Kuyavian-Pomeranian Voivodeship, located in the central-north part of Poland, has a surface of 18,000 square km and counts 2,1 mln inhabitants. It has two capitals – Bydgoszcz (governor's office) and Toruń (local government's office). The main towns of the region are Bydgoszcz (367,000 inhabitants), Toruń (200,000), Włocławek (120,000), Grudziądz (100,000) and Inowrocław (78,000). 61,4 % live in urban areas. The province is situated in the central part of Poland on both sides of the longest Polish river – the Vistula. There are a dozen or so higher education institutions in the region. Except from educational services they perform scientific researches. The most important ones are: The University of Nicolaus Copernicus in Toruń, The University of Casimir the Great and Technological-Natural University, both situated in Bydgoszcz.
The region has a strong food industry (30% of the total industrial production), with many enterprises switching to or continuing traditional ecological manufacture. The region is strong in introducing new technologies. Recent creation of Special Economic Zone in Łysomice allowed to open a Sharp plant as well as other Japanese and Corean factories. Regional authorities support numerous starting enterprises and therefore such organizations as The Center of Technological Transfer in Toruń and Toruń Technological Park have been appointed. The region has non-commercial broadband Internet network. The main airport is situated in Bydgoszcz.

Founded in 1998, Kujawsko-Pomorskie Voivodeship is centrally located in northern Poland, between Pomorze and Mazury lake districts. It covers the area of 17.972 sq kilometres and equals 5.7 % of Poland’s territory. 2.1 million inhabitants stand for 5.4 % of Poland’s population. Kujawsko-Pomorskie Voivodeship incorporated former voivodeships of Bydgoskie, Toruńskie and Włocławskie with the exception of gminas (communes): Chojnice, miasto Chojnice, Czersk, Brusy (now part of Chojnicki Poviat in Pomorskie Voivodeship), Nowe Miasto Lubawskie, Biskupiec, Grodziczno, Kurzętnik (now in Nowomiejski Poviat in Warmińsko-Mazurkie Voivodeship), Trzemeszno (part of Gniezno Poviat in Wielkopolskie Voivodeship). The voivode’s office and majority of central government administration are situated in Bydgoszcz whereas self government administration and Voivodeship’s Sejmik (assembly) is located in Toruń.

With its 52 cities and towns, Kujawsko-Pomorskie Voivodeship divides into 19 poviats: Aleksandrowski, Brodnicki, Bydgoski, Chelmiński, Golubsko-dobrzyński, Grudziądzki, Inowrocławski, Lipnowski, Mogileński, Nakielnski, Radziejowski, Rypinński, Sępoleński, Świecki, Toruński, Tucholski, Wąbrzeski, Włocławski, Żniński and 4 cities-poviats: Bydgoszcz, Grudziądz, Toruń and Włocławek.

The cities of: Bydgoszcz with 361.000 citizens (28.6 % urban population of the voivodeship, 17.5 % of the total population), Toruń – 207.000 (16.4 %/10.0%), Włocławek - 118.000 (9.4%/5.7%) and Grudziądz – 99.000 (7.8%/4.8%) are the largest urban areas. Inowroclaw with its population of 76.000 is considered as one of the major cities as well. 16 towns, including Brodnica, Świecie and Chelmno, with population spanning from 10.000 to 30.000 are considered medium-sized towns. The remaining towns are significant centres of sub-regional importance (with developed industry, education facilities and transport hubs), as some of them are poviats (or had been - until 1975). 30 small towns, under 10.000 citizens, are varied in their municipal functions.
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**HISTORY**

Kujawsko-Pomorskie comprises of territories whose ethnical, economical and social background varied throughout ages. Historical core of the region is Kujawy with Chełmno and Dobrzyń Land together with north-eastern Wielkopolska. Kujawy was strategically important during the early Piasts reign between the 10th and 12th centuries – due to location in the lower Vistula area.

