Statistical analyses and reports

Statistics Poland

Warsaw, Białystok 2026

# Green Lungs of Poland in 2024

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Statistics Poland, Statistical Office in Białystok

Warsaw, Białystok 2026

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# Preface

The north-eastern part of Poland holds a special place in the social consciousness as a region where nature is still strong and diverse. It is one of the last remaining areas in Europe with pristine nature, intact landscape and special cultural values. Forests, lakes, bogs and river valleys unite into a harmonious whole there. This landscape is unique both in terms of its natural beauty as well as from the point of view of the inhabitants' strong connection with it. It is in this region, characterised by a relatively low urbanisation and industrialisation, that Krzysztof Wolfram came up with an idea of the 'Green Lungs of Poland' in 1983. It is a concept which emphasises a harmonious coexistence of humans and nature, and focuses on the pursuit of social and economic development that is based on sustainable management of natural resources and maintaining high-quality environment.

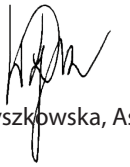
This is the eleventh edition of our publication, released in a three-year cycle, which presents the area of the Green Lungs of Poland in the light of statistical data. The characteristics of the region shows its natural conditions and current state, threats to and protection of the environment, and forestry. The analysis has been enhanced with information on the demographic and social situation in the region, municipal infrastructure, dwellings as well as culture and tourism. Data have been presented in a breakdown by voivodship and in comparison to the whole country in 2024, and selected information has been shown by powiat and gmina. The publication is supplemented with a table containing major data on the region in a retrospective since 1993.

The aim of this publication is to provide reliable information on the area of the Green Lungs of Poland, which can support the processes of planning, implementation and monitoring of the policy of sustainable development and the protection of natural resources. The publication is addressed to representatives of the public administration, the scientific community, non-governmental organisations as well as institutions and individuals interested in sustainable development and environment protection.

I hope that information contained in our publication will help to advance the knowledge about the unique nature of the region and will support activity aimed at preserving and upholding the legacy of the Green Lungs of Poland. We would like to thank managers of administrative data sources for information that have enhanced the scope of our publication.

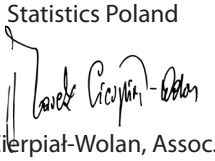
We would like to encourage you to share your comments and suggestions about the publication, which will be useful in improving its subsequent editions. We would also like to recommend that you use other publications and databases available on the websites of Statistics Poland and the Statistical Office in Białystok.

Acting Director
Statistical Office in Białystok



Dorota Wyszkowska, Assoc. Prof.

President
Statistics Poland



Marek Cierpiał-Wolan, Assoc. Prof.

Białystok, Warsaw, May 2026

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## Symbols

| Symbol | Description |
|---|---|
| Hyphen (–) | magnitude zero |
| Zero: (0) | magnitude not zero, but less than 0.5 of a unit |
| (0.0) | magnitude not zero, but less than 0.05 of a unit |
| Dot (.) | data not available, classified data (statistical confidentiality) or providing data impossible or purposeless |
| Symbol Δ | categories of applied classification presented in an abbreviated form |
| "Of which" | indicates that not all elements of the sum are given |

## Major abbreviations

| Abbreviation | Full name |
|---|---|
| PLN | zloty |
| pcs | piece, unit |
| km | kilometre |
| $m^2$ | square metre |
| $km^2$ | square kilometre |
| ha | hectare |
| $m^3$ | cubic metre |
| $dam^3$ | cubic decametre |
| $hm^3$ | cubic hectometre |
| kW | kilowatt |
| MW | megawatt |
| Art. | article |
| cont. | continue |
| e.g. | for example |
| etc. | and so on |
| i.a. | among others |
| i.e. | that is |
| No. | number |
| pp | percentage point |
| NACE | Statistical Classification of Economic Activities in the European Community |
| EC | European Community |
| GLP | Green Lungs of Poland |

| Abbreviation | Full name |
|---|---|
| sections of the NACE Rev. 2 | |
| accommodation and catering | accommodation and food service activities |
| trade; repair of motor vehicles | wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles |
| divisions of the NACE Rev. 2 | |
| catering | food and beverage service activities |
| tourism activities | travel agency, tour operator and other reservation service and related activities |

# Executive summary

Green Lungs of Poland (GLP), located in the north-eastern part of the country, at the end of 2024 comprised the following voivodships: Podlaskie (118 gminas), Warmińsko-Mazurskie (excluding gmina Kisielice, i.e. 115 gminas), the north-eastern part of Mazowieckie (114 gminas) as well as parts of Kujawsko-Pomorskie (33 gminas) and Pomorskie (6 gminas).

In 2024, the area of GLP equalling 63.5 thousand km$^2$ occupied 20.2% of the total area of the country. The biggest part of Green Lungs of Poland area was located in Warmińsko-Mazurskie Voivodship (37.8%), whereas the smallest – in Pomorskie one (1.6%).

According to geodesic records, at the beginning of 2024 agricultural land comprised 60.1% of the total area of the ecoregion and forest land including wooded and shrub land – 29.9%. The structure of land use in GLP remained fairly the same in comparison with the one noted at the beginning of 2021.

In 2024 in the area of Green Lungs of Poland, 632.3 hm$^3$ of water was withdrawn for the needs of the national economy and population, which was 18.1% less than three years before.

In the analysed year, industrial and municipal wastewater discharged into the waters or into the ground within the ecoregion area amounted to 446.4 hm$^3$, which was a decrease by 23.8% in comparison with 2021. A total of 157.2 hm$^3$ of this wastewater required treatment, and 99.4% of the total was treated.

In the area of Green Lungs of Poland in 2024 plants of significant nuisance to air purity emitted 1.0 thousand tonnes of particulates and 19.3 thousand tonnes of gaseous pollution (excluding carbon dioxide). It was a decrease by respectively 35.9% and 34.7% in comparison with data from 2021.

At the end of 2024, the total sum power of renewable energy source (RES) installations in the ecoregion area amounted to 3047.2 MW and it grew within three years by 81.1%.

At the end of the analysed year, the area of special nature value under legal protection within the GLP area equalled 2242.1 thousand ha, which was 35.3% of the total ecoregion area. This area increased by 0.3% in comparison with the one noted at the end of 2021.

In 2024, GLP gminas produced 2850.8 thousand tonnes of waste (excluding municipal waste), i.e. by 6.9% more than three years before, and collected 1247.5 thousand tonnes of municipal waste (by 1.1% more than in 2021), of which waste collected separately comprised 40.5% (in 2021 – 36.5%).

Within the analysed year, outlays on fixed assets in environmental protection in the area of Green Lungs of Poland equalled PLN 1206.0 million (by 18.4% more than in 2021), and in water management – PLN 392.3 million (by 70.8% more).

At the end of 2024, forests in the ecoregion area covered 1849.9 thousand ha. Their area grew slightly, by 0.6%, in comparison with the end of 2021. Forest cover indicator remained the same as three years before – 29.1%.

In gminas of Green Lungs of Poland at the end of the analysed year there were 3816.4 thousand residents, i.e. by 1.6% less than three years before. Analysing the structure of population by economic groups of age, it can be noticed that the share of population at working age in the total GLP residents is gradually diminishing, and the share of post-working age population is increasing.

In 2024, a negative natural increase was noted in the area of Green Lungs of Poland. It amounted to minus 16.1 thousand, while in 2021 it was minus 21.9 thousand. Internal and international net migration for permanent residence was also negative and in 2024 equalled minus 5.7 thousand, while three years before – minus 5.8 thousand persons.

At the end of 2024, 1444.4 thousand residents of GLP gminas were employed. Their number decreased by 1.3% in comparison with the one noted at the end of 2022.

At the end of December 2024, within the area of Green Lungs of Poland the number of registered unemployed persons was 107.7 thousand and this number was by 9.9% lower than the one recorded at the end of 2021.

At the end of 2024, gminas of GLP had 1565.8 thousand dwellings and within three years dwelling stocks grew by 57.7 thousand. In 2024, there were 18.1 thousand completed dwellings in the GLP area, which is by 14.2% less than in 2021.

At the end of 2024 there were 92.8% of the total GLP population using a water supply system (i.e. by 0.3 pp more than three years before), a sewage network – 66.3% (by 1.0 pp more), while a gas supply system – 37.0% (by 1.8 pp more).

At the end of December of the analysed year the share of population using wastewater treatment plants in the total population of GLP area was 68.9% and in comparison with this population at the end of 2021 it increased by 1.1 pp.

In September 2024, there were 1559 primary schools for children and youth in the area of Green Lungs of Poland, which provided education to 319.6 thousand students. In the GLP area the number of these schools fell by 44, while the number of students attending them grew by 0.8% in comparison with the value recorded three years before.

In the 2024/25 school year, 790 post-primary schools for youth operated in the Green Lungs of Poland area providing education to the total of 170.1 thousand students. In comparison with the 2021/22 school year there were 36 schools of this type more and the number of their students grew by 5.4%.

At the end of December 2024, 25 higher education institutions and 26 branches (of higher education institutions with their seat outside GLP) located in the GLP area provided education to 82.5 thousand students (including foreigners), i.e. by 0.1% less than at the end of 2021.

Pre-primary education in GLP gminas in the 2024/25 school year was provided to 143.7 thousand children. In the analysed school year, 0.7% fewer children attended schools within the ecoregion than three years before.

At the end of 2024, out-patient health care within the area of Green Lungs of Poland comprised 2503 out-patient departments and 418 medical practices providing health services financed from public funds. In relation to the end of 2021, the number of out-patient departments in the GLP area increased by 6.1%, whereas the number of medical practices decreased by 7.3%.

At the end of the analysed year, there were in total 18.1 thousand places in establishments providing care to children up to the age of three located in the area of Green Lungs of Poland. The number of places in the ecoregion area grew by 19.8% in comparison with the one noted three years before.

At of the end of 2024, there were 13.4 thousand residents in social assistance houses and social welfare facilities located in the GLP area, i.e. 5.9% more than at the end of 2021.

At the end of December 2024, there were 990 public libraries (including branches and library service points) operating in the ecoregion. Despite a 4.0% decrease in their number over the three-year period, the number of borrowers in the analysed year increased by 6.9% compared to 2021.

As of the end of July 2024, the number of beds in tourist accommodation establishments located in the area of Green Lungs of Poland was 81.2 thousand. Their number increased by 5.9% in relation to the number recorded three years before. In 2024, the number of tourists accommodated in these establishments was 2777.6 thousand, i.e. by 43.4% more than in 2021.

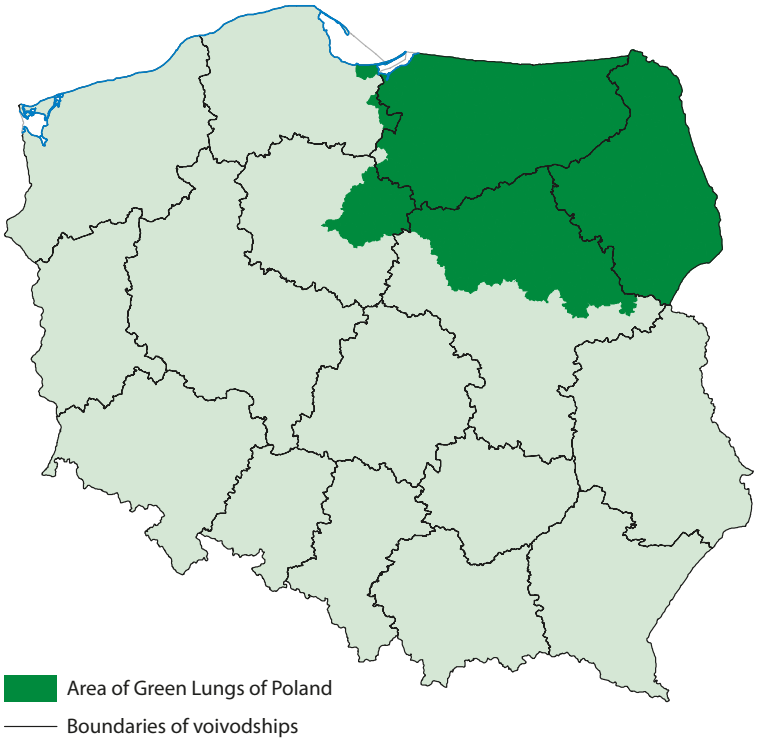
At the end of 2024, 3031.5 km bicycle roads were in the GLP area. Their length grew by 499.3 km in relation to the one noted at the end of December of 2021.

According to REGON register data, 420.3 thousand entities of the national economy (excluding persons tending private farms in agriculture) were registered in the Green Lungs of Poland area at the end of 2024. Their number grew by 7.8% in comparison with the number at the end of 2021.

# Chapter 1. Area and administrative structure

Green Lungs of Poland (GLP) comprise the north-eastern part of the country with the area of 63.5 thousand km$^2$, i.e. 20.2% of the total area of the country.

**Map 1. Green Lungs of Poland against the background of the country in 2024**
**As of 31 December**

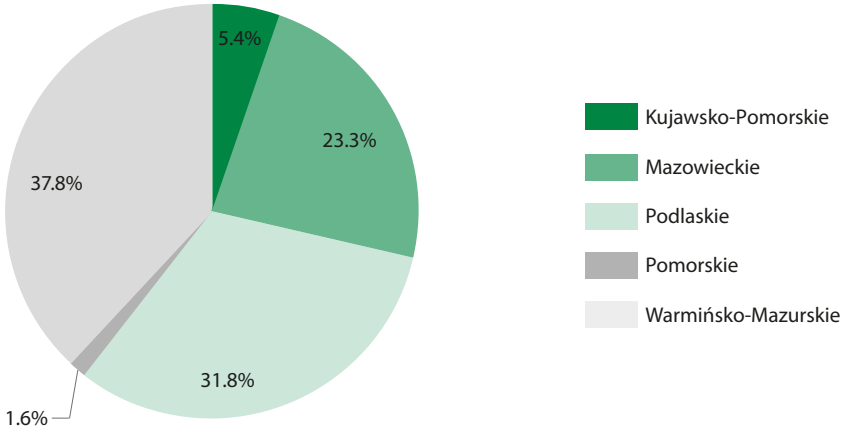



At the end of 2024, the ecoregion spanned 386 gminas located within 5 voivodships: Podlaskie (118 gminas), Warmińsko-Mazurskie (115 gminas), Mazowieckie (114 gminas), Kujawsko-Pomorskie (33 gminas) and Pomorskie (6 gminas).

**Map 2. Green Lungs of Poland in 2024**
**As of 31 December**


The greatest area of Green Lungs of Poland is located in Warmińsko-Mazurskie Voivodship (24.0 thousand km$^2$, i.e. 37.8% of the total area of GLP), whereas the smallest – in Pomorskie Voivodship (1.0 thousand km$^2$, i.e. 1.6%).

**Chart 1. Structure of total area by voivodships in 2024**
**As of 31 December**

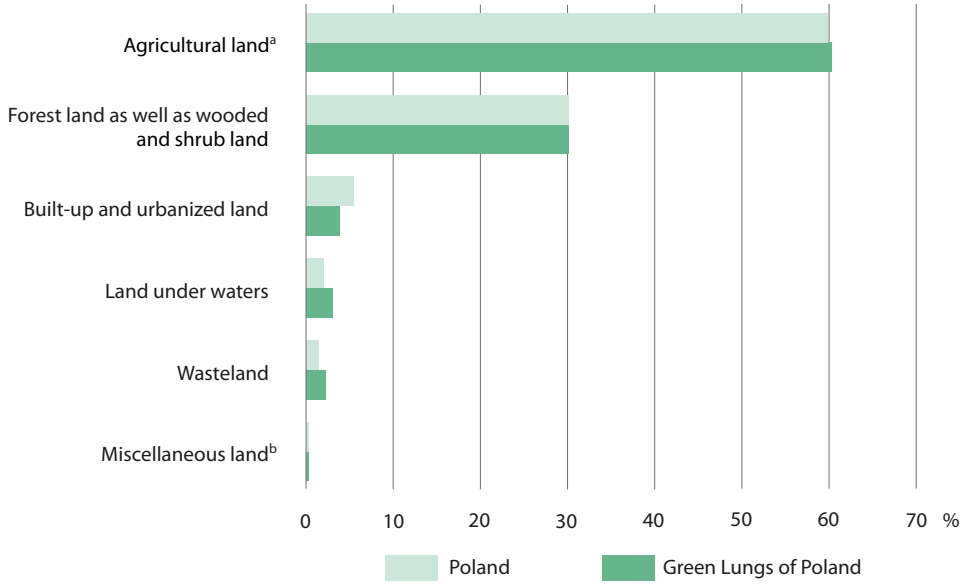


# Chapter 2. Environmental protection. Forestry

## Land use and protection of land surface

According to a geodesic register, at the beginning of 2024 agricultural land together with forest land, wooded and shrub land constituted 90.0% of the area of Green Lungs of Poland, while in the country – 89.8% of its total area. Agricultural land comprised 60.1% of the total ecoregion area (3813.0 thousand ha), while forest land together with wooded and shrub land – 29.9% (1898.0 thousand ha). In comparison with the data as of the beginning 2021, the GLP land use structure has not changed significantly.

