

## FQA – Frequently Asked Questions

### 1) How to come to Bialystok from the Airport?

You can choose one of two ways of coming to Bialystok from the Okęcie Chopin Airport in Warsaw. There are shuttle busses from airport to the Bialystok which we can offer 2 firms you can see the Schedule from the links below. They are in Polish but you can understand it easily. It is useful to say that lotnisko-okecie means airport.

<http://www.transavia.com.pl/rsuw.php>

[http://www.podlasie-express.pl/rozklad\\_wawa.html](http://www.podlasie-express.pl/rozklad_wawa.html)

You can check the driving ways and schedule under the menu called ‘rozklad jazdy’ too. The first offered buss comes to the in front of a hotel which is in the Centrum of the Bialystok called Hotel Cristal. The second choice arrives to the bus station of Bialystok which is very near to the Centrum.

#### Contact Information

Trans-Avia

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### 2) How are the dormitory conditions where you will stay?

All the bed clothes, pillows and blankets, etc. can be taken from the dormitory management for free. But if you want to use your own sheets you can bring or buy them for example from a hypermarket. They are not very expensive. In addition, you have 24-hour cold, hot water inside the dormitory. There are many sections in a floor at the dormitory and inside the every section there are 4 rooms that 2 of them is for three persons and 2 of them is for 2 persons. There is one bathroom and one toilet inside a section. For cooking you can use the kitchen which is one and used by people who lives in same floor. There are two cookers inside the kitchen. On the other hand, you can wash your clothes inside the laundry room which exists in every floor and has one washing machine and strings to hang your wet clothes.

### 3) What we have inside the dormitory room?

In side the room that you will stay, there are beds, desks, wardrobes and some shelves hanged on the wall. You can ask dormitory for a kettle to use in your room-it is free.

Other useful details are that electric sockets work with 220 V in Poland and you have 2-3 sockets depending on your room. Also you can connect internet from dormitory. Its price 90 zloty in first connection, then you pay 31.50 zloty per month. If you wish to have a fridge in your room, its price is 90 zloty per month. You can share it with your friends and you can share the price with them too. Cost for dormitory room is 300-400 zloty per month.

#### **4) Which currency is used in Poland and how can you transfer your money to the national currency of Poland?**

Poland is an EU country but Euro isn't used in this country. Polish Zloty is to be used inside the country borders. If your grant is in Euro, you should notice that all the bank ATMs in Poland use Polish Zloty, so if you have an Euro account in your country, you should change it to your own currency if you live in non EU country. ATMs in Poland can change your own currency to the zloty (except Euro). If you live in EU country and use Euro as a currency, you should open a Citibank account to be able to use your money in Poland. Because only Citibank lets change Euro to the zloty from the ATM. Besides you can bring your all Money with you and change your cash at the change offices called 'Kantor' in Poland. The third choice is also exist that you can open a new bank account in Poland and transfer your Euro money to this account. After that you can use your money with changing zloty.

The useful link about Money problems is this:

<http://www.sendmoneyhome.org/Countries/Poland.php>

#### **5) How can I open a bank account in a Polish Bank?**

You can open a bank account in several banks in Poland of course. But we can give Citibank as an example because you can put both your euro and zloty money in it. If you want to have euro you can take your money as euro from inside the bank. Also you can take your money from the ATM s as Zloty both from Euro account and Zloty account. You need only your passport and tax number with you to open an account in the Citibank. They give you a form to fill in and you write your personal information and your tax number on it. After that they copy your passport pages then, you will sign a lot of pages but at the end they give you your card! It works really quickly and you can use your card at the ATM s. On the other hand you can use the Internet to check your account after taking your card. The Citibank Poland website has the English version too. So you can do everything on the website, check balance, transfer money, pay for Internet etc.

#### **6) How can you communicate with people?**

It is useful to have a Polish dictionary and conversation book if you can find. Because especially the older people don't speak English very well in Poland, so even you can't read the words you can show them to tell something and they can show you or tell you what you need also it is more useful to find young people who speak English too. That is the important thing to ask for help from a specific person even you are in immediate situation. If you just shout for help it is more difficult to find some one who can help. It is better to ask a specific person. Actually Polish people are very helpful.

