



**WYŻSZA SZKOŁA
INFORMATYKI i ZARZĄDZANIA**
z siedzibą w Rzeszowie



GUIDEBOOK

for International Students



Rzeszów

CONTENTS

1. Legal Stay in Poland: First Steps for International Students	3
2. Essential info for foreigners (insurance, rules for minors)	4
3. Office addresses & emergency contacts (+48, ambulance, police, fire dept, international student support)	13
4. Housing in Rzeszow	14
5. Cost of living (transport, food prices)	14
6. Useful apps	15
7. Explore Rzeszów	15
8. Student Events	16
9. City Highlights	17

1. Legal Stay in Poland:

First Steps for International Students

International students are responsible for keeping their stay in Poland legal throughout their studies. Depending on your citizenship and situation, you may need a visa, visa-free stay, or a temporary residence permit.

Before travelling to Poland, make sure that you have a valid passport, a valid visa or another legal basis for entry (if applicable), and health insurance that covers your stay in Poland. These documents are essential for both entering the country and completing legalization procedures.

After your arrival, the first administrative steps are:

1. Register your place of residence (meldunek), if applicable.
2. Obtain a PESEL number.

These may be required when completing official procedures and applying for a Temporary Residence Card. If you intend to stay in Poland beyond the validity of your visa or visa-free period, you **should apply for a Temporary Residence Card (TRC)**.

Applications are submitted through the official MOS online system. As collecting the required documents and processing the application may take several months, you should begin the procedure well before your current legal stay expires.

The International Student Support Office (ISSO) provides guidance throughout the legalization process. ISSO can explain the Temporary Residence Card procedure, help you understand how to prepare an application in the MOS system, advise which university documents are required, and answer general questions related to legalization. Please note that ISSO does not make legal decisions, does not replace the Voivodeship Office, and cannot guarantee the outcome of any application. (UITM in Rzeszow)

If you need assistance with legalization procedures, please contact the **International Student Support Office (ISSO)** at isso@wsiz.edu.pl. We strongly recommend starting the legalization process as early as possible and not waiting until your visa or legal stay is close to expiring.

isso@wsiz.edu.pl

2. Essential info for foreigners (insurance, rules for minors)

Health Insurance

Having valid health insurance is mandatory throughout your stay in Poland. You may be asked to present proof of insurance during visa, residence permit, or other administrative procedures.

Depending on your situation, you may use one of the following options:

NFZ (National Health Fund)

If you are not covered by another form of insurance, you may be eligible to obtain public health insurance through the university or voluntarily register with the National Health Fund. Public insurance allows you to access healthcare services in Poland.

EHIC (European Health Insurance Card)

Students from EU/EEA countries may use a valid EHIC issued in their home country to receive medically necessary healthcare during their stay in Poland.

Private or international health insurance

Non-EU students are strongly encouraged to arrive with private medical insurance covering the first weeks or months of their stay, especially before obtaining NFZ insurance.

Students should ensure that their insurance remains valid for the entire duration of their studies. If your insurance expires, renew it immediately to avoid problems with healthcare access or legalization procedures.

Students Under the Age of 18

International applicants who are under 18 years of age must complete several additional formalities before beginning their studies at UITM.

Minor students are required to provide a notarized consent from a parent or legal guardian authorizing them to sign the educational agreement and other documents related to their studies and stay in Poland. Depending on the student's situation, additional parental consent forms may also be required for residence permit and health insurance procedures. Documents issued abroad should be translated into Polish by a certified translator after arrival, if required.

Parents or legal guardians should ensure that the student has:

- valid health insurance,
- all required travel and identity documents,
- the necessary legal consents before travelling to Poland.

UITM also applies official Standards for the Protection of Minors, which are designed to ensure the safety and well-being of students under the age of 18 while studying at the university.

Need Assistance?

If you have questions about health insurance, documents required for minor students, or other formalities related to your stay in Poland, you can contact the **International Student Support Office (ISSO)**: isso@wsiz.edu.pl.

Before Coming to Poland

Before arrival, make sure you bring:

- **Valid passport**

Your passport should be valid for the whole planned period of stay.

- **Visa or right to enter Poland**

Non-EU students usually need a student visa or another legal basis to enter Poland.

- **Admission documents from the university**

Bring your admission letter and other documents confirming that you have been accepted as a student.

- **Health insurance**

Bring valid health insurance for your stay in Poland. Non-EU students are strongly advised to arrive with private/international medical insurance and then check after arrival whether they should register with **NFZ** or use another valid insurance option.

- **Accommodation confirmation**

Bring a dormitory confirmation, rental agreement, or another document confirming where you will live in Poland, as border control at the airport usually requests this.

