Since Krakow is a very popular holiday destination, the number of hotel rooms is very limited. For your convenience, a selection of hotel rooms has been reserved for the period from

1 July to 13 July 2017. We strongly recommend that you benefit from this opportunity and book your accommodation as soon as possible.

More information can be found at www.41whckrakow2017.pl. The webpage provides comprehensive information on allocated hotel rooms in Krakow and all matters related to accommodation. Please note that participants of the 41st session shall be responsible for all expenses incurred during their stay.

For any questions concerning hotel bookings, please contact: accommodation@41whckrakow2017.pl.

7. PASSPORT, VISA AND OTHER TRAVEL INFORMATION

7.1. Passport Requirements

Participants are required to present a valid national passport to enter Poland. Its validity should extend at least three months after the intended date of departure and it must have been issued within the previous 10 years. The passport should contain at least two blank pages.

7.2. Visa Requirements

Please note that visas will be processed free of charge for all accredited participants to the 41st session of the World Heritage Committee. If necessary, accredited participants may apply for a visa in any Polish Consulate of their choice and not only in the Polish Consulate of their residence's jurisdiction.

For all enquiries concerning visas and other formalities required to enter the Schengen area, participants are invited to visit the relevant website of a competent Consulate. The list of competent Embassies/Consulates can be found on the website: http://www.msz.gov.pl/en/travel_to_poland/polands_missions_abroad/.

To ensure that visas are issued in time, participants are strongly encouraged to submit their applications as soon as possible. It is recommended to submit the application after having successfully completed the online registration and having been accredited by the UNESCO World Heritage Centre and, preferably, **before 2 June 2017**.

Please note that, depending on the country of residence, specific deadlines may apply for submitting visa application.

The confirmation e-mail received upon online registration and accreditation (see chapter 4.2 of this document) must be presented to support the visa request, together with:

- a copy of the official UNESCO invitation letter,
- a passport and its copy,
- a completed and signed visa application form,
- a biometric photograph (in colour and passport-sized),
- proof of medical insurance of at least EUR 30000 valid on the entire Schengen territory,
- a hotel booking confirmation,
- a return flight reservation.

IMPORTANT: The documents listed above represent the minimum visa requirements.

The Polish visa sections in each country may require further information and/or documentation. Biometric data of the applicant will also be collected. All Polish Embassies

will be notified by the organizers of all participants who have successfully registered through the online registration system.

All visa applications should be lodged no more than three months before the start of the intended visit. Holders of a multiple-entry visa may lodge the application before the expiry of the visa valid for a period of at least six months.

Please note that the UNESCO World Heritage Centre will be unable to intervene in any visa decisions taken by the Polish authorities.

If you have any questions, please refer directly to the visa section of the competent Consulate.

Information concerning customs and import restrictions is available at www.41whckrakow2017.pl.

7.3. Travel to Poland and Krakow

Once you have received an e-mail confirming your accreditation, you are strongly advised to organize your trip to Krakow.

Flying to Krakow

Krakow Airport is the largest regional airport in Poland. The operational area of the airport covers south-eastern Poland inhabited by around 7.9 million people within a 100 km range. The airport is situated about 11 km west of Krakow's centre. We encourage all participants to make use of the possibility of traveling to/from the airport by train. The journey to the city centre takes approximately 17 minutes. Additionally, Krakow Airport is served by two regular bus lines: 208 and 252, and one night line: 902.

For more information, please visit the airport website: <http://www.krakowairport.pl/en/>.

In case you are planning to take part in a tour, before departure, please check its final stop/destination as some tours are planned to end in Warsaw (the capital city). In such cases, you may need to take this into consideration when planning your travel arrangements within Poland or to book a multi-destination flight. Warsaw Chopin Airport, as Poland's largest and busiest airport, handles almost 40% of the country's air passenger traffic.

You can find more detailed information directly on the airport website: <https://www.lotnisko-chopina.pl/en/index.html>.

You can easily book a direct train ticket from Warsaw to Krakow here: <https://www.intercity.pl/en/>. The journey takes less than three hours.

