



## **House Hunting Trip (HHT)**

# **Elblag, Poland**

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# **GREETINGS FROM YOUR MFS(E) TEAM**

Welcome to Europe! This guide has been written with the intention of providing you with useful information that you can use during your Home Hunting Trip (HHT), your Destination Inspection Trip (DIT), when preparing for your move, or shortly after your arrival. Essentially, it contains all the information we would have liked to know earlier or find useful to know on our first move out of Canada.

For any additional questions, remember that you can always contact the MFS(E) Center of your new location.

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# MOVING AROUND IN THE GUIDE

- *To go to a Table of Contents entry or a website link, simply click on it*
- *To search for a specific word, use the Find tool by pressing "Ctrl" then F*

Several of the websites referenced in this guide will be in a language other than English. There are a couple of options to obtain the information in English:

- *You can enter the address of the website directly into <https://translate.google.com/> and it will translate the entire website*
- *If you have Google Chrome, you can right click anywhere on the page and it will bring up a dialog box which often has a "Translate to English" option. Due to website formatting, this option may not be available for all pages or for all text on the page.*
- *Some sites have the option to change the language. These sites will have either a drop-down menu listing multiple languages or flags symbolizing the language. Simply click on the language or flag (typically a British or American flag) to see a translated version of the website. Often this option can be found in the top right corner.*

This guide is an ongoing work in progress, and we need your help:

- *Please let us know of any errors or omissions and we will update them in the next edition.*
- *If there is a topic you'd like added to the next edition, do not hesitate to let us know.*

## **You can contact us at:**

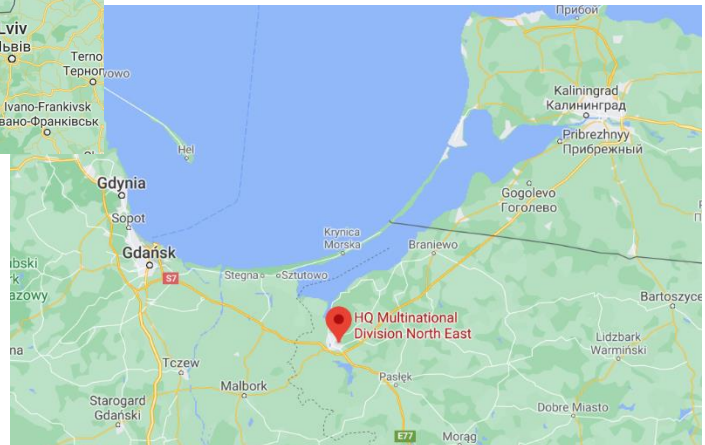
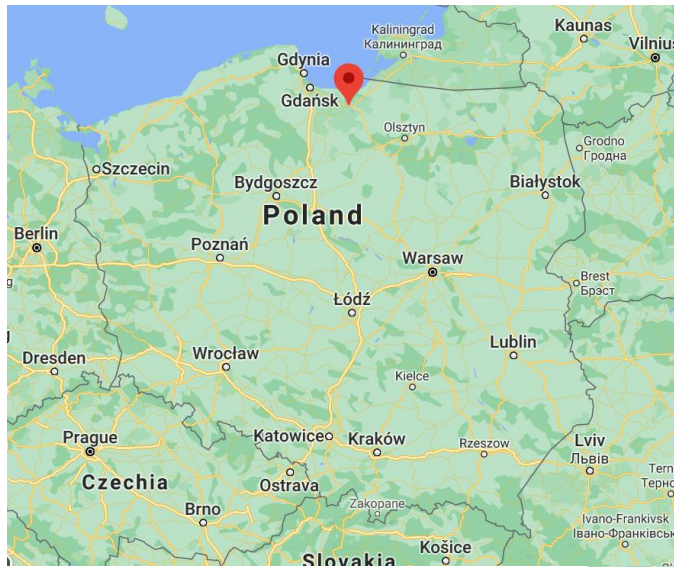
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***DISCLAIMER: Due to rules and regulations ever changing, please ensure you do your own research and consult with the resources provided for the most up-to-date policies and procedures before making any assumptions or relying on information provided here as accurate as policies and procedures change and could be different from the time this document was created and updated.  
Thank you for your cooperation and attention in this matter.***

# OVERVIEW OF ELBLAG

## MAPS



### NATO Military Presence

- 1 Multinational Corps Northeast (MNC-NE), Szczecin  
Allied Command Counterintelligence (ACCI)
- 2 Multinational Division Northeast, Elbląg
- 3 Joint Force Training Center, Bydgoszcz  
NATO Force Integration Unit  
Allied Command Counterintelligence
- 4 Enhanced Forward Presence (eFP) Battlegroup, Orzysz
- 5 NATO Counter Intelligence Center of Excellence (CI COE), Kraków

### U.S. Military Presence in Poland

- 6 European Phased Adaptive Approach (EPAA), Redzikowo
- 7 ABCT Headquarters, Żagań
- 8 ABCT Element, Skwierzyna
- 9 ABCT Element, Świętoszów
- 10 ABCT Element, Bolesławiec
- 11 Rotational Logistics and Aviation, Powidz
- 12 1st Infantry Division (Forward), Poznań
- 13 52nd Operations Group Detachment 1, Łask
- 14 52nd Operations Group Detachment 2, Mirosławiec

## **OVERVIEW**

Elblag is located in northern Poland, in Warmian-Masurian Voivodship. The city lies at the junction of two geographical regions: Zulav,ry Region and Wysoczyzna Elblaska (Elblag Upland). Elblag is the oldest city in the Warmian-Masurian Voivodship and one of the oldest in Poland.

