

International Understanding

Cześć! (Chehshch) – Hi!
(informal)





Session Aims and Objectives

To understand different expectations of the Jamboree experience

To learn about the importance of mixing with other cultures and celebrating diversity in Scouting

To learn about the host country, Polish culture (history, language, traditions, customs, food, Polish Scouting)

To get ready for collaborating with IST members and Contingents from different countries (gain intercultural understanding, be ready for conflict resolution, and effective communication)



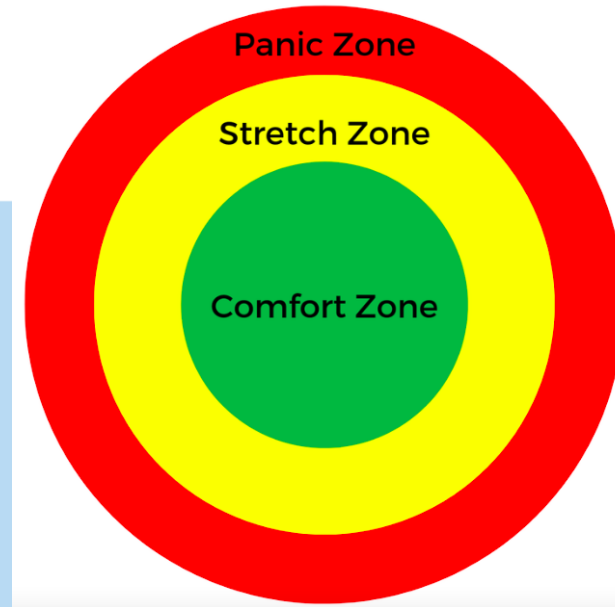
World Scout Jamboree according to the World Organization of the Scout Movement

- Purpose: To promote peace, mutual understanding, and global solidarity while enabling young people to develop leadership and life skills.
- Educational Experience: providing a, "unique firsthand experience of multiculturalism in action," which blends outdoor adventure, cultural exchange, and community service.
- Relying on Volunteer Support: the event is supported by the International Service Team (IST) which consists of adult volunteers from around the world providing their skills and expertise, making the event happen.
- As of 2025 WOSM has an estimated 60 million members representing 176 National Scouting Organizations
- The 26th World Scout Jamboree in Poland (2027) is expected to bring together 40,000 participants from over 150 countries, and will be a celebration of 120^[5 min] years of World Scouting

IST at WSJ What Zone are you in?

The Three Zones Defined

- **Comfort Zone (The Centre):** This is the state of ease, familiarity, and safety. Activities here are routine, requiring little effort or risk, such as sitting around a familiar campfire with familiar people, or doing a well-known, simple activity.
 - Jamboree *Context*: High security, low learning. Staying here too long causes boredom or no skill development.
- **Stretch Zone (The Middle):** This is the "learning" or "growth" zone, located just outside the comfort zone. Here, tasks are challenging but achievable. It involves novelty and adventure, such as taking on a new leadership role, navigating in new terrain, or attempting a difficult outdoor challenge.
 - Jamboree *Context*: Excitement, learning, and growth. A volunteer feels nervous but confident they can manage the challenge.
- **Panic Zone (The Outside):** This is where the challenge exceeds the scout's current skill set, support, or confidence. It leads to high anxiety, fear, and feeling overwhelmed.
 - Jamboree *Context*: No learning occurs here, only distress. A volunteer may experience "fight, flight, or freeze" reactions



What zone are you in the following scenarios?

- Trying new and unusual foods
- Attempting to speak new languages
- Keeping an open mind about the IST job preferences
- Camping for extended periods in challenging weather conditions
- Sharing space and working alongside people from different cultures
- Challenging and breaking down national stereotypes
- Overcoming language barriers through patience and creativity
- Creating new connections for international cooperation and friendship
- Confidently representing and speaking about UK Scouting

#UK26WSJ

[10 mins]



UK Contingent: Perception

- In teams of up to 10 people discuss the following:
- How can we build the best showcase of what UK Scouting represents?
- How do we want to come across as a Contingent?
- How do we want to speak and how do we want to communicate?

[5 mins]



What does this iceberg tell us about Curiosity?

- What assumptions can you make about Poland and what will it be like for you as a visitor?
- For example: people – food & drink – culture – language – music – history – places – climate – nature – transport – safety... etc.
- List as many ideas as possible. You have got 2 minutes.





Guessing

Stereotyping

What are we doing when we make assumptions?