**13th century** marked the arrival of Teutonic Knights Order which was to christianise Prussia. The Chełmno Land soon became a centre for Teutonic Knights settlements, both administrative and military. The castles’ ruins are still to be watched nowadays – in Toruń, Chełmno, Brodnica, Radzyń Chełmiński, Kowalewo Pomorskie and Grudziądz. Despite resistance from the last Piasts, the Teutonic Knights invaded Pomorze Nadwiślańskie and effectively strengthened their influence in the region, with a few new cities founded and new monastic state administration. Thanks to the Second Peace of Toruń that ended the Thirteen Years’ War in 1466, Chełmno Land was returned to Poland. Until 1343 northern Wielkopolska and Kujawy experienced feudal fragmentation that led to territorial divisions. Kujawy region was parted into the duches of Inowrocław and Brześć. In the north – three further divisions were established: Inowrocławska, Bydgosko-Wyszogrodzka, Gniewkowska.

**State of Poland**

Prussia with its autonomy and general assembly was divided into three voivodeships: Chełmińskie, Pomorskie and Malborskie. Toruń grew as an important commercial centre with its 10,000 citizens. Grudziądz acquired local parliament. Out of around 30 cities and towns of the region, Bydgoszcz, Włocławek and Inowrocław became significant players. The prosperity era was to be terminated due to Swedish invasion in the 17th century along with political decline of Poland.

**The foreign rule**

From the end of 18th century and onwards Prussia incorporated part of Dobrzyń Land, Krajna, part of Pałuki and Kujawy with Inowrocław and Kruszwica. Napoleon’s vicotry in 1807 brought the Duchy of Warsaw to life. Bydgoszcz and part of Chełmno Land remained within the new puppet state. The ultimate French defeat and subsequent Congress of Vienna in 1815 tore Poland apart for over 100 years. Parts of Pomorze Nadwiślańskie, Wielkopolska and western Kujawy were now within borders of Prussia. Part of eastern Kujawy with Włocławek and Dobrzyń Land became Russian.

**After WWI**

The region’s rebirth witnessed brand new Polish administrative borders; Krajna, and Western Kujawy with Bydgoszcz and Inowrocław were parts of Poznaź Voivodeship. The vast Pomorskie Voivodeship with Toruń as a capital got prestigious position thanks to access to sea and transit
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links with Germany and East Prussia. North and east of Wielkopolska and Kujawy joined Pomorskie Voivodeship in 1938.

**After 1945**

Pomorskie Voivodeship was reactivated in 1945. One month later Bydgoszcz became its capital. The new borders spanned from southern Pomorze, Chełmno and Michałowska Land, Krajna, Kujawy with Inowrocław and Włocławek, and – from 1950 the poviats of Żnin and Mogilno. Major administrative reform was carried out in 1975. As an effect of the latter, two voivodeships were created: Toruńskie and Włocławskie. Parted did the region existed until 1998, when Poland’s map welcomed new Kujawsko-Pomorskie Voivodeship, with voivode’s seat in Bydgoszcz and voivodeship’s Sejmik in Toruń.
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NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Kujawsko Pomorskie is a region of an outstanding natural environment, touristic attractions, historical sites and vibrant culture and art activities.

Owing to the region’s particular natural and landscape values and efforts to preserve them, over 30% of the land in our region is under the legal protection. There are 8 landscape parks, 93 nature reserves, 31 protected landscape zones and 5 nature-landscape zones with over 2000 natural phenomena.

Environmental enclaves with natural like character have been preserved in the northern part of the region. Majority of park areas are located in the central, north and north eastern lake districts (Brodnicki, Górniewieński-Lidzbarski, Tucholski, Wdecki, Krajeński and Nadgoplański). The Gostyniński-Włoślawski and Lower Vuistula River parks can be found within the Vistula River valley. Forest and lake complexes are exceptionally attractive as a landscape, abundant in rare species of fauna and flora. The European Ecological Network (E-ECONE) covers 2 junction areas of international rank in our voidvodeship: Tucholski Coniferous Forest and Powidzko-Gostynski Zone and also 2 so-called ecological corridors along the Vistula River valley (with branches). Part of our region lies within the European Network of Protected Zones, Nature 2000.

