Locating Vital Records in Poland Online

© Julie Roberts Szczepankiewicz, 2024
https://fromshepherdsandshoemakers.com/

Rock County Genealogical Society, 9 April 2024

Relevant blog posts:
Summary of Poland's border changes:
https://fromshepherdsandshoemakers.com/2017/01/15/those-infamous-border-changes-a-crash-course-in-polish-history/
Overview of the history of vital records creation in Poland:
https://fromshepherdsandshoemakers.com/2016/09/20/overview-of-vital-records-in-poland-part-i-historical-background/
Annotated list of databases of indexed Polish vital records and scans online:
https://fromshepherdsandshoemakers.com/2016/12/07/50-useful-websites-for-polish-genealogy/

History of Poles in Milwaukee: https://emke.uwm.edu/entry/poles/

General Steps:

1. Gather evidence from U.S. or Canadian records (or records from wherever the research target settled) for specific place of origin.
2. Determine the parish or registry office that served that village.
3. Determine what records are available for that parish/registry office (online, on site at an archive, etc.). Note that sometimes a variety of sources need to be utilized for complete coverage (e.g. records from diocesan archive, online at FamilySearch, for 1730–1885, digital images from state archive, online at Szukaj w Archiwach for 1886–1923, onsite records at local registry office from 1924–present.) Once evidence for the target immigrant has been found in records from the proposed parish or registry office, further research can be carried out to discover deeper ancestry.

Top Sources for place of origin in Europe for Polish immigrants:

1. Passenger manifests.
2. Petitions for naturalization (if immigrant naturalized after 1906).
3. Church records (Especially if the immigrant belonged to an ethnic Polish parish; check marriage and death records for the target immigrant as well as baptismal records for all that person's children.)
4. Military records (e.g. draft registrations).
5. Landsmanschaften/burial society records (Jewish ancestors)
6. Polish-language newspaper articles/death notices.

Annotated list of gazetteers for Polish genealogy:
https://fromshepherdsandshoemakers.com/gazetteers-for-polish-genealogy/

Annotated list of sites offering maps for Polish genealogy:
https://fromshepherdsandshoemakers.com/maps-for-polish-genealogy/

Sources for locating vital records in Poland:

Note: Digital images of vital records, or links to images, can be found at sites marked with *. Sites marked with § offer indexes only; scans or images of the records must be obtained from another source. Note that this list is not exhaustive; the most significant resources are included here, but many other smaller, regional indexing projects exist. A more complete list can be found here:
https://sites.google.com/view/polishgenealogygroup/internet-tools/collections-and-databases

*§ Genealodzy.pl websites: Geneteka, Skanoteka (http://genealodzy.pl/):

*§ Geneteka: http://geneteka.genealodzy.pl/

• Surname-indexed records searchable by individual parish or entire voivodeship.

• A 3-part tutorial for using Geneteka starts here:
https://fromshepherdsandshoemakers.com/2018/04/23/a-step-by-step-guide-to-using-geneteka-part-i/

• Even if an entry in Geneteka is not linked to a scan, that record may nonetheless be online, if you check some of the other repositories like GenBaza, GenealogiawArchiwach, etc.

* Skanoteka (https://skanoteka.genealodzy.pl/)

•	Vital records may be available in Skanoteka for a different range of years for a particular location beyond what is indexed in Geneteka (e.g. indexed births in Geneteka from 1890-1910, but scans of birth records available from 1826-1910), so both databases should be checked for your towns of interest.

•	Digital archive includes mostly vital records, but some population registers (księgi meldunkowe), notary records (notariaty), town and court records (księgi sądowe) and others (inne).

*Szukaj w Archiwach, "Search the Archives" (https://www.szukajwarchiwach.gov.pl/en/strona_glowna)

•	Main search portal for the Polish state archives. To find vital records, search for the parish/registry office that served your ancestor's place of residence at the time of the vital event, then browse books by date. This is not a database like Geneteka, where you can enter a surname to find vital records; entering a surname in the search box will only produce archival collections that contain that name.

•	Search instructions are here: https://www.szukajwarchiwach.gov.pl/en/instrukcje-wyszukiwania (You can view this page in English by selecting the language at the top right corner of the page.)

* Metryki GenBaza (http://metryki.genbaza.pl/):

•	The current version of the site (since March 2022) no longer requires login or creation of an account at GenPol to access scans.

