

**THE CONSTITUTION OF THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND
OF 2nd APRIL, 1997**

As published in *Dziennik Ustaw* No. 78, item 483

Having regard for the existence and future of our Homeland,

Which recovered, in 1989, the possibility of a sovereign and democratic determination of its fate,

We, the Polish Nation - all citizens of the Republic,

Both those who believe in God as the source of truth, justice, good and beauty,

As well as those not sharing such faith but respecting those universal values as arising from other sources,

Equal in rights and obligations towards the common good - Poland,

Beholden to our ancestors for their labours, their struggle for independence achieved at great sacrifice, for our culture rooted in the Christian heritage of the Nation and in universal human values,

Recalling the best traditions of the First and the Second Republic,

Obliged to bequeath to future generations all that is valuable from our over one thousand years' heritage,

Bound in community with our compatriots dispersed throughout the world,

Aware of the need for cooperation with all countries for the good of the Human Family,

Mindful of the bitter experiences of the times when fundamental freedoms and human rights were violated in our Homeland,

Desiring to guarantee the rights of the citizens for all time, and to ensure diligence and efficiency in the work of public bodies,

Recognizing our responsibility before God or our own consciences,

Hereby establish this Constitution of the Republic of Poland as the basic law for the State, based on respect for freedom and justice, cooperation between the public powers, social dialogue as well as on the principle of subsidiarity in the strengthening the powers of citizens and their communities.

We call upon all those who will apply this Constitution for the good of the Third Republic to do so paying respect to the inherent dignity of the person, his or her right to freedom, the obligation of solidarity with others, and respect for these principles as the unshakeable foundation of the Republic of Poland.

**Chapter I
THE REPUBLIC**

Article 11

1. The Republic of Poland shall ensure freedom for the creation and functioning of political parties. Political parties shall be founded on the principle of voluntariness and upon the equality of Polish citizens, and their purpose shall be to influence the formulation of the policy of the State by democratic means.
2. The financing of political parties shall be open to public inspection.

Chapter IV
THE SEJM AND THE SENATE

Article 99

1. Every citizen having the right to vote, who, no later than on the day of the elections, has attained the age of 21 years, shall be eligible to be elected to the Sejm.
2. Every citizen having the right to vote, who, no later than on the day of the elections, has attained the age of 30 years, shall be eligible to be elected to the Senate.
3. No person sentenced to imprisonment by a final judgment for an intentional indictable offence may be elected to the Sejm or the Senate.

Chapter XI
EXTRAORDINARY MEASURES

Article 228

1. In situations of particular danger, if ordinary constitutional measures are inadequate, any of the following appropriate extraordinary measures may be introduced: martial law, a state of emergency or a state of natural disaster.
2. Extraordinary measures may be introduced only by regulation, issued upon the basis of statute, and which shall additionally require to be publicized.
3. The principles for activity by organs of public authority as well as the degree to which the freedoms and rights of persons and citizens may be subject to limitation for the duration of a period requiring any extraordinary measures shall be established by statute.
4. A statute may specify the principles, scope and manner of compensating for loss of property resulting from limitation of the freedoms and rights of persons and citizens during a period requiring introduction of extraordinary measures.
5. Actions undertaken as a result of the introduction of any extraordinary measure shall be proportionate to the degree of threat and shall be intended to achieve the swiftest restoration of conditions allowing for the normal functioning of the State.
6. During a period of introduction of extraordinary measures, the following shall not be subject to change: the Constitution, the Acts on Elections to the Sejm, the Senate and organs of local government, the Act on Elections to the Presidency, as well as statutes on extraordinary measures.
7. During a period of introduction of extraordinary measures, as well as within the period of 90 days following its termination, the term of office of the Sejm may not be shortened, nor may a nationwide referendum, nor elections to the Sejm, Senate, organs of local government nor elections for the Presidency be held, and the term of office of such organs shall be appropriately prolonged. Elections to organs of local government shall be possible only in those places where the extraordinary measures have not been introduced.