**Chart 2. Directions of land use in 2024**
**As of 1 January**




a Including wooded and shrub land on agricultural land. b Land designated for reclamation and reclaimed land that is not managed, ramparts not suitable for road traffic.
S o u r c e: data of the Head Office of Geodesy and Cartography.

In 2024, 437 ha land (378 ha agricultural land and 59 ha forest land) was designated for non-agricultural and non-forest purposes in the area of the Green Lungs of Poland, i.e. 7.8% of the total of land with such designation in Poland. In relation to 2021, there has been a fall in these areas in the ecoregion by 26.2%. 43.5% of those designated lands was allotted for industrial areas, and for building residential districts – 28.6%, for roads and traffic routes – 3.4%, whereas for mining grounds – 2.3%.

At the end of 2024, there were 10.8 thousand ha of degraded and devastated land in GLP (in the country – 60.2 thousand ha), i.e. by 1.9% more than at the end of 2021. In the analysed year, 234 ha of land were reclaimed (mainly for agricultural purposes – 139 ha), and 50 ha were managed (of which 28 ha – for agricultural purposes).

## Resources, consumption, pollution and water protection

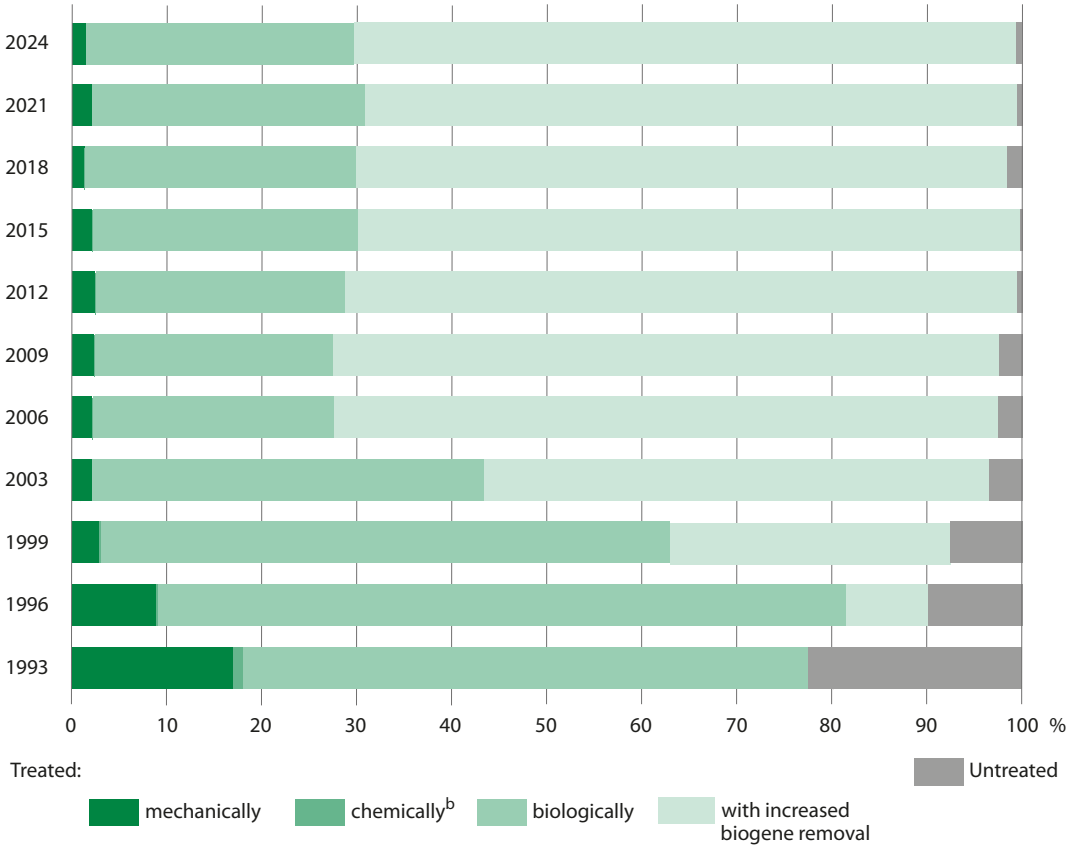
In 2024, water withdrawal for the needs of the national economy and population in the area of Green Lungs of Poland equalled 632.3 $hm^3$, comprising 7.5% of the total water withdrawal in Poland. Water withdrawal in the ecoregion area was by 18.1% lower than the one noted in 2021.

In the analysed year, in the GLP area, the majority of water was withdrawn for production purposes – 340.4 $hm^3$ (i.e. 53.8% of total withdrawal) as well as for the exploitation of water supply network – 238.9 $hm^3$ (37.8%). 53.0 $hm^3$ (8.4%) of water was used for filling and replenishing fish ponds.

In 2024, among cities belonging to the ecoregion, the highest water consumption (reaching 297.1 $hm^3$) was noted in Ostrołęka in Mazowieckie Voivodship and 99.3% of this water was designated for industrial purposes.

In the Green Lungs of Poland area, in 2024, there were 446.4 $hm^3$ of industrial and municipal wastewater discharged into waters or into the ground. They comprised 6.4% of the total such wastewater in Poland. This amount fell by 23.8% in comparison with the amount recorded in 2021.

**Chart 3. Structure of industrial and municipal wastewater[a] requiring treatment discharged into waters or into the ground**




a Data from 2012 onwards are not strictly comparable with data for previous years due to changes in methodology of municipal wastewater survey b. From 2003 onwards, data regarding wastewater treated chemically concern only industrial wastewater.

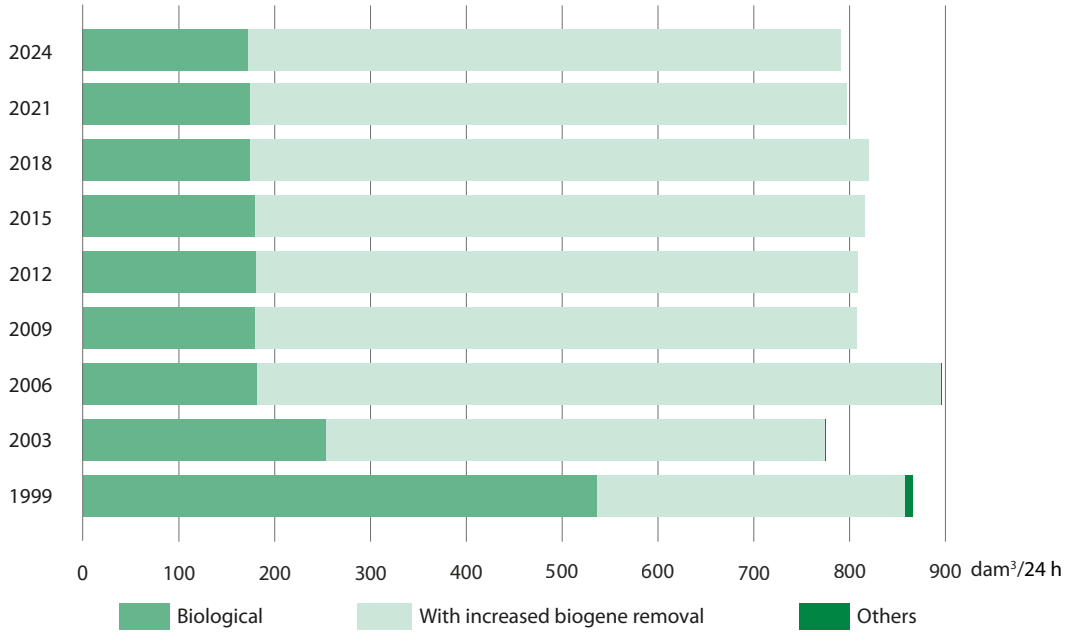
In 2024, in the ecoregion area, there was 35.2% (157.2 $hm^3$) industrial and municipal wastewater requiring treatment (7.2% of wastewater of this type in the country). In relation to 2021, its amount rose by 4,2%. In the analysed year, in the GLP area, 99.4% of this wastewater was treated. The majority of it was treated in plants with increased biogene removal, i.e. fitted with highly efficient treatment technologies making it possible to increase the reduction of nitrogen and phosphorus. In 2024, the share of this wastewater in the total amount of treated wastewater in the GLP area made up 70.1%, wastewater treated biologically – 28.4%, mechanically – 1.3%, while chemically – 0.1%. Some wastewater requiring treatment did not undergo treatment. In the analysed year, the amount of untreated wastewater totalled 0.9 $hm^3$ (i.e. 0.6% of wastewater requiring treatment) and was, as a whole, directly discharged from industrial plants. It comprised 0.6% of the total amount of untreated wastewater in Poland.

In 2024, in the GLP area, 335.8 $hm^3$ of industrial wastewater was discharged (i.e. 6.0% of the total of such wastewater in the country), of which 321.1 $hm^3$ was discharged into waters or into the ground and 14.6 $hm^3$ – by a sewage network. In comparison with 2021, the amount of discharged industrial wastewater decreased by 30.0%, of which discharged to waters or into the ground – by 31.1%. In the analysed year, there was 27.4 $hm^3$ industrial wastewater requiring treatment and 97.1% of this wastewater was subjected to treatment. Wastewater treated biologically (58.6%) and the one treated with increased biogene removal (35.3%) prevailed in treated wastewater.

In 2024, in the GLP area there was 125.3 $hm^3$ municipal wastewater discharged by sewage network into waters or into the ground (i.e. 8.8% of the total amount of municipal wastewater discharged in Poland). All this wastewater was treated, of which 78.8% was treated with increased biogene removal and 21.2% biologically.

At the end of 2024, there were 507 municipal wastewater treatment plants in the ecoregion area (3250 in the country), of which 392 were biological ones and 115 with increased biogene removal. Their total number fell by 2 since the one noted at the end of 2021. Their total treatment capacity equalled 793.3 $dam^3$ a day (while three years before – 797.6 $dam^3$ a day).

**Chart 4. Capacity of municipal wastewater treatment plants[a]**
**As of 31 December**




a According to plans; operating on sewage network.

In the analysed year, municipal wastewater treatment plants in the Green Lungs of Poland area produced 46.5 thousand tonnes of sewage sludge dry mass (i.e. 8.4% of total sludge produced in Poland). In comparison with 2021 its amount fell by 5.1%. 38.5% of sludge out of the total mass was reused (mainly in agriculture) and 22.1% was temporarily landfilled. The amount of sludge collected so far in wastewater treatment plants area amounted to 28.1 thousand tonnes of dry mass (i.e. 13.9% of the total of such sludge in the country) at the end of 2024. Compared with the situation observed three years before, this amount grew by 61.3%.

## Air pollution and protection

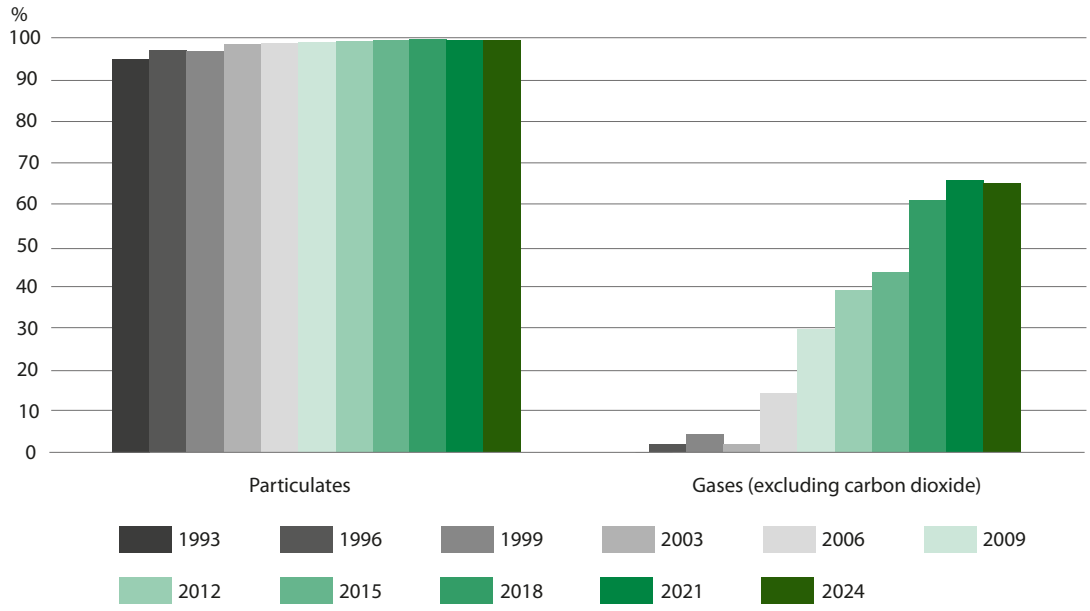
At the end of 2024, in the Green Lungs of Poland area there were 205 plants of particular nuisance to air purity (i.e. 11.4% of such facilities in Poland). In comparison with the end of 2021 their number increased by 1. Pollutant reduction systems were installed in 124 plants (60.5% of the total), and only 32 (i.e. 15.6%) were equipped with systems to reduce gaseous pollutants.

Particulate pollutant emission in 2024 in the area of Green Lungs of Poland was 1.0 thousand tonnes (6.8% of Polish emission) and in comparison with emission recorded in 2021 fell by 35.9%. A significant amount of particulate pollutants (equalling 68.7% of the total particulate pollutant emission in the GLP area) was from fuel combustion.

Gaseous pollutants emission (including carbon dioxide) in the ecoregion in the analysed year amounted to 5257.0 thousand tonnes (3.1% of the national emission) and was by 2443.4 thousand tonnes, i.e. 31.7%, lower than three years earlier. It was by 10.3 thousand tonnes, i.e. by 34.7% lower than in 2021. Taking into consideration cities located in the area of Green Lungs of Poland, it was stated that in 2024 the greatest majority of gaseous pollutants (including carbon dioxide) was emitted by plants of particular nuisance located in Ostrołęka – 1241.0 thousand tonnes.

Gaseous pollutants emission (excluding carbon dioxide) in the area of Green Lungs of Poland in the analysed year reached 19.3 thousand tonnes (2.1% of domestic emission). It was by 10.3 thousand tonnes, i.e. by 34.7% lower than in 2021.

**Chart 5. Air pollutants retained in pollutant reduction systems in plants of particular nuisance in % of pollutants generated**



In the GLP area in 2024, the vast majority of particulate pollutants generated by plants of particular nuisance for air purity, i.e. 99.4%, was retained by air pollutant reduction systems (in Poland – 99.9%). In the case of gaseous pollutants (excluding carbon dioxide) this ratio accounted for 64.9% (in Poland – 74.0%), which means that in relation to 2021 the particulate pollutant reduction fell by 0.1 pp, and in the case of gaseous pollutants – by 0.6 pp.

## Renewable energy

Energy from renewable sources is the energy derived from natural processes, being an alternative for traditional, non-renewable fossil fuels energy carriers. Its use makes it possible to reduce the pressure on natural environment by limiting the emission of harmful substances, and in particular greenhouse gases.

According to the data from the Energy Regulatory Office, at the end of 2024, the total sum power of renewable energy sources (RES) installation systems in the area of Green Lungs of Poland was 3047.2 MW (i.e. comprised 14.1% of the total power of RES installed in Poland) and within three years grew by 81.1%.

In 2024, in the ecoregion area, and in the country alike, the greatest energy power installed concerned the wind RES installation (1650.0 MW and 10522.4 MW respectively).

