



Polish Flag Day and Constitution Day 2 & 3 May

1st-3rd May is a holiday season known as *Majówka*, which also includes the 1st May/Labour Day holiday.



Flag Day

Polish National Flag Day was introduced by an act issued on 20 February 2004. It was intended as a day when Poles had a moment of reflection on Polish history, to fill in the free day between two national holidays, and to underline celebration of the Day of Polonia and Poles Abroad.



The holiday is celebrated on the day between two national holidays: 1st May (called International Workers' Day/Labour Day) and 3rd May (Constitution Day). On the same day, the Day of Polish Community Abroad is celebrated.

2nd May is not a national holiday however many Poles take this day off because it is the only date in the calendar which occurs between two national holidays.

Celebrating Flag Day

Various types of patriotic actions and demonstrations are organized on this day.

For example, on 2nd May 2009 in Bytom, over 500 people created a white and red flag from simultaneously lifted umbrellas.



It was probably the largest flag created in Poland on the occasion of the National Flag Day.



In recent years, it has become common to wear a national cockade on that day. A cockade is a knot of ribbons, or other circular- or oval-shaped symbol of distinctive colours which is usually worn on a hat.

What could you use to create a Polish flag?

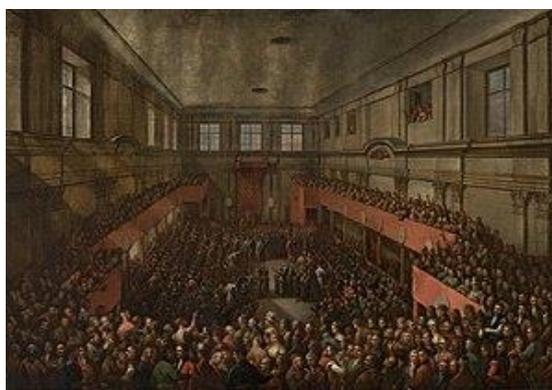
Can you make your own cockade and wear it on flag day?

Constitution Day

Background



The Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth's constitution was adopted on 3rd May 1791. It was the first constitution in modern Europe and second in the world, following the American one.



The 3rd May was established as a holiday only days after the constitution was passed by the Grand Sejm (Polish Parliament). It was later suspended for many years due to the country's partitioning, but was then reinstated after Poland regained its freedom in 1918.

After World War II, in 1946, the communist authorities banned the holiday's public celebration. The holiday was officially cancelled in 1951.

Since 1990 the 3rd May holiday has again been celebrated as an official statutory holiday in Poland.

Celebrating

Constitution Day is an official public holiday in Poland, so schools, banks, government offices and most private businesses are closed.



It is celebrated with military parades, spring concerts and family picnics.



Many people gather at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier (*Grób Nieznanego Żołnierza*) at the Piłsudski Square in Warsaw.



The monument is dedicated to unknown soldiers who gave their lives for Poland.