

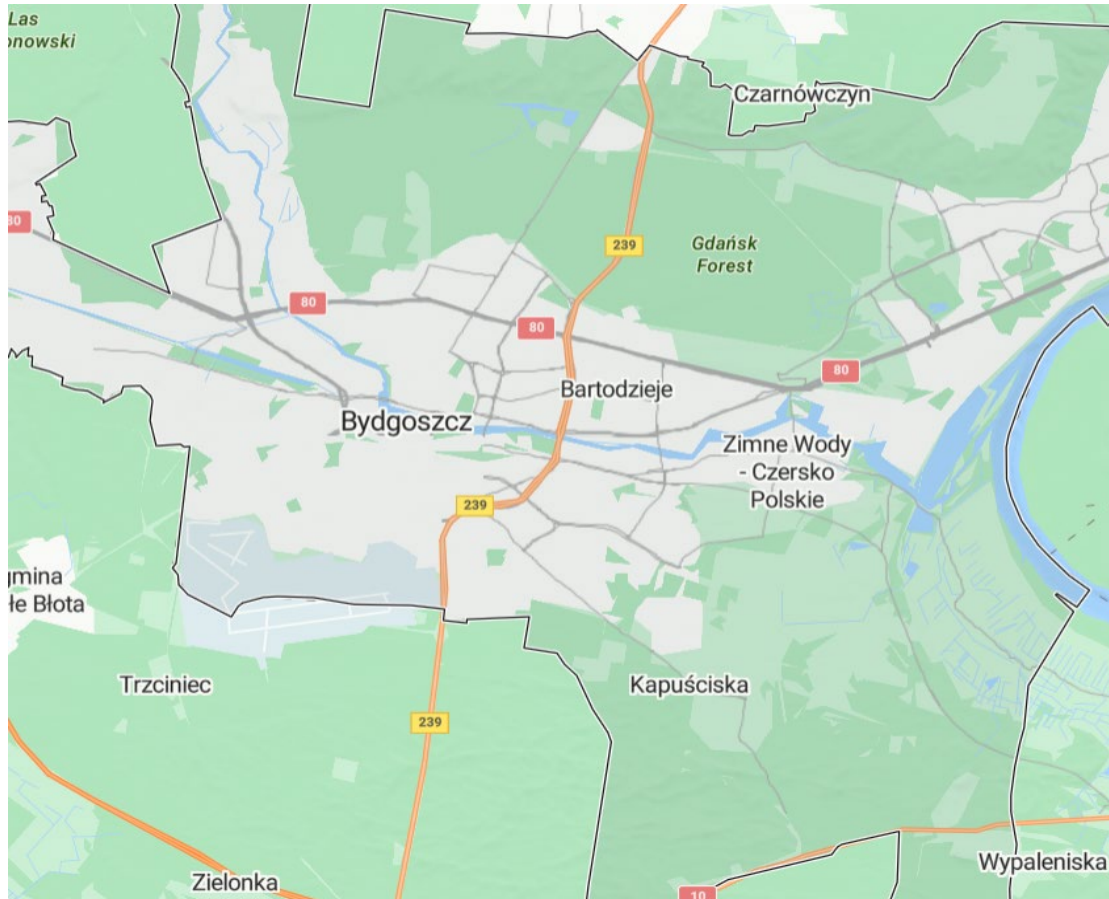
C Co, AFNORTH BN, USANATO BDE

NATO Joint Forces Training Centre (JFTC)

Bydgoszcz, Poland

Welcome Packet

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Contact

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Welcome

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome you to Charlie Company, Allied Forces North Battalion (AFNORTH), and United States Army North Atlantic Treaty Organization (USANATO) Brigade. We have a very unique organization. Our company is located Szczecin, Poland. The Battalion Headquarters is in Mons, Belgium and the Brigade Headquarters is at Sembach, Germany.

Our mission is to enhance the well-being of individual Soldier and Family readiness through human resources, training, and logistical support. C Co HQs delivers support to members assigned to Poland, the Baltics, Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia.

You are further assigned to Joint Forces Training Centre, Bydgoszcz, Poland. So we are better prepared to receive you, keep us abreast of changes to your arrival date. Your sponsor's contact information is in your welcome letter. Your sponsor will be assisting to make your transition as seamless as possible. Please inform him or her of any special requirements (i.e., pets, housing or medical needs).