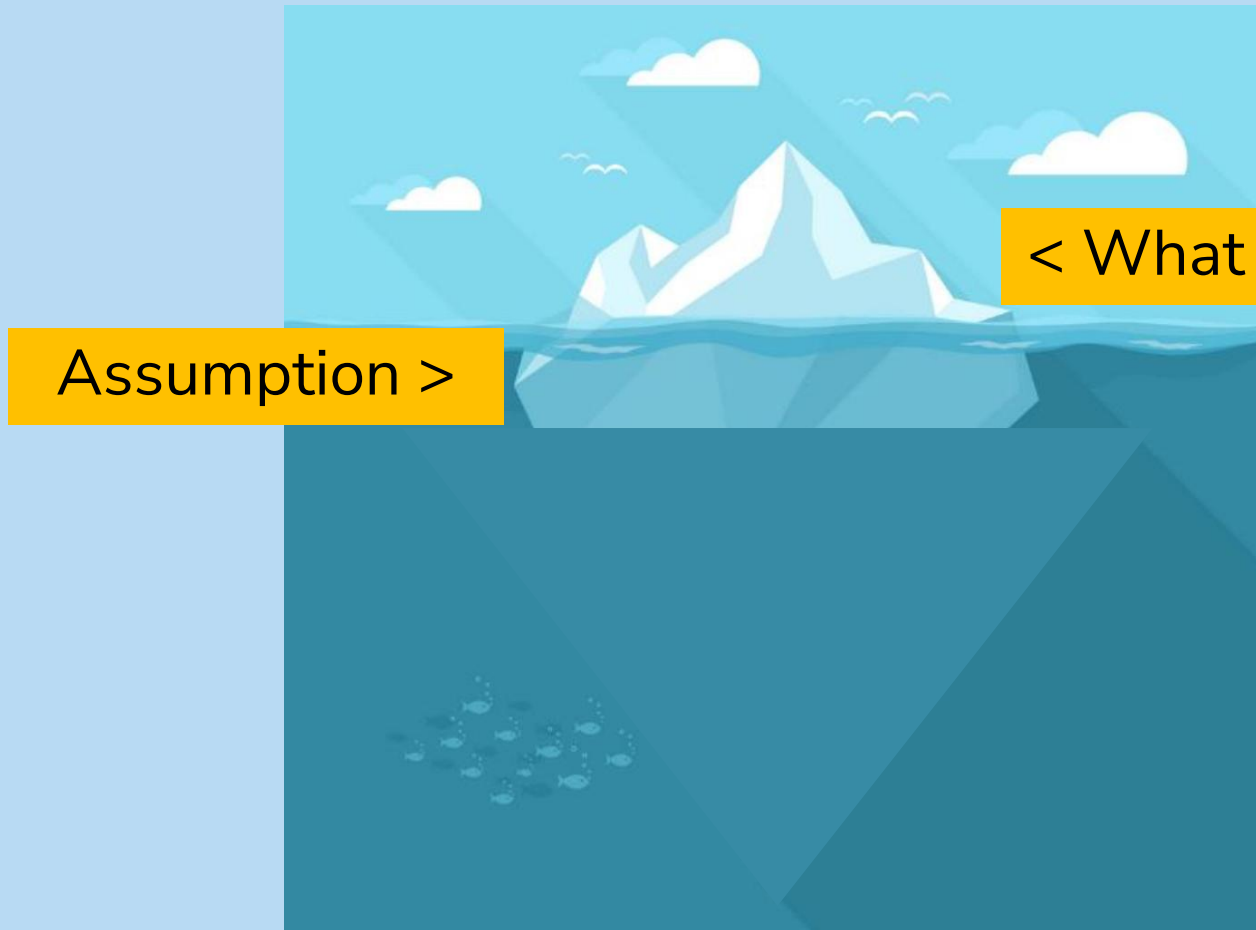
Predicting

Judging





What is an Assumption?



*An assumption
is anything that
you accept as
true, without
evidence or
proof.*

Assumptions



What do WE need to do at the WSJ so we can avoid making unhelpful assumptions?

< What is this?
How do we get
through here?

Assumption >

< What people see

There is a lot
hiding beneath
the surface

< Everything
else

Reality

- Be curious
- Be open-minded
- Ask questions
- Listen closely
- Not jump to conclusions
- Notice yourself making assumptions
- Ask **better** questions!



Why do we need international understanding?





Conflict resolution at WSJ

- At a World Scout Jamboree, conflict is seen as an opportunity to learn. Conflict is resolved through dialogue, respect, and shared Scout values that strengthen international friendship.
- Intercultural understanding recognises that Scouts come from many cultures and languages. Misunderstandings are addressed with patience, empathy and explanation.
- It is based on open communication talking directly and respectfully to understand each side.
- Be aware that some people may not have good command of English. Use clear and simple language, avoid slang, idioms, or informal expressions.
- UK International Service Team members are expected to act as role models, representing



Poland: geography

- Total Area ~312,696 km² (approx. 120,733 sq mi). 9th largest country by area in Europe.
- Approximately 1.29 times larger than the United Kingdom.
- Has 7 neighbours and its current borders were set after World War II ended in 1945.
- Roughly 600-700 km across, with a 770 km coastline on the Baltic Sea.
- Poland has 16 administrative divisions called voivodeships (provinces).



