

DOING BUSINESS IN MAŁOPOLSKA

Guide for investors



■ Table of contents

Małopolska - a region ready for your business	4
Poland - a stable environment for capital	6
Investment potential of Małopolska	10
Małopolska – the innovation centre of Central Europe	18
Sustainable development and ESG in the region	22
Investment incentives and financing	24
Your partner in the region – institutional support	28
Starting a business in Poland – step by step	30
Key aspects of business culture	34
Case study – an investment success story in Małopolska	38

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Strategic advantages of the region

Skilled workforce

Access to specialists with strong technical and language skills, and 156,700 students in the region

Proven business environment

A well-developed business services sector and the presence of global companies, with Kraków serving as a hub for advanced expertise and innovation

Strong academic and research base

Established cooperation between universities, enterprises, and the R&D sector

Advanced transport infrastructure

Efficient logistics and access to essential transport hubs

Małopolska - a region ready for your business

Every investment decision today is based on several pivotal factors: the availability of **skilled talent**, **quality of infrastructure** and **stability of the business environment**. Increasingly important is also an ecosystem that supports the rapid launch along with scaling of operations.

Małopolska combines these elements into a coherent and mature business environment. It is a region where a **knowledge-based economy** meets **industrial experience**, and where investors find **stable conditions** for conducting and scaling business operations.



3.4 million
residents in the region



1.6 million
economically active people



8.1%
share of Poland's GDP



22,600
people employed in the R&D sector



over 519,000
national economy entities



156,700
students



Diversified economic structure
Greater resilience to economic fluctuations and strong opportunities for business growth

Business-friendly environment
Institutional support along with access to investment incentives

Crucial location in Europe
Effective access to the EU as well as Central and Eastern European markets

High quality of life
Attractive living and working conditions that help attract and retain talent



A large market and competitive operating costs

Poland is the **largest economy in Central and Eastern Europe** and continues to grow faster than the EU average. For investors, this means a market with growing purchasing power as well as solid macroeconomic fundamentals.



Competitive labour costs on a European scale
Favourable ratio of costs to quality and workforce productivity



Stable labour market
Low unemployment and predictable recruitment conditions

Poland compared to Central and Eastern Europe - unemployment and labour costs (2025)

Poland - a stable environment for capital

Poland is among the **twenty largest economies in the world** and has maintained stable expansion for over three decades. The country offers a predictable macroeconomic environment, confirmed by **A-level investment ratings**, as well as full integration with the EU, NATO, and OECD. This combination of institutional stability provides stable conditions for business growth and expansion.

Stable economic environment, **access to the EU market** and competitive market conditions

20th largest economy in the world
(€882.7 bn GDP in 2025)
Large market scale and stable economic fundamentals

3.6% GDP growth (2024)
Growth rate above the EU average

Investment rating A-/A2
Confirmed creditworthiness



Source: Eurostat

Poland – a strategic trade and investment hub in Europe

EUR +26.4 bn
Foreign trade balance

PLN 56.5 bn
Foreign direct investment inflow in 2024

USD 364 bn
Cumulative investment value since 1989



48% - Poland's share of foreign investment inflows in the CEE region (2020-2023)

Poland attracted nearly half of all foreign investment directed to the region

Poland is strongly integrated into European and global supply chains. In 2025, the most important trading partner remained **Germany**, whereas outside the European Union, a significant role is also played by **the United Kingdom** and **the United States**. Imports are equally diversified – **China** is the second largest supplier of goods to Poland. The presence of thousands of foreign-owned companies confirms the country's economic stability along with investment attractiveness.

Warsaw - administrative and financial centre of Poland



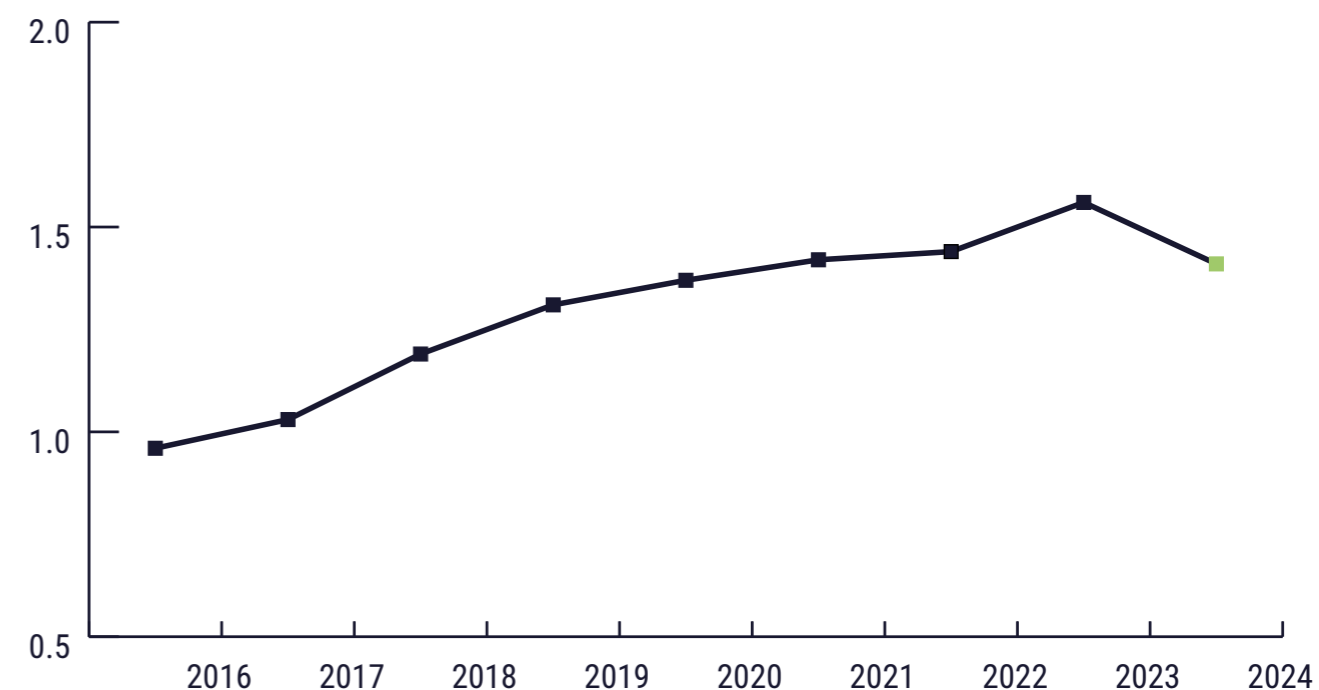
Macroeconomic stability and investment credibility

Poland maintains stable macroeconomic fundamentals. Following a period of elevated inflation, price growth has slowed considerably. At the same time, expenditure on research and development is growing, confirming the gradual shift of the economy towards technology-driven projects and advanced services. Poland's investment credibility is confirmed by the assessments of international rating agencies, which maintain the country at investment grade with a stable outlook.



