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GERMANY/POLAND VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

Introduction

Welcome to your program, Never Again: Remembrance, History and Genocide Prevention. *Never Again: Remembrance, History, and Genocide Prevention* challenges students to better understand the events leading up to and surrounding the Holocaust while fully appreciating its implications for the present and future. You will gain an insider's view of history through special guided tours and meetings with community members while taking in the culture of Germany and Poland. We look forward to welcoming you on this journey and sharing this life-changing experience!

This Handbook was written to provide you with useful information regarding your participation in this program. It answers many of the questions frequently asked by previous participants. We encourage your feedback on how it can be improved for future participants. Please read this entire handbook carefully and contact our office if you have any questions.

Amizade's Mission & Vision

Amizade encourages intercultural exploration and understanding through community-driven service-learning courses and volunteer programs. Amizade imagines a world in which all people have the opportunity to explore and grow, realize their ability to make change, and embrace their responsibility to build a better world. Thank you for joining us in this mission.

Amizade's Commitment

At the heart of Amizade is the sincere belief that intercultural understanding and the development of global citizens is essential to our increasingly connected global world. We are committed to providing you with an intercultural experience that allows you to make concrete contributions to a community resulting in a deeper understanding of your role in the global community.

Approach to Service

Ethic of Service

Amizade strives to promote an "ethic of service" on all our programs. This means that we envision the entire experience as one of service to our fellow human beings. There will be scheduled time for completing service projects on each program, but we also encourage you to carry your ethic of service with you throughout the program by offering support and assistance when needed, especially to your fellow travelers.

As guests in the host community, Amizade volunteers are encouraged to act respectfully in all community interactions. The global service experience provides a unique opportunity to learn from the traditions, beliefs, and customs of a new community. Since most Amizade volunteers come from outside of the community, they are often seen as "ambassadors" representing their countries and are able to use this opportunity to share positively about their culture. At the same time, volunteers have the unique opportunity of experiencing another culture while taking the time to absorb and respect new world views.

Volunteer Opportunities

Service during this program will occur at two sites, weather permitting: the grounds of the Auschwitz concentration camp, and the Jewish cemetery in the town of Oswiecim. The work involves historical landscape preservation and artifact preservation. Because much of the service work is outdoors, we must adapt the schedule if the weather interferes. When weather interferes with our planned service, we will make every effort to reschedule service hours as well as the planned activities.

While you should have the opportunity to help with artifact preservation at the museum, you may also be asked to do service work such as raking leaves, sweeping, or cutting away weeds. While these tasks may seem “ordinary,” know that you are making an extraordinary contribution to the local community as well as the broader community of Holocaust survivors. By performing even small tasks with care and reverence for those who died, you provide a living, contemplative witness to history. You are also demonstrating to the local community an ethic of volunteering. The concept of volunteer service is not as fully developed in Poland as it is in the United States. When you agree to perform a service without asking for remuneration or putting your own self-satisfaction first, you are helping to develop a culture of volunteerism.



Volunteers sweep the road at the Auschwitz site.

The On-Site Experience

On-Site Orientation

Upon arrival, your Amizade instructor will hold a program orientation for all volunteers. Many issues such as health, safety, and security issues will be addressed as well as site logistics, standard procedures, and other important information that will benefit each participant to know.

Volunteer Supervisors

At the service sites, local community members will provide instruction and supervision for your volunteer service.

Group Work

Amizade programs generally have a strong core element built around group work. For many people, living, volunteering, studying, completing projects, and spending leisure time in a group may be new. Therefore we ask all volunteers to approach group interaction with flexibility, openness, and constructive communication. We strive to respect each other's space and needs while also supporting each other to achieve personal goals on the program.

Flexibility

Flexibility on behalf of the participants is the most important element on an Amizade program. Itineraries may change at the last minute in order to meet current community needs or participate in unexpected opportunities for recreational, educational, or cultural exploration. Many aspects of traveling are unpredictable and time-consuming, so be prepared to enjoy the unexpected surprises and embrace the opportunities they provide!

Location Overview

You will learn much more about these locations through your readings and during your visit. Below is just a brief description of the main cities on our itinerary.