A huge advantage of Kujawsko-Pomorskie Voivodeship is a good condition of natural environment. Numerous areas remain unpolluted (such as: Nadwiślański Landscape Park, Brodnica Lake District, Chelmński Landscape Park) which allows development of tourism.

Geographical macroregions in the voivodeship:

Południowopomorskie Lake District,
Lower Vistula Valley,
Toruński - Eberswaldzka Valley,
Chełmińsko - Dobrzyńskie Lake District,
Wschodniopomorskie Lake District,
Wielkopolskie Lake District,
Południowowielekska Lowland,
Tuchola Forest.
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Varied relief and scattered post-glacial lakes with flat and undulating moraine hills – predominantly in the north-west, north-east and east parts - constitute typical landscape in Kujawsko-Pomorskie.

Barcin, Pakość and Piechcin area is rich in the limestone resources (estimated at ca. 1005 million tones). Lignite - around Inowrocław, Góra, Mogilno (also at Lubień Kujawski and Izbica Kujawska) there are rock salt resources estimated at 5.5 miliard tones. Szubin, Kcynia, Żnin, Łabiszyn and Radziejów is hardly suitable for exploitation though. Nevertheless, in the nearby of

Valuable geographical and natural features led to the creation of Ecological System of Protected Areas (nature reserves, landscape parks, nature monuments, protected areas, etc.).

**There are 8 landscape parks in the region:**

*Brodnica Landscape Park,*  
*Górznieńsko-Lidzbarski Landscape Park,*  
*Krajeński Landscape Park,*  
*Nadgoplański Millenium Park,*  
*Joint Chełmiński and Nadwiślański Landscape Park,*  
*Tucholski Landscape Park,*  
*Wdecki Landscape Park,*  
*Gostynińsko-Włocławski Landscape Park.*

Despite being geographically varied, no homogeneous climate characteristics are noted in the region. North, north-west and north-east of the region enjoys typical lakeland climate. However the southern part of the voivodeship remains under influence of central Poland’s climate. Therefore the climate of the region features lowlands, lakelands and coastal characteristics.
ECONOMY

**Industry**

Social and economic indexes of the voivodeship are country’s average. However, versatile industry has efficiently adjusted to free market economy. Bydgoszcz, Toruń and Włocławek, together with Grudziądz and Inowrocław are main centres of chemical, machine and electrical engineering, food processing, textile, pulp, mineral and printing industry. The region’s economy’s ratio is services – production - agriculture. The production value is highly dependant on food processing industry, that benefits from natural resources. It is where major joint-venture companies have found their niche. Smaller producers should not be underestimated, since their market position is growing stronger. Chemical processing, pulp & paper and machine & electrical engineering industry focus important manufacturers of the region. The involvement of foreign capital redefined domestic companies’ market share and management structures. The main domain of around 19 thousand companies is industrial production. Their constant pursue for quality has consequently strengthened ties with EU markets, which is seen in numbers - over 70 % of all exported goods rich their destination within EU. Many of the voivodeship’s companies are proud holders of ISO 9000 Certificate.

**Agriculture**

Agriculture is significant part of the economy, particularly in the former Toruńskie and Włocławskie voivodeships. The overall area of farm land is 1036.6 thousand hectares (out of which 87.3 % is arable land). Pomorze and Kujawy are country’s forefront in the livestock production (mainly pigs). Dairying and cattle, poultry and sheep farming presents good economic results. The range of high quality goods spans from grain, sugar beet, rape, potatoes, fruits and vegetables. Well developed agrarian structure and regular professional trainings for farmers abroad (partner countries: Danmark, France and Holland) ensure valuable exchange of know-how and shape the potential of the region’s agriculture. One of more attractive ways of cultivating the farmland is agrotourism. It merges natural resources with material conditions of the countryside, not to forget magnificent climate, ecological cuisine and last but least - friendly atmosphere. Needless to say, „EKOLAND” – the country’s organisation promoting ecological production is situated in the region.

