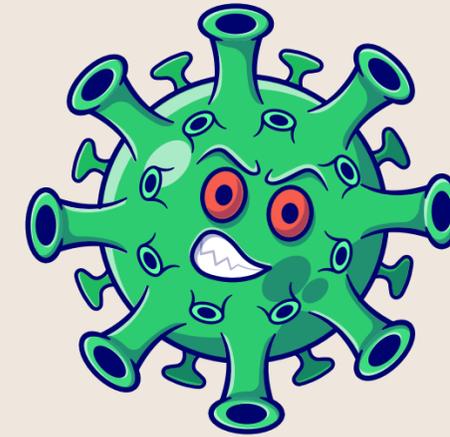
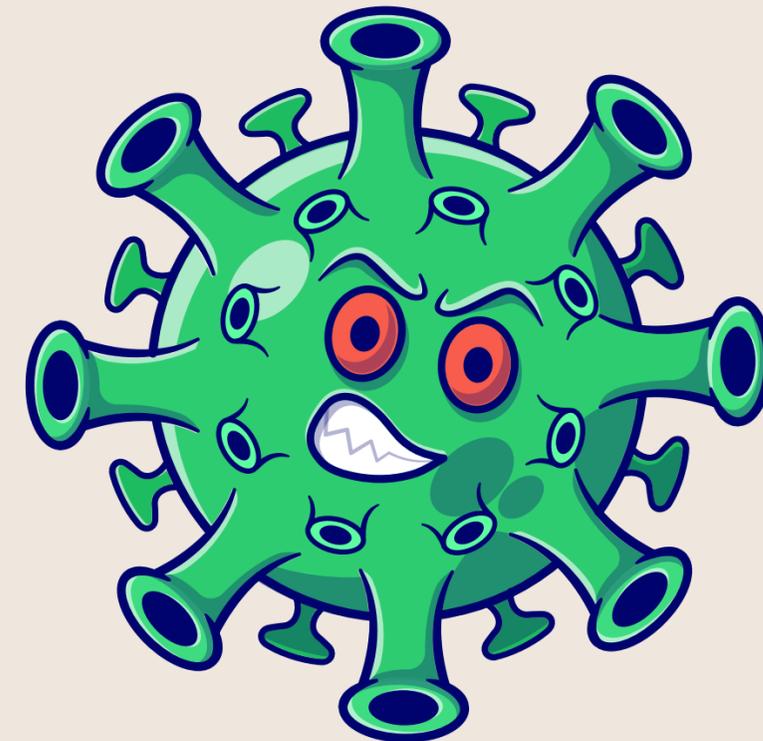
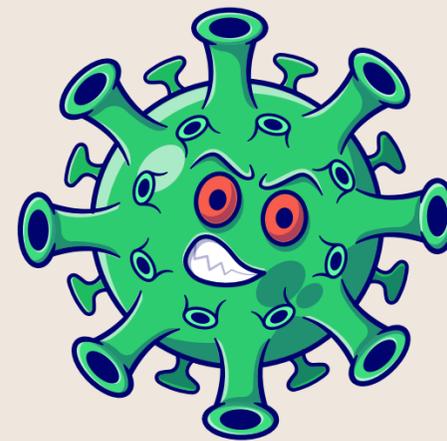


Impact of coronavirus pandemic on regions' potential



Masovia



CORONAVIRUS

Start of coronavirus pandemic in Poland

On March 4, 2020, the first case of a person infected with the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus, which causes the infectious respiratory disease COVID-19, was reported in Poland. The epidemic began on November 17, 2019 in China. In the second half of February, the first serious outbreaks of infection appeared in Europe, and from then on the epidemic began to spread rapidly to other European countries. In Poland, a state of epidemic emergency became effective on March 14. As of March 15, significant restrictions were imposed on border traffic. Since March 20, an epidemic state has been in effect, with significant restrictions on social activities, movement and use of public spaces, among other things. One of the industries most quickly and severely affected by the epidemic was the tourism and food service industry.



Cultural impact of the pandemic

The majority of cultural institutions (64.9%) indicated that they had experienced the negative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, through, among other things, a decline in business revenue business. Among the cultural institutions that indicated that they had experienced negative effects of the pandemic, 63.4% estimated the scale of the decline in business revenues at less than 50.0%. In contrast, 8.0% of cultural institutions indicated a decline in business revenues of more than 90.0%.



IMPACT OF THE PANDEMIC ON THE EDUCATION PROCESS

Reduction in the quality of education, deepening of educational inequalities and deterioration of the psycho-physical condition of students and teachers - such were the effects of remote teaching during the Covid-19 epidemic in Poland, an audit by the Supreme Chamber of Control showed. According to the Chamber, the education process was adversely affected by the lack of systemic solutions that would provide schools with optimal conditions for stable didactic, educational and caring work. The audit of the Supreme Audit Office showed that the failure to define standards for remote or hybrid teaching led to the fact that schools freely decided how to implement didactic activities.



In some subjects, classes were not organized at all. The epidemic further highlighted the inadequacies of the education system: problems with social communication, the inadequacy of the core curriculum and teaching methods to meet the challenges of modern times, too little emphasis on competencies. According to the Chamber, the lack of a systemic approach to distance education, insufficient support for teachers in the form of training in conducting online lessons, as well as cases of digital exclusion of students show the need to create an optimal model for the functioning of schools in an epidemic emergency. It should, in line with the recommendations of the scientific community, ensure a balance between the requirements of the sanitary regime and measures to protect the mental health of students.