All Family members, of qualifying age and Command Sponsored are required to travel with a no-fee passport. We also highly encourage you to hand-carry your training records, obtain "**copies**" of your medical and dental records, and documents required to in-process (i.e., PCS orders, DA Form 31, marriage certificate, birth certificate(s) for the children, household goods, vehicle shipping documents, and travel expense receipts). Also, it is best to bring at least 90 days of prescribed medication until you are enrolled in the TRICARE Overseas Program Prime Remote (TOP PR).

To financially prepare for this move, it will be important to allocate savings to cover initial PCS expenses upon arrival. These expenses will include housing security deposit, first month rent, realtor fee, fuel ration deposit, immediate-use household goods, annual insurance premium payment, vehicle inspection, registration and repairs, utility and internet deposits and cellular phone contracts. These initial costs can be in excess of \$7,000. You don't need to bring your \$7K funds in paper cash, but it is important that you can access it via bank transfers or ATM withdrawals immediately upon arrival. Advances for housing security deposit and first month rent are available through the finance office. If you require additional financial information or support please contact your NSE NCO. After in-processing is complete, submit vouchers for reimbursable expenses, Move-In Allowance and Dislocation Allowance can be submitted. Please note, these payments may take several weeks to process.

The information below is not all inclusive and may change over time. It is especially important to check and verify a country's requirement for passport and visa.

Challenges associated with this remote location

Procuring US equivalent standards of medical care, education for school aged dependents and overall quality of life are three of the foremost challenges that come with being posted at this remote location. Most quality of life services including housing leases, auto services, utility bill management, banking and cellular or internet require Polish language translation support.

Routine Admin Support

All admin support such as actions, awards, evaluations, DD Forms 93, SGLV, leave and passes,

SRB updates, rating scheme, MEDPROS updates, FVAP, and all other routing HR related actions are handled by the National Support Element (NSE) at Szczecin. The NSE supports their assigned company and BN's mission by ensuring individual Soldier and Family Readiness through administrative, HR, logistics, operations, and communications support. They receive direct guidance from company leadership. NSE personnel will coordinate with the supporting Company and BN headquarters for all national support requirements for Army personnel.

In-processing

C Co AFNORTH BN National Support Element (NSE) will issue you an in or out-processing checklist. Please follow each of the steps in the checklist and work closely with your sponsor and C Co NSE in submitting your required documents to start/stop your overseas entitlements, and establish your network access (in the USRAEUR domain). Your NATO installation will also have their own in/out-processing requirements with each staff section (J1, J2, J6, etc).

Resources

Garrison Support

US Army Garrison Bavaria – Grafenwoehr Germany Training Area is the closest Army Installation to Eastern European/Baltic countries. Often, C Co personnel will visit the DEERs office, Health and Dental Clinic, Passport Office, Finance, Housing Office, MWR, PX and Commissary. C Co HQ staff will be sending your in-processing documents to these respective offices during your transition. C Co utilizes USAG Bavaria as our servicing installation.

Medical/Dental

The following information comes from our Medical Liaison's office:

Welcome to your new assignment! Medical access and services in remote European locations differ significantly from those in the United States, presenting unique challenges for military families. Key issues include:

- Healthcare in most locations is good. But there are cultural differences.
- Limited availability of English-speaking providers.
- Longer waiting times for appointments, especially for specialty care.
- Fewer local facilities equipped for advanced medical procedures.
- Navigating foreign healthcare systems and insurance requirements.
- Many locations cannot use E-Scripts and SMs must purchase medications and file claims.
- Decreased services at MTFs forces patients to facilities on the host nation network.

To best prepare, familiarize yourself with International SOS, your primary resource for medical referrals and guidance. They can connect you to English-speaking providers and help coordinate specialty care. It's also helpful to keep copies of medical records, ensure vaccinations are up-to-date, and learn basic phrases in the local language for emergencies.

It is crucial that you also get a PHA within 30 days prior to departing your losing unit.

For assistance, contact International SOS at:

Phone (Europe): +44 20 8762 8133

Toll-Free (U.S.): +1 800 523 6586

Email: onlineassistance@internationalsos.com

Website: www.internationalsos.com

We encourage you to reach out to International SOS early to establish a support plan and streamline your medical care experience.