2.7% inflation (Q3 2025)

R&D expenditure in Poland as a percentage of GDP (2016–2024)



Source: Statistics Poland

Poland's investment rating:

Fitch **A-**

Moody's **A2**

S&P **A-**



Investment potential of Małopolska

Małopolska brings together all the **key resources** needed for business operations – from a skilled workforce and robust infrastructure to a mature business and technology ecosystem. The region combines a strong academic and R&D base with the presence of global companies and fast-growing sectors such as business services, IT and advanced manufacturing. This provides conditions for **the efficient launch and scaling of operations**

A **complete base for investment** and business incentives

PLN 297.2 bn GDP
a strong regional economy

300+ business service centres
a proven environment for operations and scaling

2.6% of GDP spent on R&D in Małopolska
1 p.p. more than the national average

22,600 R&D specialists
a solid innovation base

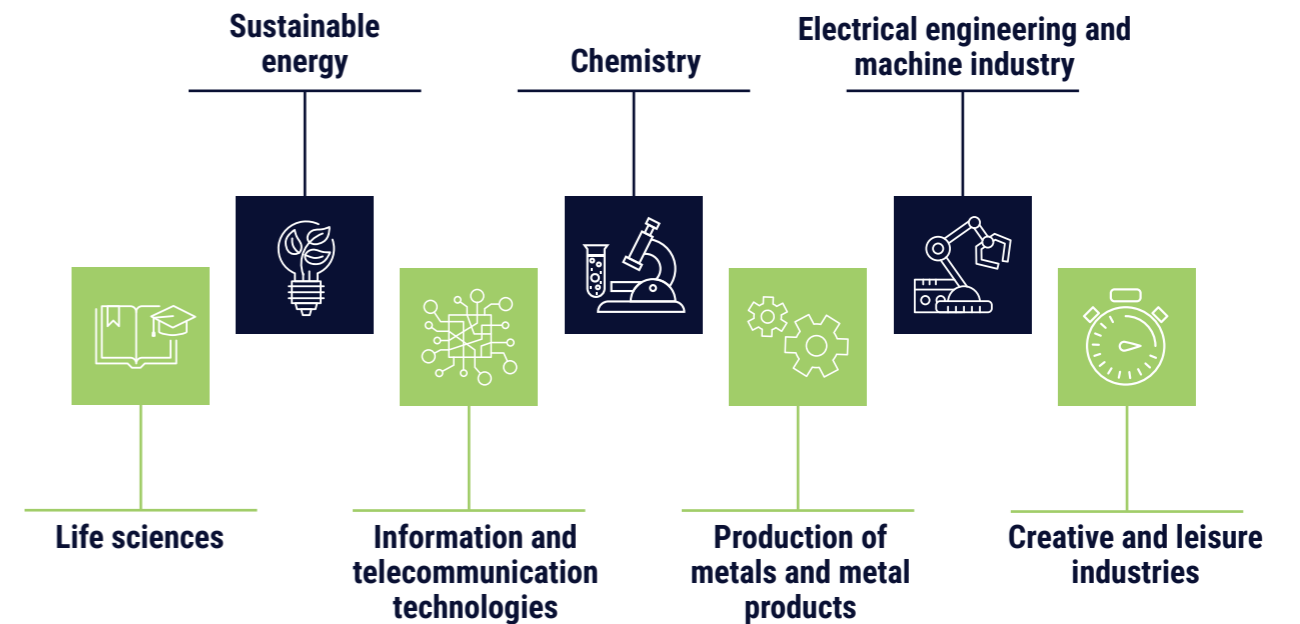
156,700 students
a steady inflow of new talent

A diversified economy based on strategic sectors

Małopolska is one of the economically strongest regions in Poland, accounting for **8.1% of national GDP**. The region is developing towards an economy **based on knowledge and advanced technologies**, while maintaining a strong industrial base. Moreover, the diversified economic structure, encompassing manufacturing, business services, and the IT sector, reduces vulnerability to economic

fluctuations and creates **stable conditions** for investment. Furthermore, the region's progress is focused on clearly defined **areas of specialisation**, in which Małopolska holds competitive advantages. These integrate investment, collaboration between academia and industry, as well as innovation support activities. This approach fosters the advancement of projects in high-potential areas.

Małopolska Smart Specialisations



Kraków – one of the leading business services hubs in Europe

Kraków, the capital city of the Małopolska Region is one of the leading centres for modern business services in Central and Eastern Europe. The region hosts **GBS/SSC, IT, BPO** and **R&D** centres, providing advanced services and processes for global organisations. Notably, the scale of the sector confirms the availability of a skilled workforce and the region's capacity to support complex technological operations.

Approx. 108,000
employees in the business services sector

Nearly 10%
average annual employment growth in the business services sector

Over 300
GBS/SSC, IT, BPO, along with R&D centres

Kraków in the fDi Intelligence “European Cities and Regions of the Future 2025” ranking:

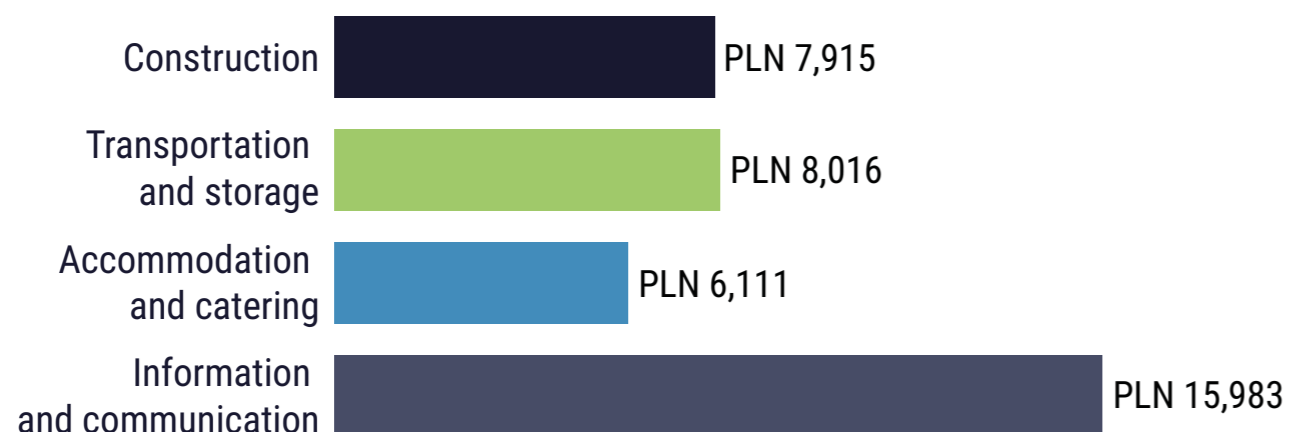


The region’s human capital

Małopolska offers access to a broad and diverse talent pool. The region has over **3.4 million residents** and is one of the main centres attracting new workers in Poland. What is more, **positive net migration** as well as a stable labour market situation provide companies with access to staff for both large-scale investments and specialist recruitment.