## **CLIMATE**

The climate is moderately continental, characterized by cold winters, with temperatures often below freezing, and mild or pleasantly warm summers. Sometimes, cold waves from Siberia can occur, and the temperatures can drop to -20 °C or below.

## **LANGUAGES**

The official and commonly spoken language in Poland is Polish. Services in English can generally be found at hotels, restaurants and shops in major tourist locations. French is not commonly spoken in Poland. You may experience difficulties in obtaining services in English or French outside major tourist destinations. This is also true of many governmental services, including medical care, police services and public transportation. Locals do appreciate when you make an effort in Polish even if not perfect. Any little bit of the language helps!

The ability to speak and understand the language of the host country ensures that your posting in Europe is as rewarding as possible. It facilitates daily life like grocery shopping and banking. It is also easier to make connections and ensure that your cultural experiences are more enriching.

Rosetta Stone is the best language training program in the world. We offer licenses for the Rosetta Stone software for military spouses of the Canadian Armed Forces. If you are interested in language training in the host nation language, contact the Programs, Employment, Education and Training Coordinator for Military Family Services Europe at: [MFSE.EmploymentEducationTraining@cfmws.com](mailto:MFSE.EmploymentEducationTraining@cfmws.com)

## **CULTURAL NUANCES, ETIQUETTE AND TRADITIONS**

Polish customs and traditions Poles are fun lovers who enjoy festivities, traditions and centuries-old Polish customs. The most ancient rituals, especially those dating back to pagan times, have long lost their magical character, becoming a colourful vestige of the past and a form of amusement. Links with tradition are felt the strongest during the greatest religious feasts, such as Christmas, Easter, Corpus Christi processions and All Saints' Day.



## HOLIDAYS IN POLAND

<b>Holiday</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>New Year's Day</b>	1 January
<b>Three Kings' Day</b>	6 January
<b>Easter</b>	March – April
<b>Labour Day</b>	1 May
<b>Constitution Day</b>	3 May
<b>Pentecost Day</b>	50 days after Easter
<b>Corpus Christi</b>	Second Thursday after Whitsun
<b>Assumption Day</b>	15 August
<b>All Saints Day</b>	1 November
<b>Independence Day</b>	11 November
<b>Christmas</b>	24 - 26 December

# BEFORE YOU LEAVE

## WHAT TO BRING

- Passport, Visa, Military ID
- Travel Orders
- Driving Licence & International Driving Licence
- Health Card
- Long form of Birth Certificate
- Marriage Certificate
- Power of Attorney
- Custody Documents
- Children Vaccination & Immunization Records
- Last 2-3 years of School Report Cards
- Country Adaptor/Converter
- Phone, Tablet, Laptop Chargers
- Medication (Prescriptions)
- Extra Cash in new Currency (In case you have issues with Credit Cards)
- Width of your vehicle at its widest point with the mirrors folded in as the width of the garage entrance may be an issue. Be mindful of this measurement, as streets and parking spaces in Europe are narrower than those in Canada.
- Digital camera or use your cell phone. It is very helpful to take some pictures of the houses for comparison purposes to other homes. Please note: If you decide to take pictures, make sure to have the tenant's/landlord's permission prior. Some people might not be comfortable with having their private belongings photographed.
- Measuring tape

# EMERGENCY INFORMATION

## PUBLIC SAFETY AND SECURITY

Should you have an issue where the local police have been contacted, please inform the CFSU(E) MP Det. If you experience a break and entry to your home or car, it is important to contact local police and then the CFSU(E) MP Det shortly after.

Here is the link to the Government of Canada’s Emergency Assistance info, outside of Canada: <https://travel.gc.ca/assistance/emergency-assistance>

## EMERGENCY CONTACTS

- Universal European Emergency Services ..... 112**
- Police (Emergency) ..... 112 or 997
- Fire and Rescue (Emergency) ..... 112 or 998
- Ambulance (Emergency) ..... 112 or 999
- Chaplain ..... +32 (0) 65 44 6179
- Embassy of Canada ..... +48 (22) 584 3100
- CFSU(E) Duty Officer (Germany) ..... +49 (0) 1725 345 900
- CFSU(E) Licensing Office (Germany) ..... +49 (0) 2451 717 127
- CFSU(E) Housing Officer (Germany) ..... +49 (0) 2451 717 157 or 120
- CFSU(E) Military Police (Germany) ..... +49 (0) 2451 717 142