7.4. Medical insurance

If needed, a first aid service and an ambulance will be available at the International Congress Centre (ICC Krakow) at all times during the session. Please note, however, no other medical service will be provided. Participants are expected to cover the costs of any medical expenses incurred in Poland. Therefore, it is highly recommended that participants have an insurance policy covering medical expenses in Poland and elsewhere during their travel. Participants requesting an entry visa will also be required to submit a proof of medical insurance.

Medical emergency call number is 112 (or 999).

8. THE MEETING

8.1. Conference Venue

Built in 2014, the International Congress Centre (ICE Krakow) meets the requirements of various cultural and social events such as conferences, concerts, theatre shows or exhibitions. The high architectural and technical standard of the building places it among the most popular congress centres in Poland.

Over 36.000 m² of conference space, an Auditorium ready to host 2000 people, a spacious and multifunctional foyer adapted for various activities, the building's excellent location in the centre of Krakow – these are only some of the assets of the multifunctional International Congress Centre (ICE Krakow).

Additionally, the venue is barrier-free accessible and adapted for people with disabilities and special needs.

For further information about the venue, please visit the International Congress Centre (ICE Krakow) website: <http://www.icekrakow.com/>.

8.2. Local Transportation and Transfer to the Conference Venue

The International Congress Centre (ICE Krakow) can be reached within 30 minutes by public transport from the Krakow airport, 15 minutes from the Central Train Station and the Old Town. In order to reduce the ecological footprint of the session, we encourage all participants of the 41st session of the World Heritage Committee to use the excellent and safe infrastructure of local public transport facilities as well as... their feet. Take advantage of the picturesque streets with their tenement houses, as you need about 25 minutes to reach International Congress Centre (ICE Krakow) from the Main Square and only 15 minutes from the Wawel Hill.

All participants will receive a free travel card for Krakow public transport. Additionally, a comprehensive information on schedules and itineraries will be available at the session webpage.

At any time, participants can order a taxi, at their own expense, either from hotel receptions or from the registration desk at the International Congress Centre (ICE Krakow).

8.3. Registration Desk and Distribution of Badges at the Meeting Place

The onsite registration desk, situated at the entrance of the International Congress Centre (ICE Krakow), will be open on 29 June from 3:00 pm until 6:00 pm, and from 30 June until 1 July 2017 between 9:00 am and 6:00 pm.

During the session, from 2 until 10 July 2017, the registration desk will be open between 8:00 am and 7:00 pm.

All participants are encouraged to present themselves at the onsite reception desk before the opening of the session of the World Heritage Committee on 2 July in order to allow a smooth registration process. Information and welcome dossier on the 41st session will be provided.

Please note that, due to safety reasons and the expected number of visitors, the registration process and receiving your badge may take a while.

The registration is mandatory and only participants with badges will be allowed to enter ICE Krakow.

Please be informed that the Opening Ceremony will take place on 2 July in a different venue (Wawel Hill in Krakow). Only registered participants with valid invitations will be allowed to

attend. Please make sure to collect your personal invitation beforehand at the onsite registration desk at the International Congress Centre (ICE Krakow).

In case you are not able to collect your invitation in advance, please contact us at protocol@41whckrakow2017.pl.

8.4. Badges

Badges will be available at the registration desk for accredited participants only. Please note that, in order to collect the badge, all participants will be requested to show a valid ID or passport.

It is important that participants check in at the onsite registration desk upon arrival, so as to allow sufficient time for the badges to be printed and collected. We will do our best to make this process run as smooth as possible. However, we kindly ask for your patience if it takes longer than expected.

Please note that for security reasons the identification badge is non-transferable and it must be visible at all times.

8.5. Service Area for Participants

Free wireless Internet connection will be provided in the entire Conference Centre at all times.

An area equipped with a limited number of computers with internet access, as well as docking stations for portable devices will be available for all participants. Should you require help, our staff will be available to assist you at all times.

For ecological reasons, only one printed set of the documents related to the 41st session will be available for each Committee member delegation.

All other delegates are kindly requested to bring their own copies or to make use of the memory stick containing all relevant documents for the session, which will be provided to all participants upon registration. Documents will also be accessible online six weeks prior to the opening of the session. Let's think about our common responsibility for the environment.

8.6. Meals and Refreshments

During the 41st session, coffee, tea, water and small refreshments will be offered outside the main meeting room free of charge.