Schools

As you prepare for your move to remote locations in Europe, please be aware of significant differences in the educational experiences offered by International Baccalaureate (IB) program private schools and Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) schools. IB program schools emphasize a global, inquiry-based curriculum and are not inferior to DoDEA schools. However, the IB program may not be advisable for high school students in their final two years, as its rigorous, specialized requirements may not align with students' existing educational goals. The alternatives listed below should be carefully considered.

For those eligible, the Non-DoD Schools Program (NDSP) provides various services to support your children's education, including:

- Tutoring: Assistance to bridge any educational gaps.
- Boarding School: Financial support for students in areas without schooling options.
- Home Schooling: Reimbursement for approved curriculums and materials.
- Travel funding and more depending on the circumstances.

We strongly encourage you to contact your NDSP representative for tailored advice. These representatives have visited most schools in your area, met personally with parents, and addressed concerns by developing Courses of Action (COAs) to solve them. They are intimately aware of the challenges students and parents face at each location and can guide you to the best educational solution for your family.

Please visit <https://www.dodea.edu/nonDoD/> for more information.

Housing

There is no Government Quarters/Housing available. Families must reside in Private Leased Housing. Many of the local quarters may be smaller than what some Americans are accustomed to, but there are suitable housing available. The housing office in Ansbach, Germany will be processing your request to reside on the economy, lease agreement, realtor fee and other documents. Please contact the following personnel and the C Company HQs NSE when you arrive to anticipate their administrative requirements.

NATO/Remote Site Manager
USAG Ansbach Housing
DSN: 314-587-1714
Comm: +49 9641-70-587-1714

You will find housing without closets, yet the overall living quarters are comfortable and accommodating. Having a positive outlook and considering ways to adapt to a completely different culture will enable you to overcome this cultural differences. Many electrical appliances you currently own cannot be used on the European 220 voltage systems. However, most smart devices like cellphones, laptops and tablets can be plugged in to the wall via an adapter. Additionally, other 120v appliances will require a step-down transformer, which you can purchase after you arrive. It will be possible to order transformers via amazon and have them delivered to your new APO. Please see the mail information regarding timeliness and size restrictions. Other host nation online retailers may be a good option to obtain compatible electronic devices or transformers. Unfortunately, Furniture Management Office (FMO) lending is not available due to the distance from the Ansbach Housing Office.

Passports/Visa

Family members and US Government civilians traveling overseas are required to have passports. "No-fee passports" can be obtained at Government expense. The application process may take 4 to 6 weeks, so, you should begin the passport application process as soon as you receive your travel

orders.

Tourist passports are needed for personal travel in Europe. You may apply for tourist passports on arrival, but for convenience it is recommended that you apply for the tourist passport while you're still residing in the United States. You can find more information on tourist passports from your local personnel services detachment, passport office nearest you, or from the U.S. State Departments official website at <http://travel.state.gov>.

Mail

The mail flows from Frankfurt, Germany and throughout Poland and is usually delivered to the US National Support Element (NSE) at Bydgoszcz least once a week. Size restrictions do apply for parcels, which is often 18" by 18". However, we have seen larger items be delivered, but it is not guaranteed. Parcels being shipped to or from the APO cannot weigh more than 70lbs.

Banking

Internet, cellular and TV providers, utilities and contract-based services require a host nation bank account for payment. The local currency is Zloty (PLN). Your sponsor may be able to recommend financial institutions that provide convenient branch and ATM locations. Please remember that conversion fees apply to your transactions when transferring dollars to the local currency or at point of sale (if paying in USD). Many people make the mistake of calculating the equivalent currency when looking at the price of a good or service, but vendors and banks offer different conversions rates that is not equal to a simple conversion. Banks often provide more competitive conversion rates, so it may be best to transfer USD to local currency within your account to avoid excessive transaction fees or conversion rates at the point of sale. It will be important to know your bank's International Bank Account Number (IBAN) or SWIFT number, as this information will almost always be needed when paying bills, tickets or contract services online.

Vehicles

License: To legally operate your POV, you will need to apply for, and purchase an international driver's license. Many U.S. personnel in NATO accomplish this through AAA. Please reach out to your sponsor for alternatives if AAA is not available to you. Other licenses can be acquired, depending on agreements with the local government. When you arrive in country, you will need to apply for the USAEUR Polish Driver's license. All C Company personnel stationed at the Multinational Corps Northeast (MNC-NE), Multinational Division Northeast (MND-NE), Joint Forces Training Center (JFTC) and the NATO Force Integration Unit Poland (NFIU-PL), and their command sponsored dependents are required to maintain a USAREUR-AF Poland Driver's License in order to operate a motor vehicle in Poland in accordance with the ASG Poland USAREUR-AF Poland Driver's Licensing and POV Registration Process SOP.