Average monthly gross salaries in selected sectors in Małopolska (January 2026)

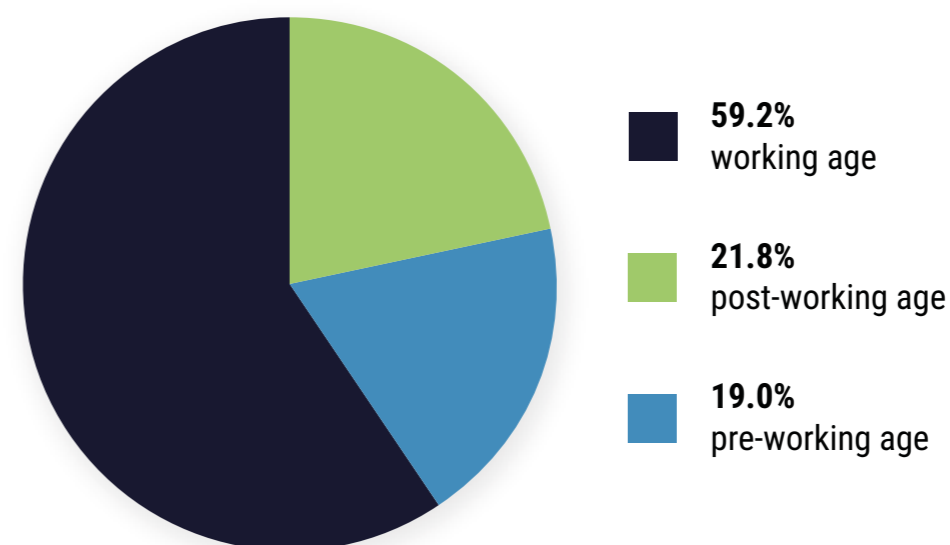


Source: Statistics Poland

Stable demographic structure

Małopolska’s potential is built on a stable demographic structure. In particular, the large working-age population (approximately 2 million people) and strong workforce availability across the region provide companies with a solid base for recruitment and business growth.

Structure of the population by economic age groups in the Małopolskie Voivodeship in 2024



Source: Statistics Poland



Advantageous location and extensive transport infrastructure

Małopolska serves as an important logistics hub in Central and Eastern Europe, supporting efficient supply chain operations. The region is located at the intersection of major transport corridors connecting Western Europe with the East and the North with the South. The **A4 motorway** provides direct transit between Germany and Eastern Europe, while the **E77 expressway** connects the region with Warsaw and the Baltic ports. In addition, ongoing road infrastructure investments, including the Northern Bypass of Kraków, improves transport and increases the accessibility of investment sites. Kraków Airport handles over 13 million passengers annually and offers developed cargo infrastructure, including for temperature-controlled shipments.



270 + km
of expressways
and motorways



Rail transport

The E30 rail corridor and the LHS Broad Gauge Line provide connections to eastern markets.

1080 + km
of railway lines



Access to sea ports

Rail connections with the ports of Gdańsk and Gdynia enable international trade handling.

130 +
flight destinations
from Kraków



Air transport and cargo

Kraków Airport and Katowice Airport provide connections to European logistics hubs.

Travel time from Kraków (by car):



A robust real estate and business space market

Kraków offers a well-developed commercial real estate market tailored to a wide range of business needs. Companies have access to both **modern office space** and functional locations outside the city centre, allowing them to match real estate solutions to their operational requirements and business scale. The warehouse sector is also growing rapidly, supporting both logistics and trade. **Favourable market conditions** and planned investments for the coming years confirm sustained demand for modern space.



Office market

1.8 million m² of total space
52,000 m² of space delivered in 2024
42.7-76.9 PLN per m² rental rates



Warehouse market

1.2 million m² of total space
42,000 m² of space delivered in 2024
18.8-27.8 PLN per m² rental rates

Investors looking for greenfield or brownfield sites can benefit from the support of the Business in Małopolska Centre and the **nationwide investment site database** maintained by the Polish Investment and Trade Agency.

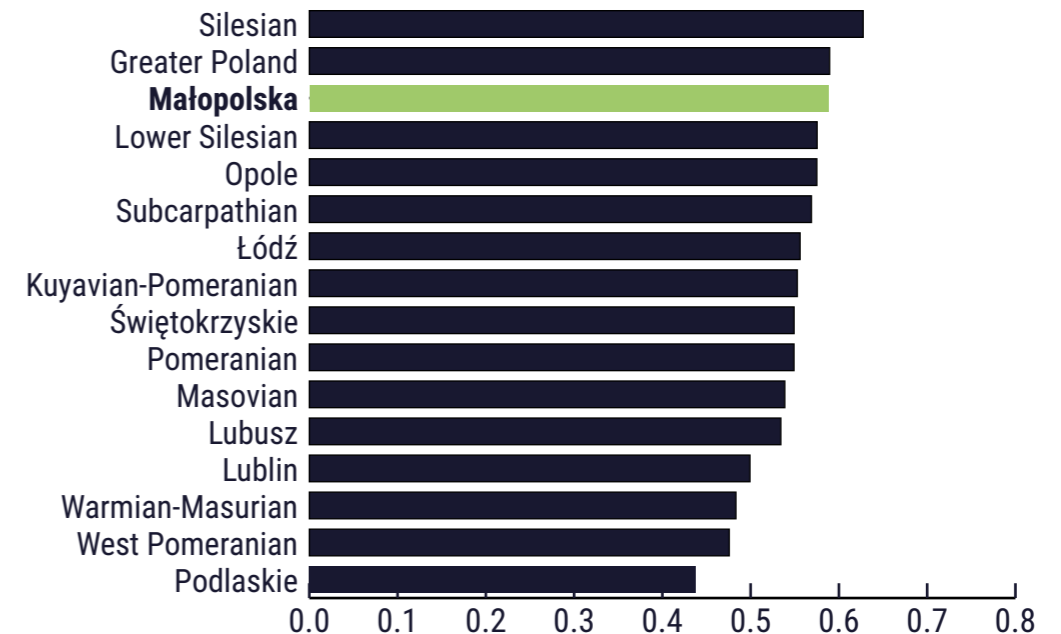
Explore available investment locations



An attractive place to live and work

Małopolska is one of the regions with the **highest quality of life** in Poland. The heart of the region is Kraków – an internationally recognised economic and cultural centre. The region attracts approximately **29 million** tourists annually, confirming its appeal. Consequently, the high quality of life encourages specialists to stay in the region long term, making it easier for companies to **attract and retain talent**.