In comparison with 2021, in gminas belonging to the GLP area, the highest, i.e. almost a threefold increase in the RES energy power was noted in installations making use of solar energy (from 429.2 MW to 1269.0 MW).

It should be borne in mind, however, that apart from installations that are based on renewable energy sources (making use of the energy of wind, sun, biomass, hydropower, biogas and renewable hydrogen) there are also installations co-firing conventional fuels and biomass/biogas as well as installations of thermal waste treatment that produce energy which, pursuant to legal acts (in compliance with the Act of 20 February 2015 on Renewable Energy Sources) is considered energy from renewable sources. At the end of 2024, in the GLP area, the power of such installations amounted to 492.3 MW (in the country – 13744.3 MW).

## Protection of environment and biodiversity

Establishing areas under legal protection is an important element of carrying out the policy of nature protection and it is a form of ecosystem protection against excessive anthropopression. At the end of 2024, the area of special nature value under legal protection in the area of Green Lungs of Poland equalled 2242.1 thousand ha (while in Poland 10120.1 thousand ha), which was 35.3% of the total GLP area (in Poland – 32.2%). It grew in comparison with the state noted at the end of 2021 by 5.7 thousand ha. At the end of 2024, there were 5981 $m^2$ of the area under legal protection per capita in Green Lungs of Poland and this figure for Poland amounted to 2669 $m^2$.

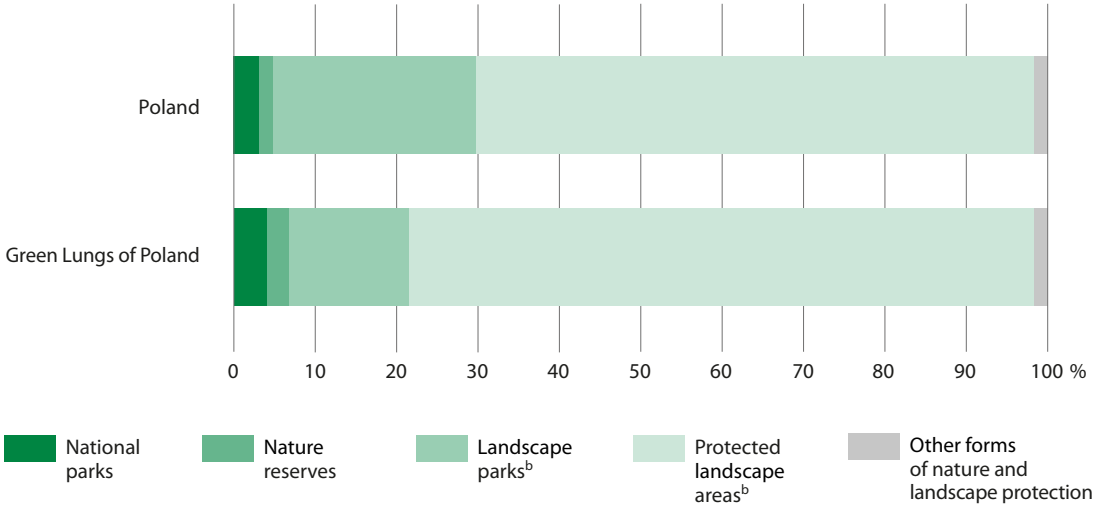
National parks rank first in the category of legally protected forms of nature protection. At the end of 2024, in the Green Lungs of Poland area, there were 4 national parks with their area located completely within the boundaries of Podlaskie Voivodship. The area of these parks equalled 92.2 thousand ha and 17.1% of that area was under strict protection. The area of these parks comprised 29.3% of their total area in the country (1.5% of the total area of GLP). In relation to their size noted at the end of 2021, this area remained the same. The greatest share of the area of national parks in the ecoregion, namely 43.7%, fell into the category of forest land.

At the end of 2024, there were also nature reserves among areas under legal protection in the Green Lungs of Poland area. They equalled 63.5 thousand ha, i.e. 35.8% of their total area in Poland and 1.0% of the total area of Green Lungs of Poland. This area in the ecoregion area grew (by 3.6%) in relation to the state recorded at the end of 2021.

At the end of December 2024, the area of landscape parks (excluding nature reserves and other forms of nature protection located within their area) in the area of Green Lungs of Poland amounted to 332.5 thousand ha, which comprised 13.2% of the area of landscape areas under legal protection in Poland and 5.2% of the total area of Green Lungs of Poland. In comparison with the situation noted three years before their area grew by 0.8%.

Protected landscape areas are the form of environmental protection that has the greatest share in terms of area in the ecoregion. At the end of December 2024, they covered 1716.1 thousand ha (excluding nature reserves and other forms of nature protection located within their area), which comprised 24.8% of the area of landscape areas under legal protection and 27.0% of the total area of Green Lungs of Poland. In comparison with the end of 2021 their area grew slightly (by 1.3 thousand ha, i.e. 0.1%).

**Chart 6. Structure of the area of special nature value under legal protection[a] in 2024**
**As of 31 December**




a Data do not include information concerning the areas of Natura 2000 network, data include only these Natura 2000 network areas which are located within the boundaries of other areas under legal protection. b Excluding nature reserves and other forms of nature protection located within these area.

At the end of 2024, in the area of GLP there were 5677 monuments of nature (in Poland – 35066), with these as follows: single trees (4402), groups of trees (798), erratic boulders (296), alleys (124) and stones, grottos, caves and others (57). Their number increased by 37 in comparison to the one noted three years earlier.

At the end of 2024, the green areas in GLP equalled 1856.9 thousand ha, which was 19.8% of green areas in Poland and 29.3% of the total of the ecoregion area. The per capita ratio of green areas in GLP amounted to 4865.5 $m^2$. Green areas in the ecoregion cities equalled 39.8 thousand ha and comprised 2.1% of their area. Green areas in the GLP cities per capita amounted to 191.7 $m^2$.

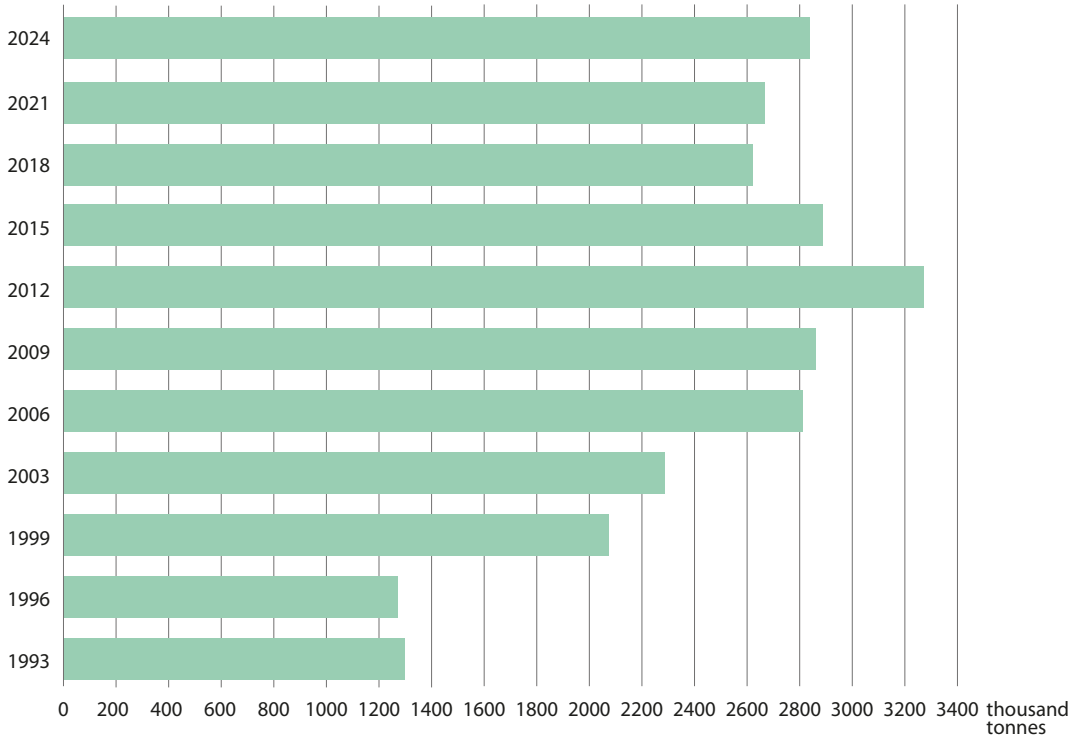
The brown bear, the Eurasian lynx, the gray wolf, the European bison, the Eurasian beaver are species under legal protection whose life pursuits can result in damage in crops, forests, apiaries and livestock. In 2024, in the GLP area there were 3130 reported cases of damage caused by these animals, i.e. 45.3% of the total of such damage in Poland. It was by 480 cases smaller than in 2021. The majority of damage reported in the ecoregion was in caused by beavers (2245, i.e. 71.7% of all reported cases) and no case of lynx-caused damage was reported in this area. The State Treasury is hold responsible for damage caused by these animals. It was PLN 22.6 million paid in damages in the analysed year (in the country – PLN 43.9 million) and 72.9% of this amount was damages for beaver activity. The amount of paid damages in 2024 was by PLN 4.4 million lower than the one paid three years before. On average one reported beaver-caused damage cost PLN 7.3 thousand.

# Waste

At the end of 2024, in the area of Green Lungs of Poland there were 223 plants generating waste (2183 in the country) and their number increased by 26 in relation to their number noted at the end of 2021.

In the ecoregion area in 2024, 2850.8 thousand tonnes of waste (excluding municipal waste) were generated, accounting for 2.8% of the total waste generated in the country. This was 184.7 thousand tonnes (6.9%) more waste than was generated in the GLP area three years before.

**Chart 7. Waste[a] (excluding municipal waste)**




a Generated during the year.

Out of the total amount of waste (excluding municipal waste) generated in the ecoregion in 2024, as much as 56.2% was transferred to other recipients and 41.7% was recycled by a waste producer on its own. In the analysed year, in relation to 2021, the amount of recycled waste increased (by 91.8%), just like the amount of waste transferred to other recipients (by 30.0%) or the one temporarily landfilled (by 0.2%). However, the amount of waste disposed fell (by 61.6%).

In 2024, in the GLP area the total of 1247.5 thousand tonnes of municipal waste was collected (of which 85.6% came from households), i.e. by 1.1% more than three years before. It comprised 8.2% of its total amount in Poland. Gradually the structure of generated municipal waste is changing – the percentage of separately collected waste is increasing and the percentage of mixed municipal waste is decreasing. In the analysed year, in GLP gminas, the shares of these types of waste were 40.5% and 59.5% respectively (in 2021 – 36.5% and 63.5%).

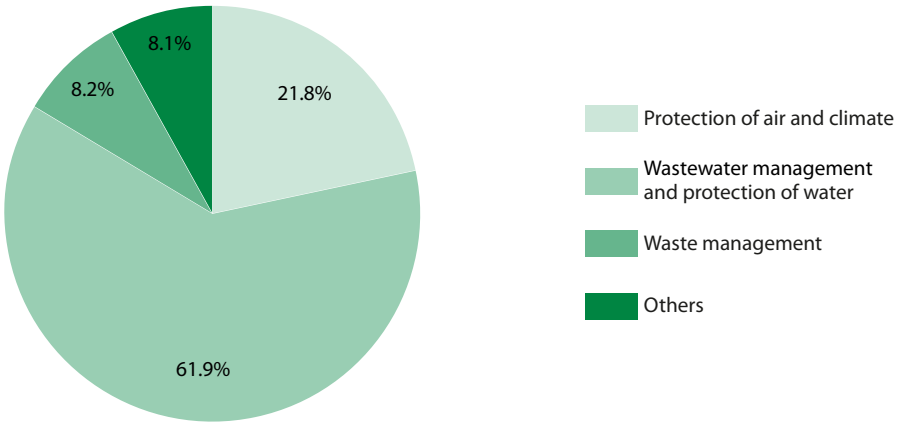
In the case of areas deprived of sufficient sewage infrastructure, some people use household sewage plants. They are septic tanks and household sewage plants. In the ecoregion area, as of 31 December 2024, there were altogether 340.2 thousand of such installations in operation (in Poland – 2581.3 thousand), of which 77.7% comprised septic tanks. At the end of 2024, in comparison with the number noted at the end of 2021, the number of septic tanks grew by 1.3%. In 2024, septic tanks in the area of GLP provided 4001.2 $dam^3$ liquid waste for collection, i.e. 9.1% of the total of such waste in Poland. The amount of liquid waste transferred in the GLP area rose by 1562.2 $dam^3$ (61.4%) in comparison with the one recorded in 2021.

In the case of household sewage plants an increase in their number was observed – from 56.0 thousand noted at the end of December of 2021 to 75.9 thousand recorded three years later. Household sewage plants located in the GLP area at the end of 2024 constituted a 15.9% share in their total number in Poland.

## Economical aspects of environmental protection

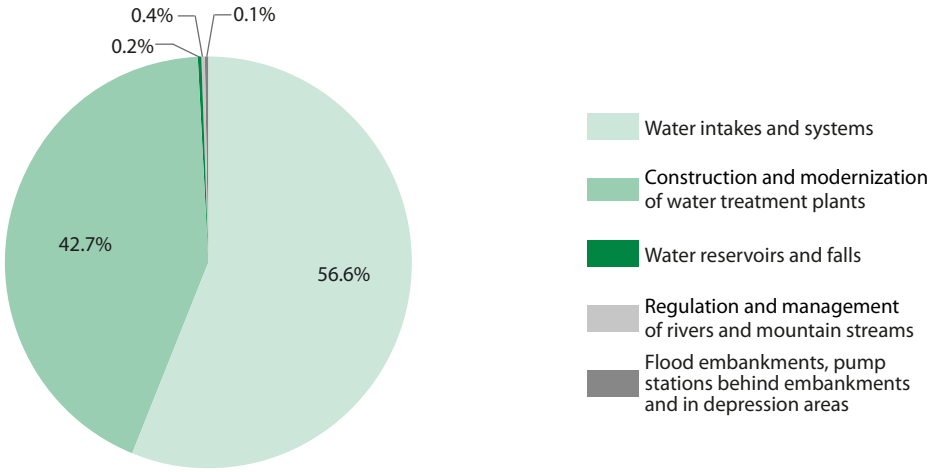
In 2024, in the Green Lungs of Poland area the amount of outlays on fixed assets on environmental protection amounted to PLN 1206,0 million and made up 8.0% of the total amount of these outlays in Poland. They were by 18.4% higher than in 2021. These outlays per capita equalled PLN 316 (in the country – PLN 404) and rose by 20.6% in relation to the ones noted three years before. While taking into consideration the directions of investment in environment protection, it is worth noting that wastewater management and protection of water incurred most costs – PLN 746.5 million (61.9% of the total outlays on environmental protection in the GLP area) as well as the protection of air and climate – PLN 263.5 million (21.8%). In relation to 2021 the greatest increase in outlays on fixed assets on environmental protection was noted in the case of wastewater management and protection of water (by 59.3%) and waste management (by 19.9%).

**Chart 8. Structure of outlays on fixed assets on environmental protection by directions of investment in 2024 (current prices)**




In the GLP area in 2024, the incurred outlays on fixed assets on water management comprised PLN 392.3 million, and their share in this type of outlays in Poland equalled 10.9%. They were by 70.8% higher than in 2021. In the analysed year, water management outlays per capita in Green Lungs of Poland amounted to PLN 103 (PLN 96 – in the country), while three years before – PLN 59. In the structure of outlays on fixed assets on water management in the GLP area prevailed expenditures on water intakes and systems – PLN 222.2 million (56.6% of the total outlays in the ecoregion area) and on construction and modernization of water treatment plants – PLN 167.4 million (42.7%).

**Chart 9. Structure of outlays on fixed assets on water management by directions of investment in 2024 (current prices)**




Taking into consideration financing sources of investment in environmental protection and water management in the GLP area in 2024, it can be stated that they were mainly own funds (PLN 583.0 million and PLN 162.3 million). They represented respectively 6.5% and 9.6% of the total of such funds in Poland and they were by 2.2% higher than in 2021 in the case of financing the investment in environmental protection and by 31.5% higher in water management investment financing. Another significant investment financing source were foreign funds, which in the analysed year, in the case of investment in environmental protection, equalled PLN 108.0 million (13.4% of total funds designated for this purpose type in the country), whereas on fixed assets on water management – PLN 63.5 million (31.0%). In relation to 2021 there was a decrease in foreign funds on investment in environmental protection by 55.7%, and an increase in water management investment – by 19.1%.