Berlin, Germany

Berlin is Germany's capital and largest city with 3.4 million inhabitants. Berlin played a significant role in 20th century history, and Berliners are conscious of their historical role and responsibility. In recent years, Berlin has reasserted itself as an educational and cultural center and committed to being a "green" city by promoting ecological practices. While some right-wing elements still express intolerance, Berlin has grown increasingly diverse. Today, nearly 14% of residents are of foreign nationality with the greatest portion coming from Turkey, and Berlin has a vibrant gay and lesbian scene.

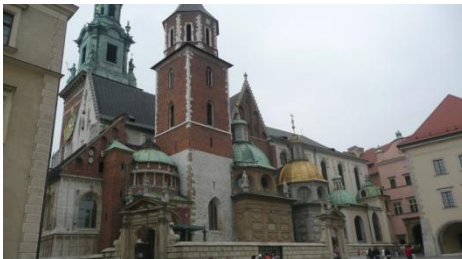


In front of the Brandenburg Tor (Gate)

Oswiecim, Poland

Oswiecim (roughly pronounced osh'-vee-ech-im) is a small town in southern Poland. Comprised of approximately 43,000 residents, Oswiecim's history traces back to 1100 A.D. Before World War II, the majority of inhabitants were Jewish. Today, due to the Nazi terror, not one Jewish person lives in Oswiecim year-round. During World War II, the Nazis built the infamous concentration camp Auschwitz (the Germanized name for Oswiecim) outside the city center. The Polish people usually do not refer to the town by its Germanized name; "Auschwitz" is used to refer only to the concentration camp.

Kraków, Poland



Wawel Castle compound in Krakow

Kraków (pronounced kra-koof') is one of Poland's most beautiful cities with a long history. Kraków has been the center of academic, cultural and artistic life in Poland. Today comprised of nearly 800,000 residents, Kraków was spared the destruction that met many of Poland's cities after the Nazi evasion in part because Kraków was selected as the capital of Germany's General Government. It was in Kraków that Oskar Schindler, portrayed in Steven Spielberg's film *Schindler's List*, selected Jews from the ghetto to work in his plant, and they thus avoided deportation to the camps.

For more information on Germany and Poland, we recommend the following websites:

US Department of State Country Background Notes:

Germany: <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/3997.htm>

Poland: <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2875.htm>

Lonely Planet World Guides:

Germany: <http://www.lonelyplanet.com/worldguide/destinations/europe/germany>

Poland: <http://www.lonelyplanet.com/worldguide/destinations/europe/poland>

BBC Country Profiles:

Germany: http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/country_profiles/1047864.stm

Poland: http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/country_profiles/1054681.stm

Encyclopedia.com:

Germany: <http://www.encyclopedia.com/html/G/Germany.asp>

Poland: <http://www.encyclopedia.com/html/P/Poland.asp>

Accommodations, Meals and Transportation

Berlin, Germany

All In Hostel

Grünberger Str. 54
10245 Berlin

Phone: +49 30 288 768 3

Fax: +49 30 288 768 58

www.all-in-hostel.com

Amenities include: breakfast included, 24-hour reception, vending machines, internet terminals, tv lounge, luggage storage, tour/sightseeing information, small on-site shop

Location: Friedrichshain neighborhood which has many cafes, restaurants, bakeries and shops.

Oswiecim, Poland

Center for Dialogue and Prayer (CDIM)

Krakowska Fundacja

Centrum Dialogu i Modlitwy w Oświęcimiu

ul. M. Kolbego 1

32-602 Oświęcim

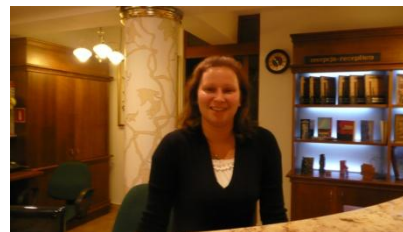
Poland

Phone: +48 (33) 843 10 00

<http://www.centrum-dialogu.oswiecim.pl>

Amenities include: private bath; coffee bar, television, computer library, meeting spaces.

Location: short taxi ride from city center; 10-minutes' walk to Auschwitz I site.



You will be warmly welcomed at the Center for Dialogue and Prayer.

