

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs

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FACT SHEET

The United States and Poland:
Partners on Democracy, Economic Development, and Defense

Poland is a close and enduring ally of the United States. Our relationship is built on a shared vision for advancing freedom, democracy, and prosperity; a strong and growing economic partnership; and close security cooperation.

Poland's successful political and economic transition in the short time since its emergence from communism in 1989 is a model for other countries in the region, a fact proven by its key leadership as a member of both NATO and the European Union. The United States works closely with Poland to promote democracy across the Eastern Partnership countries, both through our bilateral Democracy Dialogue and by co-funding democracy promotion activities through our Emerging Donors Challenge Fund. Poland's leadership also helped create the EU's European Endowment for Democracy. Further afield, Poland has shared the lessons of its own democratic transition through mentoring for Libya, Egypt, and Tunisia on the process of democratic elections, as well as training social activists in Burma on civil society and press freedom.

Over the last few years, Poland has become an economic success story in Europe. Even in a time of economic crisis, Poland's economy has managed to grow over 18% since 2008. It is now the 6th largest economy in Europe and the 22nd largest in the world. Poland is the largest commercial partner of the United States in Central Europe, and the United States is one of the top sources of foreign investment in Poland. Bilateral trade has quadrupled over the past ten years, and U.S. exports to Poland grew over 37% just in the first seven months of 2013. American companies have invested more than \$20 billion in Poland and directly employ over 180,000 Poles.

Poland is also a regional leader on energy diversification efforts, including the construction of an LNG terminal on its Baltic coast, a nuclear power plant project, shale gas exploration, and ambitious plans for the expansion of gas interconnectors with its neighbors.

On the environmental front, Poland is hosting the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change 19th Conference of Parties (also known as COP 19) from November 11-22 of this year.

Looking ahead, Poland will be an important partner in a successfully-negotiated Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership agreement with the European Union. This agreement could boost economic growth in the United States and Europe and add to the over 13 million American and European jobs already supported by transatlantic trade and investment, including in Poland.

Our alliance in promoting global security cannot be underestimated. Polish forces are making key contributions as part of the ISAF mission in Afghanistan. Approximately 1,100 Polish troops are serving side by side with us there, and 43 Poles have been killed in action.

Poland is also an important part of the European Phased Adaptive Approach to NATO missile defense, and we will deploy a missile defense site in Poland in the 2018 timeframe.

In addition, Poland is making significant contributions to NATO capabilities through its strong defense spending. We look forward to helping satisfy Poland's requirements for its \$45 billion defense modernization initiative.

Our commitment to European security is also symbolized by the November 2012 launch of a full-time aviation detachment at Łask Air Base. This represents the first-ever continuous presence of U.S. troops in Poland. The Detachment has already hosted the first four training rotations of U.S. F-16 and C-130 aircraft.

Secretary Kerry's visit to Poland will highlight many of these areas in our bilateral relationship. In Warsaw, Secretary Kerry will meet with senior Polish officials to discuss our close defense alliance and partnership with Poland across a range of global issues, as well as Poland's key contributions on democracy promotion and in enhancing NATO capabilities. He also will meet with representatives of U.S. and Polish businesses and young innovators, highlighting our strong economic ties and mutual commitment to transatlantic prosperity.