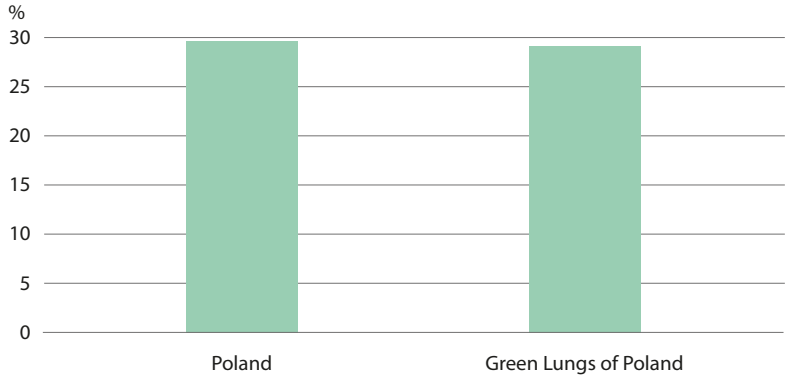
Tangible effects of investments in environmental protection in the Green Lungs of Poland area in 2024 include the construction of 337.9 km of sewage network discharging wastewater (in Poland – 3813.6 km) and 68.7 km of sewage network discharging precipitation water (in the country – 568.1 km). In relation to 2021 in the GLP area growth in the length of built sewage network discharging wastewater was noted by 39.9% (i.e. by 96.3 km) and a fall in the length of network discharging precipitation water by 1.2% (i.e. by 0.8 km). In the analysed year in the ecoregion area, 8 new wastewater treatment plants with a treatment capacity of 9750 $m^3$/24 hours were built (60 in the country), i.e. 6 more than three years before. Water management investment in the GLP area in 2024 comprised 473.2 km of water network that was made available to population (in Poland – 3094.9 km), i.e. by 23.8% more than in 2021.

## Forestry

As data of the end of 2024 show, the area of forest land in Green Lungs of Poland equalled 1885.9 thousand ha, representing 19.9% of the total forest land in the country. In comparison with the end of 2021, this area grew slightly (by 0.5%). The ownership structure of forest land of the ecoregion showed a prevalence of public land comprising a 76.1% share (of which forest land managed by the State Forests – 73.1%).

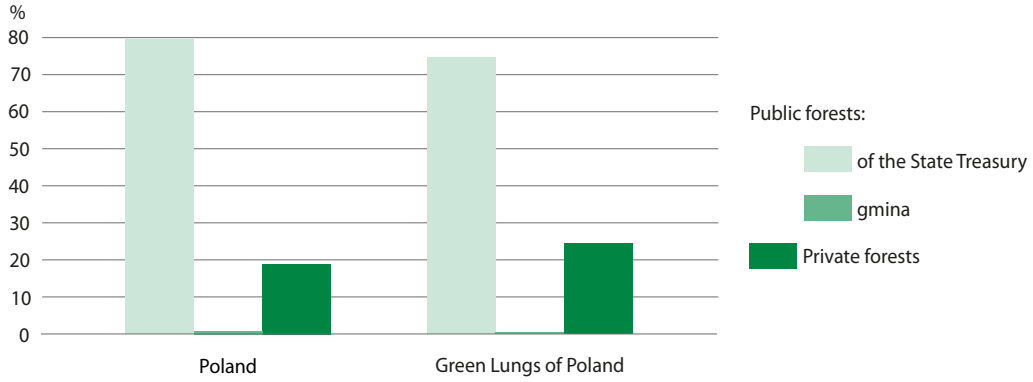
At the end of the analysed year, like three years before, forest cover indicator in GLP was 29.1% (in Poland – 29.6%).

**Chart 10. Forest cover in 2024**
**As of 31 December**



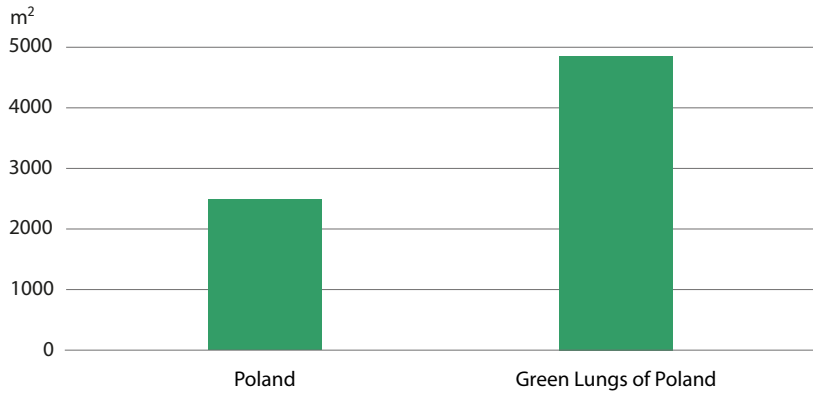

At the end of 2024, forests in Green Lungs of Poland covered 1849.9 thousand ha, which represented 19.9% of the total forest area in Poland. In comparison with the end of 2021, there was a slight increase in forest area (by 0.6%) in the ecoregion area. The ownership structure showed a dominance of public forests, whose share in the total forest area in GLP made up 75.6%.

**Chart 11. Structure of forest area by ownership forms in 2024**
**As of 31 December**




At the end of 2024, forest area per capita in the ecoregion area amounted to 4847.3 $m^2$, while in the country – 2477.8 $m^2$.

**Chart 12. Forest area per capita in 2024**
**As of 31 December**



In 2024, in the Green Lungs of Poland area, afforestation of non-forest land covered 92.4 ha (in the country – 878.7 ha), and afforestation was mainly recorded in public forests (60.3 ha). Afforestation area diminished by 15.2% in comparison with the one noted in 2021.

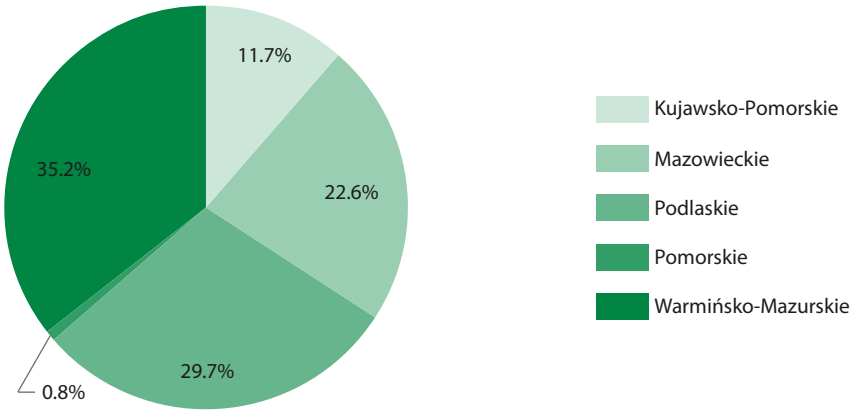
In the analysed year, 45.7 thousand trees (by 2.1% more than three years before) and 75.2 thousand shrubs (by 66.8% more) were planted in the GLP area. Timber removals comprised 178.1 thousand $m^3$, i.e. by 13.7% more than in 2021.

# Chapter 3. Population

## Size and structure of population

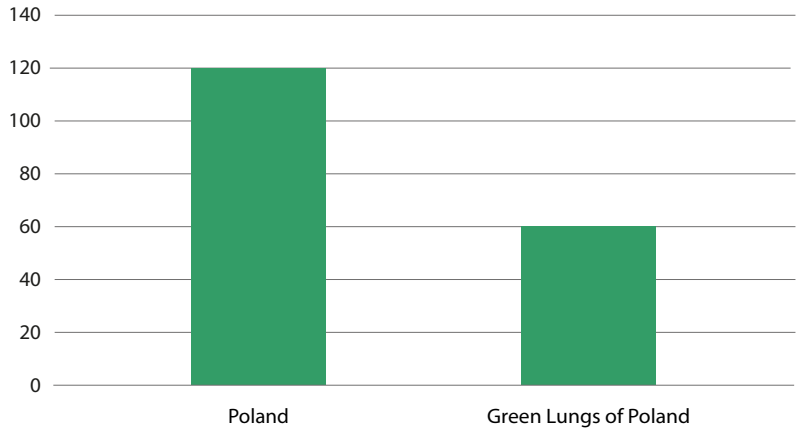
At the end of 2024, the Green Lungs of Poland area was inhabited by 3816.4 thousand population. i.e. 10.2% of the total population of Poland. In relation to the values as of the end of 2021, the number of population residing in the GLP area fell by 62.3 thousand. The greatest majority of GLP population lived in Warmińsko-Mazurskie and Podlaskie Voivodships (respectively 35.2% and 29.7% of the total population).

**Chart 13. Structure of population by voivodships in 2024**
**As of 31 December**



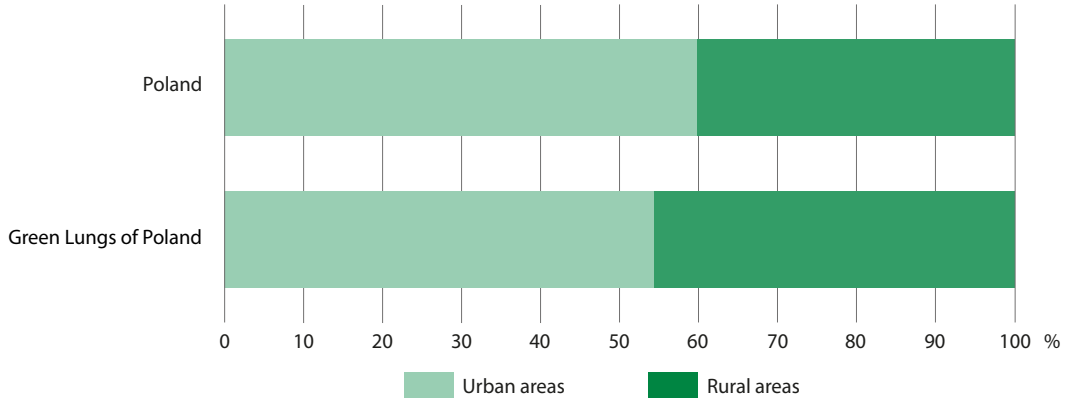

At the end of 2024, the average density of population, i.e. the number of population per 1 km$^2$, was 60 in the Green Lungs of Poland area while this number for the country was 119.

**Chart 14. Population per 1 km$^2$ in 2024**
**As of 31 December**




Urban population of GLP at the end of 2024 amounted to 2075.4 thousand and comprised 54.4% of the total population of the ecoregion. Urban population of Poland, however, equalled 59.4% of the total population then. In comparison with these data as of the end of 2021, the population of GLP urban areas fell by 1.9%. At the end of December of the analysed year, rural areas of Green Lungs of Poland had 1741.1 thousand residents, which means that the share of rural population of GLP was 45.6%, while this population in Poland was 40.6%. The share noted three years before shows a 1.2% drop in rural residents of the ecoregion within this time.

**Chart 15. Structure of population by place of residence in 2024**
**As of 31 December**




The structure of population by sex in the area of Green Lungs of Poland at the end of 2024 resembled the one in the country. Women prevailed in the number of the total GLP population and their share amounted to 51.2% while in the country their share was 51.7% of the total population.

The analysis of the population structure by economic age groups shows that the share of population at pre-working age and working age in the total GLP population is diminishing and the share of post-working age population is growing. The share of children and youth aged 0–17 in the total population of Green Lungs of Poland at the end of 2024 was 18.1% (in Poland – 18.0%) and decreased by 0.6 pp in relation to the one noted at the end of 2021. The percentage of working age population (women aged 18–59, men – 18–64) equalled 58.2% (the same as for the country, namely 58.2%) and decreased by 1.1 pp in comparison with the one recorded three years before. The ratio of post-working age population (women aged 60 and more, men – 65 and more) in the total GLP population was 23.7% (in Poland – 23.8%) and grew by 1.7 pp in relation to the ratio noted at the end of 2021.

The relationship between each economic age group is shown by the age dependency ratio, which is the number of non-working age population per 100 working age population. At the end of 2024, this ratio in the Green Lungs of Poland area, just like in the country, amounted to 72, i.e. 31 for pre-working age population and 41 for post-working age population. At the end of 2021, this ratio for the ecoregion reached 69 (32 for pre-working age population and 37 for post-working age population).

## Vital statistics

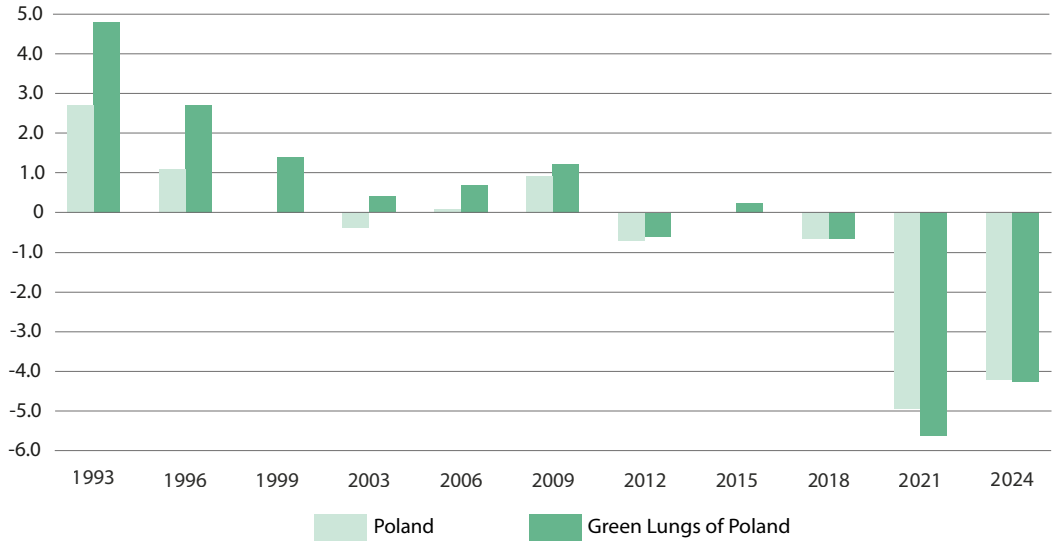
In 2024, in the area of Green Lungs of Poland there were 13.0 thousand newly-contracted marriages (which comprised 9.6% of all marriages registered in civil status offices in Poland), which is by 22.9% less than three years before. The marriage ratio (the number of marriages per 1000 population) in the analysed period reached 3.39 in comparison with 3.60 recorded in the country. In 2021, the number of newly-contracted marriages per 1000 population in the GLP area was 4.33.

In 2024, in the ecoregion gminas there were 25.3 thousand live births, i.e. 10.1% of all live births in Poland. The number of live births in the Green Lungs of Poland area in relation to 2021 fell by 23.3%. Birth rate (i.e. the number of live births per 1000 population) stood at 6.62 (in the country – 6.70) and was lower than the rate noted three years before when it was 8.48.

In the analysed year, in the Green Lungs of Poland area, 41.4 thousand people died, which made up 10.1% of the total number of deaths in Poland. In relation to 2021, their number in the GLP area fell by 24.5%. The total death rate (the number of deaths per 1000 population) in the ecoregion area amounted to 10.83 (10.88 in the country), while three years before 14.10 represented the death rate.

In 2024, a negative increase was recorded in Green Lungs of Poland, just like in the country. The difference between the number of live births and deaths equalled respectively minus 16.1 thousand and minus 156.7 thousand. In 2021, the natural increase in the ecoregion area accounted for minus 21.9 thousand. The natural increase per 1000 population in 2024 equalled minus 4.21 (in Poland – minus 4.17), while in 2021 it amounted to minus 5.62.

**Chart 16. Natural increase per 1000 population**




## Migration for permanent residence

In 2024, internal migration in the area of Green Lungs of Poland showed that 44.3 thousand population registered for permanent residence while 50.7 thousand people registered for departure from the place of permanent residence, i.e. respectively by 3.6% and 3.7% more than in 2021.

The inflow of people in the internal migration, while taking into consideration the place of residence of persons, shows that people formerly residing in urban areas constituted a prevailing group – 53.8% of the total number of population arriving at the GLP area. Similarly, the internal migration population outflow shows the tendency of moving to urban areas rather that rural ones – 52.1% of the total population moving from the GLP area.