Meals

Your program offers a variety of meals, including restaurant meals where you will order from the menu, as well as fixed meals. In Berlin and Krakow, we plan to eat at restaurants. At Oswiecim, we will take most of our meals at the Center for Dialogue and Prayer. There, meals are fixed and are served family-style.

German and Polish meals are a lot like traditional American dinners that includes meat (often pork), starch (often potatoes) and vegetables. Specialties you may have a chance to sample include schnitzel (fried pork cutlet) in Germany, and pierogies (potato-stuffed dumplings) in Poland.

Breakfasts in both Germany and Poland are a little different than a typical American breakfast. They usually include a selection of cold cuts, cheese, bread, sliced tomatoes, yogurt, fruit and coffee/tea.

In Poland, the heaviest meal is served mid-day, and usually consists of a soup, salad, meat, and starch. In the evenings, they may serve one hot dish (like a sausage or pierogies) with a side or two, or cold foods such as cold cuts, cheese, and bread.

While you'll have an opportunity to taste many wonderful local foods, you may still miss some of the foods from home. You may want to pack a "comfort food." Some popular foods that travel well include granola bars, cookies, candies, or even single-serving peanut butter packs.

Alcohol

Your instructor will discuss with you the policy on alcohol. AT NO TIME should a participant become intoxicated. Intoxication impacts your motor skills and judgment and can render you vulnerable. The risks posed by intoxication increase when you are in a foreign place without a good grasp of the local language or customs. Participants who do not follow these guidelines may be expelled from the program.

For Vegetarians: Vegetarianism has become a growing trend throughout Europe, but vegetarian options are still often limited and do not provide much variety. Amizade will make every effort to provide vegetarian options, but sometimes they will need to be supplemented with further protein and vitamins. We encourage vegetarians to bring healthy snacks and vitamins with them. Please indicate your dietary needs and restrictions so we can best prepare for you.

Transportation on Site

Transportation will be provided by Amizade for the duration of the program. Transportation will include a combination of public transit, which will allow you to experience the city like a “local,” as well as hired taxis and coaches.

Money Matters

Please bring some spending money to use for costs beyond those covered by the Amizade program price. This may include money for souvenirs, additional food/snacks, or taxis. It’s useful to know that many public toilets in Germany and Poland are pay toilets, with staff at the entrance to collect the fee (usually a few coins).

Currency

You may need two types of currency during your program: the **Euro (EUR)** for Germany and the **Polish Zloty (PLN)** (pronounced “zwah’-tuh”). While Poland has joined the European Union, they have not yet adopted the Euro. For the latest conversion rates, please visit www.xe.com.

ATMs

ATMs are available at the airport and in the cities in which we travel. We will offer you the opportunity to use the ATM. Many travelers find it easiest to use their ATM to withdraw a small amount in Germany (in Euros) and then to make another withdrawal once in Poland (in Polish Zloty). Be sure to notify your bank of your travel plans and all the countries in which you might use your card; otherwise, they may deactivate your card. Also, please inquire with them about fees for withdrawals and purchases so you don’t get any surprises in your bank statement when you return home.

Cash

As with travel in the United States, it is wise not to rely solely on ATMs and credit cards. There may be places where access/acceptance is limited. We recommend having some cash on hand. Currency exchanges are available at the airports, in the cities, and even at the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial Museum. We will provide you the opportunity to exchange money.

Credit Cards

Credit cards, especially Mastercard and VISA, are accepted many places in Europe. If you would like to use your credit card for purchases while you are abroad, be sure to notify your credit card companies of your travel plans and of all the countries in which you may use your card. Also, please inquire with them about fees, so you are not surprised when you return home and see your statement. Please note that it can be difficult and costly to use your credit card for cash advances.

Tipping

Your program fee includes appropriate tips for service staff, such as wait staff and drivers, and you will not need to provide tips for any group activities. If you take a taxi or visit a restaurant/café in your free time, you may wish to tip your taxi driver and wait staff 5-10%. Service is already included in restaurant bills. It is customary, especially in Germany, for you to pay your bill immediately when the staff delivers it.



Open-air café dining in Krakow.