After Arrival in Poland

After arriving in Rzeszów, students should:

1. Complete university registration.
2. Keep copies of all important documents.
3. Check the expiry date of their visa or visa-free stay.
4. Register their address in Poland with meldunek.
5. Obtain a PESEL number.
6. Make sure they have valid health insurance, for example NFZ, EHIC for EU students, or private insurance.
7. Start preparing legalization documents early.
8. Contact ISSO if they need guidance with the Temporary Residence Card process.

Do not wait until your visa or legal stay is about to expire. Start preparing your documents as early as possible. Here is some essential information regarding the timeline and what happens when your visa expires.

When to Apply and Processing Times

When to Apply: By law, you must submit your application no later than the very last day of your current legal stay (the expiration date of your visa or visa-free period). However, to avoid unnecessary stress and ensure you have time to collect all required paperwork, it is highly recommended to begin preparing and submit your application at least 3 to 6 months before your visa expires.

How Long It Takes: Due to the high volume of applications at regional offices, you should expect the process to take several months.

Staying in Poland After Your Visa Expires

A common worry for students is what happens if their visa runs out while they are still waiting for their residence card.

The short answer is: **yes, you can stay!** If you submit a complete application before your current legal stay expires, your continued stay in Poland remains entirely legal until a final decision is issued.

During this waiting period, you will receive a special red stamp in your passport or confirmation to prove your legal status. However, you must keep this crucial limitation in mind:

Travel Restrictions: The application stamp only legalizes your stay inside Poland; it does **not** allow you to travel to or transit through other Schengen countries. If you leave Poland to return to your home country, you will need to apply for a new visa to re-enter Poland, as the stamp alone is not a valid document for crossing borders.

Temporary Residence Card / TRC

A Temporary Residence Card confirms that a non-EU student has the right to stay in Poland for a longer period.

Applications are prepared through the MOS system which is the official online system for residence permit applications.

ISSO can help students understand the process, check what university documents may be needed, and guide them through the MOS system. However, ISSO does not replace the Voivodeship Office and cannot guarantee the result of any application.

When applying via MOS, you will upload digital versions (PDF/JPG) of your documents first. Later, you will be summoned to the Voivodeship Office to show the originals and provide fingerprints.

Mandatory Application Documents (Uploaded in MOS)

- **Application Form:** Filled out directly in the MOS portal.
 - **Appendix 5 (Załącznik nr 5):** You do not upload this yourself. In MOS, you enter your university's email address: mos@wsiz.edu.pl
 - The system sends them a link to complete and digitally sign the appendix, which is then automatically attached to your application.
 - **Passport Scan:** A single PDF file containing scans of **all pages** of your valid travel document (even the blank ones).
 - **Digital Photo:** A current, biometric passport-style photograph in JPG format (facing forward, no glasses/head coverings).
-

Special Guidelines for Ukrainian Students (CUKR Status)

If you are a Ukrainian citizen under temporary protection (PESEL UKR status), your legal stay in Poland is extended automatically according to current government regulations.

Ukrainian students now have a pathway to secure a long-term stay by transitioning from temporary protection to a special 3-year temporary residence permit, known as the **CUKR residence card**.

To apply for the CUKR status, you must meet all of the following requirements:

- Hold an active PESEL UKR status on the specific date required by current immigration laws.
- Maintain continuous UKR status for at least 365 days.
- Have a valid PESEL UKR on the day you submit your application.

Important Identity Update: Your data in the PESEL register must be completely up to date.

If your PESEL UKR was initially issued without presenting a valid travel document (e.g., based on a declaration), you must visit a municipal office to confirm your identity with a valid foreign passport. Failing to update this information can result in the loss of your UKR status and prevent you from applying for the CUKR card.

Note for Students: Switching to the CUKR card means your previous legal stay is converted to a standard temporary residence permit, which revokes your UKR status and its associated benefits. If you are currently studying for free at a public university strictly under the special temporary protection act, you should verify with the university if changing to CUKR status will affect your tuition fee exemptions

PESEL, Meldunek and Insurance

PESEL is a Polish identification number used in many administrative situations, such as public offices, healthcare, banks, taxes, and online services. Students may receive PESEL when registering their address or may apply for it separately if required.

Meldunek means official address registration in Poland. Students should register their address after arrival if they live in Poland, especially if they stay longer than a short visit.

Health insurance is required and should be valid for the whole stay in Poland. Recommended options include:

- **NFZ voluntary health insurance** for students who are not insured in another way.
- **EHIC** for EU/EEA students who have a valid European Health Insurance Card from their home country.
- **Private or international medical insurance**, especially for the first weeks after arrival or if the student is not yet covered by NFZ.

Students should not leave insurance arrangements until the last moment, because proof of insurance may be needed for legalization procedures.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Is a PESEL number mandatory?