Quality of life – voivodeship ranking



Source: Algolytics (2025), 'Where is the best place to live?' report

Shift towards a low-emission economy



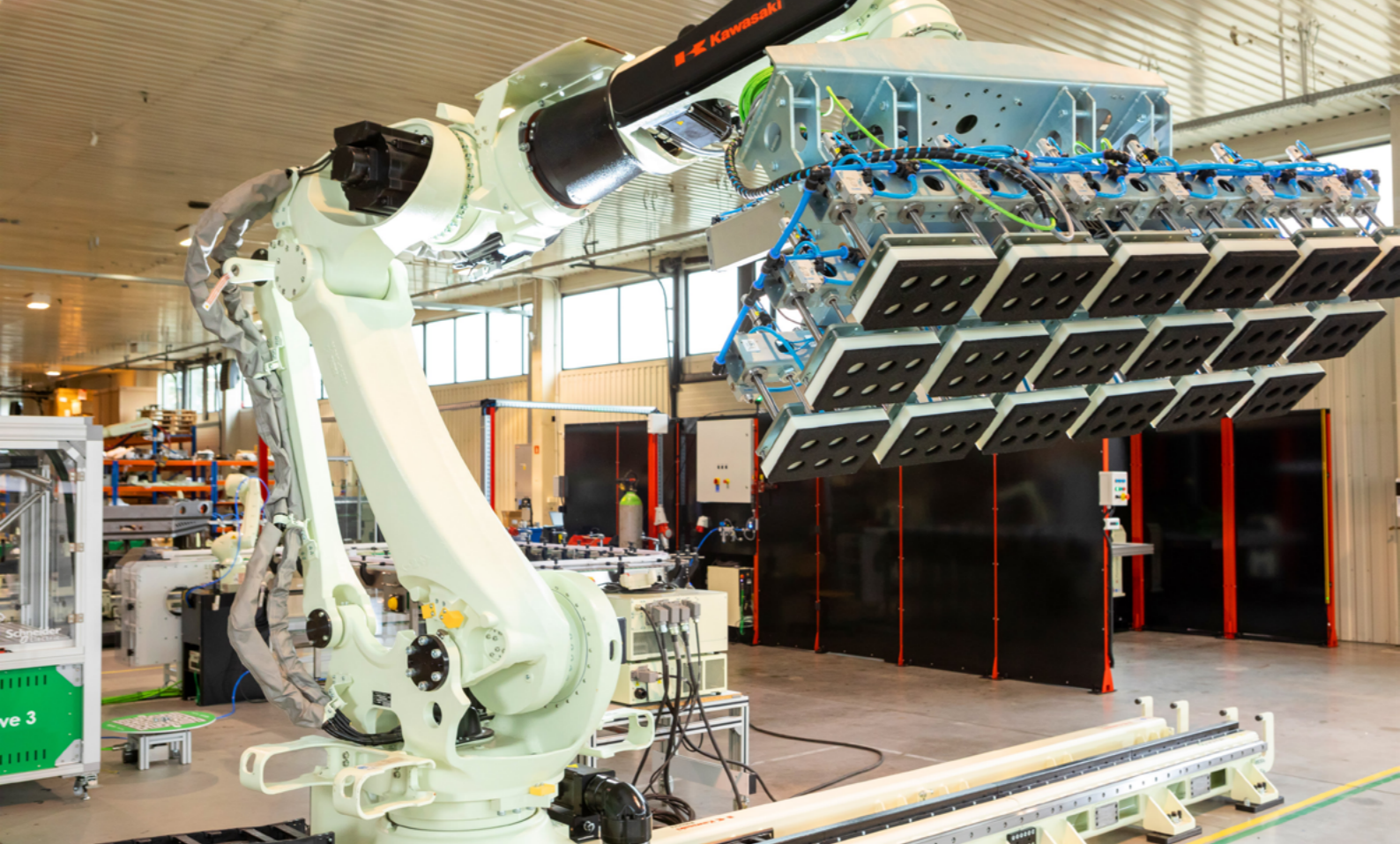
Małopolska is consistently developing a low-emission economy, through investments in renewable energy sources, energy efficiency, and sustainable transport. This creates stable conditions for responsible long-term investment.



Kraków was recognised in the **2025 Sustainable Mobility City Ranking**, achieving **first place** in the categories of individual mobility and urban policies.



Kraków belongs to the group of **100 European cities** selected by the **European Commission** for the programme to achieve climate neutrality **by 2030**, which provides access to expert support and transformation funding.



Universities as a base for implementation and business cooperation

Małopolska is home to **26 higher education institutions**, 23 of which are **located in Kraków**. Universities in Małopolska actively support the commercialisation of technologies, collaborating with business on R&D projects. In particular, Technology Transfer Centres operating at the largest universities provide access to laboratory infrastructure and support the development of joint industry projects.

Kraków – the 2nd largest academic centre in Poland

18 programmes at the Jagiellonian University have been awarded the status of **the best in the country**.

Małopolska – the innovation centre of Central Europe

Małopolska offers not only a strong foundation for innovation, but also an efficient ecosystem supporting commercialisation and market implementation. Cooperation between **universities, companies and public institutions** helps turn research into market-ready solutions. As a result, the region **attracts high-value technology projects** with strong growth and scaling potential.

An efficient ecosystem of cooperation between **academia and business**, supporting the creation and commercialisation of innovation

1st place in Poland in terms of R&D expenditure relative to GDP (GERD and BERD)

Participation in the European Regional Innovation Valleys (RIV) an EU initiative supporting deep-tech solutions and cooperation between regions

2.56% of GDP R&D expenditure in the region

3rd place in Poland in terms of the number of patent applications filed

826 entities conducting R&D activities a strong innovation ecosystem



Jagiellonian University

One of the highest-ranked universities in Central and Eastern Europe (top 300 globally), actively participating in **international research projects** and cooperating with business.



AGH University of Kraków

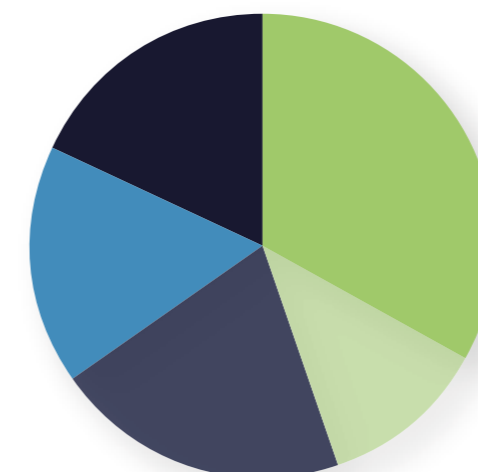
A leading technical university in Poland, closely cooperating with industry and delivering projects in the fields of **engineering, new technologies** and **industrial transformation**.



Kraków University of Economics

A strong competency base for the commercial sector, training specialists in the fields of **finance, management and logistics**.

Most popular fields of study at universities in Małopolska



- **20.4%** Business, law, and administration
- **16.8%** Engineering, manufacturing and construction
- **17.9%** Social sciences, journalism and information
- **11.7%** Humanities and arts
- **33.2%** Other

Source: Statistics Poland

Clusters as a platform for cooperation and innovation implementation

Alongside the academic base, specialised industry clusters are an important part of Małopolska's innovation ecosystem. Their role is not only to connect businesses, research institutions and industry partners, but also to support companies in developing projects and bringing new solutions to market. Through cluster initiatives, companies can **accelerate technology development**, test solutions in real market conditions and **expand into new markets** in cooperation with industry partners.



LifeScience Cluster Kraków

is a cooperation platform for organisations operating in the healthcare, biotechnology and medical sectors, offering export support and legal advisory services.



Sustainable Infrastructure Cluster

brings together companies, researchers and experts to drive innovation in construction technologies.



Polish Cluster of Composite Technologies

comprises over 100 entities and coordinates cooperation between businesses and universities to support the development of Poland's composite technologies sector.



SPIN – direct access to research facilities and implementation

SPIN is a programme that connects companies with the research facilities of the region's leading institutions, such as AGH University of Kraków, Kraków University of Technology, the University of Agriculture and the Polish Academy of Sciences. It enables a rapid transition from concept to implementation – with real support from infrastructure and experts. As part of the programme, companies can carry out technology audits, test solutions and implement innovations without the need to build their own R&D facilities. The programme is funded by the European Funds for Małopolska 2021-2027.