## PADRES

There are three Padres serving the families in Europe, available for consultation:

<p><b>Maj Jean-Guy Morin</b> Located in Casteau</p> <p>Responsible for Belgium, France, Germany, Netherlands &amp; Poland.</p>	<p><b>Lt(N) Lesley Fox</b> Located in London</p> <p>Responsible for Estonia, Finland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Russia, Sweden, Switzerland &amp; UK.</p>	<p><b>Capt Gerson Flor</b> Located in Naples</p> <p>Responsible for Austria, Greece, Italy, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Spain, Turkey &amp; Ukraine.</p>
<p><a href="mailto:jean-guy.morin@forces.gc.ca">jean-guy.morin@forces.gc.ca</a> +32 (0) 65 44 6179</p>	<p><a href="mailto:lesley.fox@forces.gc.ca">lesley.fox@forces.gc.ca</a> +44 (0) 1895 613 022</p>	<p><a href="mailto:gerson.flor@forces.gc.ca">gerson.flor@forces.gc.ca</a> +39 345 080 5673</p>

## **HOSPITALS**

According to the NATO SOFA, Poland as a Host Nation is obliged to provide medical and dental services to members of the force, members of the civilian component, and their dependents under the same conditions as Polish personnel.

The recommended emergency department for Canadians is the Wojewodzki Szpital Zespólny.

This Provincial Integrated Hospital has newer infrastructure (in comparison to the city hospital). Services are provided in the area of inpatient and outpatient health care, first-aid, rescue service, medical transport and also diagnosis of diseases and rehabilitation.

This facility has 24 17 emergency services.

### **Wojewodzki Szpital Zespólny**

Królewiecka 146

82-300 Elbląg, Poland

Phone for Reception Desk: +48 55 239 5900 or +48 55 234 4111

Website: <http://www.szpital.elblag.pl/>

### **Canadian Medical Clinic CFSU(E)**

Building B14, Selfkant-Kaserne,

Quimperléstrasse 100, 52511 Geilenkirchen

Tel: +49 (0) 2451 717 301

## **CAF MEMBER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

Military members and their families can also contact the CAF Member Assistance Program at +1 800 268 7708. This is a voluntary and confidential service that allows callers to speak with a professional counsellor and is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Please note that Canadian toll-free numbers are not free when calling from another country, but the CAF Member Assistance Program will also accept collect calls at +1 613 941 5842.

## **FAMILY INFORMATION LINE**

The Family Information Line offers confidential assistance and supportive counselling 24/7.

When you call you will be connected to one of their experienced professionals who can connect you with local and national resources.

The Family Information Line can be called toll free, from Europe, at 00 800 7711 7722.

## **A.A. MEETINGS**

Information on Alcoholic Anonymous meetings in Europe or online is available at

<https://alcoholics-anonymous.eu/>

# Communications

## MAKING PHONE CALLS CALLING WITHIN EUROPE

There is no standard way to write a European phone number, which will lead to confusion. This is the same number, written different ways –

*+48 - 25 - 343 80 - 14            +48 (25) 343 80 - 14            0048 (0) 25 343 80 - 14*  
*(025) 343 80 - 14            025 / 343 80 - 14            025 343 80 14*

The “+48” at the start is the exit code and country code. The “25” is the area code and the “3438014” is the phone number. There is no standard length for area codes (2-5 digits) or phone numbers (5-12 digits).

So, when dialing within the country you’re in, you do not need the exit code and country code (+48).

If you’re dialing within the same area code, you do not need to enter the area code. But it’s a good idea to use it just in case!

## CALLING OUTSIDE OF POLAND

The exit code for calling out of the country in Europe is 00. You then follow that with the country code, area code, and telephone number. The “+” means to use the exit code for the country you’re in – in Europe, that’s 00, in Canada, it’s 011. You can use the “+” on your mobile phone as the exit code, and your phone should pick up the right exit code, no matter what country you’re in!

## CALLING CANADA FROM POLAND

The country code for Canada and the United States is 1. Dial the exit code (00) then the country code (1) then the number.

00 - 1 - area code - seven-digit number

## CALLING POLAND FROM CANADA

The exit code in Canada is “011”

011-48-1895-123-456

## SOME COUNTRY CODES

Austria.....	43	France.....	33	Spain .....	34
United Kingdom ....	44	Belgium.....	32	Switzerland.....	41
Czech Republic.....	420	Latvia .....	371	Turkey.....	90
Estonia .....	372	Netherlands .....	31	Germany .....	49

## SUMMARY

To dial a number within Poland	25 1234567
To dial a Polish number from elsewhere in Europe	+48 25 1234567
	or 00 48 25 1234567
To dial a number outside Poland	+48 121 1234567
	or 00 48 121 1234567
To dial Canada from Poland	00 1 613 5551234
To dial Poland from Canada	011 48 25 1234567

## TOLL FREE AND CHARGES FOR CALLS

### **0800**

0800 and 0808 are the dialing prefix for Toll Free Calls in Poland

### **0900 and 0180 calls**

0900 numbers are “premium-rate” services, and 0180 numbers are for service-oriented calls and are billed per minute or per call. Costs will vary.