#### **7) What about university conditions?**

If you wonder about the classes, it is a biggest probability that you will have classes with Erasmus group of students. Sometimes you have classes in English with Polish students together too. From a student's point of view, Erasmus classes shouldn't be very difficult. Actually you won't have difficult classes in WSAP too. The teachers are quiet helpful about the lessons. They only want you to come to the lessons and try to make you understand everything. But it doesn't mean that you can pass your classes if you are very very lazy. There are many chances to pass classes like make-up exams but you should pass them on your own. Don't worry it is really enjoyable that it can be to learn different lessons in WSAP. For

example you have some language classes like Russian, French, English, Polish, etc. and they have no credit! So it is very good opportunity to learn a foreign language without thinking about marks.

In addition, University has a library and you can find some dictionaries, books in English too which can be helpful for your classes.

On the other hand, there is a gym and aerobics saloon in the Collegium Novum building. If you like, you can go there for free and make some exercises also there are some Latino dance, other dance group choices that you can join specific times during the week and learn how to dance. Swimming, playing volleyball or football. Just anything you like!

### **8) What are the food choices? What is the Polish cuisine like?**

Pork is the main source of meat in Poland also chicken and fish are available in every market. The most famous Polish foods are barszcz soup and pierogi. Pierogi is round dough filled with pork meat or chopped cabbage and mushroom which boiled in water. Barszcz soup also includes pork meat and mushrooms with cream. You can see cabbage and cucumber pickles every market. The frequent used food products are cabbages, eggs, potatoes and mushrooms and creams in Polish cuisine. Also you can find small cake shops nearly every corner of the streets.

In the University, you have 2 choices to have something to eat. One of them is in the Collegium Novum. There is one restaurant called Papagayo where you can have meals. They have tasty and cheap menu offers to eat and drink. Inside the Lubomirski Palace there is a small canteen too. You can find snacks and hot-cold drinks there.

### **9) If I don't want to eat pork meat, are there any other meat choices?**

If you don't want to eat pork, you can find turkey, chicken meats and fish too. There are many kinds of meats in supermarkets and you can choose them even by looking at their picture. Because there are many Tatar people who live in Bialystok and they are Muslims. So they don't eat pork as well and you can see the meats with written 'na tatar' label on it. As a beef or minced meat you can find 'wolowina'. Also all the bird meats called 'drobiowe'. If you don't eat pork meat you should look into the foods contents because many of soups or meals consist of pork meat.

### **10) Which clothes should you bring with you? How is the weather in Poland?**

It is usual that you can see snow very often during the winter in Poland. Sometimes temperature decreases till -15, -20 Celsius in the night time but in daily time it can be warmer like 5-6 Celsius. Actually you can get used to living in that weather. Because you need warmer coats, gloves and shawls when you are outside. But inside the dormitory or school buildings you can wear even t-shirts. Radiators begin to warm up everywhere with the beginning of academic term. So you need warmer, woolen clothes and boots for outside but also thinner, relax clothes for inside.

### **11) What kind of Health Insurance should I have in Poland?**

It is very necessary to have a health insurance when you are abroad. But there are some important points which you should care about them to not to come cross with a problem. Firstly, if you are a European Union country citizen and you have national health insurance

you can apply for a European Union Health Insurance Card and secondly you can ask your national Health Insurance Agency about what opportunities this card will provide you in Poland. In other situations (for example if you are not a European Union country citizen or you haven't got any Health insurance) you'd better apply for a Health insurance in your home country. But please be sure that it should be Health insurance and should cover all period that you stay in Poland and you should read all the includes even it is quite long pages. Because there are some insurances that you can make through the banks and it provides only small period, only urgent illnesses/emergency and they call as travel insurance not health insurance. The last important detail that you shouldn't forget that in all choices about health insurance you pay all your doctor appointments and medicines and the health insurance service that you have, will pay your money back when you go back to your country and show them all the documents, receipts that you had in doctor appointment.