What the company gains:

- access to laboratories and infrastructure
- expert support
- faster implementation
- lower investment risk

A strong technological ecosystem

Małopolska brings together over **800 R&D entities**, forming one of the largest innovation ecosystems in Poland. The region is home to both specialised research institutions and technology centres operated by global companies such as Comarch, Motorola Solutions, ABB, Cisco, MAN and Aptiv. Kraków is one of Poland's leading **technology hubs**, with a thriving **startup ecosystem** in areas including artificial intelligence, data analytics and software development. The space sector and dual-use technologies, combining civilian and defence applications, are also developing rapidly, strengthening the region's position in advanced technologies.

Selected startups from the region:





Sustainable development and ESG in the region

Małopolska is consistently moving towards a **low-emission economy**, combining improvements in environmental quality with operational efficiency for businesses. For investors, this translates into a **stable and predictable environment** aligned with European ESG standards, limiting regulatory risks and the costs of the energy transition. This creates favourable conditions for secure long-term investment planning.

The region's environmental transformation is measurable and systematically enforced:

<p>-33.5% target reduction in CO₂ emissions by 2030 (against baseline levels adopted in the RAPCE)</p>	<p>+24% projected improvement in energy efficiency by 2030</p>
<p>361,200 tonnes of particulate pollutants captured by air protection installations in 2024</p>	<p>24,600 inspections carried out in 2024 as part of the enforcement of the anti-smog resolution</p>

Instruments for improving environmental quality

The region is implementing a coherent set of measures that systematically improve environmental quality while **increasing energy efficiency** and the predictability of business conditions.



Anti-smog resolution and heat source replacement programmes

Reduce emissions and improve air quality, providing predictable environmental standards for running a business



Thermal modernisation of buildings

Reduces energy consumption and operating costs, improving the efficiency of company operations



Development of renewable energy sources (RES)

Strengthens the energy independence of enterprises and the stability of energy costs



LIFE EKOMAŁOPOLSKA programme (2021–2030)

Provides funding for activities aimed at improving air quality and the energy transition (EUR 16.4 million), ensuring continuity of their implementation in the region

Kraków is an example of **effective environmental policy implementation**. As the first large city in Poland, it has eliminated the use of solid fuels in residential heating and is consistently developing low-emission transport.

Regulatory environment for investments

Investments in Małopolska operate within the framework of European Union regulations, including climate and energy policy as well as sustainability reporting requirements. In practice, this means that **energy efficiency, emissions** and compliance with the EU taxonomy and CSRD reporting requirements must already be taken into account at the investment planning stage, influencing investment design, technology choices and operating models.



Investment incentives and financing

Poland's investment support system makes it possible to substantially **reduce market entry costs** and accelerate business development. Investors can take advantage of a broad range of instruments – from tax reliefs and exemptions under the Polish Investment Zone to grants and **support for R&D projects** and digitalisation. A key advantage is the ability to combine these tools and tailor them to the scale and nature of the investment.

A broad range of support instruments **allows financing to be tailored** to the scale and nature of the investment

Polish Investment Zone

Income tax exemption for new investments and the expansion of existing plants. The support decision is issued before the project begins

European Funds

Grants for R&D, digitalisation and business development, available under the European Funds for Małopolska 2021–2027 programme, targeted primarily at SMEs, start-ups and green technology investors

Other tax reliefs

Deductions of costs related to R&D activity, automation and the implementation of innovations. Can be combined with other instruments

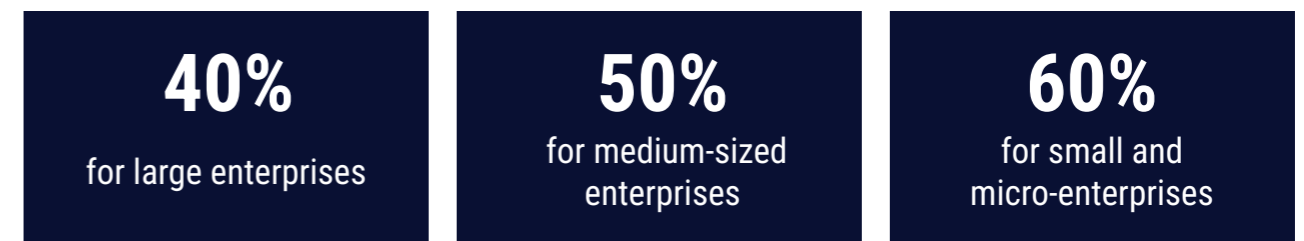
Polish Investment Zone – income tax exemption

The Polish Investment Zone (PIZ) is the principal mechanism for supporting new investments in Poland, making it possible to obtain an income tax exemption. Support decisions in the Małopolska Voivodeship are issued by **Kraków Technology Park** based on the entrepreneur's application.

Which investments qualify for the tax exemption?



Level of state aid (exemption from CIT or PIT income tax)



In the Olkusz, Chrzanów, Oświęcim and Wadowice districts, the exemption is 10 p.p. higher

Duration of the tax exemption



Investment location

The investment may be located **anywhere in the country**, on both private and public land. There is no requirement to locate in designated zones.

Sectors eligible for support under the PIZ

Support is available to companies operating in traditional industrial sectors (excluding the production of alcohol, tobacco products, steel, electricity and gas), as well as selected service-sector companies, including **IT services, R&D** in natural and technical sciences, auditing and bookkeeping, **accounting services** (excluding tax return preparation), technical testing and analysis, call centre services, and architectural and engineering services.

Additional tax incentives for investors

<p>R&D Relief</p> <p>Deduction of research and development costs from the tax base, including salaries of R&D teams, materials and external services. Significantly reduces the cost of R&D activities</p>	<p>Relief for innovative employees</p> <p>Enables companies to utilise unused R&D relief by reducing PIT advances on the salaries of employees engaged in R&D. Improves financial liquidity and supports the retention of research teams</p>	<p>IP Box</p> <p>Preferential 5% CIT/PIT rate for income from qualified intellectual property (e.g. software, patents, technologies). Particularly beneficial for companies developing their own solutions and products</p>
<p>Robotisation relief</p> <p>Additional deduction for automation investments, including – the purchase of robots, software and system integration. Supports productivity gains and the modernisation of processes. Applies to investments completed by the end of 2026</p>	<p>Prototype relief</p> <p>Deduction of 30% of the costs of trial production and launching a new product on the market – testing, certification, preparation for production. Helps move from the development stage to commercialisation</p>	<p>Sponsorship and CSR relief</p> <p>An additional deduction of 50% of costs related to sports and cultural activities, as well as support for higher education and science. A solution for companies involved in social initiatives</p>

Selected tax reliefs may be combined with other support instruments, subject to the rules applicable to each mechanism.

European funds – regional and national level

Investors in Małopolska can benefit from **EU funds available** at the **regional and national level**. These programmes support business development, innovation, and the digital and energy transformation of enterprises.