## INTERNET/MOBILE PHONE

Households enjoyed a broadband penetration of 111 percent, and the share of enterprises with Internet access amounted to 96 percent in 2019. In 2019, 87 percent of households had access to the Internet, most often with a fixed broadband connection.

A lot of places provide free Wi-fi opportunities. There are also good mobile internet opportunities all across the country provided by mobile phone operators.

The most common local internet service providers are:

- *Netia SA*
- *Punkt UPC*
- *JMDI*
- *Orange*

The largest cell phone service providers are:

- *Orange*
- *P4 (which trades under the name "Play")*
- *T-Mobile*
- *Polkomtel*

## **SIM CARDS**

Most Canadians will use a mobile phone while in Europe. If your Canadian mobile works on a GSM network, you will be able to use it.

A CRTC law bans cellphone unlocking fees and orders that all new devices be unlocked. Canadians no longer have to pay to have their cellphones unlocked. When your phone is unlocked you will be able to use it with any mobile company simply by switching the SIM card in the back.

Make sure to unlock the phone before moving as the provider might not be able to assist once the account is closed.

## **VOICE OVER INTERNET PROTOCOL (VOIP)**

Several Canadian families have used a VoIP phone, and this is worth investigating before leaving Canada (so you can keep your number). With a VoIP phone, you can keep a Canadian phone number. This has a few benefits. Your family and friends can call you, and you can call them, without overseas long-distance charges. Besides cost, it is also less confusing for people who may not be used to European calling (like elderly parents). Keeping a Canadian phone number also can help when completing online forms, banking, registering on Canadian websites etc. And finally, if you want to keep a phone number for continuity, you can move a number to a VoIP provider when you move OUTCAN, then move the same number back to a Canadian provider when you return. Which provider to use? There are several, with varying costs and services. MagicJack and Vonage are two of the big companies, but many other VoIP providers are out there.

## **WHATSAPP**

WhatsApp Messenger, or simply WhatsApp, is an American freeware, cross-platform messaging and Voice over IP (VoIP) service owned by Facebook, Inc. It allows users to send text messages and voice messages, make voice and video calls, and share images, documents, user locations, and other media over the internet for free, rather than using your mobile network which costs you money.

WhatsApp is a free app for iPhones, Android smartphones, Windows Phone and Mac laptops and Windows PC.

# ON THE ROAD

## GENERAL

**Traffic Rules** When driving in Poland, you will notice that traffic is heavy and the standard of the road infrastructure is not high. Regular traffic jams are common in major cities. Outside cities it is common to drive on roads with only one lane in each direction. There is also a narrow lane for slower moving vehicles on both sides. Be aware of pedestrians and cyclists who use it frequently.

For your own safety, always call the police if you are involved in a traffic accident. Make sure to return to the place of the accident if you have to leave to place a call for assistance. If you do not return, you put yourself at risk of being charged with escaping the scene.

Under Polish law, it is not mandatory to have a first-aid kit in the car. You are obliged to give life-saving first aid, if you become involved in or aware of a traffic accident. It may be mandatory to have a first-aid kit in the car when going through other countries (e.g. Germany).

Licensing Office: +49 (0) 2451 717 127 in Geilenkirchen if you have any specific questions regarding licensing or vehicle registration.

## DRIVER'S LICENCE

While Canada and Poland have a reciprocal agreement to recognize each other's driver licenses, car rental companies may demand an international driver's license. As such, it is recommended that personnel acquire an international driver's license prior to their HHT and Travel to New Location (TNL)

Within 6 months of arrival (TNL), personnel will be required to exchange their Canadian driver's license for a Polish driver's license.

After this initial 6 month period, Polish authorities will not accept an international driver's license and/or Canadian driver's license from personnel who are residing in Poland and have a registered POMV.

## PARKING

Parking in the city center is can be expensive and difficult to find during busy times but is generally OK. Parking at the side of the road against the traffic flow is permitted on roads with only one lane of traffic in each direction and without a tram line in the middle. If a curb is painted yellow, you cannot park there.

Parking disks are cards with a moveable wheel that you can set to indicate what time you parked. They must be put in view on your dashboard. These are used where you do not



need to purchase a ticket for parking so that parking enforcement knows how long you have been parked.

## **TOLLS & CONGESTION CHARGES**

When traveling, be aware of toll costs. To drive on the autoroutes in Switzerland, for example, you require a sticker (called a vignette) on your windshield. The vignette is only available as an annual purchase. For Austria, you can purchase a 10-day, 2-month or annual vignette. In France, you will find toll booths on the autoroute. For some you pay a toll to go through the booth, for others you take a ticket and pay when you exit the toll road. The website <https://www.viamichelin.com/> is an excellent resource for calculating toll costs before a trip.

## **ROADSIDE ASSISTANCE**

Emergency road services in Poland are very efficient. In a breakdown situation please call 9637. This is the emergency number for the National Emergency Road Service which guarantees a full-range of auto assistance: removing a damaged car on special car transporters, directing you to MOT services and garages and legal advice in the case of any litigation.