Flag of Poland



Coat of Arms

Pomorskie Province

- Pomorskie Province is shaped by Polish, German, and Kashubian influences with a strong regional identity celebrating multicultural heritage reflected in language, architecture, and traditions.
- Historically part of shifting borders between Poland, Prussia, and Germany, with rich maritime history and trade connections via the Baltic Sea, preserved medieval towns, castles, and port cities.
- Important tourist and economic region blending modern urban life and preserved natural landscapes.
- Climate: average highs are around 21-23C with July and August being the warmest months. July is also typically the wettest month.



Sobieszewo Beach



A UNESCO site: Castle of the Teutonic Order in Malbork



Kashubia, Northern Poland

Gdańsk



Solidarność



- Gdańsk is the capital of the Pomorskie Province, the Province has a population of 2.3 million whilst the city of Gdańsk has approximately 470,000 residents making it the 6th largest city in Poland.
- Gdańsk was founded in 997 and over centuries was under Polish, Teutonic and German control.
- As of the 16th century the city was a wealthy Hanseatic trade hub.
- WWII's first shots were fired on 1 September 1939 when the German battleship bombarded the Polish Military Transit Depot on the Westerplatte peninsula.
- The Solidarity Movement (Solidarność) was founded in 1980 in the shipyards of Gdańsk. It began as a workers' strike demanding better conditions and political freedoms. It inspired democratic movements across Central Eastern Europe.





Poland: Language

- Polish is a West Slavic language spoken by over 40 million people.
- It uses the Latin alphabet with 9 unique characters (ą, ć, ę, ł, ń, ó, ś, ź, ż), and has a total of 32 letters.
- It lacks 'q', 'v', and 'x'.
- English is spoken, to varying degrees, by around 35–50% of people in Poland. Younger people in particular often have a good level of English.
- To improve your Jamboree experience, try to learn a few useful Polish words and phrases. This can make communication easier and help you connect with people during your stay.
- You can use popular language learning apps to get started and make practice a regular part of your Jamboree preparation.

÷Babbel



Polish language: useful phrases

Dzień dobry (Jen-doh-bri) – Good morning / Good afternoon.

Dobry wieczór (Doh-bri vyeh-choor) – Good evening.

Cześć (Chehshch) – Hi / Bye (informal).

Dobranoc (Doh-brah-nots) – Good night.

Dziękuję (Jen-koo-eh) – Thank you.

Dzięki (Jen-kee) – Thanks (informal).

Proszę (Prosh-eh) – Please / Here you go / You're welcome.

Nie ma za co (Nyh mah zah tso) – You're welcome / No problem.

Przepraszam (Psheh-prah-shahm) – Excuse me / I'm sorry.

Tak/ Nie (Tahk / Nyeh) – Yes / No.

Nie rozumiem (Nyh roh-zoo-myem) – I don't understand.

Na zdrowie – nah-zdrov-vyeh – cheers, bless you.

Moja wydra uciekła ze stawu - My pet otter escaped from the pond



DID YOU KNOW?

that WOSM's official working languages are English and French?

WOSM's working languages are Arabic, French, Spanish, and English

2 million Scouts in the European Region speak some 35 different languages!



Poland: Money

- Currency: Polish zloty but card payments (Visa and Mastercard) are widely accepted
- Conversion rate: 1.00 GBP = 4.92 PLN
- Use local ATMs for cash withdrawals rather than exchange offices (Kantor) at airports or hotels, which often offer poor rates.
- When paying by card or using an ATM, always select to be charged in PLN, to avoid high conversion fees.
- Euro is not accepted



Poland: Food



- Polish cuisine reflects a blend of influences from neighbouring countries and historical connections across Europe.
- Common ingredients are: potatoes, buckwheat, cucumbers, beetroot, cabbage, onions, wild mushrooms, dairy products, pork, poultry, fish, preserved foods and fresh herbs.
- Polish cuisine includes a wide variety of vegetarian and vegan options, including modern adaptations of classic dishes.
- Polish cooking is shaped by seasonal ingredients and traditional celebrations.

Zapiekanka

A toasted, open-faced sandwich



Pączek

Jam-filled round doughnut



Pierogi

Dumplings filled with potato & cheese, meat, or fruit



Żurek

Creamy soup often served in a hollowed-out bread bowl, contains sausage and egg



Gołąbki

Cabbage leaves stuffed with meat and rice



Bigos

Hearty stew with sauerkraut, fresh cabbage, and meat



Kotlet schabowy

Polish-style schnitzel usually served with potatoes and cabbage salad



Poland: Traditions and Customs

- Strongly influenced by **Catholic heritage** with Christmas Eve (Wigilia) being one of the most important celebrations, consists of family gatherings and sharing of traditional dishes.
- Bread: guests are traditionally welcomed with **bread and salt**, symbolising respect and hospitality Bread is seen as a symbol of life, prosperity, and hospitality. Dropping or wasting bread is considered improper or disrespectful.
- Festivals and Celebrations: **name days** (imieniny) are often celebrated more than birthdays, folk festivals with music, dance, and regional costumes, seasonal harvest celebrations are tied to agricultural traditions.