•	The complete list of archives is now accessible from the menu here: https://metryki.genbaza.pl/index/list. Type a location into the search box to see if it's available; you no longer need to know the specific archive which holds those records.

*§ FamilySearch indexed and digitized collections:

- These can be accessed via a catalog search, (https://familysearch.org/catalog-search), OR from their Poland Research page: (https://familysearch.org/search/collection/location/1927187).

*§ Lubelskie Korzenie – Lubgens: https://regestry.lubgens.eu/news.php

- Has indexed vital records for the Lublin area, many with scans attached.

- Polish diacritics don't matter (i.e. "Zielinski" yields same result as "Zieliński") but the search engine differentiates between masculine or feminine versions of gendered surnames (i.e. "Zielinski" yields different results from "Zielinska"). Leave off the final vowel and select "Dopasuj poczatek wyrazu" (match the beginning of the word") to see results for both genders.

Świętokrzyskie Genealogical Society "Świętogen" database: https://swietokrzyskie.indeksy.net/

- Indexed vital records from the Świętokrzyskie province. There is some overlap with Geneteka, but some content is unique.

§* Słupca Genealogy: http://www.slupcagenealogy.com/SearchPg.aspx

- Indexed vital records from Słupca, Konin, and Ostrów Wielkopolskie Counties in Wielkopolskie province.

*AGAD (Archiwum Główne Akt Dawnych w Warszawie, Central Archives of Historical Records in Warsaw): http://www.agad.gov.pl/inwentarze/testy.html

- Roman Catholic, Greek Catholic, Jewish, and Protestant records from parts of Eastern Poland which are now located in Ukraine.

- These collections can now be searched via Szukaj w Archiwach as well.

§ Jamiński Zespół Indeksacyjny (Jaminy Indexing Team): https://jzi.org.pl/en/wyszukiwarka/

- This group is indexing records for locations in Augustów county, Podlaskie.

§ Projekt Podlasie: https://indeksy.projektpodlasie.pl/

- Offers indexed vital records from the Podlasie area, as well as some notary and court records.

§ Pomeranian Genealogical Society database: http://www.ptg.gda.pl/

- Indexed vital records from Pomerania.

- The website has been recently revised. Go to "PomGenBase" in menu bar at the top of the page and then select "Record Indexes" to search vital records.

- Polish diacritics matter, and wildcard searching is not permitted. To find all children of Józef and Tekla Woliński, do a "Match first letters" search for surname "Woli" father's name "J" mother's name "T." This will produce results that include surname spellings Wolinski and Woliński, and given name spellings Józef, Joseph, Josef, Tekla, Thecla, etc.

§ Poznan Marriage Project: http://poznan-project.psnc.pl/

- Indexed marriage records from the Poznan region, 1800-1899, including about 75% of the region's marriages.

- Clicking the parish name in search results to obtain information on the archives which hold records for this location, as well as relevant FamilySearch film numbers.

* Genealogy in the Archive: https://www.genealogiawarchiwach.pl/

- Has vital records for locations in the Kujawsko-Pomorskie, Pomorskie, Wielkopolskie, and Warmińsko-Mazurskie provinces. Most of this territory was in the Prussian partition, but there are some places that were in the Russian partition as well.

- While not presently a significant source of indexed vital records, the site offers users the option to index individual entries, rather than indexing an entire book. Enter surname and location in search box at the top of the page to check for relevant records that may have already been indexed.

*§ BaSIA (Baza Systemu Indeksacji Archiwalnej, Database of Archival Indexing System): http://www.basia.famula.pl/en/

• Has indexed vital records from Wielkopolskie province. Many entries were originally linked to digital images, but the links were broken when Szukaj w Archiwarch significantly upgraded their website. Nonetheless, the information in the indexed entry can be used to find the image through an independent search at Szukaj w Archiwach.

• Extended search permits searching according to parameters which include range of years, type of document, distance from a specified location, and percent similarity of a surname.

*§ Metryki Wołyń: https://wolyn-metryki.pl/joomla/index.php

• Offers indexed vital records from the Wołyń/Volhynia area, some linked to scans. Click "Wyszukiwarka" to access search engine.

Recommended sites for Jewish research:

*§ JRI-Poland (Jewish Records Indexing – Poland, https://www.jri-poland.org/) AND

*§ JewishGen (https://jewishgen.org/)

• These are the premier sites for indexed Jewish genealogical records (vital records and more) from Poland. Some entries are linked to scans. Some of the other sites mentioned above may also be useful for Jewish research.