In short, yes it essentially becomes mandatory if you plan to live in Poland. By law, foreigners planning to stay in Poland for more than 30 days must register their place of residence at a local municipal office (a process called zameldowanie). When you complete this registration, you are automatically assigned a PESEL number.

Even if you cannot register an address right away, you can still apply for a PESEL number manually. You will quickly find that a PESEL is practically essential for daily life in Poland; you need it to set up an official Trusted Profile (Profil Zaufany) for online government services, pay taxes, and navigate the healthcare system.

Can you open a bank account without a PESEL number?

Legally, yes, you can open a bank account in Poland as a foreigner without a PESEL number. However, in practice, not having one can make the process more difficult.

Every bank sets its own internal requirements, and without a PESEL, you will almost certainly be blocked from opening an account online and will need to visit a branch in person. To open an account without a PESEL, you typically need to present your passport, your visa or residence card, and an official proof of your Polish address (like a rental agreement). Because individual branches sometimes interpret rules differently, it is highly recommended to get your PESEL first to make banking much smoother.

Is it possible to register for NFZ immediately after arriving in Poland?

You cannot register for the Polish National Health Fund (NFZ) the moment you arrive, because you need to gather specific documents first.

To sign a voluntary health insurance agreement with the NFZ, you must prove that you are an active student and that you live in Poland. You will need to wait until you can visit your University's Dean's Office to obtain an official certificate of student status.

To apply, you will generally need:

- A certificate confirming your student status.
- Proof of accommodation in Poland
- Your passport with a valid visa.
- PESEL and Meldunek
- NFZ Application form

Once you have these documents, you can visit the local NFZ office to sign the agreement, after which you must submit a final registration form to the Social Insurance Institution (ZUS).

What is a Trusted Profile (Profil Zaufany)?

A Trusted Profile is a free, official digital identity that acts as your electronic signature when dealing with Polish government offices online.

You **must** have a Trusted Profile to log in, fill out, and submit your Temporary Residence Card application on the online MOS portal. It also grants you access to your online healthcare account (IKP) for e-prescriptions and medical history.

How to Get It (Requires a PESEL Number)

- Via Online Banking (Easiest): If you have a Polish bank account, you can activate your Trusted Profile instantly through your bank's mobile app or online portal without visiting any offices.
- In Person: If your bank doesn't support this, register online at pz.gov.pl. You then have 14 days to visit a designated confirmation point (such as a City Hall, tax office, or certain post offices) with your passport to verify your identity.

Guidelines for Students Under 18 Years of Age

If you are starting your university studies in Poland before turning 18, Polish law considers you a minor. This means you cannot complete most official, administrative, or legal procedures on your own. Since your parents or legal guardians likely live outside of Poland, special arrangements must be made.

Here is what you and your parents need to know about navigating the legalization and administrative processes as an underage university student:

1. Legal Representation in Poland

Because you cannot independently sign official applications, your parents must grant a formal written authorization (a power of attorney). If your parents are not in Poland, they usually need to authorize an adult residing in Poland (such as a family friend, relative, or occasionally a university proxy) to act as your legal representative for administrative matters until your 18th birthday.

2. Applying for a Temporary Residence Permit

- Signatures and Submission: You cannot sign or submit your own residence permit application. The application must be completed, signed, and submitted by your parent or your authorized legal representative in Poland.
- In-Person Appearance: Even though your representative submits the paperwork, you must still attend the appointment at the Voivodeship Office in person to give your fingerprints. Your authorized representative must accompany you.

3. Registering Your Address and Getting a PESEL

You cannot register your residence (zameldowanie) or obtain a PESEL number independently.

University Proxy: Your parents can sign a specific written authorization form granting permission for a university representative to go to the City Hall, register your address, and obtain a PESEL number on your behalf. You should request this authorization form from your university prior to arriving.

4. University Documents and Contracts

Your parents or legal guardians must provide written consent for your university enrollment. They are required to sign all legally binding documents on your behalf, including tuition fee contracts, dormitory rental agreements, and formal consent forms allowing you to participate in mandatory student work placements.

5. Healthcare and Medical Insurance (NFZ)

Signing up for NFZ: To sign a voluntary health insurance contract with the National Health Fund (NFZ), you must present a written consent form signed by your parents or guardians. If this document is written in a language other than Polish, it must be officially translated into Polish by a sworn translator.

Visiting a Doctor: As a 16- or 17-year-old student, you are allowed to go to medical appointments alone; however, you must bring a written parental consent form authorizing the medical examination and present it at the clinic's reception desk.

For legalization support, contact:
International Student Support Office

isso@wsiz.edu.pl

3. Office addresses & emergency contacts (+48, ambulance, police, fire dept, international student support)

International Student Support Office (ISSO)

The International Student Support Office helps international students with administrative matters, legalization procedures, adaptation to life in Poland, and general support during their studies at UITM.