International migration for permanent residence in 2024 was as follows: immigration to Green Lungs of Poland equalled 1.6 thousand population, i.e. by 14.9% more than in 2021, while emigration from the GLP area – 0.8 thousand population, i.e. by 20.2% less than three years before.

In 2024, the balance of internal and international migration for permanent residence in the Green Lungs of Poland area was negative, like three years before, which means that the number of people deregistered from permanent residence within the analysed year exceeded the number of people registered for permanent residence (by 5.7 thousand; and in 2021 – by 5.8 thousand). It is worth noting that in 2024 in the area of Green Lungs of Poland there was a reverse trend than the one in Poland, where there was a positive total balance of internal and international migration (totalling 9.3 thousand people).

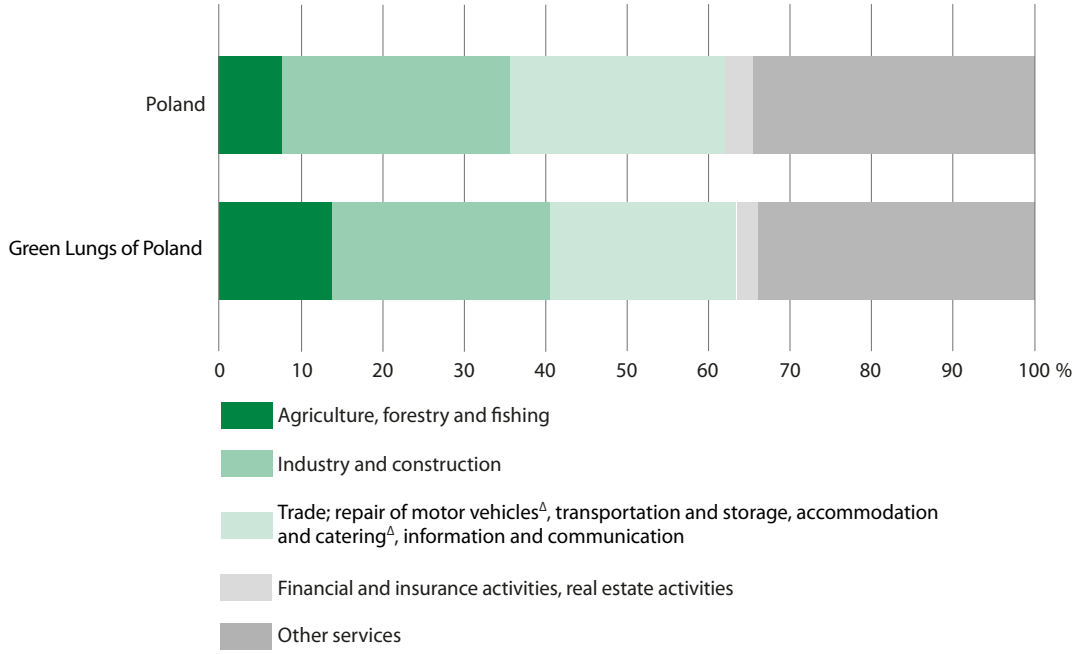
# Chapter 4. Labour market

## Employed persons[1]

At the end of 2024, in the Green Lungs of Poland area there were 1444.4 thousand persons, i.e. 9.5% of the total employed persons in the country. In comparison with the end of 2022 their number fell by 1.3% in the GLP area. As data of the end of 2024 show, there were 378 employed persons per 1000 ecoregion population, i.e. by 26 fewer than on average in the country.

In relation to the situation recorded two years before, the greatest fall in the number of employed persons in the GLP area and in the country was noted in such section groups as agriculture, forestry and fishing. In both cases it equalled 7.6%. The highest increase in the number of employed persons both in the GLP area and in the country was observed in the section group of other services and it amounted to 3.1% and 4.0% respectively.

**Chart 17. Structure of employed persons by section groups in 2024**
**As of 31 December**




In the ecoregion area, at the end of December 2024, the highest share in the employed persons structure had the group of the employed in the following section groups: other services – 34.0% (two years before – 32.2%) as well as industry and construction – 26.7% (at the end of 2022 – 27.2%), while the lowest – in financial and insurance activities and in real estate activities – 2.7% (two years before – 2.6%).

At the end of 2024, a higher percentage of persons employed in agriculture, forestry and fishing was noted in the Green Lungs of Poland area than in the country – it equalled 13.8% and 7.8% respectively.

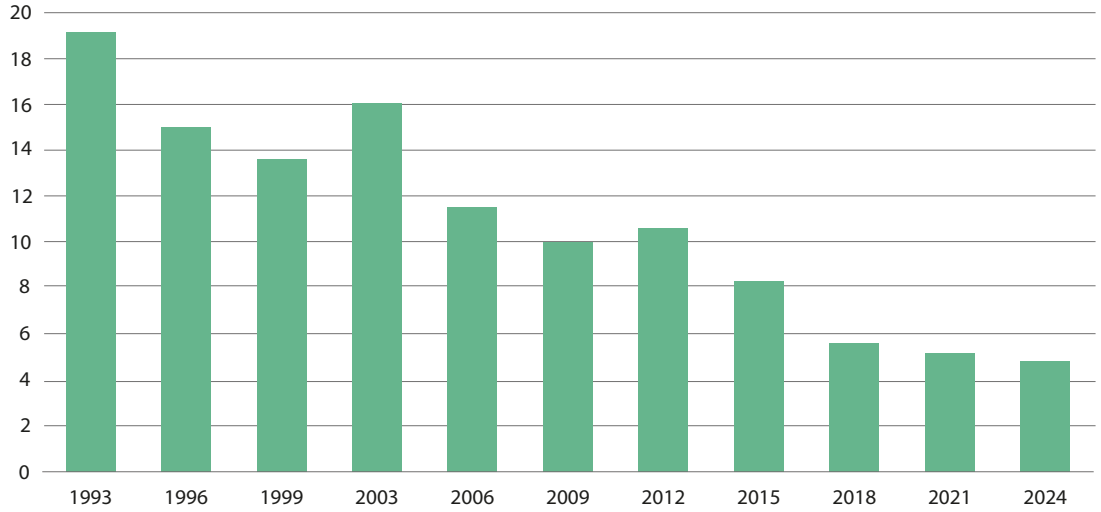
[1] Since 2022, data have been presented on the basis of administrative data sources by place of residence. Data concern employed persons in all entities of the national economy.

## Registered unemployment

At the end of December 2024, there were 107.7 thousand unemployed persons registered in the Green Lungs of Poland area and their number fell by 9.9% in comparison with the one noted three years before. Unemployed persons in the GLP area comprised 13.7% of the total registered unemployed persons in Poland. In comparison with their number noted at the end of 2021 their share grew by 0.3 pp. In the number of registered unemployed persons, the share of long-term unemployed persons equalled 51.7%, persons over 50 years old constituted 26.3%, and persons up to 25 years of age – 13.8%.

At the end of 2024, the share of registered unemployed persons in the total number of working age population was 4.8% in the GLP area (3.6% in the country) and it was by 0.4 pp lower than the one recorded three years before.

**Chart 18. Registered unemployed persons per 100 working population**
**As of 31 December**




S o u r c e: data of the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy.

At the end of December 2024, in the GLP area, contrary to the country, men prevailed in the group of the unemployed. They constituted 50.3% (48.4% in the country) of the total unemployed persons registered in powiat labour offices. Their share in the total number of the unemployed was by 3.3 pp higher than three years before.

# Chapter 5. Dwellings. Municipal infrastructure

## Dwelling stocks

At the end of 2024, in the GLP area, there were 1565.8 thousand dwellings (i.e. 9.8% of the total number of dwellings in dwelling stocks in Poland), with their total usable floor space of 118.8 million $m^2$. Since the end of 2021 dwelling stocks have increased by 57.7 thousand dwellings (by 3.8%) and the increase in their usable floor space reached the level of 5.0 million $m^2$ (4.4%).

Within three years, an increase in the average usable floor space per dwelling was observed, both in the analysed region and throughout Poland, with the increase being slightly higher in rural areas. At the end of 2024, the average usable floor space of a dwelling in the area of the Green Lungs of Poland was 75.9 $m^2$ and it was by 0.4 $m^2$ larger than three years earlier (in Poland – 75.6 $m^2$ and 0.5 $m^2$, respectively). The average usable floor space per person was also characterized by an upward trend. At the end of 2024, it amounted to 31.1 $m^2$ in gminas belonging to GLP and increased by 1.7 $m^2$ in comparison with the one recorded at the end of 2021 (in the country – 32.2 $m^2$ and 1.8 $m^2$, respectively).

## Dwellings completed

In 2024, in gminas belonging to GLP, there were 18.1 thousand dwellings completed, i.e. 9.1% of their total number in Poland. In the ecoregion, comparing to 2021, there was a decrease in their number – by 14.2%. In the analysed year, the majority (60.7%) of the discussed dwellings were built in urban areas (in Poland – 64.4%).

There were 4.7 dwellings completed per 1000 population in gminas belonging to GLP (5.3 in Poland), which is a decrease in the level of the analysed indicator by 0.7 pp in relation to 2021.

In the analysed year, in the area of Green Lungs of Poland, mainly dwellings designated for sale or rent (54.9% of the total) as well as the ones built by individual investors (39.1%) were completed. The situation was similar three years earlier when the share of these two forms of construction was also dominant and amounted to 96.9% in total. In the structure of dwellings completed in GLP in 2024, other forms of housing construction, i.e. public building society, municipal, cooperative and company housing, accounted for: 2.8%, 2.5%, 0.5% and 0.2%, respectively.

## Municipal infrastructure

At the end of 2024, in gminas belonging to the ecoregion Green Lungs of Poland, 3543.4 thousand people used the water supply network, i.e. 92.8% of the total population of the GLP and 10.2% of all users of this network in the country. This is a decrease in the number of water supply system users by 107.8 thousand people (by 3.0%), but an increase in the percentage of such population in the total number of inhabitants (by 0.3 pp) comparing to the situation recorded three years before. At the end of December 2024, the percentage of population using the water supply network in urban areas of the ecoregion was 97.2%, and in rural areas – 87.6%.

At the end of 2024, in the area of Green Lungs of Poland, 2528.7 thousand people were served by the sewage network, i.e. 66.3% of the total GLP population and 9.3% of the population using this network in the country. In the area of the ecoregion, there was a decrease in the number (by 1.9%), but at the same time an increase in the percentage (by 1.0 pp) of the population using sewage network comparing to the end of 2021. The share of the population using the sewage network in the total number of inhabitants of urban areas in GLP was 92.9%, and in rural areas – 34.5%.

At the end of the analysed period, in the area of Green Lungs of Poland, the number of people using gas from gas-line system was 1410.4 thousand. They constituted 37.0% of the total population of GLP and 6.6% of all users of this system in the country. Comparing to the situation recorded at the end of 2021, the number of people using gas from the gas supply system increased by 1.6%, and its share in the total number of inhabitants of the ecoregion increased by 1.8 pp. The percentage of people using gas in urban areas in GLP reached 59.1%, and in rural areas – 10.6%.

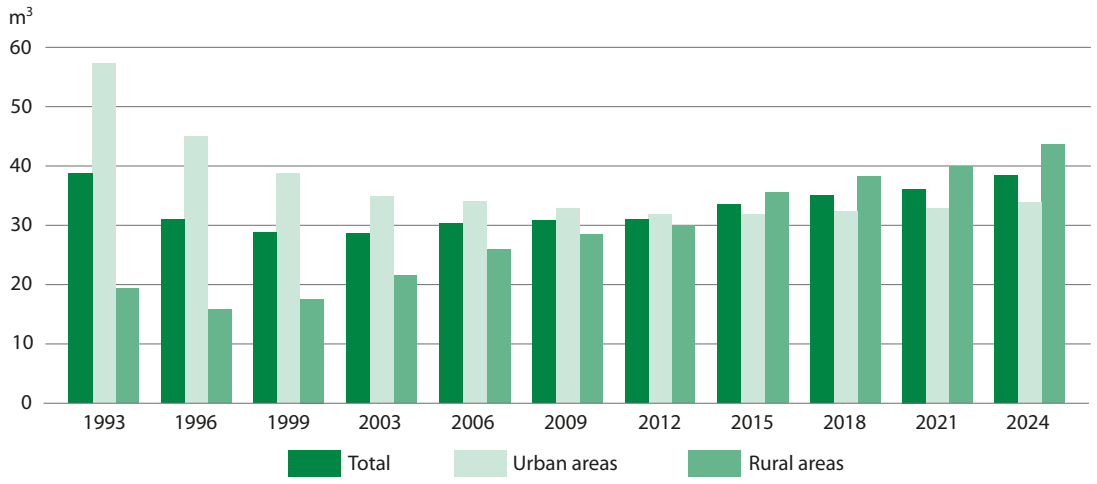
At the end of 2024, the share of the population using wastewater treatment plants in the total population living in the area of Green Lungs of Poland was 68.9% and it was by 7.3 pp lower than in the country, and comparing to the one recorded three years earlier, it increased by 1.1 pp. In urban areas belonging to GLP, 95.7% of the population used wastewater treatment plants, while in rural areas – 37.1%.

As of 31 December 2024, in the area of Green Lungs of Poland, the length of the water supply network (distribution together with a transmission one) was 55.9 thousand km, constituting 16.2% of the length of this network in the country, and the number of water supply connections – 700.6 thousand units, i.e. 11.0% of their total in Poland. Comparing to the situation at the end of 2021, the length of the water supply network (distribution and transmission ones) in the ecoregion increased by 1.4 thousand km (by 2.6%), with a simultaneous increase in the number of connections leadings to buildings by 30.1 thousand units (by 4.5%). The vast majority of the water supply network (85.8% of the total) and connections (68.1%) were located in rural areas. In the GLP area, the density of the water supply network (distribution together with a transmission one) was on average 88.0 km/100 km$^2$ (in Poland – 109.5 km/100 km$^2$), while the network density in urban areas was 345.8 km/100 km$^2$ and was much higher than in rural areas, where this indicator was 78.4 km/100 km$^2$.

As of the end of December 2024, the sewage network in the gminas belonging to GLP reached a length of 18.0 thousand km and accounted for 9.7% of the total length of the sewage network in Poland. The number of connections leading to buildings was 350.6 thousand units, i.e. 8.7% of their total number in the country. In the ecoregion, comparing to the end of 2021, the length of the sewage network increased by 1.0 thousand km (by 5.8%) with a simultaneous increase in the number of connections leading to buildings by 24.3 thousand units (by 7.4%). At the end of 2024, the density of the sewage network in GLP gminas was 28.3 km/100 km$^2$ (in Poland – 59.2 km/100 km$^2$), with the ratio in urban areas reaching 303.6 km/100 km$^2$ and exceeding significantly the one in rural areas, where its value was 18.0 km/100 km$^2$.

In 2024, in the GLP area, water consumption from water supply systems in households per capita amounted to 38.3 m$^3$ (in the country – 35.5 m$^3$). Comparing to 2021, it increased by 2.3 m$^3$. This indicator was higher in rural areas (43.6 m$^3$) than in urban areas (33.8 m$^3$), while in Poland the situation was reversed (33.5 m$^3$ and 36.9 m$^3$, respectively).