European Funds for Małopolska 2021–2027

Scope of support:
R&D and implementation, digitalisation, innovation, internationalisation, energy transition

For whom:
SMEs, start-ups and enterprises implementing innovative projects; in selected measures also large enterprises and consortia

Just Transition Fund (Western Małopolska)

Scope of support:
Productive investments, business development, energy transition, labour market and competences

For whom:
Enterprises investing in Western Małopolska



EUR 2.69 billion
total budget of the European Funds for Małopolska



EUR 254 million
for Western Małopolska under the Just Transition Fund



EUR 312 million
for research, development and entrepreneurship across Małopolska

The European Funds for Modern Economy

Scope of support:
R&D, innovation deployment, digitalisation, skills development, green transition

For whom:
SMEs and large enterprises implementing innovative projects

SMART Path

Scope of support:
R&D, implementation, digitalisation, internationalisation, competences

For whom:
Enterprises of all sizes innovative and technological projects

Ecological Loan

Scope of support:
Energy efficiency, infrastructure modernisation, reduction of energy consumption

For whom:
SMEs and small mid-cap and mid-cap enterprises undertaking modernisation investments



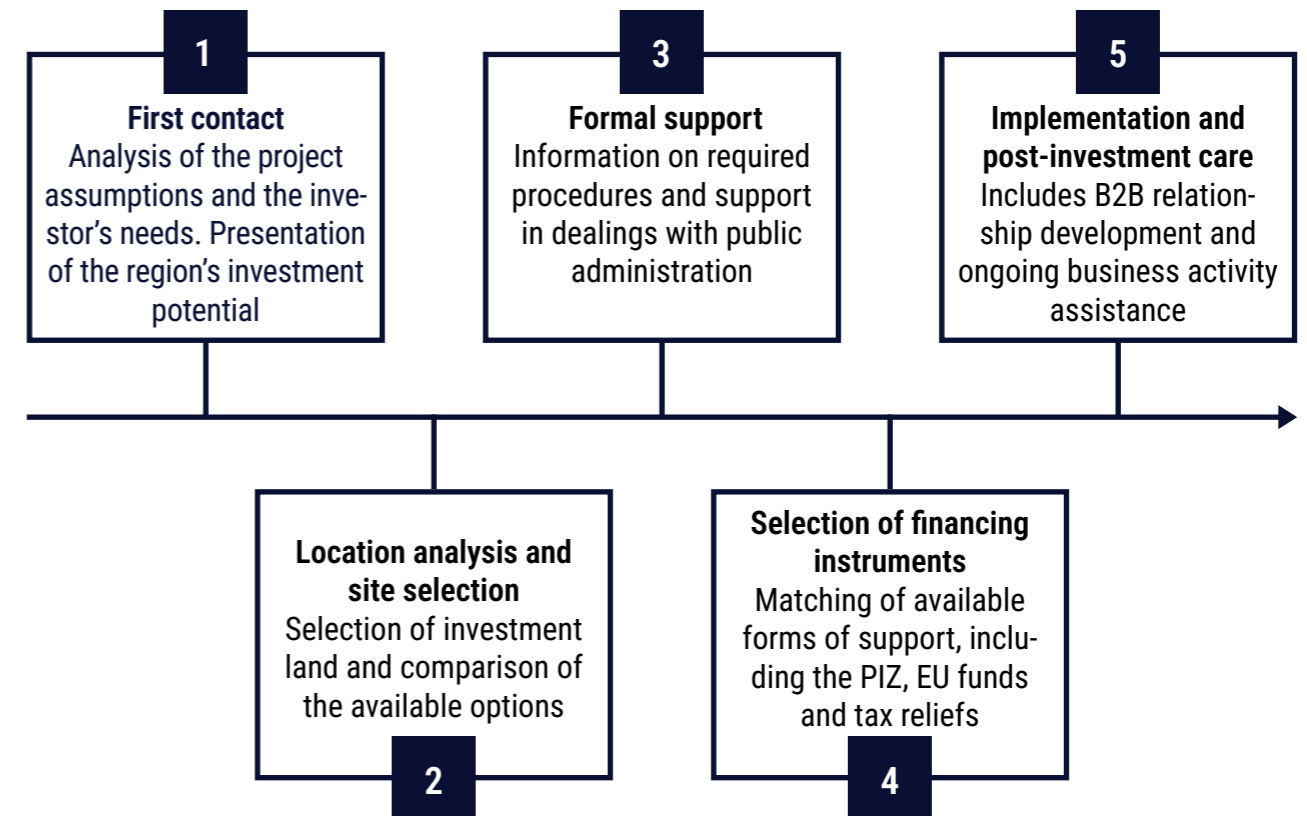
Your partner in the region – institutional support

The Business in Małopolska Centre provides investors with **operational support** at every stage of the investment process – from first contact with the region, through location analysis and assistance with formalities, to the launch of operations and the development of business relationships. Investors gain **access to market data**, investment site offers, information on available financing instruments and support in dealings with public administration. In addition, the Centre organises site visits and supports the development of B2B cooperation, helping **shorten time to market** and reduce operational risk.



Free, comprehensive investment support – from location selection to post-investment care

Investor service process – step by step



Export support

The Business in Małopolska Centre supports companies in their international expansion – from identifying markets to establishing business relationships. Entrepreneurs **gain access to knowledge and contacts** that support international expansion – through information meetings and export-oriented conferences, market analyses, and information on opportunities to enter foreign markets and available support instruments.

Support is provided in cooperation with regional business support institutions. The Centre acts as the coordinator of the system, so that entrepreneurs **do not need to navigate a fragmented offer on their own** and can reach the appropriate support more quickly. The offer is addressed primarily to the SMEs.

The Centre's activity is developed within the „Business in Małopolska. Together for Future” project, co-financed by the European Union under the **European Funds for Małopolska 2021–2027** programme.

Current support available for companies



Starting a business in Poland – step by step

The process of starting a business in Poland is **structured and can be planned in advance**. Investors may carry out key stages of the project in parallel – from choosing a legal form and location to preparing the investment and building a team.

The basic rules of doing business, including the **tax and regulatory system, are uniform** at the **national level**. At the same time, the local level plays a significant role – in spatial planning and the implementation of the investment.

In practice, this means a **stable and predictable legal environment** and the ability to adapt the project to local conditions and to manage the investment schedule efficiently.



Legal form

Affects the management structure, liability and applicable tax regime



Investment location

Determines development parameters, access to infrastructure and the pace of project implementation



Regulatory environment

Combines uniform national regulations with local investment conditions, influencing the course of the investment process

Choice of legal form

The legal form of the business **affects how the company is managed**, the scope of liability and the taxation model. Poland offers solutions suited both to smaller projects and to large capital investments.

The key is to **match the structure to the scale of operations**, development plans and the level of risk the investor is willing to assume.

Limited liability company	Joint-stock company	Branch of a foreign entrepreneur
Sole proprietorship	Simple joint-stock company	Limited partnership
General partnership	Professional partnership	Civil law partnership

Which forms do investors most often choose?

The most commonly chosen legal form is the **limited liability company**, which combines limited shareholder liability with management flexibility and a relatively simple structure.

For larger investment projects, the **joint-stock company** is used, enabling the raising of external capital and the development of operations on a larger scale.