**Pro investment attitude:**

- Over 250 investment offers of Greenfield and Brownfield type waiting for investors
- 4 industrial parks in Grudziądz, Świecie, Solec Kujawski, 2 industrial-technology complexes in Bydgoszcz and Włocławek as well as technology park with the Technology Transfer Centre in Toruń.
- 13 sub-zones of Pomeranian Special Economic Zone.
- High concentration of companies - leaders in their fields
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- Easy Access to qualified workforce (possible co-operation with colleges and vocational schools).
- Well developed educational infrastructure (junior high schools and high schools) and academic centres: Nicolaus Copernicus University, Collegium Medicum, Kazimierz Wielki University, University of Life Sciences and Technology.
- Large workforce resources.
- Low labour cost.
- Multiple business support instruments at state, regional and local levels.
- Self-government of Kujawsko-Pomorskie supports the entrepreneurship by financing investment, modern technologies, brands promotion and improving the investment areas.
- Real estate tax exemptions, possibility of purchasing or renting the real estate in the industrial and technology parks or communes at a very competitive rate.
- Income tax exemptions within the SEZ area applies in the region.

**Major foreign investors in Kujawsko-Pomorskie:**

**Investments and export support:**
Kujawsko-Pomorskie region operates within the Investors and Exporters Service Centres network within the Innovative Economy 6.2.1. Operational Program. Thanks to this and the close co-operation with the Investments and Trade Promotion Departments of Polish Embassies, the Ministry of Economy and available funds, the region is able to support investment located here efficiently. Certified Investor’s Assistance Centre as a part of the Marshal’s Office is operating as a regional partner of Polish Information and Foreign Investment Agency.

**Major and developing industries:**
Food processing, chemical, cellulose-paper, BPO/SSC, electro-machinery, plastics, wood, electronics, renewable energy sources, tourism.

**Communication:**
- A-1 motorway running cross the region from North to south is an important part of the european transport network connecting the Scandinavia with the southern Europe.
- Express roads: S-10 linking Szczecin and Warsaw, through Bydgoszcz and Toruń, S-5 from Gdańsk through Bydgoszcz to Poznań and Wrocław.
- International Bydgoszcz Airport with cargo terminal.
- International water ways E70 and E40.
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**CULTURE AND SCIENCE**

Be our guest in the sightseeing tour around the sites that truly root in history...

The most valued and commonly known artefact of Łużycka Age is fortified settlement’s remains of Biskupin (600-500 BC). Most important Roman architecture sites are scattered around Western Kujawy. Significant development of Gothic art took place in Chełmno Land, whereas Baroque and Classic artefacts dominated in the area of Eastern Kujawy and Dobrzyń Land.

A few of the most famous monumental churches and monasteries are particularly worth seeing: Benedictine Church in Mogilno (founded in 1065) and Kruszwica (St. Peter and Paul collegiate church from 1120-40) and Norbertine Sisters in Strzelno (ca. 1180-93).

Gothic architecture came to Wielkopolska and Kujawy around 1200 AD. Monumental culture and its sites are those of Franciscan and Dominican Order (churches in Toruń and Chełmno from 1240s). After 1254 the cathedral in Chelmża was erected; the city walls of Toruń, perish churches and town halls of Toruń and Chełmno are form this period as well.

Undoubtedly Toruń’s churches are of exceptional representative value (Hail Mary’s, St. John The Baptist, St. John’s The Evangelist) along with those of Brodnica, Chełmno, Chelmża and Nowe.

1450s’ architecture is featured in churches of Bydgoszcz, Inowrocław, Mogilno, Kwieciszewo and Trląg.

Numerous ruins of Gothic castles are worth seeing – with the best preserved ones in Golub Dobrzyń, Radzyń Chelmiński, Bierzgłowo, Papowo Biskupie, Brodnica and Świcie.

Among secular monuments, Toruń’s town hall is truly exceptional - one of the biggest of its type in Europe, built at the end of 1300s.

The town hall of Chełmno and cathedral in Włocławek are fine examples of the art of renaissance.

There are few sites of Baroque’s era (monasteries in Bysławek, Skępe, Świecie and Trutowo, Kcynia nd Obory, Brodnica, Grudziądz, Łabiszyn, Pakoś, Podgórze and Włocławek; Jesuite colleges in Bydgoszcz, Grudziądz and Toruń).