### **12) Which advantages will you have when you take students ID card from WSAP?**

When the academic term begins and the students arrive, WSAP gives them a student ID card as soon as possible. This card is the proof that you are a student in Poland, so you can take all the advantages that provided to the students. It includes some discounts in local-national transportations, at the bar entrances, etc. Discounts can be up to 50%. In addition, you can use the computers (inside the Lubomirski Palace building and Collegium Novum Library) through inserting your student card to the small micro chip readers. You can borrow dictionaries or some books in English from the library with this card too.

### **13) Are there any other opportunities which will provide me some discounts?**

Yes. There are some international discount cards which you can have them from your home country too and if you bring them with you, you can take the advantages that provided by these cards in specific restaurants, clubs, cinemas, theatres, etc. One of these cards is called ISIC (International Student Identity Card) and the other one is IYTC (International Youth Travel Card). You can search and take more information from the internet and link below

[http://www.isiccard.com/right\\_stuff\\_popup.asp?card=1](http://www.isiccard.com/right_stuff_popup.asp?card=1)

\*When you entered the Web site, you can choose the country as-Poland and the city as-Bialystok and click the GO button to the places see where your card provides discounts.

[http://www.isiccard.com/discounts\\_worldwide.asp](http://www.isiccard.com/discounts_worldwide.asp)

### **14) What is the procedure of taking residing permit – karta pobytu in Poland?**

If you aren't a European citizen there is two choices to stay more in Poland after expiring date of your visa. The first one is going back to your country and getting a new visa. The other one is to apply for karta pobytu to stay more in Poland after expiring date of your visa. The procedure for applying karta pobytu works like this;

First of all you don't forget to deadline which is 45 days before expiring date of your visa!

You must prepare all the documents before the deadline and on this day, you must bring all your documents to the Voivodship Office (Urząd Wojewódzki). After that you will wait for the decision and they will inform you about the decision with a letter to your address in Poland. Finally if the decision is positive they will give you this card. Decision and taking this card will take a long time maybe the same dates with expiring date of your visa.

### 15) What are the documents that will be needed for the residing permit- karta pobytu?

- **An Application Form which is in Polish.** So you should request help from your Erasmus coordinator to have it and to fill it.
- **Your Birth Certificate:** You can request it from your family or one of your relatives, friends etc to take it from Registration Office of your City in your home country. But it is **the most important thing that it has to be in Polish**. So you can have it translated in your language as soon as it reaches you. **It is better to have it many days before the deadline. Because everything should be ready at that day.**
- **Health Insurance:** It is the one of documents that is needed before you come to the Poland. But it should be in Polish too. If you don't have Polish version of this document you should have it translated too. (Only sworn-in translations are accepted, it costs about 30zł per page)
- **Copy of your passport- all pages**
- **4 photos of your face.** If you go to a photographer's studio and say it is for karta pobytu they can help you and take the suitable photo.
- **A document from dormitory** which proves that you stay there. (but it is needed to have it confirmed by the Urząd Miejski w Białymstoku)
- **A document from University** that proves you are studying there.
- **A bank account document** that proves that you have enough money to stay and live in Poland. If you have money in foreign account outside the Poland banks, you should open a bank account in Poland and transfer your money into this account. It is the easiest way that to have this document. Then you can request the bank to give you a document that contains your bank account information.
- **A small receipt** that proves that you had paid application fee at the cash Office inside the Voivodship building.

### 16) How much money will you spend in average limits for this card?

You will not pay the money for the application form, university document and the bank account information document. But the documents that you will spend some money are the translation of your birth certificate, translation of your Health insurance, photos, application fee and the card cost. The translation bills depend on the words or pages that the document has. It changes about 50-100 zloty according to document. (For example the Health insurances are generally written in small figure and contains very large information) 4 Photos cost is nearly 15 zloty and the application fee is 340 zloty. **So the total cost can be 500-550 zloty after the adding card cost before every procedure is completed.**

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