Practical Information

Cell Phones

Cell phone service is generally available at all locations to which we will be traveling. European cell phone service operates on the GSM digital network. Much of the U.S. operates on a different system (CDMA, TDMA or iDEN) and many U.S. cell phones are not compatible with the GSM network. T-Mobile and Cingular operate on GSM, and if you have this service in the U.S., you may be able to use your phone overseas. Contact your cell phone provider for rates, coverage information and to confirm that the phone you have will operate overseas.

Several internet providers offer international cell phones and SIM cards (the chip-like card inside the phone that allows you to connect to a network). If you want to use your phone the entire trip, you'll need to make sure your card(s) provide service in both Germany and Poland.

Climate and Weather

Weather in Germany and Poland is similar to that in the northeast U.S. Because we will be working outside, it is important that volunteers check the weather forecast for the time of year that they will be visiting to best prepare for the program. Please visit www.weather.com for updated forecasts.

Electricity

Voltage is generally 220V/50Hz in Germany; 230V/60Hz in Poland, which is twice the U.S. standard of 120V. Check any appliances you plan to bring to ensure that they can operate on this higher voltage (many laptops and digital cameras can), or bring a converter. Plug adaptors are recommended for all appliances. These do not convert the electrical current, but simply allow your plug to fit into European outlets. European outlets take a plug with 2 round prongs. The following adapters should work:



Internet Access

In Berlin, we try to book hotels that provide wireless internet access. The Center for Dialogue and Prayer in Oswiecim offers a public computer terminal in the lobby that can be used by guests for short periods of time. There is also free wifi in the Center's lobby. If you have your own computer, you can talk to friends and family for free over Skype, if they also have Skype on their computer. You will need a microphone and speakers or headphone with microphone to use this feature.

Language

The program will be conducted in English, though we will encourage and support you in learning a few German and Polish phrases. While German remains the official language of Germany, English is widely spoken. Polish is the official language of Poland, but English and German are increasingly spoken as second languages. If you'd like to practice some words before you go, you can visit www.forvo.com, a site that allows you to type in any word and hear pronunciations.

Laundry

Laundry facilities are limited. We suggest you bring items that are easy to hand wash and dry quickly, as well as some laundry soap, so that you may hand wash clothes in your room. Travel packs of laundry soap are available in many U.S. drugstores.

Preparing for Your Program

Transportation to/from Site

You will be flying in and out of Berlin, Germany. All volunteers are required to arrive on or before the scheduled program start date and depart on or after the scheduled finish date. If volunteers arrive early or stay late, the individual volunteer will need to make his/her own arrangements for food, lodging, and airport transfer.

Travel Documents

For both Germany and Poland, U.S. citizens may enter for up to 90 days for tourist or business purposes without a visa. The passport should be valid for at least three months beyond the period of stay. Please visit the following website for information on the entry requirements for US Citizens traveling abroad: <http://travel.state.gov/forenentryreqs.html>

Non-US citizens must check with their country's consulate regarding travel documents and requirements.

Please be prepared in case of losing your wallet, passport, or other travel documents. Bring copies of all your important travel documents and monetary documents, especially your passport, and store one set of copies in your luggage while leaving another set of copies with your emergency contact at home.

Health and Safety

Traveling often affects one's health so it is imperative that all volunteers are in good physical condition.

Typical travel ailments include stomach upsets and diarrhea, bug bites, jet lag, minor cuts, scrapes, bruises, blisters, and sunburn. Even the healthiest person can encounter these, so please consider bringing travel-sized portions of over the counter medicines such as headache medicine, stomach medicines, sun block, bug spray, band-aids, etc.

This program calls for walking up to two miles per day sometimes over uneven surfaces, climbing stairs, standing for periods of time, as well as some stooping, bending, and light lifting. The action and intensity of the work is similar to gardening, household chores, or lawn maintenance. Before the program, please consult with your physician about the appropriateness of these activities for you.

Throughout the program, please rest, drink plenty of water, and take care to avoid overexposure to the sun. An on-site Amizade staff member will have a first aid kit. While on the program, let the group leader know if you have any concerns about your health and contact them immediately if you experience a health emergency.

Please check with your medical physician regarding further information about healthy travel abroad.