History of the Scouting Movement in Poland



- Founded in 1910, inspired by the ideas of Robert Baden-Powell
- Developed as Związek Harcerstwa Polskiego (ZHP) founded in 1918 with a strong focus on patriotism, independence, and moral development has grown to 110,000 members today
- During WWII officially banned by occupying Nazi and Soviet forces but continued operating underground as the “Grey Ranks” (Szare Szeregi)
- Organised resistance activities such as sabotage and intelligence gathering, courier missions and underground communication
- Scouts participated in armed actions particularly during the Warsaw Uprising in 1944 where they served as messengers, medics and fighters
- Scouts helped sustain the Polish resistance and national identity under occupation and after WWII during communism retained some independence from the regime
- Today, ZHP shapes 6-21 year- olds into capable, community-oriented young people dedicated to service, responsibility and care for others
- Much like in the UK, Scouting in Poland enjoys high social trust and is perceived as an organization helping young people develop essential life skills



Scouts Cross awarded to Scouts upon Investiture is based on the Virtuti Military medal - the highest Military award for bravery

Czuwaj = Be Prepared





The Polish Guide and Scout Law

1. A Guide/Scout conscientiously fulfils the duties stemming from the Guide and Scout Promise.
2. A Guide's/Scout's word is to be trusted like that of Zawisza the Knight.
3. A Guide/Scout is useful and helps others.
4. A Guide/Scout is respectful to everybody and treats other Guides/Scouts like sisters/brothers.
5. A Guide/Scout acts chivalrously.
6. A Guide/Scout loves Nature and strives to get to know it.
7. A Guide/Scout is disciplined and obedient to their parents and superiors.
8. A Guide/Scout is always cheerful.
9. A Guide/Scout is thrifty and generous.
10. A Guide/Scout works on themselves; she/he is pure in thought, in word and in deed; she/he is free from addictions.

Poland: Do's and Don'ts

International Understanding



DO's

- **Greet politely** – A handshake is standard when meeting someone
- **Use formal titles** – Especially with older people or in professional settings (Pan = Mr., Pani = Ms.)
- **Be punctual** – Being on time is considered respectful
- **Accept hospitality** – Food and drink are often offered generously
- **Take off your shoes** – When entering someone's home

DONT's

- **Don't interrupt or speak loudly in public** – Politeness and calm behaviour are valued
- **Don't discuss sensitive historical topics lightly** – Especially WWII or communism
- **Don't be overly informal** at first meeting – Avoid first-name use unless invited
- **Don't call Polish people**– Eastern Europeans. Poland is located in central Europe.



Good to Know

- “We Are All Hosts” - Programme currently running in Poland encouraging international cooperation between all Scouts [more info: <https://zhp.pl/wjg/>]
- WSJ organiser website: <https://www.jamboree2027.org/>
- Useful Apps:
- Mobile usage: check with your provider; O2 includes EU roaming at no extra cost but for EE, Vodafone and Three will charge your roaming fees. Check out Nomad and other eSim apps
- Language: Duolingo, Google Translate, Babbel
- Public transport: JakDojade (route planning, ticket purchasing), Citymapper for route planning
- Money: Currency converter app, Monzo, Revolut
- In Your Pocket Guide: <https://www.inyourpocket.com/gdansk>
- Emergency number 112





International Service Team Mindset at a Jamboree

- Be curious about the host country and the Jamboree itself
- Step into your **stretch zone** and keep an open mind
- Understand how you want to connect and communicate with others
- Build connections within your Raft and explore international understanding through your own Scouting section



Where to find information

Internet search – “UK Scouts WSJ IST”



IST Hub

Resources to support UK Contingent 26th World Scout Jamboree
International Service Team

Welcome to the IST Hub

Welcome to the UK Contingent as an IST member, congratulations on your appointment! Thank you for volunteering to deliver an incredible adventure for young people.



IST Webinars

Coming soon. Catch up on demand on the latest IST webinars, covering updates and a Q&A session.

[Support](#)



Support for IST

Coming soon. We'll publish various information to support our IST members in their preparations.



Resources for IST

View the list of IST Raft locations across the UK

[IST Rafts >](#)

#UK26WSJ



Get in touch
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#UK26WSJ



Dziękuję

(Jen-koo-eh) – Thank you



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