



CANDIDATE FOR
european green capital
WARSAW2018



City: Introduction and characteristics

Index		Unit	Data
Population	1 735 442	Residents	2014
Area	517	km ²	2014
Population density	3 355	Persons/ km ²	2014
GDP	29 153	€/per capita	2012
Climate classification (Köppen)	Cfb		2010

Warsaw - the capital of the Republic of Poland, located in the heart of Europe. A city of rich history - destroyed by war and rebuilt from ashes...

Today - green, beautiful and on a mission to satisfy the needs of its residents and gain a strong position among main European metropolises.

Fall in Love with Warsaw – green



In recent years, Warsaw has undergone tremendous changes, not only infrastructural but also great effort was made to raise awareness of Varsovians on climate changes and promote ecological behavior and a conscious approach to ecology.



Photo: Archives of the City of Warsaw

Warsaw is a unique capital in terms of nature. It borders with one of the largest national parks and a huge half - wild river – the Vistula - flowing through the center of the city. The right bank of the Vistula, in the area of the reserve, has no regulated structure over a distance of almost 4 km, which for a city so large, is quite unusual.

Warsaw undertakes significant steps in order to "bring the river back to the city" and provide residents and tourists with attractive public space: the pedestrian waterfront promenade and **the Vistula River bicycle trail** (26.5 km) along the river.

Warsaw also commenced the projects:

1. ***The Restitution of floodplain meadows in the Warsaw section of the Natura 2000 Central Vistula Valley*** – includes the creation of a semi-natural landscape of the river by recreating multi-species grasslands and reducing the impact of invasive plant species on an area of 67.37 hectares,
2. ***The Protection of the habitat of key species of birds of the Central Vistula River Valley in the Warsaw agglomeration*** – envisages the construction of artificial and floating islands on the river in order to improve the living conditions of birds such as the ringed plover, oystercatcher, ferruginous, bluethroat, kestrel.



Photo: Archives of the City of Warsaw

Warsaw is surrounded by the most valuable and largest forest complex in Mazovia - the Kampinoski National Park and forests which constitute part of the Mazowiecki and Chojnów Landscape Parks, Celestynowskie, Otwockie and Chojnowskie Forests - together with the Warsaw Protected Landscape Area form the capital's ecological barrier, ensuring an ecological balance between biologically active areas and built-up areas and thus ensure the appropriate climate and health conditions for its inhabitants. Together they constitute Warsaw's "*breathing apparatus*".

The Kampinoski National Park was named a bird refuge of European importance by the European Parliament and is listed as UNESCO Biosphere Reserve. The park itself offers great opportunities for discovering nature, hiking, biking and horseback riding through its wild corners.

Approximately 40% of Warsaw constitutes green areas, open areas and semi-natural vegetation complexes (27 complexes, urban forests and 88 parks and dozens of green spaces).

Warsaw has many valuable areas and facilities under various forms of protection: 12 nature reserves, The Warsaw Protected Landscape Area, 6 Natura 2000, 6 ecological areas, 477 natural monuments, including 2 248 trees, 72 boulders and 7 natural objects.



Sobieski Forest
Photo: Archives of the City of Warsaw

Warsaw also made remarkable progress in the wastewater management field. The largest environmental investment in Central Europe – the "Czajka" Sewage Treatment Plant underwent a thorough expansion and modernization. It currently complies with strict environmental regulations. The total cost of the modernization amounted to approximately € 719 000 000.

Due to the modernization of the Warsaw Lindley Filters (an intermediate ozonation and activated carbon filtration station was constructed), which supply water for residents since 1886, nowadays tap water is clean, tasty and safe to drink.

More and more Varsovians grow aware of the advantages of cycling and leaving their car at home. In 2012, the public bike system **Veturilo** was introduced and named as one of the 10 best systems of this type in the world in 2013. This led to a true cycling boom in the city and put strong pressure on the development of cycling infrastructure. Today, cycling routes measure over 412 kilometers in length.



Veturilo – bike system
Photo: Archives of the City of Warsaw

Transportation investments play a significant role in reducing air pollution and noise:

- repairs, modernization and development of tram routes,
- completion of the I metro line and the construction of the central section of the II line;
- replacing the old bus stock with low-emission buses.

In 2012 as one of the few cities, Warsaw created noise maps at the height of 4 m, as well as calculated the distribution of noise on the facades of residential buildings.

In 2009 Warsaw joined the **Covenant of Mayors**, and in 2011 adopted the **Sustainable Energy Action Plan for Warsaw in the perspective of 2020**. Around 80% of residents use heating network based on cogeneration system, which gives fuel savings and CO₂ emission reduction of 30%.

The city's other actions and activities, which can be described as "green" include:

- "Green" projects selected by residents within the participatory budget € 12 032 275 were to be disbursed in 2015.
- Each cut down tree is substituted with a new one. 170 000 trees had been planted in the years 2009-2014;
- Caring for the diverse vegetation of urban plantings;
- Appointment of the City Plenipotentiary for Greenery.

In November 2013, Warsaw organized the **Warsaw Dialogue on Scaling-Up Local and Subnational Climate Action** conference, which took place at the 19th Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change COP19 and for the first time within the formal COP Cities Day agenda.

Warsaw implements a number of projects, i.e. **Preparation of a strategy of adaptation to climate change with the use of city climate mapping and public participation (ADAPTCITY)** or **Million trees for Warsaw**.