Nonetheless urban Baroque architecture developed considerably in Toruń (The tenement “Pod Gwiazdą”), or as seen in the palace of Ostromecko. However, the palaces of Kikół, Lubostroń and Nawra, Okalewo and Lubraniec are those of classical architecture.
Small towns’ old squares and lanes (Nieszawa, Włocławek, Brześć Kujawski, Osięciny, Lipno and Skępe) should not be underestimated.

You are more than welcome to enjoy the beauty and tradition of the region.

**Culture and Art**

A big creative potential of artists, musicians, actors puts Kujawsko-Pomorskie region in the leading role among the national culture centres. Numerous international cultural events reflecting the achievements and traditions of different nations are held here, i.e. International Film Festival “Tofifest” in Toruń, Toruń “Music and Architecture” Festival, Reggae Blues Festival. The following events have the international recognition in Europe and the World: International Theatre Festival “Kontakt”, Baltic States’ Music and Art Festival “Probaltica”, Musica Antiqua Europae Orientalis and Bydgoszcz Opera Festival and International Folk Bands meeting. Many cultural institutions that are significant for the Polish culture are operating here: theatres: Wilam Horzyca and Baj Pomorski theatres in Toruń, Teatr Polski, Opera Nova and Pomeranian Philharmony in Bydgoszcz and famous Chopin’s Centre in Szararnia near Golub – Dobrzyń, to name a few.

**Higher education**

**Toruń**

- Nicolaus Copernicus University - [http://www.umk.pl](http://www.umk.pl)
- Torun School of Banking - [http://www.wsb.torun.pl](http://www.wsb.torun.pl)
- Torun Private University - [http://tsw.edu.pl](http://tsw.edu.pl)
- Theological seminar - [http://www.wsdتورun.pl](http://www.wsdتورun.pl)
- The College of Social and Media Culture - [http://www.wsksim.edu.pl](http://www.wsksim.edu.pl)

**Bydgoszcz**

- Kazimierz Wielki University in Bydgoszcz - [http://www.ukw.edu.pl](http://www.ukw.edu.pl)
- University of Technology and Life Sciences in Bydgoszcz - [http://www.upt.edu.pl](http://www.upt.edu.pl)
- Academy of Music in Bydgoszcz - [http://www.amuz.bydgoszcz.pl](http://www.amuz.bydgoszcz.pl)
- Collegium Medicum UMK - [http://www.cm.umk.pl](http://www.cm.umk.pl)
- University of Economy - [http://www.wsg.byd.pl](http://www.wsg.byd.pl)
- Wyższa Szkoła Środowiska - [http://www.wss.edu.pl](http://www.wss.edu.pl)
- Wyższa Szkoła Nauk o Zdrowiu - [http://www.wsnoz.pl](http://www.wsnoz.pl)
- Poznań University of Economics/Bydgoszcz Branch - [http://www.ue.poznan.pl](http://www.ue.poznan.pl)
- Academy of Humanities and Economics in Lodz/Bydgoszcz Branch - [http://www.ahe.lodz.pl](http://www.ahe.lodz.pl)
- Theological seminary - [http://seminarium.diecezja.bydgoszcz.pl](http://seminarium.diecezja.bydgoszcz.pl)
Włocławek

- Wydział Zamiejscowy Wyższej Szkoły Informatyki w Łodzi – http://wloclawek.wsinf.edu.pl
- University of Humanities and Economics in Włocławek - http://www.wshe.pl

**Events**

The cultural image of the region is shaped by numerous artistic events. Either annual festivals or day-to-day activity of region’s museums and galleries attract artists and enthusiasts. Artistic circles of music, theatre, fine arts and literature deliver considerable output for the country.