Registration: Registration is often a complicated task. Before registration begins, you will need to have your vehicle inspected at a reputable mechanic shop or inspection station. The inspectors will ask for translated copies of your previous registration and a data sheet that outlines the technical specifications for your vehicle. European inspections are rigorous. Technicians will complete a bumper-to-bumper, top to bottom, inspection that states any deficiencies. You will then have up to two weeks to correct the deficiencies, i.e. repair it, or you will need to pay for a whole new inspection at full-cost. Be prepared to pay for repairs or parts replacement if your vehicle is not new or well-maintained. Once completed, you will need to have written permission from your finance company to register in your host nation (translated), a bill of sale (translated), previous registration, customs documents, local inspection and (in some cases) a drivers history from the past seven years (translated) for the insurance company. You will need assistance from a language specialist or local national to take your documents to the local DMV, pay the fees, and receive your temporary plates. After you are entered into the DMV database, permanent plates will be issued.

Fuel: There is a current agreement with the Polish government to waive Value Added Tax and Excise Tax from your fuel purchases. Fuel in Europe can cost up to three times the cost in the U.S. It is important to plan trips according to authorized fuel stations. In Poland, NATO personnel utilize ORLEN fuel stations. You will need to provide a deposit, in excess of \$500, and pay your fuel bill (as charged to your ORLEN card) once a month. Please speak with your sponsor about the forms and account numbers you will need to provide to set up your account.

Transportation

The Transportation office located on USAG Bavaria – Grafenwoehr in Building 244. The arrival of Household Goods (HHG) will be coordinated through this office. Your sponsor will assist you in working with transportation personnel to ensure the location of delivery once you find a home. Once your housing contract is complete you can track your move at: <http://www.move.mil/> website. Upon notification of a shipment's arrival, you must schedule a delivery date and be at your quarters on that date to accept delivery. HHG shipments for newcomers to your location should not include Personally Owned Firearms (POF). Host nation law is to absolutely minimize the import of weapons. The need to have a weapon must be proven by the local authorities and there is no guarantee request will be approved. Newcomers will not have the option to store POFs in the unit arms room due to the limited available space or prohibition of POFs in your orders.

IT Support

IT support is available at Szczecin. This service is found at the C Co HQ. The company will process NIPR account requests and provide a NIPR computers for your use via the common access kiosk. VPN access can also be requested from the C Co HQ if needed. Most of your emails will be on NATO provided unclassified or Secret servers.

Reassignments

When a SM out-processes from C Co their main POC is the C Company HQs NSE in Szczecin, Poland. The Company coordinates issuance of PCS orders from the BN MPD/S1 at Mons, Belgium and coordinates all out-processing requirements such as transportation and housing with the USAGs in Ansbach and Grafenwoehr.

Clearance

The NATO Secret, SF86 renewals, and other clearances are process by the AFNORTH Bn S2 through the NSE at C Co HQ in Szczecin. If fingerprints are required, the Service member must travel to Grafenwoehr on TDY.

Hand Receipts

The property books are controlled by the Company Commander at C Co HQ, Szczecin, Poland.

UCMJ

UCMJ Company Grade is held by the Company Commander at Szczecin Poland C Co HQ.

UCMJ Field Grade is held by the AFNORTH Battalion Commander at Mons, Belgium.

GCMCA is held by the 7th ATC at Grafenwoehr

SCMCA for E1 through E7 will be held by the AFNORTH Battalion Commander at Mons, Belgium.

SCMCA E8 and above will be held at 7th ATC at Grafenwoehr.

Required Documents to Carry With You

- PCS orders.
- Medical, dental, and Immunization Records.
- Marriage Certificates, Divorce Decrees, and Birth Certificates
- Passports (Soldier and family members).

- Social Security Cards.
- Wills and Powers of attorney.
- Education Records.
- Car titles and shipping papers, car registrations, car insurance policies and driver's license.
- Household goods and shipping inventory.
- Employment records and references.
- Pet records.
- Proof of citizenship, if a naturalized citizen.