The National Emergency Road Service should be on site within a maximum of 60 minutes (depending on the distance and locality of the breakdown or accident). The fee for these services depends on what is required and the distance, which is important when a damaged car has to be transported to a garage, for example.

The network of authorised garages and car services is very well developed in Poland. If you rent a car or are using a private car you are strongly advised to carry the appropriate phone numbers of these services before setting out on a trip. In the event of an accident or breakdown the numbers for these services can also be obtained from local emergency breakdown services or the police.

## **IF INVOLVED IN A CAR ACCIDENT**

In case of an accident you should always call the police in order to avoid any uncertainties during the following insurance procedures. Unless somebody is injured, you are required by Polish law to pull over by the side of the road (shortest distance possible from the place of impact) in order not to obstruct further traffic. For insurance purposes, it is highly recommended to use a special form – the European Accident Statement – in order to collect all necessary data of both vehicles involved in the accident, as well as the circumstances of the accident.

You can easily download the Polish-English version of the form from [www.pbuk.com.pl](http://www.pbuk.com.pl).

A hard copy is available from the JFTC Support Unit In-Processing Office and on the L-Drive. Please carry it with you when you are driving.

## **CAR RENTAL**

To rent a car in Poland, you must be at least 21 years old (age may vary by car category) and have held your license for 1 year. A few car classes have a maximum rental age of 70 years.

Drivers renting a car under the age of 25 may incur a young driver surcharge.

An International Drivers License is required.

Most rental car categories in Poland can be driven anywhere in Western Europe without restriction, however you will need to purchase 'Green Card Insurance' at the time of pick up. Due to insurance regulations, there are restrictions on luxury car categories and on travel in certain countries.

The most popular car rental companies are Hertz, Europcar, Budget, Avis and Thrifty.

## **PUBLIC TRANSIT**

The Elbląg tram system is the tram network in Elbląg, Poland. Operating since 1895, the system is operated by Tramwaje Elbląskie Sp. z o.o., and is integrated into the Zakład Komunikacji Miejskiej w Elblągu (ZKM Elbląg).

The system currently has 5 lines with a total length of 32 kilometres (20 mi). Elbląg's tram network is the second oldest tram system in Poland (after Warsaw's).

## **TAXIS**

There are a lot of taxis in most major cities in Poland. In general, use taxis that clearly show a telephone number on the side. The prices depends on the company. First kilometer costs approximately 6 PLN and every additional kilometer approximately 2.5 PLN.

The cheapest and easiest way to order a taxi is by phone or SMS. For trips at night you will have to expect a 50% increase of the fare. It is not mandatory to tip taxi drivers.

Each taxi driver is obliged to provide a receipt for the service provided. If you choose a "private" taxi (a taxi operating outside one of the taxi corporations), you may experience that the fare will be higher (check fare information on a taxi window).

Keep an eye on the meter and if you believe the meter is counting too fast, ask the driver to stop, get out of the taxi and pay the fare before finding another taxi.

Uber : Uber does exist in Poland, in fact Krakow hosts the European hub for Uber.

## **TRAIN**

Poland's rail network has several different types of train that differ primarily by speed, cost and level of comfort. Identify the train type by the initials on station and online timetables.

ExpressInterCity Premium (EIP) High-speed 'Pendolino' trains that travel between major cities, such as Warsaw, Kraków, Katowice, Wrocław and Gdańsk. Both 1st- and 2nd-class seats are available, and reservations are mandatory for both.

ExpressInterCity (EIC) One step down from EIP trains, the modern, comfortable EIC trains also run between major cities, like Warsaw–Kraków and Warsaw–Gdańsk, but are slightly less expensive. There's seating in both 1st and 2nd class, and reservations are compulsory in both.

InterCity (IC) As with EIC, but generally offer a slightly slower service with more stops than EIC trains.

EuroCity (EC) International express trains linking Polish cities with cities in other European countries.

TLK (Pociąg Twoje Linie Kolejowe; TLK) Low-cost express trains that run between major cities at speeds approaching EIP trains, but at fares that are around 40% cheaper. TLK trains are a step down in comfort and can be crowded. There's seating in both 1st and 2nd class; both classes require reservations. Bicycle carriage on TLK trains may be limited.

InterRegio (Pociąg InterRegio; IR) These are the standard Polish 'fast' trains running between regions, with stops at most medium-sized cities along the route. IR trains normally don't offer 1st-class seating, and no seat reservations are required.

Regio (Pociąg Regio; Regio/Osob) These trains are much slower as they stop at all stations along the way. These may be 2nd-class only and reservations are not required.

Train Companies:

Since the demise of the state monopoly Polskie Koleje Państwowe (PKP) the Polish rail network has been broken up into around 10 different operators that manage different routes and trains.

PKP InterCity runs all of Poland's express trains, including ExpressInterCity Premium (EIP), ExpressInterCity (EIC), InterCity (IC), EuroCity (EC) and TLK trains.