During lunchtime, several fee-based meal options will be provided in the restaurant area of the International Congress Centre (ICE Krakow). You can also take advantage of the city's rich gastronomic offer and taste local specialties or opt for cuisine from around the world.

8.7 Prayer and Meditation Room

A Prayer Room will be at participants' disposal during the entire Committee session.

9. MEDIA

Poland honours the principles of press freedom and welcomes media representatives from around the world. The session is open to media representatives at all times. The session will be livestreamed at www.41whckrakow2017.pl and on the World Heritage Centre's webpage. For further information, please read the following sections carefully.

9.1. Accreditation

Accreditation is mandatory for journalists wishing to cover the 41st session of the World Heritage Committee. To get accreditation, please register online at the following address: www.41whckrakow2017.pl.

9.2. Media Registration and Security Measures

The onsite registration desk for media will be open on 1 July from 3:00 pm until 6:00 pm, and from 2 until 10 July 2017, between 8:00 am and 7:00 pm. A special reception desk will be reserved onsite for media representatives. Please note that your online registration and accreditation must be done before going to the onsite reception desk. In order to collect badges, all participants will be requested to show a valid ID or passport.

It is important that media representatives check in at the onsite registration desk upon arrival, so as to allow sufficient time for the badges to be printed and collected.

Identification badges must be worn visibly at all times to gain access to the venue, and must be presented to security staff upon request. Identification badges are non-transferable. Access to the International Congress Centre (ICE Krakow) will be granted to individuals with badges only.

Please be informed that security staff has a right to examine and verify any equipment taken into the International Congress Centre (ICE Krakow). Please allow for sufficient time in your schedule to pass the security checks.

For any questions regarding media accreditation and facilities, please contact the session organizers at the following address: media@41whckrakow2017.pl.

9.3. Media Centre

Journalists covering the 41st session of the World Heritage Committee will have access to the Media Centre, equipped with appropriate working space and a Wi-Fi connection. Journalists who wish to organize interviews with Committee members are required to submit their requests to the Media Centre at media@41whckrakow2017.pl.

9.4. Press Conferences

Press Conferences will take place in a designated area within the International Congress Centre (ICE Krakow) for accredited media only. The programme of events planned for the media will be provided at the time of registration as well as on the webpage.

9.5. Press Material and Media Assistance on the Spot

Press material including photos, press releases or interviews will be posted on the session's webpage and updated regularly. The webpage will also contain links to the Committee's

working documents and to the livestream of the session. Debates of the Committee session will be live-streamed with an online and on-screen broadcast.

A team responsible for media relations will be present at the Media Centre during the session.

Information meetings on World Heritage Committee decisions will be held as required.

10. RECEPTION PROGRAMME AND RELATED EVENTS

As a registered participant, you are cordially invited to attend the receptions and events that will be held during the 41st session of the World Heritage Committee. The full programme will be made available on the webpage: www.41whckrakow2017.pl.

Delegates who wish to attend the Opening and/or the Closing Ceremony are kindly requested to indicate explicitly their participation when registering online.

The Opening Ceremony of the 41st session will be held on 2 July 2017 at 7.30 pm at the Wawel Hill (Krakow) and will be followed by a reception. The Closing Ceremony will be held on 11 July 2017 at the Museum of Municipal Engineering in Krakow. Detailed information about both Ceremonies of the 41st session will be provided on the webpage: www.41whckrakow2017.pl.

10.1. Guided Tours and Day Trips

Guided visits to the city of Krakow as well as fee-based day trips to selected World Heritage sites will be offered.

Detailed information will be available on the webpage: www.41whckrakow2017.pl/the-41st-session/programme/.

You are kindly requested to book your trip online and to confirm your participation at the tourist information desk located in the entrance hall of the International Congress Centre (ICE Krakow). Please inform our staff at the earliest convenience and no later than 2 days before the trip date.

Please note that availability for each trip is limited and that a minimum number of participants is required. You are therefore encouraged to book your trips early so as to avoid any inconvenience and to enable the organizers to proceed with proper preparations.

11. WORLD HERITAGE YOUNG PROFESSIONALS FORUM

The World Heritage Youth Forum has become an annual event held in conjunction with the session of the World Heritage Committee. This year, as part of the 41st session, The Young Professionals Forum (YPF) will be organized by the International Cultural Centre in Krakow in cooperation with the Polish National Commission for UNESCO.

