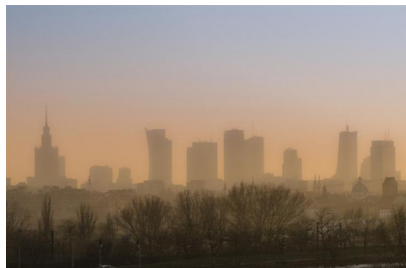


POLAND INCREASINGLY POPULAR DESPITE TRAVEL SAFETY ISSUES



Sea, mountains, cuisine, hospitality and security. Foreign tourists love Poland and throughout the last couple of years the destination has become even more popular. However, the travel safety has become troublesome recently.

In the latest report of the World Economic Forum, Poland was ranked 48th in terms of travel safety and security of a country. This is a fall by 13 positions compared to 2015. In assessments, the issues like crime rate and terrorist threat were taken in to account. In the same report **Poland's great attractions, well-maintained and quality hotel infrastructure were highlighted.** Tourism in Poland seems not harmed much by the security troubles.

However, is the fall in terms of safety a reason for concern? Despite Poland's great popularity, there is no shortage of questions such as "Is Poland safe?" on various online forums. Answers are mostly positive, though sometimes visitors complain about pickpockets or hooligans. Let's see what other countries' Ministries of Foreign Affairs think about Poland and its safety situation.

Petty Theft and Nightlife

"Most visitors to Poland experience no difficulties. But you should be alert to the possibility of street crime and petty theft, and that foreigners may appear to be lucrative targets. Keep valuables and cash out of sight, especially in crowded areas and tourist spots where pickpockets and bag snatchers operate," the official website of United Kingdom's Foreign Office warns its citizens.

Moreover, the website also states that there is higher risk of robbery at main rail stations and on all train services, especially overnight sleeper trains. The government also warns about overcharging taxi drivers as well as bars and nightclubs. Visitors of nightclubs should also not leave their drinks unattended or in the care of strangers and should be cautious about possible "gifts" from strangers. Drinks, snacks etc. from others may contain drugs, under the influence of which one can be exposed to theft or sexual harassment, as stated by the Australian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Roads, Protests and Terrorism

The British Foreign Office focusing on travel safety in Poland also warns of the dangers of driving in Poland: "Poland is an important transit route from east to west, which is why there is a lot of trucks on the roads. The road network is constantly modernized and road works are frequent, especially in the summer. Some of the main roads between major cities can be narrow and poorly marked, making the driving at night particularly problematic."

Australians are also warned about "an increased risk of demonstrations and protests", which should be avoided due to the fact that they can potentially turn out to be violent. In addition, Australian citizens are warned about disruptions on borders as a result of "significant influx of asylum seekers into Europe". The possibility of terror attacks is also stressed, as "there is an ongoing threat of terrorism in Europe".

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