A second main operator, PolRegio ([www.polregio.pl](http://www.polregio.pl)), takes care of most other trains, including relatively fast InterRegio trains and slower Regio trains.

## **BUS**

Elbląg, Bus terminal is located about 2.36 km from the town centre.

Poland has a comprehensive bus network (far greater than the rail network) covering nearly every town and village accessible by road. Buses are often more convenient than trains over short distances, and occasionally over longer ones, when, for instance, the train route involves a long detour.

The frequency of service varies greatly: on the main routes there may be a bus leaving every 15 minutes or so, whereas some small remote villages may get only one bus a day. Ticket prices also vary due to fierce competition between bus companies, so shop around.

There are hundreds of regional and private operators. Most cities have a main bus station (*dworzec autobusowy*), often located close to the train station.

FlixBus/Polski Bus (<https://global.flixbus.com>) The main nationwide coach operator, running services between major cities and towns using modern coaches with free wi-fi. You can buy tickets online using the company's smartphone app; real-world ticket outlets are listed on the website.

# HOUSING

## LOCATION

### Headquarters Multinational Corps Northeast (MND-NE)

<https://mndne.wp.mil.pl/en/>

Podchorążych 1

82-300 Elbląg

Poland

Tel. +48 26 1312 382

Central Registry: +48 261 312 365

Central Registry Fax: +48 261 312 363



## SUPPORT

It is suggested to plan your HHT for a full week (Monday to Friday). Plan to arrive at location on a Saturday or Sunday to rest and get acquainted with the area.

MND-NE appointed Housing Point of Contact is: Lt Paulina Montewka  
Paulina.montewka@gmail.com Tel: +48 667 672 278

Lt Montewka will arrange an information package for newcomers and viewing appointments with the real estate agents, the development companies and/or the landlords.

It is imperative that members do not secure any type of housing without obtaining prior approval from CFSU(E) Housing Officer: +49 (0) 2451 717 157

## GENERAL

Approximately 700 new apartments and houses have been built in Elbląg and the surrounding area. These are available for either sale or rent. The apartments are in the range of 45-86 sqm and have underground parking. They are within walking distance to the center of Elbląg and to MND-NE.

A lease template (in both Polish and English) should be available to members to ensure that all requirements are met. Lease requirements, such as: Military Clause, lease termination period (1 to 3 months) and rent/security deposit payments were discussed with agents.

In general, security deposit is 1-2 months' rent and in rare cases 3 months' rent. House finder's fees are 1 month's rent \* 23 %Y AT. It is recommended that tenants take photos to prove the condition of the accommodations at time of occupancy.

White appliances for a fully fitted kitchen and cupboards are provided in most cases, as is a washer. A dryer, alarm system and window screens must be discussed with the landlord on a case by case basis. Any arrangements must be in writing and listed in the lease agreement.

The windows don't always have bug screens, but they are available and it's best to ask your landlord to have them installed while you are negotiating your lease agreement. If by chance this step was missed, you can buy screen kits and stick the screens to your window frame with a Velcro strip that's included in the kit.

Should members plan to bring pets, they must inform the above Housing POC prior to arranging viewing appointments. Landlord's approval to keep pets must be included in the lease agreement.

## **CANADIAN FORCES SUPPORT UNIT EUROPE (CFSU(E))**

CFSU(E) support element in Niederheid, Germany would be the contact for various administrative support requirements.

**CFSU(E) Niederheid**  
Quimperléstrasse 100  
Selfkant Kaserne  
52511 Geilenkirchen  
Germany

CFSU(E) Duty Officer	+49 (0) 1725 345 900
Military Police	+49 (0) 2451 717 142
Admin O	+49 (0) 2451 717 229
Orderly Room CFSU(E)	+CFSUEOR@forces.gc.ca
CFSU(E) Supply	+CFSUESUPPLY@forces.gc.ca
AJAG Europe	+49 (0) 2451 717 170 AJAG.Europe@forces.gc.ca

## **MFSE CENTER**

Your MFS(E) Centre is located in Riga, Latvia, and serves local families, and 16 other remote locations throughout Europe. The Centre offers Community Orientation & Information Sessions, Virtual Coffee Mornings, as well as Child and Youth group activities, Travel Forums, Virtual Book Club, French Coffee Mornings, and Employment Workshops are some programs that have been offered virtually.

Through participation in our virtual programs you may be able to connect with other CAF members and families throughout Europe.

## **WATER QUALITY**

Poland is one of many European countries with conflicting reports about tap water quality. Water companies operating in Poland are required to comply with standards adapted to the European Union (EU) regulations.

A recent study (2014) reveals that 60% of Poles do not trust to drink water without prior boiling. Water flowing from the taps, although widely available, is judged to be polluted, with too much fluorine or not having the appropriate consumer values (colour, smell and taste).

From several reports, the water in Poland is potable (drinkable). Theoretically water can be drunk without boiling in Poland, but it depends a lot from the quality of pipes etc and where you are living. Again, it is advised to talk to the local authorities on water quality and / or consult the embassy or your unit.