The YPF will take place from 25 June to 4 July 2017, starting with a visit in Warsaw and continuing the meeting at the International Cultural Centre in Krakow. We are happy to provide a platform for a meeting of participants aged 22 to 32 years, who are eager to learn more about the implementation of the World Heritage Convention, the working methods of

the World Heritage Committee, the challenges of a sustainable management of World Heritage sites, as well as their conservation and protection.

Via a call for participation, interested young professionals coming from States Parties to the World Heritage Convention may apply for participation online. Participants may be young professionals with a background in cultural or natural heritage-related issues. Priority is given to young professionals from States Parties of the World Heritage Committee Members.

Application documents are available online at www.41whckrakow2017.pl/. Additionally, National Commissions and Permanent Delegations of the above-mentioned countries are encouraged to distribute the Call for Participation. In order to ensure broad representation, only one participant from each country will be selected. The main criteria will be the applicant's knowledge and experience in relation to the World Heritage issues as well as maintenance of gender balance.

All travel, board and accommodation costs will be covered by the Host Country.

For further information, please check the above website or contact the organizers: e.wojton@mck.krakow.pl or m.wisniewski@mck.krakow.pl.

12. WORLD HERITAGE SITE MANAGERS FORUM

At a time where the World Heritage List includes over 1.000 properties and a global territory of over 276 million hectares under protection, greater comprehension of the World Heritage decision-making process among site-managers becomes crucial for more effective protection of Outstanding Universal Value (OUV). It allows the *Convention* to fulfil its potential as a tool and catalyst for World Heritage protection and heritage protection in general. At the same time, future improvements to the World Heritage decision-making procedures must build on and respond to greater engagement of those dealing with World Heritage on a day-to-day basis.

The Forum is designed for participants selected from World Heritage sites for which a State of Conservation (SOC) report has been prepared and presented for decision making at the 41st session of the World Heritage Committee. Participants should be able to demonstrate their involvement in on-going management activities of World Heritage properties that they represent. Applications will be called through the Permanent Delegations to UNESCO, and the States Parties will be requested to submit up to three applications. Participants, preferably one per State Party, will be finally selected by the Host Country, in consultation with Advisory Bodies and the World Heritage Centre.

Participants will be responsible for their round trip travel costs to and from Poland and their living costs. Candidates are strongly encouraged to seek financial support. In cases of proven financial need, and depending on the availability of funding at the time of the Forum, a number of partial scholarships may be granted to cover travel and living expenses. The Host Country has ensured a pool of funds, enabling representatives of less developed countries, as defined in paragraph 239 point b. of the *Operational Guidelines*, to participate in the Forum.

The working language of the Forum will be English.

For further information, please check the website: www.41whckrakow2017.pl or contact the organizers: smf@41whckrakow2017.pl.

13. INFORMATION ON THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND

13.1. The Republic of Poland

Poland, a Central European country with a population of 38.5 million, is located between the Baltic Sea in the north and the Carpathian and Tatra Mountains in the south. With a surface area of 120,727 sq. miles, Poland ranks eighth in Europe. The longest river, the Vistula, flows across the country, connecting the ancient city of Krakow, Warsaw –the capital– and the port town of Gdańsk. The Pomeranian and Masurian Lakelands attract yachting lovers and those willing to discover the primeval forest where rare species of animals and old trees whisper the tale of days gone by. With eleven centuries of history behind it, Poland has a very rich cultural heritage, which goes back to the days when the amber route ran through its lands.

Poland's history as a state began near the middle of the 10th century, when the Piast dynasty joined several territories ruled by local Slavic tribes. In 966 Poland was baptised and, in 1025, first king Bolesław Chrobry was brought to the throne.

In 1386 the Grand Duke of Lithuania married Queen Jadwiga of Poland, and was crowned King of Poland. Since then, the Kingdom of Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania were joined under the personal union and ruled by the Jagiellonian dynasty. Almost two centuries later, in 1569, the union was further strengthened by the Treaty of Lublin forming a Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, which became one of the strongest powers in Europe.

The series of wars and internal unrests led to the dissolution of the Commonwealth and, finally, to Poland's loss of independence. Between 1772 and 1795, the country was divided between Russia, Prussia, and Austria and disappeared from the map for over a century. It was after the World War I, in 1918, when Poland regained its independence; however, it lasted only twenty years, until the breakout of the World War II, in which Poland suffered tremendously.