Health and Safety Form

All volunteers are required to complete and submit the Amizade Health and Safety Form prior to participation. It is imperative that you complete this form as comprehensively as possible so staff can best address medical situations on site. On this form you will also list your immunization record. Please consult with your physician regarding your healthy participation in the service work and activities for your program and recommended immunizations.

Drug/Alcohol Use

Amizade in no way encourages the use or purchase of drugs while visiting any of our sites. As an organization, our primary concern is that of safety for our volunteers. For this reason, we adhere to a drug-free policy for all of our programs. Failure to comply with this rule is grounds for removal from the program.

For health and safety reasons, at no time should a participant become intoxicated; nor should a participant consume alcohol before performing volunteer work.

Immunizations and Vaccinations

Participants in Amizade programs are solely responsible for receiving immunizations; Amizade defers responsibility for vaccinations to each volunteer. Amizade defers all recommendations to the current recommendations and requirements from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). All participants are expected to consult the CDC and their personal physician for required and recommended immunizations for the country or countries they will be visiting for their Amizade program. See your doctor at least 4-6 weeks before your trip to allow time for immunizations to take effect.

As a volunteer traveling in Germany and Poland, you may wish to receive a Hepatitis A vaccine, a tetanus booster, and consult your doctor about lyme disease prevention:

- Hepatitis A is a liver disease caused by infection by the Hepatitis A virus. Transmission of hepatitis A virus can occur through direct person-to-person contact; through exposure to contaminated water, ice, or shellfish harvested in contaminated water; or from fruits, vegetables, or other foods that are eaten uncooked and that were contaminated during harvesting or subsequent handling.
- Tetanus is a global health problem because *C. tetani* spores are ubiquitous in the environment, and especially prevalent in agricultural areas. Infection occurs when the bacteria contaminate wounds; it is not transmitted person-to-person.

- Lyme Disease is widespread in Central Europe. Although ticks are mostly found in forests, ticks might also bite in public parks. Consult your physician about Lyme disease prevention.

For more information:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

1600 Clifton Rd.

Atlanta, GA 30333 USA

(404) 639-3311 (404) 639-3312 (TTY)

Public Inquiries 1-404-639-3534 and 1-800-311-3435

National Immunization Hotline 1-800-232-2522

Traveler's Health 1-877-394-8747

Traveler's Health Website: <http://www.cdc.gov/travel/index.htm>

Email form: <http://www.cdc.gov/netinfo.htm>

Prescription Medicines

If you have prescription medicines, bring them in the original prescription bottles with your name on them and bring an ample supply for the duration of your program. In some countries, certain medicines are not as readily available. You may also wish to bring a copy of your prescription.

Safety

Your safety is important to us. Please follow all instructions regarding safety and security. While it sounds elementary, one of the biggest concerns during our trip is pedestrian safety. Please be attentive to local traffic and cross the street only when it is safe; it is easy to get caught up in conversations with other group members and not pay attention to traffic.

While participants are on site for the service project, it is essential that participants adhere to all safety requirements and guidelines as determined by the service project supervisor and their staff.

The cities to which we travel are considered safe, but you should take ordinary precautions against crime. It is best to travel in pairs, especially at night. Public transportation in Berlin is usually safe day and night, but we recommend taking a taxi after dark. Be cautious with your money and make sure you store it in a safe place or money belt. In thick crowds, you should be aware of pickpockets, so use a breast bag or a money belt for your passport and your money.

Water

In Germany and Poland, the water in hotels and restaurants is drinkable. You'll be able to fill and refill your water bottle from your sink if you like. There are only few exceptions, such as on the train, where the water from the sink is not suitable for drinking. We will provide bottled water on the train, as well as during other portions of the program, for those who prefer bottled water.

Packing List

PLEASE PACK LIGHTLY!

You should bring a maximum of two bags. Ideally, this includes one medium-sized suitcase/duffel bag and a smaller daypack for daily activities. You should be able to carry your luggage comfortably by yourself. Please contact your airline for weight and size restrictions and note that your return flight from Europe may have different restrictions than your outbound flight from the U.S.

Please use your best judgment regarding valuables. Amizade does not recommend that volunteers bring expensive jewelry, electronics, laptops, etc. Amizade is not liable for lost or stolen articles.

