Embargo: 00:01 GMT [UK time] Wednesday 29 October 2025

POLAND

The Lancet Countdown on Health and Climate Change annually takes stock of the evolving links between health and climate change through 50+ peer-reviewed indicators. This document summarises key country-level findings from the 2025 Global Report of the Lancet Countdown, compiled for journalists.

Climate change is increasingly harming health, claiming lives, and harming livelihoods and the economy in Poland

- In 2024, people in Poland were exposed to **9.3** heatwave days each, on average. Of these, **7.1 (76%)** would not have been expected to occur without climate change.
- In 2024, individuals would have experienced **73** more hours per-person of at least moderate heat stress risk if undertaking moderate exercise (running), relative to the 1990–1999 baseline average.
- Heat exposure led to a loss of **50.9** million potential labour hours in 2024, **61% higher** than 1990–1999 levels. The associated potential income lost from labour capacity reduction due to extreme heat was **US$0.46** billion. Workers in the construction sector was the most severely affected, incurring **44%** of the income losses in 2024.
- From 2012-2021, Poland saw an estimated 2,300 heat-related deaths annually, more than twice as many as the 1990-1999 average.
- People in Poland experienced an average of 1.3 high wildfire-risk days per year between 2020–2024, a 39% increase compared to 2003–2012, with wildfire smoke PM2.5 linked to an estimated 517 deaths annually.

- From 2020–2024, an average of 35% of Poland's land area experienced at least one month of extreme drought per year, a 13% increase compared with the 1951–1960 baseline.

The delay in transitioning away from fossil fuels and towards healthy, renewable energy, is costing lives and straining the economy

- Poland had a net-negative carbon revenue in 2023, indicating that fossil fuel subsidies were higher than carbon prices. Poland allocated a net total of US$ 2.93 billion in 2023 alone.
- Between 2016 and 2022, CO_2 emissions from fossil fuel combustion in Poland declined by 2.8% to 284,988 kilotonnes.
- As of 2022, coal makes up 45.4% of total energy and 69.8% of electricity energy. The share of renewables of total energy and electricity supply has doubled since 2016, and made up 2.5% of total energy supply and 15.7% of electricity supply in 2022.
- In 2022, only 13% of household energy came from electricity, whilst 20% came from coal, coke and peat.
- In 2022, fossil fuels still accounted for 94.8% of all road transport energy, with electricity still accounting for less than 0.1%.
- There were over 45,000 deaths attributable to anthropogenic air pollution (PM2.5) in 2022 in Poland. Fossil fuels (coal and liquid gas) contributed to 48% of these deaths in 2022. 14% came from the use of petrol in the transport sector, and nearly 15,000 from deaths still came from the burning of coal, primarily from the household sector.
- In 2022, the monetised value of premature mortality due to air pollution in Poland amounted to US$53.9 billion.
- Poland's healthcare sector emitted 10.1 million tonnes of greenhouse gases in 2022, a 20% increase from 2016 levels. Per capita emissions reached 273 kg CO_2e, marking a 24% rise and indicating growing pressures from healthcare infrastructure and energy-intensive operations.
-

Transitions in the food and agricultural sectors could bring major benefits to the health of people in Poland

- In 2022, red meat and dairy accounted for 47% of all agricultural product consumption-related emissions in Poland.
- In 2022, 62449 deaths associated with insufficient consumption of nutritious plant-based foods and 37368 deaths attributable to excess consumption of dairy, red meat, and processed meat.
- In 2023, Poland lost over 76,000 hectares of tree cover.

- Preparedness for the low-carbon transition declined by 4.2% in 2024 compared with 2023, suggesting that policy and institutional readiness are not keeping pace with the scale of required adaptation and mitigation action
- In 2024, there were 18 scientific articles published on climate and health in Poland. 22% of scientific articles on climate and health in Poland focused on adaptation, 67% on impacts.