After the war, Poland was under the rule of the communist party. Nearly half a century of totalitarian rule followed. With the formation of the independent trade union "Solidarity" in 1980, Poland slowly started its march towards a change. With over 10 million members, in 1989 Solidarity paved the way to Poland's first free elections and 1990 finally brought the communist era to an end.

A new story began when Poland joined the European Union in 2004. Nowadays, Poland is a modern and dynamic country and is considered one of the fastest growing economies in Central Europe.

The Polish culture remained very strong even in times of national crises. Though in the 19th century the country ceased to exist, Polish romantic poets such as Adam Mickiewicz and Juliusz Słowacki or composers, among them Fryderyk Chopin, played a crucial role in building Polish national identity and, through their work, fought the "Polish case" on the European continent. Despite difficulties and ever-present censorship, during the post-war years, many important Polish artists emerged, whose work continues to influence young artists. Polish theatre came to the forefront with Tadeusz Kantor and Jerzy Grotowski as main figures.

In parallel, the Polish literary scene saw two Nobel Prize winners, Czesław Miłosz and Wisława Szymborska, and Polish cinema gave rise to world renowned cinematographers like Krzysztof Kieślowski (the *Decalogue* series), Andrzej Wajda (an Academy Award for Lifetime Achievement in 2000) or Roman Polański (*Rosemary's Baby* and *Chinatown*).

Soon after World War II, two fellow students from Warsaw's Academy of Fine Arts, Eryk Lipiński and Henryk Tomaszewski, started what later became known as the Polish Poster School. From the early 1950s until 1989, communist Poland became an art poster mecca, and a poster itself a statement on social and cultural reality. With a clever use of

composition, vivid colours, and symbolism, Polish posters and their creators, among them Jan Lenica, Waldemar Świerzy, became known worldwide.

The musical stage did not lag behind. In the 1960s, the so-called "Polish composers' school", characterized by new aesthetic tendencies, was born. The key representatives in Polish contemporary classical music were, *inter alia*, Witold Lutosławski, Krzysztof Penderecki as well as Henryk Mikołaj Górecki.

Jazz music, though officially banned by the communist government, flourished right after World War II, becoming a way to give voice to the spirit of freedom and nonconformity. The great Polish jazz tradition, including key actors like Krzysztof Komeda, continues to inspire future generations of musicians. From Tomasz Stańko, through Leszek Możdżer, a Grammy Music Award winner, Włodek Pawlik and Urszula Dudziak, a UNESCO Artist for Peace, jazz still plays an important role on the music scene.

13.2. The city of Warsaw

As the capital and the largest city in Poland, Warsaw is not only the seat of the government and an administrative centre of the country, but also of the seat of many key institutions like the Polish Central Bank, the Warsaw Stock Exchange or the European Agency Frontex.

With a population of almost 2 million, Warsaw is an important hub of various industries, hosting the headquarters of international and Polish companies.

Though Warsaw is mainly considered a business-oriented city, the academic and cultural life is also blooming. It is the seat of the Polish Academy of Sciences, of Poland's largest university –the University of Warsaw, the Fryderyk Chopin University of Music and the Academy of Fine Arts among others. With two opera houses, the Warsaw Philharmonic, various theatres, museums, libraries and many monuments, the city is home to many cultural institutions. Among them are the newly opened and beautifully designed POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews, the Museum of Modern Art and the Copernicus Science Centre by the Vistula River.

Also called a Phoenix city, Warsaw illustrates a great story of rebirth. The city, which was almost completely destroyed during World War II, is now a vibrant and green metropolis. Warsaw's tumultuous past is best portrayed in its architectural disorder where gothic relics, baroque palaces, social realist architecture and contemporary glass and steel adjoin. Although today's Warsaw is a fairly young city, it has many tourist attractions to offer.

With its churches, market square and colourful tenement houses, Warsaw's Old Town is one of the main tourist attractions. Among the most notable landmarks of the Old Town are the Royal Castle, the King Sigismund's Column, the Market Square and the Barbican. The complex was restored completely after the war following the campaign of its citizens and it is now inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List. It is an outstanding example of a near-total reconstruction over a span of history covering from the 13th to the 20th century.

