



The coat of arms

Łódź is the second in population city of Poland. Although the history of Łódź goes back a long way, its greatest development period happened in the 19th century, when Łódź became a centre of the cloth industry and sometimes called “the Polish Manchester”. Łódź is located in the very centre of Poland and is easily accessible from any direction.

The history



19th century
panorama of Łódź



The Prince's Mill
lithograph



The Museum of the City
– located in the former
I. Poznański's palace



Miś Uszatek
(Uszatek teddy bear) –
a popular hero of Polish
puppet fairy tales

The first mentions of Łódź date back into late Middle Ages. But it was the period of the 19th century and industrialization, when the city flourished. By that time Łódź was in the Russian area of parted Poland. Lifting the tax barriers, good connections with Prussia, several rivers and streams supporting the machinery, stable flow of workforce from surrounding villages and even abroad, cheap at that time raw materials (mainly cotton), enabled to setup a major textile industry centre.

With its potential Łódź became a new “promised land” for all seeking work and opportunity. Some, like Izreal Poznański or Karol Scheibler, managed to build textile empires. The city became a “Mecca” for Poles, Jews, Germans, Russians, even Czech and Austrian people alike. The population of Łódź increase steadily, doubling almost every decade. In 1860 there were about 32 000 inhabitants, at the turn of the century – almost ten times the number. At the eve of First World War over half a million people lived and worked in the city. The population increase forced to build worker tenements, of which many still exist. The density of the population at that stage reached almost 13 000 people per sq. kilometer. During the First World War Łódź has been quickly seized by the Germans. The war stopped the economic development, which could not be resumed during the inter-war period. But nonetheless this time was used to expand culture and educational aspects of the city. During the Nazi occupation Łódź witnessed the liquidation of the Jewish and Gypsy population, for whom the ghetto was created in 1940. Also, many factories were pillaged and stripped of the equipment. Fortunately, the city itself did not suffer horrible destruction like Warsaw or Wrocław.

After the liberation, Łódź performed the role of the temporary capital city of Poland. The nationalisation of industry, its modernisation, and the change in trade structure took place. The pre-war Jewish and German inhabitants were replaced by Polish refugees from all over the country, resulting in new social structure. In time Łódź became a big scientific and academic centre and – next to Lublin – a major place of Polish movie industry.

The city nowadays

The two World Wars and the half-century long communist period left the city run-down. As an aftermath of economic changes at the end of 20th century, most of the textile industry on which the city concentrated on, collapsed.

However, Łódź managed to maintain its position as crucial educational and cultural centre. There are 11 schools at the university level and the highly regarded Film School – the cradle for the best Polish cameramen, actors and directors, including Andrzej Wajda and Roman Polański.

On the basis of its educational platform, Łódź became a magnet for investment. The city is thriving with industry and business rapidly developing, moving away from textiles, which has been in decline since 1991. Such brands like Philips, GE, Indesit, Dell, Coca-Cola, PepsiCo, Gillette or Bosh-Siemens, setup their offices and factories in Łódź itself or nearby Łódź Special Economic Zone. The transformation is also visible in revitalization processes – old factory walls undergo renovation to host new offices, hotels, retail, leisure and culture enterprises or “lofts” – luxurious apartments.



City centre – Piłsudskiego Av.
Galeria Łódzka seen on far left



The Economic Faculty on
the Łódź University



Aleksy Newsky's orthodox church



Fire station in Prince's Mill

What to see and do

Although Łódź is rarely considered to be a tourist destination, it is popular for its specific industrial ambience, interesting architecture and friendly atmosphere.

Beautifully restored buildings and residences of the industrialists – the monuments of the Secession and Eclectic architecture, exceptional museums, and also unique in the world-scale complexes representing the 19th cent. industrial architecture, attract tourists to Łódź. The city has almost fifty historical monuments, including the Poznański and Scheibler's palaces, the Old Cemetery and the Jewish cemetery at Bałuty (the biggest in Europe, almost 42ha), the Aleksy Newsky's orthodox church, the Archbishops Basilica or Lutheran Holy Trinity church.

The Piotrkowska Street, which is the longest pedestrianised promenade in Europe and the main artery of Łódź, invites to numerous cafes, restaurants and shops.

Noteworthy seeing are several factory complexes, like ex-Poltex factory (currently the Manufaktura centre), Księżny Młyn (Prince's Mill) or The White Factory.

Museum of Cinematography, Museum of Art and Central Museum of the Textile Industry complete the places-to-see offer.

The city hosts two important festivals: the Festival of Dialogues of Four Cultures (festival of art) and the Camerimage film festival.

Retail Projects

Manufaktura – the newest destination centre in Łódź. Opened in May 2006, it is located in the premises of Israel Poznański's factory, near Piotrkowska (5 Karskiego St.). The revitalization project done by Apsys Polska, restored life and shine to the factory. Manufaktura consist of 110.000 sq m of retail, leisure, culture and office space. One of the focal points of the project was to open the Rynek (market square) – a traditional Polish element of the city, which Łódź lacked. Visitors may relax in the open restaurants and feel the spirit of industrial and textile heritage. Bowling, cinemas, discos and future casino guarantee good entertainment. In the future, a four star Andel's hotel will accompany the project.

Near the other end of Piotrkowska on 15 Piłsudskiego Avenue, another acclaimed shopping centre is located. It is Galeria Łódzka of ECE, the 2004 winner of the ICSC Awards for the most attractive city centre shopping center in Europe. Located on relatively small plot of steep land, Galeria offers 41.000 sq m GLA and over 160 shops.

The two leading concepts are accompanied by smaller shopping centres: Pasaż Łódzki (30 Jana Pawła II Avenue), Tulipan Shopping Centre (94 Piłsudskiego Avenue), M1 Centre (27 Brzezińska St.) and Ptak Shopping Centre (35 Rzemieślnicza St.).



The main entry gate to Manufaktura



The entrance in Galeria Łódzka

Useful Telephones:

City Information Centre (88 Kościuszki Av.) +48 42 638 59 55

Łódź Airport (35 Gen. Stanisława Maczka St.), +48 042 688 84 14 / +48 42 683 52 54

Łódź Statistics	
Population (2005)	767600
City Area	294 sq km
Density of population	2610 per. / sq km
Working population (2004)	508400
Unemployment rate	16,4%
Average monthly gross wages & salaries	2228 PLN
GDP per capita	26936
Commercial companies	6463

Łódź Trivia:

- The name "Łódź" may come from Polish "łódka" – a boat – or the name of the river crossing the city. And the city itself is located over seventeen different rivers and streams.
- The first steam engine on Polish soil was installed in 1839 in the Greyer's factory.
- The Palace of Israel Poznański has been built in every architectural style – simply because the owner could afford that.
- The bus line no. 70 passes nearby four major hospitals in Łódź. Coincidence or hidden logic?