It is highly recommended to drink bottled water or to use a water filter such as BRITA.

## **APPLIANCES**

You will find that your appliances around your house are often smaller than what you are accustomed to in Canada.

- *Often new families will need to buy some appliances for their home.*
- *Some families find their European fridge too small and prefer to buy a second one.*
- *North American pans do not always fit in your new oven.*
- *The washer and dryer are often much smaller and slower. This can pose problems for washing typical Canadian bedding. Many units have 2-in-1 machines that wash and dry in the same drum.*

## **BEDROOMS**

### ***Wardrobes***

Most houses do not have closets or other cabinets for storage; instead, they often have wardrobes to store items.

## Beds

You should note that sizes of beds and bedding differ between Canada and Europe. It may be helpful to purchase extra bedding prior to your move, or you may find that you must have it shipped from Canada. If you plan on purchasing a bed while you are in Europe, do your research to ensure you will be able to find bedding that will fit upon your return to Canada.

UK / EU / US Toddler 30" x 55" 75 x 142cm	UK Single / US Twin 39" x 75" 90 x 190cm	EU Single 39" x 80" 90 x 200cm	UK Small Double or Three-Quarter 47" x 75" 120 x 190cm	EU Small Double 47" x 80" 120 x 200cm
UK Double / US Full 53" x 75" 135 x 190cm	EU Double 55" x 80" 140 x 200cm	UK King / US Queen 60" x 80" 150 x 200	EU King 63" x 80" 160 x 200cm	
UK Super King / EU Super King 70" x 80" 180 x 200cm	US King 76" x 80" 193 x 200cm	US California King 72" x 84" 182 x 213cm		

♦ COTTON PATCH

## BASEMENTS

Almost all homes have no cellar or basement due to the extra cost of digging down further into the sub-soil and a requirement for much deeper foundations and waterproof tanking.

## ELECTRICITY

Electricity in Europe differs from electricity in Canada, in that the voltage is higher and the frequency is lower. In Canada, our electricity is 110V and 60Hz, while in Europe, they have 220-230V and 50Hz. Some electronics are not compatible with European power and require transformers, while others are dual voltage and only require a plug adapter.

To find out if an electronic is dual voltage, look for the electronic information on the product. This information is often found on the bottom or back of the product, or on its battery pack. If the input gives a range such as 100-240V 50-60Hz, then the product **is** dual voltage and works with both Canadian and European electricity. If the input does not give a range and only says 110V 60Hz, then it is **not** compatible with European electricity.

### Dual Voltage

If your product is dual voltage, then all you need is a plug adapter to use it. Since the product is already compatible with the local electricity, all the adapter does is allow the prongs to fit the electrical outlets. If you use an adapter with a product that is not dual voltage, you will not only damage your product, but you may also cause electrical damage to the building.

Lamps are typically dual voltage; however, you will need to replace the light bulbs with European lightbulbs.

### Single Voltage

If your electronics only says 110V 60Hz, then it is not compatible with European electricity. To use electronics while in Europe, you will need to use a transformer. Transformers convert



the local electricity to 110V 60Hz, so you can plug devices into it as if you were plugging them into a wall in Canada.



Most electronic devices have a prominent label that looks like this picture. On this device (a camera battery charger), you can see that after "Input" it says "110 - 240V", which means that it can be used with any voltage within that range, including the 110V standard in Canada or the 220-230V standard in much of Europe. All you will need is a plug adaptor.



On this next label, you can see that this coffee maker is **NOT** dual voltage. It lists simply "120V". Other items may say "110V" - anything in this range is a standard North American appliance. If you want to use something like this overseas, it will need to be on a transformer.



In this final image, you can see that some appliances have a switch for use between higher and lower voltages. This can be used overseas with only a **plug adaptor**, but do not forget to flip the switch!

## TRANSFORMERS

Transformers are created with different wattage ratings, so you will need to make sure you are using the correct wattage to handle what you are plugging into it.

The total wattage of appliances plugged into the transformer must be less than the wattage rating of the transformer. To find out the wattage of an electronic device, if it is not on the label, you can multiply the voltage of the item by the number of amperes (amps). For example, if the information on an item says 110V 60Hz 1A, you would multiple 110 (voltage) by 1 (amps) to get 110 watts.

There are also websites that have information on the approximate wattage of electronic and household appliances, for example,

- [www.wholesalesolar.com/solar-information/how-to-save-energy/power-table](http://www.wholesalesolar.com/solar-information/how-to-save-energy/power-table)

Research before choosing transformers. If in doubt, buy bigger. Some items (like TVs) need a big surge of power when switched on, so go with three times the wattage (a 500W appliance might need a 1500W transformer). Items that produce heat (iron, hair dryer) will require more wattage.

Transformers that do not have an ON/OFF switch, or have a switch and are turned on, will consume energy while plugged in, even if you do not have an appliance plugged into them. Therefore, you should always keep your transformers off or unplugged when not in use.

As part of your furniture claim, you can purchase and claim 50% of the cost of up to four transformers.