Tax system – key principles

Poland's **tax system is uniform at the national level**, providing **predictability for businesses** regardless of investment location. The level of taxation depends primarily on the chosen legal form of the business and the scale of operations.

PIT 12% and 32% depending on the level of income	CIT 9% and 19% depending on the size of the company	VAT 23% standard rate
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Site selection and investment conditions

The choice of location directly affects the investment timeline, costs and level of risk. **Local planning conditions** and access to infrastructure are **key factors**.

The scope of the investment is determined by local planning documents. In practice, there are **two main paths** for project implementation.



* The time depends on the municipality and the nature of the investment

Employment and labour costs

Employing workers in Poland is based on clearly defined rules. The process includes **concluding a contract, registering the employee with the Social Insurance Institution (ZUS) and the ongoing settlement of taxes and contributions**. The Polish labour market offers a variety of forms of cooperation – from classic employment contracts to more flexible models, including civil law contracts and B2B cooperation.



minimum hourly rate:
PLN 31.40 /
approx. EUR 7.40
(2026)



minimum annual
leave:
20 days per year



minimum wage
PLN 4,806 gross /
EUR 1,139
(2026)

Employing foreign workers

EU/EEA citizens

Employment without additional permits. An employment contract and registration with the social insurance system (ZUS) are required.

Specialists from outside the EU

A work permit or a legal right of residence is required. The procedures are standardised and may be carried out in parallel with the preparation of the investment.

Citizens of selected countries (including Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Armenia)

A simplified employment procedure based on a declaration registered with the labour office, with a defined time limit on work.

Citizens of Ukraine

A simplified employment path based on registration with the labour office and standard formalities.



From decision to the launch of operations

The investment process in Poland is **structured** and can be planned in advance. Individual stages may be carried out in parallel, helping **shorten the time** between the investment decision and **the launch of operations**.

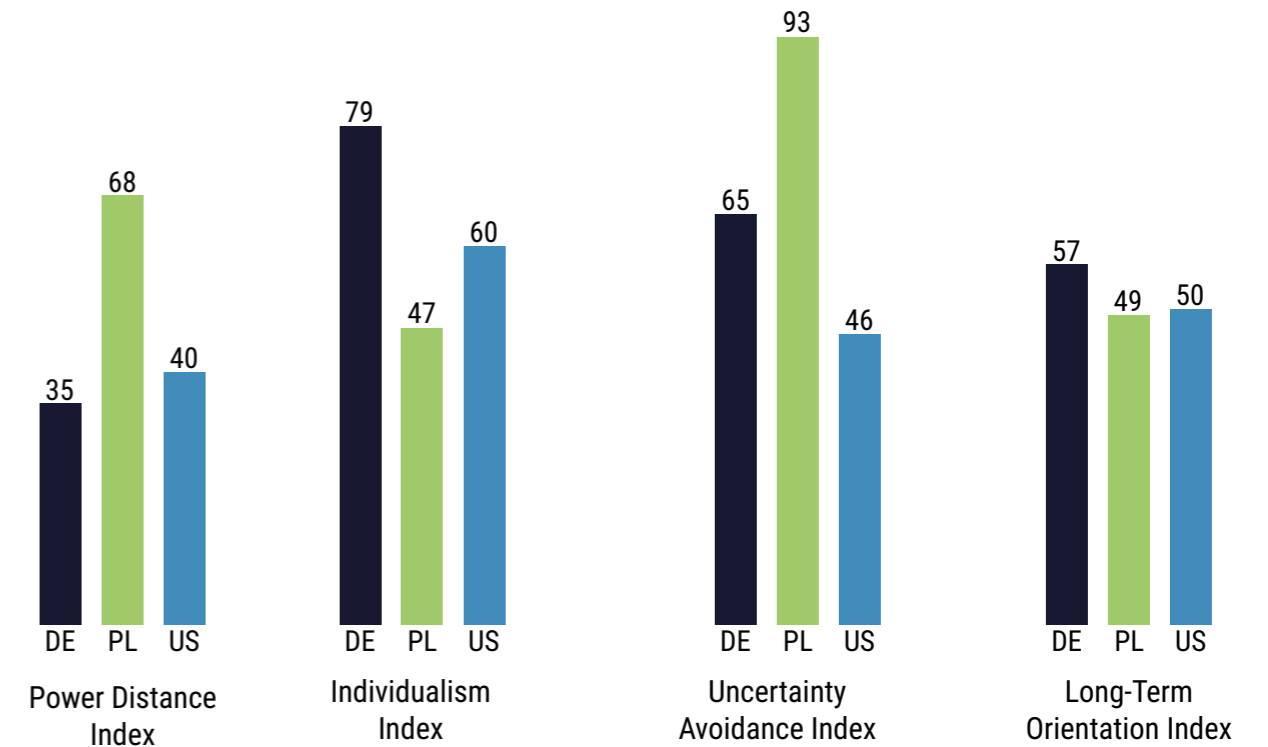
- company registration (S24): as little as **24 hours**
- zoning decision: up to **90 days***
- building permit: approx. **65 days**
- employee registration with ZUS: up to **7 days**

* time depends on the municipality and the nature of the investment





Profile of Poland's business culture compared with Germany and the USA



Source: The Culture Factor Group

Key aspects of business culture

Entering a new market is not only a matter of analysing data and regulations, but above all **understanding how people and organisations operate**. Cultural factors often determine the pace of negotiations, the quality of cooperation and the ultimate success of a project. Understanding local business culture is therefore of key importance to investment success.

Polish business culture in brief

<p>relationships are built gradually</p>	<p>decisions are made at management level</p>
<p>specifics and details matter</p>	<p>punctuality is the standard</p>

- Power Distance Index | Poland: 68**
 Organisational hierarchy and decision-making roles play an important role in the negotiation process. Decisions are most often made at the management level, so it is **crucial to engage the relevant decision-makers** at the appropriate stage of discussions.
- Individualism Index | Poland: 47**
 A combination of independence and teamwork is clearly visible. Employees value meritocracy and individual development paths, while operating within clearly defined organisational structures.
- Uncertainty Avoidance Index | Poland: 93**
 A high need for precision and formalisation. Trust is built through detailed arrangements, transparent rules of cooperation and clearly defined schedules.
- Long-Term Orientation Index | Poland: 49**
 A pragmatic approach prevails, based on concrete, measurable results and clearly defined implementation stages. Reputation and recommendations play an important role.

How to conduct your first business meetings in Poland

A first business meeting in Poland rarely ends with a decision – it is a stage of forming an **initial impression and building trust**. Relationships develop gradually, and their foundation is laid from the very first contact.

Greetings are formal: a firm handshake, eye contact and an introduction with first name, surname and position. **Punctuality is the standard**, and being late without prior notice may be perceived as unprofessional. It is worth confirming the meeting the day before and having business cards to hand, particularly in more traditional industries. **Conservative dress is the norm** – when in doubt, more formal attire is the safer choice.



At the negotiating table

Negotiations are direct, businesslike and fact-based. The person across the table is not always the one who makes the final decision, so it is worth **establishing the partner's decision-making structure in advance**. Silence after a proposal is presented often means it is being considered, not a lack of interest.