Recommended Packing List (feel free to add/subtract items to meet your personal needs):

- ❑ Documents: passport, airline tickets/airline itinerary, personal health insurance information (and copies of these documents in a separate place)

- Cash, credit/debit cards and money belt or wallet
- Water bottle
- Prescriptions in original bottles (be sure to bring enough for the entire program and bring a copy of your prescription, if possible)
- Over-the-counter medications (headache/stomachache medicine, band-aids)
- Toiletries – just the basics such as toothbrush, toothpaste, travel-sized shampoo, and soap
- Wash cloth (this is not provided at our accommodations)
- Clothing
 - 5 shirts
 - 2 pairs of pants (one pair for working)
 - 5 pairs socks and underwear
 - 1 pair pyjamas
 - 1 long-sleeve sweater, sweatshirt or jacket
 - 1 pair comfortable walking shoes
 - 1 pair sturdy work shoes
- Umbrella or rain jacket
- Sun protection: bandana, hat, sunglasses and/or sun block
- Watch
- Small knapsack or bag
- Addresses of friends and family to send postcards
- Travel alarm clock

Nice to bring, if you have room:

- Family photos to share with other participants
- Notebook/journal and pens
- Reading materials
- Guide book/phrase book
- Travel-size laundry detergent
- Work gloves (provided at service site, but you may prefer to bring your own)
- Earplugs/sleep mask
- Comfort food, such as granola bar, cookies, candies

Optional electronics:

- Digital camera and charger
- Cell phone and charger
- Electricity converter (if needed)
- Plug adaptors

Gifts

You may choose to bring thank you cards for community members. Photographs are generally appreciated around the world so feel free to collect addresses and mail or email pictures back if possible. The best gifts represent who you are or where you are from. Items with your university logo, or with a picture of your home town will be appreciated as souvenirs by the people you meet.

While You Are Away

Culture Shock

Culture shock is a term used to describe the emotional upset that may occur when a person travels to a new culture. When experiencing culture shock, people sometimes feel unsure about what is appropriate in the new culture, confused about how to manage daily tasks (such as banking or telephoning), frustrated with managing language and cultural barriers and generally vulnerable. One of the benefits of participating in an Amizade program is that you are not alone. Staff will provide you with information and orientation to ease your entry into each culture. If there is anything we can do to ease your discomfort during your trip, please let us know.

If you experience any degree of culture shock, be assured that this experience is normal. Seasoned travelers may be surprised to find that they experience culture shock in Europe, especially when that culture is similar to their home culture. Perhaps it is because of the many similarities that the differences

are more noticeable. Remember to rest, eat and take care of your physical and emotional needs in order to function at your best!

Contacting Home

Please read the earlier section for information on cell phones. Landline phones are available at each accommodation; check with the hotel staff for international calling procedures and rates. There are also pay phones available in the cities and phone cards can be purchased. Participants can send and receive emails using the public computer at the Center for Dialogue and Prayer in Oswiecim.

AMIZADE CONTACT INFORMATION

If someone from home needs to contact a volunteer with an emergency message, they can phone the Amizade US office to relay a message.

- **Amizade US Office Phone:** 304-293-6049. This phone line is staffed 8 am - 4:30 pm EST from Monday - Friday.
 - Have the person leave:
 - Their name
 - Your name
 - Their phone number
 - The message to be relayed
- **Amizade Emergency Phone #:** 412-444-5166. This phone line is staffed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week during volunteer programs.

Returning Home

Reverse Culture Shock

Many participants find that they encounter difficulties when transitioning home. Volunteers will be happy to return home and visit with family and friends but after the initial reunions take place, they often find that they experience problems when trying to communicate the experience they had abroad. Many people feel alienated, knowing that they have grown while many of those around them remain the same. It may help to connect with others who have had similar travel experiences, as they understand the need to talk about the experience in greater detail.

Program Evaluation

Amizade will invite you to complete a program evaluation after you return home. The results of those evaluations are shared with us to ensure that we can continue to deliver high-quality, life-changing service learning programs. We are eager to know what you think, and welcome your feedback.

We look forward to our journey with you!