**Chart 19. Consumption of water from water supply systems in households per capita**



# Chapter 6. Education

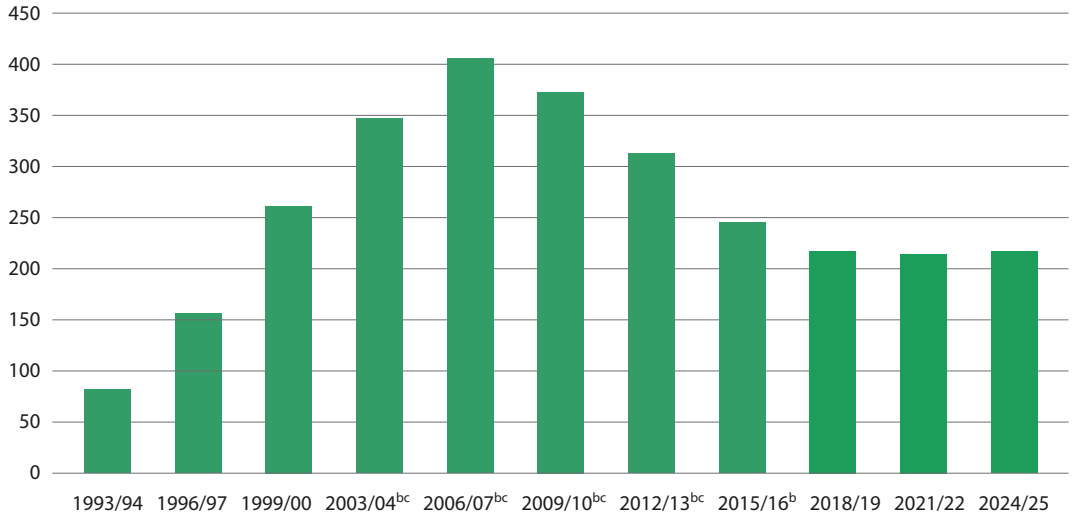
In September 2024, there were 1559 primary schools for children and youth in the area of Green Lungs of Poland, which comprised 11.1% of the total of such schools in the country. In the 2024/25 school year, primary schools provided education to 319.6 thousand children and youth or 9.9% of all students attending such schools in Poland. In the GLP area, the number of these schools fell by 44, while the number of students attending them grew by 0.8% in comparison with this number of recorded three years before.

In September 2024, 790 post-primary schools operated in the Green Lungs of Poland area (6945 in the country) providing education to the total of 170.1 thousand students. Students of post-primary schools in the GLP area comprised 10.0% of the total number of students at this education stage in Poland. In comparison with the 2021/22 school year in the ecoregion area there were by 36 establishments of this type more and the number of their students grew by 5.4%. In the 2024/25 school year, among post-primary schools it was general secondary schools that had the majority of attending students – 73.0 thousand youth. A significant group, amounting to 72.2 thousand persons, constituted students of technical secondary schools and general schools of fine arts that awarded professional certification. In stage I and stage II sectoral vocational schools and special job-training schools there were 24.9 thousand youth.

Post-secondary schools complemented the range of schools at secondary vocational level. At the end of September 2024, there were 131 establishments carrying out educational activity in the Green Lungs of Poland area (while in the country – 1215). Their number diminished by 6 in comparison with their number noted three years before. At the beginning of the 2024/25 school year, post-secondary schools provided education to the total of 22.9 thousand students, i.e. 9.3% of the total of students attending such establishments in Poland. The number of students going to post-secondary schools located in the ecoregion area grew by 7.9% in comparison with the number recorded three years before.

In the 2024/25 academic year, there were 25 higher education institutions with their seat in the GLP area (i.e. 7.4% of their total number in the country) as well as 26 branches of higher education institutions with their seat outside the ecoregion area (respectively 15.3%). In relation to the 2021/22 academic year, the number of higher education institutions dropped by 3, while the number of branches located within this area grew by 3.

**Chart 20. Students[a] per 10 thousand population**
**As of 31 December**




a Including foreigners. b As of 30 November. c Excluding higher schools of the Ministry of National Defence as well as the Ministry of the Interior and Administration.

At the end of December 2024, there were 82.5 thousand students (including foreigners) in the analysed institutions and they constituted 6.4% of their total in Poland. As regards the number of students in higher education in the Green Lungs of Poland area at the end of the year, it remained at almost the same level as three years before. The majority of these students studied full-time and represented 70.2% of the total number of students.

In the Green Lungs of Poland area at the end of September 2024 there were 2327 pre-primary establishments, comprising 10.4% of the total pre-primary establishments in Poland. Their number in the ecoregion area fell by 52 in comparison with their number recorded at the beginning of the 2021/22 school year. There were 1178 nursery schools, 1002 pre-primary sections in primary schools, 134 pre-primary centres and 13 pre-primary education units among analysed establishments. There were 143.7 thousand children in GLP gminas attending pre-primary establishments, which was 9.9% of the total children in pre-primary establishments in Poland in the 2024/25 school year. The number of children in the facilities located in the ecoregion area in the analysed year fell by 0.7% in comparison with the number noted three years before.

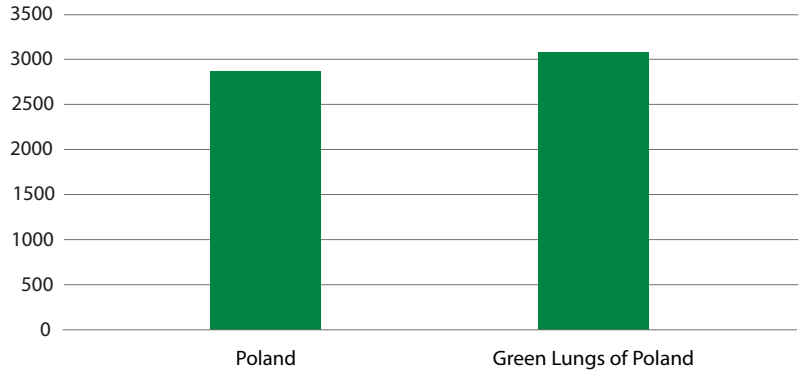
# Chapter 7. Health care and social welfare

## Health care

At the end of 2024, out-patient health care in the Green Lungs of Poland area had 2503 out-patient departments and 418 medical practices providing consultations within public funds. They accounted for 10.3% and 13.8% of their total number in the country. The number of out-patient departments in the GLP area grew by 6.1% in comparison with their number recorded at the end of 2021 and the number of medical practices fell by 7.3%.

In the ecoregion area at the end of 2024 there were 1233 generally available pharmacies and pharmaceutical outlets providing the services of selling medicines and medical supplies and such facilities comprised 10.0% of the total number of such places in Poland. Within three years in the GLP area the number of both generally available pharmacies and pharmaceutical outlets dropped by respectively 4.0% and 14.5%.

**Chart 21. Population per 1 generally available public pharmacy and pharmaceutical outlet in 2024**
**As of 31 December**




There were 3095 people per 1 pharmacy and pharmaceutical outlet located in Green Lungs of Poland gminas at the end of 2024 and it was by 116 persons more than three years before. At the end of 2024, in Poland in the analysed period the number of population per 1 pharmacy and pharmaceutical outlet was by 32 lower and equalled 2881.

As of the end of 2024, there were in total 18.1 thousand places in establishments providing care to children up to the age of 3 located in the area of Green Lungs of Poland, which is by 19.8% more than at the end of 2021. The number of these places in nurseries and children's clubs comprised 8.1% of the total number of such places in the country.

## Social welfare

At the end of 2024, in the Green Lungs of Poland area, there were 270 **stationary social welfare facilities**, i.e. by 31 facilities more than three years before. They represented 11.8% of the total institutions providing services within social assistance in Poland.

Stationary social welfare facilities in the GLP area, as of the end of 2024, had in total 14.4 thousand places (in Poland – 134.1 thousand places). Their number grew by 3.2% in comparison with the one noted at the end of 2021.

At the end of the analysed year, social assistance houses and social welfare facilities located in the ecoregion area hosted 13.4 thousand residents (in the country – 124.5 thousand), i.e. by 5.9% more than three years before.

# Chapter 8. Culture. Tourism

At the end of 2024, there were 848 **public libraries** (including branches) and 142 **library service points** in the GLP area. Their share in the total number of each establishment in Poland equalled respectively 11.2% and 20.6%. The number of public libraries and their branches in the ecoregion is falling gradually. At the end of 2024, there were by 14 (i.e. by 1.6%) fewer than three years before. The number of library service points, organised most often by communities themselves in holiday establishments or in regions with hindered access for a potential reader to a library or its branch also fell (by 27, i.e. by 16.0%). As of 31 December 2024, library establishment collections had 13.7 million volumes, i.e. by 0.4% more than at the end of 2021.

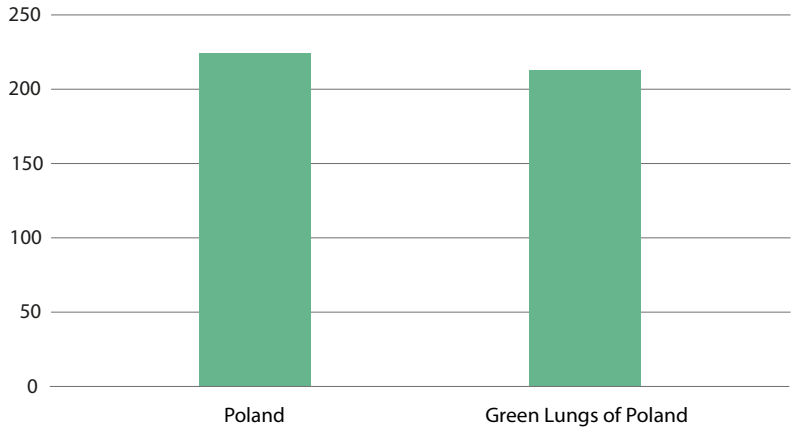
In 2024, in the GLP area, there were 429.2 thousand registered library users. Their number in the total number of library users in the country amounted to 8.0%. In comparison with 2021 the number of library users grew by 6.9%. There were 434 library users per library establishment in the ecoregion, i.e. by 218 fewer than on average in Poland. This number in urban areas of Green Lungs of Poland was five times higher than in GLP rural areas.

As of the end of 2024, there were 116 **museums** and **museum branches** in operation in the GLP area, which comprised 11.8% of such institutions in the country. Their number grew by 9 (i.e. by 8.4%) in relation to their number in the ecoregion area recorded three years before. In 2024, museums and exhibitions were visited by 3436.9 thousand people (by 70.3% more than in 2021). They constituted 7.7% of visitors in Poland. The chance to see Polish national heritage free of charge is "The Long Night of Museums" organised each year. In the GLP area 79.6 thousand people (or 10.0% of this night's museum visitors in the country) made use of this opportunity of visiting a museum in this way in 2024.

As of the end of 2024, there were 57 indoor cinemas (at the end of 2021 – 54) in the GLP area and they constituted a 10.7% share of the total number of indoor cinemas in the country. Indoor cinemas had 24.7 thousand audience seats, which is by 7.1% more than three years before. In 2024, there were 181.1 thousand screenings that were attended by 3829.4 thousand viewers and both of these figures were higher than the ones recorded in 2021 by respectively 77.9% and 87.8%.

As of 31 July 2024, there were 1085 tourist accommodation establishments (with 10 or more bed places) in the GLP area. They comprised 10.5% of the total of such establishments in Poland. Their number in the ecoregion area grew by 35 in relation to their state as of the end of July 2021. These establishments at the end of July 2024 had 81.2 thousand bed places (in Poland – 839.4 thousand). Bed places number increased by 4.5 thousand within three years.

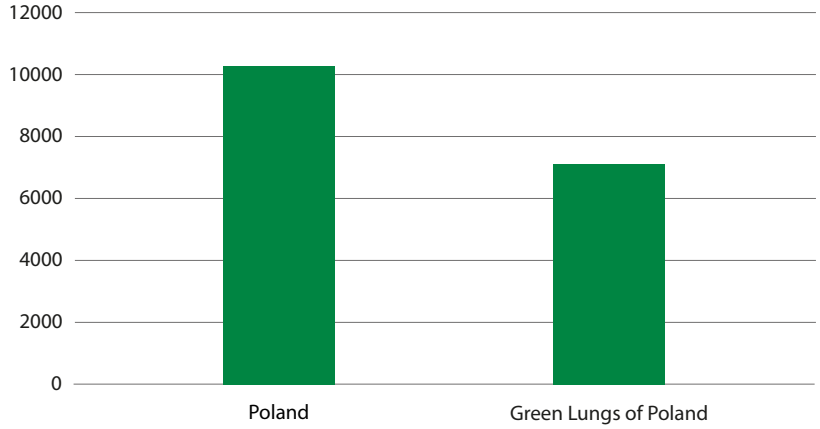
**Chart 22. Bed places in tourist accommodation establishments[a] per 10 thousand population in 2024**
**As of 31 July**




a Data concern establishments possessing 10 and more bed places.

In 2024, there were 2777.6 thousand tourists in tourist accommodation establishments located in the area of GLP, and their share in the total number of tourists accommodated in the country was 7.2%. An increase by 43.4% was noted in the number of tourists accommodated in the ecoregion area in comparison with data recorded in 2021. The majority of tourists, 67.2%, decided to stay in hotels and motels.

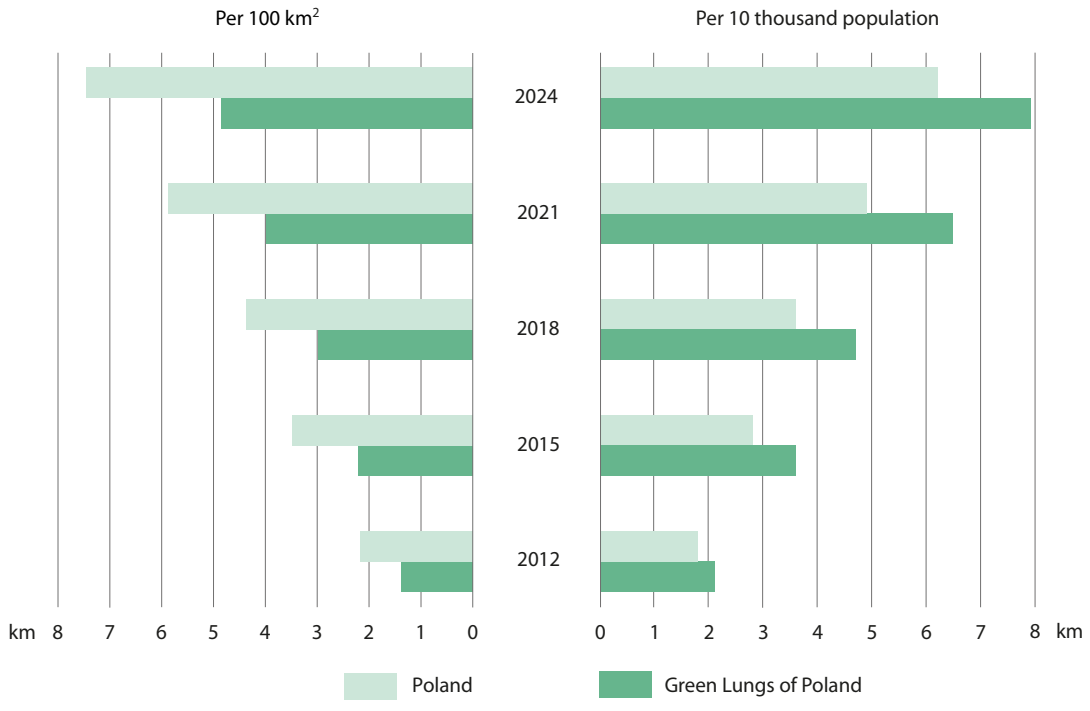
**Chart 23. Tourists accommodated in tourist accommodation establishments[a] per 10 thousand population in 2024**




a Data concern establishments possessing 10 and more bed places.

At the end of 2024, in gminas located in the GLP area there were 3031.5 km bicycle roads, i.e. 13.1% of their total length in the country. In the ecoregion area their length grew by 499.3 km in comparison with the one noted three years before.

**Chart 24. Length of bicycle roads[a] As of 31 December**




a Excluding bicycle trails.

At the end of the analysed year there were 4.8 km bicycle roads per 100 km$^2$ of the total ecoregion area, while in the country – 7.4 km. In relation to the end of 2021 this indicator value grew respectively by 0.8 and 1.5 km. The length of bicycle roads per 10 thousand population residing in the GLP area at the end of December 2021 totalled 7.9 km, while in Poland – 6.2 km. In three years the indicator increased by 1.4 km and 1.3 km respectively.

# General notes

Green Lungs of Poland cover the north-eastern part of the country. As of 31 December 2024, there were 386 gminas from the following voivodships: Podlaskie (118 gminas), Warmińsko-Mazurskie (115 gminas), Mazowieckie (114 gminas), Kujawsko-Pomorskie (33 gminas) and Pomorskie (6 gminas) included in the area of Green Lungs of Poland. A complete list of powiats and gminas in the area at the end of 2024 is presented in table II.

In the publication there is information regarding the area of Green Lungs of Poland, however, in some cases (due to the lack of data on the gmina level) there is information concerning powiats, which are at least partially included in the GLP area. Those tables are provided with appropriate notes.