Contract and formalities

The written contract forms the basis of cooperation, and its provisions are treated with great attention. Ambiguities may be the subject of detailed negotiation. **The presence of lawyers** during the negotiation process is **standard** and forms part of a professional approach.



Relationships outside the conference room

An invitation to dinner is a signal of interest in building a relationship, not merely in closing a transaction. Conversations often **cover topics unrelated to business**, such as travel, sport or personal life. An established personal relationship provides a lasting foundation for cooperation.



Communication – what is worth knowing

Business communication in Poland can be indirect, particularly when saying no. Cautiously phrased statements may signal a lack of decision or a lack of interest. The absence of specific arrangements – such as a date or a person responsible – often means that the process has not yet been closed. In situations that require a quick response, a **direct phone call is often more effective** than e-mail correspondence.

What you should know before travelling to Kraków for a business trip?

Kraków combines well-developed business infrastructure with a compact city scale, which makes it easy to organise meetings efficiently and move between locations. Below is a summary of the **most important practical information** for business visitors.

Getting around

Kraków is a city with relatively short distances, which makes it **easy to move efficiently** between meetings. Many locations in the city centre are accessible on foot or within a short drive. Kraków Airport is located approximately **20 minutes from the city centre**. In practice, the most convenient options are taxis and ride-hailing apps (e.g. Bolt, Uber), which offer price transparency and reliable availability.

For meetings outside the centre – in industrial areas, special economic zones or university campuses – it is worth **planning the journey in advance**. During rush hours, traffic may extend travel times.

Where to stay

Kraków offers a **wide selection of business-standard hotels** located near key institutions, restaurants and conference venues.

The most convenient choice for business visitors are the areas **around the Old Town and Kazimierz**, which provide easy logistics, access to dining options and quick travel to the main meeting locations.

During peak conference periods, **advance bookings are recommended**.

Where to hold dinner meetings

Meetings over a meal are an important part of business culture in Poland. Kraków offers a **wide choice of high-standard restaurants** – serving both Polish and international cuisine. The greatest concentration of venues suitable for business meetings can be found **in the Old Town and Kazimierz**. Advance booking is standard – particularly in the city centre and during the high season.





■ A global leader in the medical industry has chosen Małopolska

Stryker is one of the world's leading medical technology companies, specialising in advanced, high-end medical devices and solutions that improve patient outcomes and make healthcare better. Our innovative products and services support more than 150 million patients globally each year across areas such as orthopaedics, medical and surgical equipment, and neurotechnology.

The Skawina site incorporates a high degree of automation, robotics, and AI-supported process control, allowing us to deliver precision manufacturing at scale. This state-of-the-art facility strengthens our ability to scale production, enhance operational excellence, and meet the evolving needs of healthcare systems.

■ Case study – an investment success story in Małopolska

Macroeconomic data and investment incentives are important points of reference, but the real **strength of the region** lies in the companies that operate and grow there. Małopolska attracts both global corporations and dynamic enterprises that choose the region as a base for scaling their operations.

This chapter presents the example of an investor that chose Małopolska and successfully delivers high value-added projects here. Its experience shows how access to qualified staff, well-developed infrastructure and efficient institutional support translates into **tangible business results**.

The investor's experience as confirmation of the region's potential

Stryker on Małopolska – an interview with the investor

What important factors influenced your decision to choose Małopolska and how did it compare to other locations?

Several key factors influenced our decision. First and foremost was **access to highly skilled talent**. Małopolska offers a strong pool of well-educated professionals with the technical and analytical capabilities required for advanced manufacturing.

Secondly, the region benefits from **well-developed infrastructure** and access to the European Single Market.

Thirdly, what really stood out to us was the overall business environment. It offers a **competitive cost structure** alongside a high quality of life, which makes a real difference in how we attract, support, and retain our people while also operating efficiently.

Finally, the **presence of a supportive institutional ecosystem** and targeted investment incentives also played a meaningful role in our decision-making process.

How do you assess cooperation with regional institutions such as the Marshal's Office or Kraków Technology Park?

Our experience has been **very positive**. Cooperation with regional institutions has been professional, responsive, and we've developed a true partnership with them.

Organisations such as the Marshal's Office and Kraków Technology Park provided **valuable guidance** and **practical support**, helping us navigate the different administrative processes. **Kraków Technology Park** played an important role in supporting our investment through the Polish Investment Zone programme. They've provided **PLN 475 million** in support to Stryker in recent years.

This support is linked to significant capital investment in the Skawina facility, including the expansion of production capacity through the acquisition of specialised machinery and equipment.

What forms of support have you used?

We benefited from a **range of supports**, particularly when it came to practical guidance during both the setup and early stages of operation.

That included **help navigating regulatory requirements**, managing investment processes, and getting established within the local business community. Programmes such as the **Polish Investment Zone** have been beneficial in enabling high-value, technology-driven investments, particularly in advanced manufacturing, automation, and innovation.

That relationship hasn't stopped at setup - the ongoing engagement **continues to be very valuable** as we develop and grow the site further.

Does the location in Małopolska support your business in Central and Eastern Europe?

Yes, very much so. The location provides a **strong operational base** for supporting our activities across Central and Eastern Europe.

Its geographic position, combined with strong infrastructure and access to talent, enables **efficient coordination** across multiple markets.

If you were faced with the decision again, would you choose Małopolska?

Yes, **Małopolska** would absolutely remain a strong and natural choice for us. The region **combines business readiness with a long-term perspective**. What stands out most is the collaborative ecosystem, where investors are treated as long-term partners and supported through both incentives and advice. Combined with access to talent, strong infrastructure, and a growing innovation ecosystem, this makes **Małopolska a highly attractive location for companies** operating in advanced and high-tech industries such as medical technology.

Hundreds of international companies have already placed their trust in Małopolska



A success story – written by you
Let's talk about your business in Małopolska

■ Małopolska Region

The Małopolska Region is responsible for shaping the region's economic development policy and creating favourable conditions for investment and entrepreneurship. It coordinates the activities of public institutions and business support organisations, supporting innovation, internationalisation and cross-sector cooperation. The region also manages European funds under the European Funds for Małopolska 2021–2027 programme, which is a key source of financing for business development and investment projects in the region.

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■ Małopolska Regional Development Agency S.A.

Małopolska Regional Development Agency S.A. supports enterprises through advisory services, financial instruments and development programmes. It strengthens the competitiveness of companies at various stages of their activity – from building competences and implementing innovations to internationalisation. The solutions offered are tailored to current market needs and to the specifics of each enterprise.

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■ Krakow Technology Park sp. z o.o.

Kraków Technology Park Sp. z o.o. is responsible for operating the Polish Investment Zone in Małopolska, issuing support decisions and providing access to tax exemptions for new investments. At the same time, it develops business infrastructure and an environment conducive to the growth of modern technologies. KPT supports companies throughout the investment process, innovation development and the implementation of Industry 4.0 solutions, combining the role of a public institution with that of a business partner. It is also actively involved in the development of strategic sectors, including dual-use technologies, the defence sector and the gaming industry, supporting the growth of the gamedev ecosystem and cooperation between business, the R&D sector and public administration.

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