# **BANKING**

## **BANKING IN POLAND**

Banks are usually open from Monday – Friday, between 0800 to 1800h.

You can withdraw cash with your banking card at most ATM's ("bankomat" in Polish) all over the city.

## **OPEN A BANK ACCOUNT**

Members will be able to open a local bank account during their HHT as soon as they have an address. Members will have to provide a copy of their passport and the newly acquired address to open the bank account. Once opened, the automatic/standing monthly rent transfer from the member's to the landlord's bank account can be arranged.

Most banks have English speaking staff and call centres, and branches open until 6 or 7pm during the week. If you have queries you should be able to find someone to help you.

## **EUROPEAN BANK ACCOUNTS**

Bank accounts in Europe have an "IBAN" (International Bank Account Number) and a "BIC" (Bank Identifier Code). You will use these for making payments and receiving money. If you are paying a bill, you will typically find their IBAN on the bill and you can use that in your online banking to make the payment. You will also provide your IBAN to companies to pay your bills (insurance, gym payments, cell phone, etc). The orderly room and claims section at CFSU(E) will use your IBAN to deposit pay and claims into your bank account.

To make a payment, you will often need a TAN (Transaction Authorization Number). This can be a complex thing to get used to in Europe. You will likely get a sheet of TANs when you initially get your bank account, but then through your mobile banking you can use mobile TANs (a number sent to your phone) or photo TANs with an app on your phone. To use mobile or photo TANs, you will need to register your mobile number in the online banking.

# EDUCATION

## CHILDREN'S EDUCATION MANAGEMENT (CEM)

### CEM EUROPE

CEM Europe's Role is to manage the education compensation and benefits programs. CEM compensation and benefits program consists of the management of Departmental Foreign Service Education Allowances and related care allowances, such as Family Reunion Travel, Education, Post-Secondary Shelter allowance, Special education on behalf of dependent children of CAF members.

For queries with CEM Europe or assistance with your allowances and claims, please contact the team at [P-SFK.76ECEM@forces.gc.ca](mailto:P-SFK.76ECEM@forces.gc.ca)

Please visit this link for [CEM EUROPE](#) information on educational screening, Foreign Service Directive (FSD) and Education Allowance Forms.

### CEM CANADA

Children's Education Management (CEM) Canada, located in Ottawa, now offers Guidance Counselling Services to all CAF families serving outside Canada. This includes : secondary curriculum review, distance learning courses prescribed for courses required for graduation, post-secondary education guidance services, liaise with guidance counsellor at post if required, review of curriculum differences among provinces/territories, advice on possible required subjects.

CEM Canada Contacts are:

Andrea Smith (A-K) [Andrea.Smith2@forces.gc.ca](mailto:Andrea.Smith2@forces.gc.ca)

Alisa Hanrahan (L-Z) [Alisa.Hanrahan@forces.gc.ca](mailto:Alisa.Hanrahan@forces.gc.ca)

Understanding and applying Children's Education Management policies can be complex.

Both CEM Europe and CEM Canada will likely be involved in your children's education journey. Click [HERE](#) for more information.

To speak about your educational options, it is advisable to make contact with a guidance counselor and to discuss your children's educational options as soon as you receive your posting message.

## CHILDCARE

*\* Sorry, this section is under development \**

# RESOURCES

## **MFS(E) WEBSITE**

[www.cafconnection.ca/Europe/Home.aspx](http://www.cafconnection.ca/Europe/Home.aspx)

## **MFS(E) FACEBOOK PAGE**

<https://www.facebook.com/MFSEurope/>

## **MFS(E) YOUTUBE CHANNEL**

[www.youtube.com/channel/UCbQXCBqcVYvLZhDj0a37h8Q](http://www.youtube.com/channel/UCbQXCBqcVYvLZhDj0a37h8Q)

## **CAF CONNECTION WEBSITE**

[www.cafconnection.ca/National/Home.aspx](http://www.cafconnection.ca/National/Home.aspx)

## **MY VOICE/MA VOIX**

MyVoice is a place for you to communicate with Military Family Services (MFS). The group is a safe place to discuss your experiences as a military family and offer feedback about your military lifestyle. You can find out more at: [www.facebook.com/groups/MyVoiceMaVoix/](http://www.facebook.com/groups/MyVoiceMaVoix/)

## **FAMILY INFORMATION LINE**

The Family Information Line (FIL) is a confidential, personal, bilingual, and free service offering information, support, referrals, reassurance, and crisis management to the military community. We serve Canadian Armed Forces members, Veterans, and their families—immediate and extended. You can find out more at: [www.cafconnection.ca/National/Stay-Connected/Family-Information-Line.aspx](http://www.cafconnection.ca/National/Stay-Connected/Family-Information-Line.aspx)

## **THE CFSU(E) FACEBOOK GROUP**

The CFSU(E) Facebook page is by invitation, contact your Detachment's Orderly Room.

## **TRAVEL ADVISORIES**

<https://travel.gc.ca/travelling/advisories>