Data presented in the publication, unless otherwise indicated, concern the **entire national economy**.

Data are presented according to the **Polish Classification of Activities – PKD 2007**, compiled on the basis of the Statistical Classification of Economic Activities in the European Community – NACE Rev. 2. PKD 2007 was introduced on 1 January 2008 by the Regulation of the Council of Ministers of 24 December 2007 on the Polish Classification of Activities.

In the Polish version of NACE Rev. 2 an additional grouping was introduced under the item:

- **industry** – sections: "Mining and quarrying", "Manufacturing", "Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply" and "Water supply; sewerage, waste management and remediation activities",
- **other services** – sections: "Professional, scientific and technical activities", "Administrative and support service activities", "Public administration and defence; compulsory social security", "Education", "Human health and social work activities", "Arts, entertainment and recreation", "Other service activities" as well as "Activities of households as employers; undifferentiated goods-and-services-producing activities of households for own use".

**Relative numbers (indices, percentages)** are, as a rule, calculated on the basis of absolute data expressed with higher precision than presented in the tables.

**In data calculations per capita (1000 population etc.)** as of the end of the year, the number of population as of 31 December is used, whereas data describing the magnitude of a phenomenon within a year – as of 30 June, unless otherwise noted.

Due to the rounding of data, in some cases sums of components can slightly differ from the amount given in the item "total".

Statistical information originating from sources other than the Statistics Poland is indicated in the appropriate note.

Explanations concerning basic definitions and methods of compiling statistical data are contained in the methodological notes and more detailed information on particular fields of statistics can be found in thematic publication as well as in the series "Statistical Research Methodology".

# Methodological notes

## Environmental protection. Forestry

Data regarding the **area of drainage areas** were obtained from the Hydrographic Map of Poland in the scale of 1:10000. The boundaries of Green Lungs of Poland (GLP) area adopted for the calculations were determined on the basis of the list of gminas included in GLP as well as electronic maps of the National Register of Boundaries.

Data regarding **geodesic status and directions of land use** were compiled on the basis of the land register introduced by the Regulation of the Minister of Development, Labour and Technology of 27 July 2021 on the register of land and buildings, prepared by the Head Office of Geodesy and Cartography.

Data regarding **agricultural and forest land designated for non-agricultural and non-forest purposes** concern land for which payments and fees were collected, based on the Act of 3 February 1995 on Agricultural and Forest Land Protection. Designation of agricultural land included in quality classes I–III as well as quality classes IV–VI that are organic origin soils and designation of forest land for above mentioned purposes requires a decision to allow such designation.

Data regarding **devastated and degraded land requiring reclamation and management** concern land which has completely lost its utility value (devastated land) and land with declined utility value due to poorer natural conditions or environmental changes and industrial activity as well as inappropriate agricultural practices (degraded land).

**Reclamation of land** consists in the restoration or assigning a utility or natural value to devastated or degraded land through appropriate landscaping, improving physical and chemical properties, regulating waterways, regenerating soils, strengthening scarps as well as reconstructing or constructing necessary roads. Reclaimed land is managed, i.e. used for agricultural, forest or other purposes.

Information regarding **water withdrawal** concerns:

1. In the "for production purposes (excluding agriculture, forestry and fishing)" item – organisational units (including industrial livestock farming and crop production plants) contributing fees for the annual withdrawal of 5 $dam^3$ or more of underground water or 20 $dam^3$ or more of surface water from their own sources, or discharging 20 $dam^3$ or more of wastewater annually.

2. In the "filling and replenishing fish ponds" item – organisational entities using water for the exploitation of fish ponds with an area of 10 ha or more. Until 2018, including irrigation in agriculture and forestry.

3. In the "exploitation of water supply network" item – all entities supervising the work of the water supply network (including housing cooperatives, water companies, water service plants, workplaces etc.). Until 1998, companies and water supply and sewerage plants established by the voivod and managed by local self-governments.

Information concerning the **quality of water withdrawn from water supply systems** is compiled in accordance with the Regulation of the Minister of Health of 7 December 2017 on the quality of drinking water intended for consumption, on the basis of results of laboratory tests conducted by the State Sanitary Inspection laboratories or other laboratories with a documented quality system of analyses recognised by the State Sanitary Inspection.

Monitoring of water supply systems is conducted in points characteristic of a particular water supply system, agreed between the territorially competent state sanitary inspector and the water and sewerage company.

Water supplied to population for consumption is qualified as meeting or not meeting requirements specified in the abovementioned regulation on the basis of results of bacteriological, physicochemical and organoleptic tests.

Data regarding **wastewater** concern wastewater discharged into waters or into the ground by entities described on page 40 in information regarding water withdrawal (points 1 and 3).

**Wastewater requiring treatment** is defined as water discharged by means of channel or open ditch systems directly into waters or into the ground or into a sewage network from production entities (including contaminated drainage water from mines and cooling water), from other entities and households.

**Cooling water** means water used in production processes, mainly in heat and power generating plants, for cooling purposes. This is usually hot water which causes so-called thermal pollution of water.

Data regarding **treated wastewater** concern wastewater treated mechanically, chemically, biologically and with increased biogene removal, discharged into waters or into the ground.

**Mechanical treatment of wastewater** is understood as the process of removing only non-soluble pollutants, i.e. solid bodies and fats subject to sedimentation or flotation.

**Chemical treatment of wastewater** consists in precipitating certain soluble compounds, or their neutralisation through chemical methods, such as coagulation, sorption on active carbon, etc.

**Biological treatment of wastewater** occurs through mineralisation caused by microorganisms in the natural water environment (e.g. through agricultural use of wastewater, spray irrigation of fields, fish ponds) or in artificial facilities (biofilters, activated sludge). It involves the removal of organic pollutants or biogenous and refractive compounds from wastewater.

**Increased biogene removal from sewage** occurs in treatment plants with highly efficient treatment technologies (mostly biological, but also chemical) allowing for the increased reduction in nitrogen and phosphorus.

A **few steps treatment** of discharged wastewater, e.g. biological with increased biogene removal or mechanical, chemical and biological, was classified as the highest degree of the treatment process (with increased biogene removal, biological or chemical).

**Municipal wastewater treatment plants** cover all water treatment plants within a sewage network. The statistical surveys do not include household wastewater treatment facilities or plants which treat only transported wastewater (wastewater treatment plants which operate outside the sewage system). Since 2003 municipal chemical treatment plants have been classified as treatment plants with increased biogene removal or mechanical treatment plants.

**Population Equivalent (P.E.)** is a ratio of multiplicity of pollutant load in wastewater to individual load in waste water discharged from one inhabitant during 24 hours (defined as $BOD_5$ equals 60 g $O_2$/24 hours).

**Sewage sludge** from wastewater treatment plants is understood as sludge from sludge digesters and other installations used for treating wastewater.

Information regarding **emission and reduction of air pollutants** from plants of significant nuisance to air quality concerns units specified by the Minister of Environmental Protection and Natural Resources on the basis of the defined amount of fees borne in 1986 for the annual emission of substances polluting the air, according to rates defined in the Regulation of the Council of Ministers of 13 January 1986 on the payments for economic use of the environment and modifications to it.

The established group of surveyed entities, maintained annually which, among other things, ensures comparability of data, may only be increased in specific cases, e.g. by newly established or expanded entities with a high threshold of pollutant emission.

Data regarding **emission of particulate pollutants** concern: particulates from the combustion of fuels, particulates from cement and lime materials, fire-resistant materials, silicates, artificial fertilizers, carbon and graphite, soot as well as other types of particulate pollutants.

Data regarding **emission of gaseous pollutants** concern: sulphur dioxide, carbon monoxide, carbon dioxide, nitrogen oxides, hydrocarbons as well as other types of gaseous pollutants.

Data regarding emission of particulate and gaseous pollutants include organized emission (from technological and heating facilities) and non-organized emission (from waste dumps and landfills, in the course of reloading, from production halls etc.).

Data regarding **amount of retained and neutralized particulate and gaseous pollutants** illustrate the scale of pollution reduced by air protection devices installed in the plants recognized as particularly harmful to the atmosphere.

**Indicator of particulate (gaseous) pollutants reduction** expresses the percentage ratio of the amount of particulate (gaseous) pollutants retained by puryfying devices to the total amount of generated particulate (gaseous) pollutants. The closer to 100% the index is, the higher and better operating efficiency of the protective potential of the plant is as well as the lesser the nuisance to air purity. The indicator of reduction of gaseous pollutants was calculated and presented excluding carbon dioxide emission.

**Nature protection** consists in maintaining, sustainable use and restoration and regeneration of nature resources, formations and elements of nature (among others, plants, animals and fungi originally existing in environment as well as subject to species protection, wandering and migratory animals, habitats); forms of nature protection are: national parks, nature reserves, landscape parks, protected landscape areas, documentation sites, ecological areas, landscape-nature complexes, Natura 2000 areas, monuments of nature, plant, animal and fungi species protection.

The legal basis regulating establishing forms of nature protection is the Act of 16 April 2004 on the Nature Conservation; the forms are created by the Regulation of the Council of Ministers or the minister responsible for the environment, the regulation of regional director for environmental protection, the resolution of voivodship regional council or gmina council.

**National parks** include protected areas distinguished for particular natural, scientific, social, cultural and educational values, of the area of at least 1000 ha, where all nature elements and specific landscape features are protected. National parks are created to preserve biodiversity, resources, formations and elements of inanimate nature and landscape features, restore a proper state of resources and elements of nature, reconstruct distorted natural habitats of plants, animals or fungi.

**Nature reserves** include areas in natural or slightly changed state – ecosystems, refuges and natural habitats. They also protect habitats of plants, animals, fungi and formations and elements of inanimate nature having essential value for the environmental, scientific, cultural and landscape reasons.

**Landscape parks** are areas protected for natural, historical and cultural values, as well as for landscape features. The aim of landscape park's creation is preservation and popularisation of these values in conditions of sustainable development.

**Protected landscape areas** include areas protected for the sake of distinguishing landscape characterised by various ecosystem types. These areas are valuable due to their functions satisfying the needs of tourism and recreation and functions of ecological corridors.

**Documentation sites** are scientific and educationally important, not emerging on the earth surface or visible on the surface, places of occurrence of various geological formations, fossils accumulations, mineral objects, caverns, rock caves, exploited and discarded opencast and underground workings.

**Ecological areas** are worth protecting fragments of ecosystems of significant importance for biodiversity, such as: natural water reservoirs, field and forest ponds, groups of trees and shrubs, swamps, peat bogs, dunes, rock outcrops, scarps etc.

**Landscape-nature complexes** are fragments of natural and cultural landscape that are worth protecting due to their scenic or aesthetic features.

**Natura 2000** network includes Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) that until the creation by legal act are Sites of Community Importance (SCIs). The legal basis for its functioning are: Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on the conservation of wild birds, that specifies the criteria to designate and manage special protection areas for endangered bird species as well as the Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora, that specifies the rules of protection of the rest of the animal and plant species as well as natural habitats and the procedures of protection of especially important natural areas.

**Special Protection Areas of birds** (SPAs) are the sites established according to the EU regulations for the protection of population of wild birds of one or more species, where the birds enjoy favourable conditions throughout their entire lifecycle, at any stage of their growth.

**Special Areas of Conservation of habitats** (SACs) are sites established according to the to the EU regulations for the preservation of natural habitats or populations of endangered plant and animal species or for the purpose of restoration of a proper condition of natural habitats or proper condition of protection of these species.

Special Protection Areas and Special Areas of Conservation can overlap with each other and with other forms of nature protection, either in part or in whole.

**Monuments of nature** are single objects of animate and inanimate nature of special environmental, scientific, cultural, historical or landscape value and of distinctive individual features such as trees of impressive size, native and alien shrubs, sources, waterfalls, exsurgents, stones, ravines, erratic boulders and caves.

**Strolling-recreational parks** are green areas with high and low growing plants, at least 2 ha in size, maintained for the recreational needs of the population, featuring roads, walkways, benches, playgrounds etc.

**Lawns** are areas of less than 2 ha in size, in which recreational activity dominates.

**Green areas of housing estates** are located in residential areas and are used for the purposes of recreation, isolation and aesthetic visual appearance.

The payment of compensation for **damages caused by legally protected animals** is carried out under Art. 126 of the Act of 16 April 2004 on the Nature Conservation. Under that law, the State Treasury is responsible for damages caused by bisons, wolves, lynxes, bears, beavers. The Regional Directorates for Environmental Protection are responsible for the estimation of damages caused by animals of protected species.

**Waste** means any substance or object which the holder discards or intends, or is required to discard. Data on waste since 2013 have been compiled on the basis of the Act of 14 December 2012 on Waste.

Presented types of waste are consistent with the waste catalogue introduced by the Regulation of the Minister of the Climate and Environment of 2 January 2020.

Information regarding quantity and type of waste concerns plants which generated over 1 thousand tonnes of waste within one gmina in the course of the year or accumulated 1 million tonnes of waste and more (excluding municipal waste).

**Recovery of waste** shall mean any operation the principal result of which is waste serving a useful purpose by replacing other materials. Full definition of waste recovery is included in the Act of 14 December 2012 on Waste.

**Disposal of waste** shall mean any operation which is not recovery even when the operation has the reclamation of substances or energy as a secondary consequence.

**Thermal transformation of waste** is understood as waste burning by oxidation as well as other processes, of which gasification, plasma process, pyrolytic decomposition, carried out in appropriate installations or devices (i.a. waste incineration plants) in accordance with rules specified in detailed regulations.

**Landfilled waste** is understood as waste transferred to landfill sites (landfills, waste dumps and sludge tanks) of the plant generating it or to other areas.

**Waste storage** means a temporary waste accumulation, which includes: preliminary storage of waste by its producer, temporary storage of waste by the unit collecting waste, storage of waste by the unit processing waste.

Data regarding **landfilled up to now (accumulated) waste** concern the quantity of waste deposited on the grounds of plants as a result of land filling in the reporting and previous years.

**Reclaimed storage areas** are understood as areas where exploitation was finished and in which restoring or assigning their utility works were performed through, i.a. appropriate landscaping, improving physical and chemical properties, regulation of waterways.

Data on **municipal waste** concern waste generated by households (excluding end-of-life vehicles) as well as non-hazardous waste from other producers that, due to their nature or composition is similar to waste generated in households.

Data on **liquid waste** concern waste, removed to wastewater treatment plants or dump stations, which comes from households, public buildings and buildings of units conducting economic activity – in the case they are not discharged by sewage system.

**Septic tank** is an installation and device intended for an accumulation of liquid wastewater where it is generated.

**Household sewage treatment plant** is a set of devices intended for treatment of sewage produced in one or more households.

**Investment outlays** are financial or tangible outlays the purpose of which is the creation of new fixed assets or the improvement (rebuilding, enlargement, reconstruction, conversion or modernization) of existing capital asset items as well as outlays on the so-called initial investments. Investment outlays are divided into outlays on fixed assets and other outlays.

Data regarding **outlays on fixed assets and tangible effects of investments in environmental protection and water management** are presented in accordance with the Polish Statistical Classification of Environmental Protection and Facilities, introduced on the basis of the Regulation of the Council of Ministers of 2 March 1999. This classification was compiled on the basis of ECE/UN Single European Standard Statistical Classification of Environmental Protection Activities and Facilities as well as the European System for the Collection of Economic Information on the Environment (SERIEE), implemented by the European Union.

Information within the scope of **forestry** concerns:

1. Public forests owned by:
   a. the State Treasury managed and utilized temporarily or perpetually by:
      - the State Forests National Forest Holding (abbreviated as the State Forests) supervised by the minister responsible for the environment,
      - nature protection units (national parks),
      - organisational units supervised by different ministers, voivods, gminas or municipal associations and the National Support Centre for Agriculture (until 31 August 2017 – the Agricultural Property Agency),

- other legal persons and organisational units without legal personality as well as natural persons;

b. gminas (of which gminas which are also cities with powiat status since 1999);

c. other public units.

2. Private forests owned by:

a. natural persons;

b. common lands with tenure rights held collectively by all or by a number of village residents;

c. agricultural production cooperatives;

d. other legal persons, such as churches and religious groups, social organisations as well as private companies and partnerships.