International Student Support Office (ISSO) room number: **226**

University address: Str. Sucharskiego 2,
35-225 Rzeszow, Poland

phone: 17 866 11 11
fax: +48 17 866 12 22
e-mail: wsiz@wsiz.edu.pl

Emergency Numbers in Poland

112 – European Emergency Number

Available for all emergency situations (ambulance, police, fire department).

999 – Ambulance (medical emergency)

997 – Police

998 – Fire Department

When calling emergency services, provide:

- your name,
- your location/address,
- a short description of what happened,
- the number of people needing help.

Stay calm and follow the operator's instructions.

(WSliZ w Rzeszowie)

Important Advice for International Students

- Save emergency numbers in your phone after arriving in Poland.
- Always keep your address and residence documents available.
- In urgent situations, call 112 if you are unsure which service you need.
- For non-emergency university-related questions, contact the International Student Support Office.

4. Housing in Rzeszow

Students in Rzeszów have several accommodation options. They can rent a room in a shared apartment, or choose a private studio.

- Room in a shared apartment – usually 900–1,300 PLN per month.
- Studio apartment – approximately 2,000–2,800 PLN per month.

Students usually search for accommodation on websites such as OLX, Otodom, or through Facebook groups. It is recommended to start looking for accommodation a few months before the beginning of the academic year.

5. Cost of living (transport, food prices)

Compared to many other Polish cities, Rzeszów is an affordable place to live.

Public Transport

The city has a well-developed bus network.

Student 60-minute ticket – 2.50 PLN

Student monthly ticket – 62.50 PLN

Student semester ticket – 250 PLN

Students with a valid student ID receive discounted ticket prices.

Food Prices

Approximate prices in supermarkets:

Bread – 4–6 PLN

Milk (1 L) – 3–5 PLN

Eggs (10 pcs.) – 8–12 PLN

Chicken breast (1 kg) – 20–30 PLN

Water (1.5 L) – 2–4 PLN

Lunch at an inexpensive restaurant –
25–40 PLN

Coffee – 12–18 PLN

A student usually spends around 800–1,200 PLN per month on food, depending on their lifestyle.

6. Useful apps

Google Maps

navigation, public transport, and local businesses

Bolt or Uber

taxi services

Biedronka and Lidl Plus

discounts and special offers in supermarkets

InPost Mobile

parcel locker management

Allegro

the most popular online shopping platform in Poland.

mObywatel

a government app providing access to digital documents and public services

7. Explore Rzeszów

Shopping Malls

- Rzeszów offers several modern shopping centres where you can shop, eat, meet friends, or spend your free time.
- Millenium Hall – One of the largest shopping centres in the city, featuring fashion stores, restaurants, cafés, a cinema, and a popular outdoor area with fountains. It is located close to the city centre and is a popular meeting place for students.
- Galeria Rzeszów – Located next to the main railway station and within walking distance of the Market Square. It offers a wide range of international brands, supermarkets, restaurants, and essential services.
- Plaza Rzeszów – A shopping centre with clothing stores, cafés, a fitness club, and entertainment options.

Museums & Culture

If you would like to learn more about the history and culture of the city, consider visiting:

- Rzeszowskie Piwnice – An interactive underground exhibition located beneath the Market Square, presenting the history of Rzeszów using multimedia displays.
- Regional Museum in Rzeszów – A museum showcasing the history, traditions, and heritage of the Podkarpackie region.
- Muzeum Dobranoczek – A unique museum dedicated to classic Polish animated films and fairy tales, loved by both children and adults.

8. Student Events

Rzeszów Juwenalia

Juwenalia is the largest annual student festival in Rzeszów, usually held in May. The event includes concerts by well-known Polish artists, a colourful student parade, food zones, and numerous attractions. Students from all universities in Rzeszów take part in the celebrations, making it one of the highlights of the academic year. (rzeszowskiejuwenalia.pl)

Kulturalia

Kulturalia is a student cultural festival organized by UITM. The programme usually includes concerts, workshops, sports activities, competitions, and social events, providing an excellent opportunity to meet other students and become part of the university community.





9.City Highlights

- **Market Square (Rynek)** – The heart of Rzeszów, surrounded by colourful historic buildings, cafés, and restaurants. It is one of the city's most popular meeting places.
- **Multimedia Fountain** – Located near Lubomirski Castle, the fountain offers spectacular evening shows combining water, music, lights, lasers, and projections from spring to autumn. ([Erzeszow](#))
- **Lubomirski Castle** – One of Rzeszów's best-known landmarks, situated next to the Multimedia Fountain and surrounded by beautiful walking areas.
- **City Parks** – For relaxation or outdoor activities, visit the City Park (Park Jedności Polonii z Macierzą), Papal Park (Park Papieski), or the walking and cycling paths along the Wisłok River.