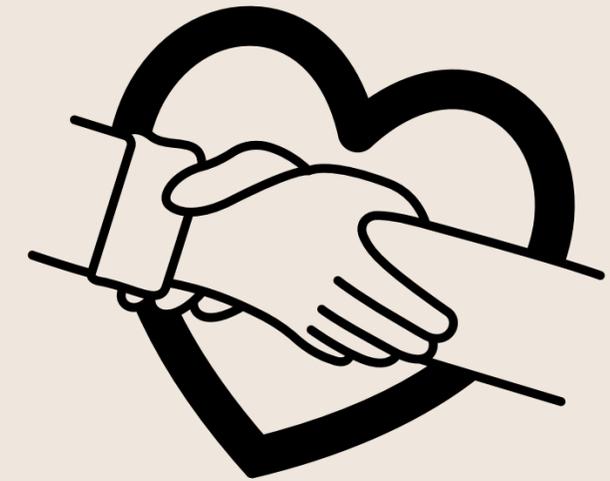


Late psychological and pedagogical assistance during the pandemic



The outbreak of the coronavirus in Poland has not only shown the learning difficulties faced by students participating in online lessons. The Minister of Education commissioned the school superintendents to study how psychological and pedagogical assistance was functioning in schools at the time, and the Institute for Integrated Prevention (IPZ) to develop a set of recommendations with which to develop systemic solutions for the upbringing, mental health and prevention of children and adolescents' problems resulting from the epidemic condition. The IPZ report clearly showed that the mental and physical condition of students and teachers deteriorated as the epidemic progressed.

It recommended that educational, preventive and supportive measures for the psychological support of children and adolescents should become a priority in the education system, both during the epidemic phase at the time and immediately after the epidemic. In some schools, in order to support students, individual teaching was continued, and various types of classes were organized for students with learning difficulties (didactic and compensatory, specialized, therapeutic, remedial, etc.). There was only one case of failure to provide a student with the opportunity to benefit from the recommendations of the decision on the need for special education.



Long-term effects of the epidemic crisis

Respondents agreed that the long-term effect of the epidemic would be an increase in domestic tourism. Most also predicted an increase in competition within the industry and the replacement of some face-to-face meetings and conferences with online activities.

Half of the survey participants estimated that there would be a permanent reduction in employment in the tourism industry, with a consequent improvement in the availability of workers.

Most doubted that labor efficiency would improve and that cooperation within the industry would increase. More than a third of respondents do not expect such effects of the epidemic, but slightly smaller percentages (32% and 29%, respectively) consider it likely.



Situation of travel companies and remote organization

Restrictions imposed by the government in connection with the COVID-19 outbreak almost immediately affected companies in the travel industry. Just two weeks after the epidemic emergency was imposed, only 6% of the companies surveyed were providing their services as normal. More than half (57%) suspended or closed their operations, and 38% provided only part of their services. The main services left were reservation and cancellation services, usually provided remotely, and ongoing maintenance work. Restaurants ceased to be open to guests, and instead began serving take-out or room service (in hotels).



Pool and spa areas were closed. Some companies conducted marketing and preparation activities for the summer period. Companies in the Tri-Cities fared slightly better than those in the region. In the Tri-City, 8% of companies were fully operational and 52% suspended or closed, while in the region 3% of companies were fully operational and 62% were suspended or closed.



Poland's socio-economic situation in the era of the pandemic

The impact of the epidemic and related restrictions on the economy was multi-channel. Demand in the economy was constrained by recommendations to stay at home, reductions in wages and employment, and restrictions abroad. Supply, in turn, was reduced by the need for some companies to temporarily suspend operations, the lower availability of supplies from abroad and increased worker absenteeism. The decline in economic activity as a result of the pandemic and related restrictions was very deep, but also temporary. The largest scale of the economic freeze occurred in April. Since May, a gradual improvement in both business indicators and "hard" data showing turnover, production and sales in a large part of industries has been visible, indicating a scenario of a shapely economic recovery.



The sectors hardest hit by the coronavirus were catering and accommodation, tourism, culture, education, entertainment and recreation, transportation, retail trade in durable goods, production of export, investment and consumer durable goods. Some sectors were not strongly affected by the outbreak, particularly those producing and selling consumer durables (e.g., food), construction, and some benefited, such as courier services, internet sales.



Forms of assistance expected by the tourism industry

The majority (63%) of companies in the industry indicated that financial assistance was needed from both the government and local authorities. Demands in this regard most often concerned exemptions, reductions or rescheduling of payments:

- local taxes (e.g., property taxes, land taxes, etc.) - mentioned by 38% of respondents,
- Social Security contributions (18%),
- support for employee retention (12%),
- rents (10%).



The second most frequently mentioned category of assistance was marketing activities (41% of indications):

- campaigns to promote the region (20% of indications) and the country (11%),
- aimed primarily at domestic tourists (11%), and only secondarily
- second to foreign markets (4%),
- persuading Poles to go on tourist trips (4%).

Impact of COVID-19 outbreak on tourism industry revenues

The vast majority (90%) of industry representatives estimated that the current situation will have a very large or large impact on the condition of their companies (72% and 18%, respectively).

Respondents estimated how much their companies' revenues in each month of this year will be lower than they assumed before the outbreak. The most pessimistic expectations were for April, with 71% of respondents expecting revenues to be lower by at least 80%.