**Forest land area** in accordance with the Act of 28 September 1991 on Forestry includes:

- **forest area** – land of a contiguous area of at least 0.10 ha covered by forest vegetation (wooded area) or temporarily devoid of forest vegetation (non-wooded area). This land is designated for forest production or constitutes a nature reserve or comprises a part of a national parks or is entered in the register of the monuments,
- **land related to forest management** used for the purposes of forest management: buildings and structures, forest irrigation and drainage systems, forest spatial division lines, forest roads, land beneath power lines, forest nurseries, wood depot areas, as well as forest car parks and tourist infrastructure.

**Forest cover (forest cover indicator)** was calculated as the share of forest area in the total geodesic area of the country, ecoregion, voivodship.

## Population

Tables regarding the size and structure of the population according to demographic features, vital statistics and migration were compiled on the basis of:

- the results of national censuses and the estimates of the size and structure of the population in gmina, prepared using the balance method by the Statistics Poland,
- the registers of the Ministry of Digital Affairs – on internal and international migration of population for permanent and temporary residence,
- documentation of gminas regarding internal and international migration of population for temporary stay,
- documentation of Civil Status Offices regarding registered marriages, births and deaths.

**Working age** population refers to males aged 18–64 and females aged 18–59. In this category the age groups of **mobility** (i.e. 18–44) and **non-mobility** (i.e. 45–64 for males and 45–59 for females) are distinguished. **Non-working age** population is defined as **pre-working age** population, i.e. up to the age of 17 and **post-working age** population, i.e. 65 and more for males and 60 and more for females.

Data regarding **vital statistics** according to territorial division were compiled as follows:

- marriages – according to the husband's place of permanent residence before the marriage, in the case when a husband lived abroad before the marriage the wife's place of residence in Poland before the marriage,
- births – according to the mother's place of permanent residence,
- deaths – according to the place of permanent residence of the deceased.

Data regarding **internal migration** of the population were compiled on the basis of gmina documentation regarding the registration of persons for permanent residence. This information does not include changes of address within the same gmina, with the exception of urban-rural gminas for which the division into urban and rural areas has been kept.

Data regarding **international migration** of the population were compiled on the basis of gmina documentation regarding the registration of people arriving to Poland for permanent residence (immigration) as well as regarding the removal from registration of people leaving Poland for permanent residence abroad (emigration).

Inflow of the population includes registrations of arrival for permanent residence, outflow – registrations of departure from permanent residence.

## Labour market

Data on employed persons in the national economy are persons performing work that brings them earnings (in the form of wages or salaries) or income; employed persons include:

- employees, that is persons employed on the basis of an employment relationship (employment contract, appointment, nomination, election) or service relationship,
- self-employed persons, including contributing family workers,
- outworkers,
- members of agricultural production cooperatives,
- clergy fulfilling priestly obligations.

Since 2022 data on employed persons have been compiled on the basis of administrative data sources. The data concern employed persons working in all entities of the national economy.

Data on **unemployed persons registered** in the powiat labour offices are presented in accordance with the Law of 20 April 2004 on Promoting Employment and Labour Market Institutions.

**Unemployed person** is a person aged 18 and more and has not reached the retirement age, is not employed and not performing any other kind of paid work, capable of work and ready to take full-time employment (or in case he/she is a disabled person – capable and ready to take work comprising no less than a half of working time), not attending school with the exception of schools for adults (or taking extra curriculum exam covering this school curriculum) or tertiary schools in part-time programme, registered in the local labour office competent for his/ her place of residence (permanent or temporary), and seeking employment or any other income-generating work, with additional provisions concerning the sources of income, included in the law.

**Long-term unemployed** are persons remaining in the register rolls of the powiat labour office for the period of over 12 months during the last two years, excluding the periods of traineeship and vocational training of adults in the workplace.

## Dwellings. Municipal infrastructure

Information on **dwelling stocks** and **dwellings completed** concerns dwellings, rooms and useful floor area in these dwellings, located in residential and non-residential buildings. Data do not include residences for communities (employee hostels, student dormitories and boarding schools, social welfare homes and others) and spaces not designed for residential purposes, but inhabited for various reasons (animal accommodations, caravans, ships, wagons and others).

Data regarding **dwelling stocks** have been compiled on the basis of the balance of dwelling stocks, as of 31 December, in each administrative division.

**Balances of dwelling stocks** are estimated for intercensal periods based on the last national census results, assuming inhabited and uninhabited dwellings as a basis, considering changes in the territorial division as well as increases and decreases in dwelling stocks.

Information on **dwellings completed** concerns dwellings: in new residential and non-residential buildings, created as a result of enlarging buildings (the enlarged part) and adapting non-residential spaces.

Information regarding the effects of:

- **private construction** concerns dwellings realised by natural persons, foundations, churches and religious associations, intended for the own use of the investor,
- **construction for sale or rent** concerns dwellings realised by various investors in order to achieve a profit from their sale or short- or long-term rent, also on the basis of agreements for institutional lease leading to acquisition of property,
- **cooperative construction** concerns dwellings completed by housing cooperatives, intended for persons being members of these cooperatives,
- **municipal (gmina) construction** concerns dwellings realised entirely from the budget of gmina (primarily with a public assistance or intervention character),
- **public building society construction** concerns dwellings built by public building societies (operating on a non-profit basis) using a loan from the state bank BGK,
- **company construction** concerns dwellings realised by companies (of the public and private sectors), intended for meeting the residential needs of the employees of these companies.

Due to a methodological change, since 2018, data regarding effects of "private construction" realised for sale or rent in order to achieve a profit, are included into the form of construction "for sale or rent".

Information on municipal installations and services was compiled using the **kind of activity method**, i.e. according to the purpose of the installation, regardless of the predominant kind of activity of the economic entity.

Data on municipal installations concern functioning installations.

Data regarding **users of water supply and sewage systems** include the population living in residential buildings connected to a defined system.

Data regarding **gas users** concern the population in dwellings equipped with gas installations connected to the gas supply system.

Data regarding the population connected to the water supply system, sewage system and gas supply system also include the population in residences for communities.

Data on **wastewater treatment plants** concern treatment plants connected to the sewage network.

**Urban areas served by wastewater treatment plants** include those urban areas from which municipal sewage, before being drained off to a collector, was subject to processes of mechanical, biological or increased biogene removal treatment. When an urban area is served by several treatment plants using different treatment methods, the predominant volume of wastewater treated by a treatment plant with increased biogene removal determines the classification of that urban area as served by this type of wastewater treatment plant.

Information on the length of the **water supply network** concerns distribution network (excluding connections leading to residential buildings and other constructions) and the transmission (main) network, i.e. conduits providing water to the distribution network.

Data regarding the length of the **sewage network**, apart from street conduits, include collectors, i.e. conduits receiving sewage from the street network; while they do not include sewers designed exclusively for draining runoff.

**Water supply and sewage connections** leading to residential buildings (including collective living quarters, e.g. worker's hostels, students' homes, dormitories, boarding schools, welfare homes) and gas supply connections leading to buildings (including non-residential buildings) are understood as branches linking individual buildings with the distribution network or, in the case of the sewage system – with the main drainage system.

**Street outlet** is a device connected with the water supply system, used by the population as a direct source of water supply.

Data regarding **consumption of water in households** include quantity of water collected from the water supply system by facilities installed in a building.

## Education

The education system in Poland functions according to the Act of 14 December 2016 – the Law on School Education, the Act of 7 September 1991 on the Education System and the Act of 20 July 2018 – the Law on Higher Education and Sciences.

Since 1 September 2017, the new school system has been implemented, introducing 8-year primary school, 4-year general secondary school, 5-year technical secondary school, 3-year stage I sectoral vocational school, 2-year stage II sectoral vocational school. Lower secondary schools have been abolished.

The presented data include:

1. Pre-primary education establishments.
2. Schools for children, youth and adults:
   a. primary schools;
   b. lower secondary schools;
   c. post-primary schools; including post-secondary schools.
3. Higher education institutions (HEIs).

**Schools for children and youth** (including special schools) comprise:

1. Primary schools including branch schools and art schools not leading to professional certification simultaneously implementing a primary school curriculum.
2. Lower secondary schools for children and youth (operating until the 2018/19 school year).
3. Post-primary schools:
   a. 3-year special job-training schools;
   b. 3-year stage I sectoral vocational schools (until the 2016/17 school year 2–3-year basic vocational schools);
   c. 2-year stage II sectoral vocational schools (operating since 2020/21 school year);
   d. 4-year general secondary schools (until the 2018/19 school year, 3-year schools);
   e. 5-year technical secondary schools (until the 2018/19 school year 4-year schools);
   f. general art schools leading to professional certification (excluding special schools), with the exception of schools providing art education only;
   g. operating until the 2013/14 school year: 3-year specialized secondary schools as well as – 2-year supplementary general secondary schools and 3-year supplementary technical secondary schools for graduates of basic vocational schools.

**Post-secondary schools** – educating in day, evening, extramural and full-time mode – comprise:

1. Post-secondary schools (1-, 1.5- or 2-year), including special schools.

2. Colleges of social work (3-year) – since 2005/06 school year.
3. 3-year foreign language teacher training colleges and teacher training colleges operating until the 2015/16 school year, which did not confer the Bachelor's degree.

**Higher education institutions (HEIs)** offer full-time programmes (until 2005/06 academic year – day study system) and part-time programmes (until 2005/06 academic year – evening, weekend and extramural study systems). Data regarding tertiary education:

1. Until the 2015/16 academic year, included foreign language teacher training colleges and teacher training colleges which conferred the Bachelor's degree.
2. Comprise foreigners studying in Poland (including students at branch campuses of Polish higher education institutions operating abroad).
3. Do not include Poles studying abroad (except for persons at branch campuses of Polish higher education institutions operating abroad).

The presented information, excluding the data on higher education institutions, has been compiled on the basis of the Educational Information System administered by the minister responsible for education.

Since the 2017/18 academic year, data on higher education institutions, except for data on some higher education institutions (HEIs) run by churches and other religious associations, have been compiled on the basis of POL-on, the Integrated System of Information on Science and Higher Education, administered by the minister responsible for higher education and science.

**Pre-primary education establishments** comprise nursery schools (including special nursery schools), pre-primary sections in primary schools, pre-primary education units and pre-primary centres. Starting from the 2004/05 school year, one-year pre-school preparation in pre-primary education establishments has been compulsory for 6-year-old children, with the exception of the 2011/12–2015/16 school years, when 5-year-old children were covered by compulsory education.

## Health care and social welfare

Data regarding **beds in general hospitals** concern permanent beds in patient rooms, either occupied or prepared to receive patients; do not include day-time places in hospital wards.

**Generally available pharmacies** do not included pharmacies, which operate within the structure of and for the needs of hospitals.

**Pharmaceutical outlets** are sales outlets for the sale of ready-made medications, with a strictly defined range of products, and they are mainly located in rural areas.

Since 2024, data on pharmacies and pharmaceutical outlets have been compiled on the basis of administrative sources: the Chief Pharmaceutical Inspectorate, the National Health Fund, the Social Insurance Institution and the Agricultural Social Insurance Fund.

Data concerning **social welfare homes and facilities** are related to the institutions for which the founding bodies are: local government entities, associations, social organizations, churches and religious associations, foundations, natural and legal persons.

**Social assistance at domicile** is assistance provided on the basis of the Law on Social Assistance by a local (gmina, urban, urban-rural) social assistance centre within duties delegated as well as its own duties, for households and people residing in the area of gmina's activity. In cities with powiat status the municipal social assistance centre, apart from the tasks of gmina, realize also tasks of powiat. In these cases, data only on gmina's tasks are included. Social assistance at domicile is an essential (apart from stationary forms) part of the social welfare system as the institution of the social policy of the State.

## Culture. Tourism

**Library institutions** include public libraries, branches and library service points.

**Collection** (books and brochures as well as newspapers and magazines) is counted in volumes, i.e. in number of units with a cover and possessing an independent signature.

Among **objects recorded in the register of historical monuments** there were following categories distinguished:

- urban planning (spatial principles) – urban and rural planning arrangements, districts and estates, squares and streets (as urban planning interior), conservation zones of landscape protection,
- sacred (sacred objects) – churches of different denominations, bell towers, chapels, cemetery chapels, roadside shrines, statues,
- defensive (defensive construction objects) – defensive walls, urban and fort gates, forts, arsenals, guardhouses, barbicans, bastions, fortified towers,
- public (public buildings) – the seats of authorities, schools and dormitories, banks, post offices, hotels and pensions, theatres and cinemas, barracks and prisons, railway stations, hospitals and medical care homes, administrative buildings, arenas, casinos, barracks and prisons,
- greenery – palace and manor parks, manor gardens, exclusive residential gardens (as elements of arranged landscaping), urban parks, alleys,
- grange (grange buildings) – residential and farming out-buildings (in complexes), livestock buildings (in complexes), production buildings (in complexes), residential and functional buildings of grange workers (farm building with four apartments, gardener's, forester's and doctor's houses etc.), single objects after grange complexes, granaries, storehouses,
- residential (residential houses) – houses, tenement houses, peasant cottages, palaces and urban manor houses, presbyteries, vicar's and organist's houses, monasteries, residential outbuildings, houses in estate areas (specified in spatial decisions), houses in working-class estates (entered into spatial plant complexes),
- farming (farm buildings) – any single farm objects in rural homesteads, granaries, storehouses as independent objects outside grange complexes, auxiliary buildings at public objects and residential houses as well as at industrial plants,
- industrial (industrial construction) – industrial plants, production halls in factory complexes, workshops, accompanying objects, locomotive sheds, boiler houses, mining shaft towers, single production buildings outside grange complexes (smithies, olive presses etc.), mills, windmills, hydro-technical devices, water towers, bridges and viaducts, power stations, gasworks and water supply systems,
- cemeteries – municipal, military and religious cemeteries, cemetery plots and single graves, mausoleums,
- castles,
- palaces – rural palaces (estate centres), urban palaces (in residential complexes),
- manor houses – rural manor houses (estate centres), suburban manor houses (in residential complexes), defensive manor houses (residential towers),
- others – fences, gates, links, cellars, monuments, fountains and wells, park architectural details (garden houses, caves, pavilions) and others.

Data concerning **border traffic** include only Polish border simultaneously being the external border of the Schengen zone. Poland became the part of the Schengen zone on 21 December 2007.

**Tourist accommodation establishments** include hotels and similar establishments and other establishments (since 2011 with 10 or more bed places; until 2010 they do not include rooms for rent and agrotourism lodgings).

Establishments and places temporarily unavailable due to expansion, renovation, etc. are not included in data regarding **establishments and number of bed places for tourists**.

**Bicycle road** – road or part thereof that is not a carriageway, marked with appropriate road signs (e.g. C-13, C-13/16) intended for the traffic of bicycles, electric scooters and personal transport devices as well as persons using movement assist devices and pedestrian traffic, in the cases stipulated in the Act.

Data concerns length of bicycle roads managed appropriately by gmina, powiat or voivodship (excluding length of bicycle trails): independent roads for bicycles (constructed as a part of traffic road); roads made of a part of traffic roads; roads made of a part of pavement; roads in foot-bicycle paths. Length of bicycle roads is length of roads running in one direction. Length of road laying on the opposite side of the road are calculated separately. Data concern those roads, which are used only for to the communication purposes, while those for the tourism purposes (e.g. running through the forest) were not included.

## Entities of the national economy recorded in the REGON register

Presented data concerning **entities of the national economy recorded in the REGON register** include legal persons, organizational units without legal personality and natural persons conducting economic activity, classified into particular NACE Rev. 2 sections according to the predominant kind of activity.

The National Office Business Register, hereinafter referred to as REGON, is an administrative register kept by the President of Statistics Poland. The rules for running the register are defined by the Act of 29 June 1995 on Official Statistics and the Regulation of the Council of Ministers of 30 November 2015 on the mode and methodology of running and updating the National Official Business Register and templates for applications, surveys and certificates.

The basic function of the REGON register is the identification of entities of the national economy, which is accomplished by assigning unique identification numbers to them.

The REGON register is updated on a current basis with the use of data on entities of the national economy transferred through the electronic system from the Central Registration and Information on Business, the National Court Register, the Educational Information System as well as the Central Business Entity Register of the National Taxpayer Register, and – for the remaining entities – on the basis of applications submitted to the relevant statistical offices. The completeness and timeliness of the register is contingent on the timely compliance with the abovementioned obligation.