Warsaw hosts many renowned international cultural events. One of the most famous worldwide is the International *Fryderyk Chopin Piano Competition*, initiated in 1927 and held in Warsaw every five years since 1955. The Competition was created from the need to popularize and preserve familiarity with the music and the piano-playing tradition that was characteristic of Fryderyk Chopin's style. For years, this pianistic tournament was one of its kind in the world, and still remains one of few competitions devoted entirely to the works of a single composer.

Every September since 1956, Warsaw hosts the largest Polish international festival of contemporary classical music called *Warsaw Autumn*, organized by the Polish Composers' Union. The aim of the festival is to familiarize its audience with the newest trends of the contemporary classical music presented in a context of their relation to tradition.

Last but not least, since 2000, Warsaw gathers enthusiasts of independent cinema at its Warsaw Film Festival. This annual event joined in 2009 the elite group of events recognized by the International Federation of Film Producers Associations (www.fiapf.org) along, *inter alia*, Cannes, Venice or Berlin.

13.3. Małopolska Region

Małopolska's extraordinary natural complexity goes hand-in-hand with its diversity and multiculturalism, which has developed over the centuries, creating an exceptionally valuable national and regional heritage. The region boasts with monuments from all eras, interesting architectural styles and exceptional buildings with, amongst them, exceptional examples of vernacular architecture. This land, alongside Wielkopolska region, was one of the cradles of the Polish state, and dozens of castles, towns and villages with historic urban layouts, nearly a thousand churches and other places of worship, reflect this rich history. The region possesses natural springs of mineral waters, particularly in the south, which have beneficial influence on human health and are used as alternative treatment for numerous diseases and ailments. Owing to its upland and mountain terrain, including the highest mountain range in the Carpathian Mountains -Tatra Mountains, the region has excellent conditions for all forms of active tourism, such as downhill and cross-country skiing and mountain climbing. The local countryside is also exceptionally attractive, offering rich and diverse local culture, customs, traditional locally sourced cuisine and crafts in scenic surroundings. Małopolska offers a developed range of foods based on traditional recipes –the region has more EU-registered regional products than any other region in Poland. Additionally, six out of fourteen places inscribed onto World Heritage List are located in Małopolska, including the Wieliczka and Bochnia Royal Salt Mines and the Historic Centre of Krakow, which were among the first twelve sites inscribed on the List in 1978.

13.4. The City of Krakow

Krakow, the capital of Małopolska region, is the second largest city in Poland inhabited by over seven hundred thousand people. The Historic Centre of Krakow, located on the River Vistula bank, is formed by three urban ensembles: the Wawel Hill complex, the medieval chartered city of Krakow, and the town of Kazimierz (including the suburb of Stradom). It is one of the most outstanding examples of European urban planning, characterized by the harmonious development and accumulation of features representing all architectural styles from the early Romanesque to the Modernist periods.

As a former capital of Poland, Krakow is filled with treasures of the past satisfying the needs of even the most demanding admirers of architecture. The opulence and splendor of the Sukiennice, the medieval market place, is a proof of the glory the city enjoyed in the medieval century. Adjacent to the Main Market Square stands The Mariacki Church. The characteristic facade of the Church, consisting of two high-raised uneven towers, cannot be missed. Up on the Wawel Hill, raised above the city, stands the majestic Wawel Castle. The Hill is comprised of many historically significant buildings dating back to different eras. Wawel played a significant role in the political and religious history of the country and the city itself. For centuries, it was the Royal Residence of the Polish kings.

As one of the largest administrative and commercial centres in central Europe, Krakow was a city where arts and crafts flourished, and the culture of East and West intermingled. The importance of Krakow as a cultural centre of European significance is reinforced by its being home to one of the oldest universities of international renown – the Jagiellonian University.

This cultural tradition is continued to these days, and Krakow remains an important centre, hosting many local and international festivals each year. The Jewish Culture Festival in Krakow is the largest festival of contemporary Jewish culture presenting its diversity and beauty from all around the globe. Named after modernist author Józef Konrad Korzeniowski

– known to the world as Joseph Conrad – The Conrad Festival presents modern literature created in various places in the world, by artists of diverse roots, cultures and experiences. The participants can exchange ideas taking part in debates, workshops, films and theatre shows, concerts, exhibitions, literary walks and urban games. Sacrum Profanum is another annual event, which has gained international fame. The idea behind the event is to present two trends in the 20th century music: the sacred (sacrum) and the lay (profanum). The festival merges the worlds of avant-garde music and the developments of ambitious entertainment and the experimental scene, presenting iconic stars such as Kronos Quartet, Jonny Greenwood (Radiohead), Adrian Utley (Portishead) or Sigur Rós.

A map of Krakow is available here: <http://infokrakow.pl/en/mapa>.

13.5 Polish cuisine

Polish cuisine is the result of a treasured lore of ancestral ingredients and an intriguing mix of European and Eastern influences. Poles are very passionate about food and their cuisine has recently bloomed from virtual obscurity to one of the rising stars of the European scene. Its great advantage comes from its range of unexpected tastes: the sharp pungency of mustard plants, the sparkle of fermentation and umami galore.

While Poland is not immune to the fast-food bug, still to this day the average Pole carries a shaman-like knowledge of mushrooms, berries, and ancestral recipes. Consequently, fresh and delicious local dishes are not hard to come by while visiting, but audacious cooks abroad should not be afraid to try a few recipes themselves since most key ingredients can easily be made at home, if not necessarily available in stores. A typical Polish meal starts with soup, most of which are beetroot soup (barszcz), a sour soup of fermented rye (żurek) or, in the summer, cold beetroot and yoghurt soup (chłodnik). Pierogi: the most iconic Polish food of all, need no introduction. Stuffed with potatoes and cheese are one of the most popular varieties in Poland, but meat and other fillings are quite popular as well. A thing not to miss is “bigos”, a dish made of sauerkraut stewed with a variety of meats and mushrooms. In the summer, various fruit play a key ingredient: apples, pears, plums and wild berries can be found in most of desserts.

13.6. Climate

Poland's climate is moderate and generally has equal periods of cold or warm weather. June and July are among the warmest and most beautiful months. However be advised that July can be rainy.

The current weather forecast is available at <http://www.accuweather.com/en/pl/poland-weather>.

13.7. Currency & Exchange

The official currency is the Polish złoty (PLN). Cash dispensers (ATMs) are very popular and spread densely around every city. All popular types of credit cards are widely accepted in shops, so it is very convenient to use this kind of payment. Money can be exchanged in banks, hotels or exchange counters (Polish: kantor).

Exchange rates can be found on the website of the *Narodowy Bank Polski* <http://www.nbp.pl/homen.aspx?f=/srodeken.htm>.

Please note that you may be charged an extra fee, depending on your bank policy.

13.8. Gratuities

It is customary to reward good service with a ten percent tip.

13.9. Electricity Supply

The standard voltage for Poland is 220–240 Volts. Plug type C, E, F. The outlet has two round holes and often a round male pin for grounding.

13.10. Smoking

In Poland, smoking is prohibited in public spaces. Certain restaurants and cafeterias have a designated, separate area for smokers.

A space dedicated for smoking will be arranged within International Congress Centre (ICE Krakow).

13.11. Time Zone

Poland is part of the Central European Time (CET; UTC+01:00) and from 26 March 2017 to 24 October 2017 part of the Central European Summer Time (CEST; UTC+02:00).

13.12. Drinking Water

It is highly recommended to make use of Poland's tap water, which is always potable.

13.13 Useful phone numbers

Poland area code: +48

Warsaw area code: +48 22

Krakow area code: +48 12

Police: 997

Ambulance: 999

Fire brigade: 998

Emergency number to dial from mobile telephones: 112

13.14 Useful Polish expressions

Good morning	Dzień dobry (jean dough-bree)
Goodbye	Do widzenia (d-oh veedzenia)
Please/here you are	Proszę (prosh-eh)
Thank you	Dziękuję (jen koo yeh)
How are you?	Jak się masz? (yahk sheh mash)

14. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For further information about the World Heritage Committee and the World Heritage Convention, please see the UNESCO World Heritage Centre's website at the following link: <http://whc.unesco.org>.

For all questions concerning the organization of the 41st session of the World Heritage Committee, please do not hesitate to contact the session organizers: contact@41whckrakow2017.pl.

We look forward to welcoming you to Poland soon!