Major cultural institutions in the voivodeship are Opera Nova (the most modern music theatre in Poland) and Pomeranian Philharmonic (one of the best concert halls in Europe) and the only arts academy in the region - Feliks Nowowiejski Academy of Music in Bydgoszcz (within the graduates – Rafał Blechacz, winner of the 15th Chopin Competition). The theatres - Hieronim Konieczka’s in Bydgoszcz and these in Toruń: Wilam Horzyca’s and Baj Pomorski with such institutions as Chopin Centre in Szafrarnia contribute to cultural life of the region. Well established and valued are galleries and museums of the biggest cities: Biuro Wystaw Artystycznych (Arts Exhibitions Beurau), Leon Wyczółkowski District Museum in Bydgoszcz, Wozownia Art Gallery and Ethnographic Museum in Toruń and Centre of Contemporary Art Znaki Czasu in Toruń (since 2008).

Out of many events, the oldest and most important are:

- International Paderewski Piano Competition - http://www.konkurspaderewskiego.pl
- International Theatre festival - http://www.teatr.torun.pl
- Bydgoszcz Opera Festival - http://www.opera.bydgoszcz.pl
- Międzynarodowe Toruńskie Spotkania Teatrów - http://www.bajpomorski.art.pl
- Festiwal Laureatów Konkursów Muzycznych - http://www.amuz.bydgoszcz.pl
- Międzynarodowy Ekumeniczny Festiwal Muzyki Chrześcijańskiej Song of Songs - http://www.songofsongs.pl
- Festiwal Muzyki i Sztuki Krajów Bałtyckich - http://www.probaltica.art.pl
- Festiwal Prapremier - http://www.prapremiery.pl
- Bydgoszcz Jazz Festival - http://www.eljazz.com.pl
- Pejzaż bez Ciebie – Festiwal Twórczości Niezapomnianych Artystów Polskich - http://www.pejzazbezciebie.pl
Other regional events:

- Bydgoskie Impresje Muzyczne
- Bydgoski Trójkąt Literacki
- Festiwal Operowo-Operetkowy w Ciechocinku
- Festyn Archeologiczny w Biskupinie
- Jazz Od Nowa Festival
- Międzynarodowy Festiwal Filmowy TOFIFEST
- Międzynarodowy Festiwal Harmonik Ustnej HARMONICA BRIDGE Bydgoszcz – Toruń
- Ogólnopolski Festiwal Chórów a Capella Dzieci i Młodzieży
- Toruński Festiwal Książki
- Toruńskie Spotkania Teatrów Ulicznych
- Toruński Festiwal Nauki i Sztuki

Sports

Sport plays significant role in the region’s life. Not only have professional sport events attracted thousands of spectators around the region and the country, but also worldwide. You will find numerous opportunities to enjoy basketball, voleyball, athletics. Speedway and ice hockey are among the most popular disciplines in the region. Needles to say - the region’s natural potential is a paradise for water sports.

With big names in Poland’s hall of fame in sports, such as Teresa Ciepły (1937-2006) – the olympic medalist from Rome and Tokyo, Zbigniew Boniek (Football World Cup in 1978, 1982, 1986), Robert Sycz – the olympic medalist from Sydney i Athens, Sebastian Chmara – world champion Wielobój, Speedway stars - Jacek and Tomasz Gollob, Piotr Protasiewicz, Karol Żąbik and Wiesław Jaguś, Paweł Wojciechowski – pole vaulter, world junior vice champion. Events such as 12th IAAF World Junior Championships, Speedway Grand Prix and All-Poland’s Youth Olympics are of significant importance.

Voivodeship’s infrastructure: Hala Mistrzów Sportu in Włocławek, Hala Łuczniczka in Bydgoszcz, speedway stadiums in Bydgoszcz and Toruń, and Bydgoszcz’s athletics stadium - Bydgoski Stadion Miejski im. Zdzisława Krzyszkowiaka
Kuyavia and Pomerania, POLAND

TOURISM

Kujawsko-Pomorskie characterises itself by special conditions for tourism development. Besides visiting beautiful natural and landscape areas and numerous historical sites, tourists can make use of other forms of tourism.

Water tourism enthusiasts can enjoy numerous water ways created by the rivers Vistula, Brda, Wda, Drwęca and Noteć. In the voivodeship area one can find about 1000 lakes with holiday resorts offering excellent accommodation and catering.

The region is distinguished with great spa advantages. There are three health resorts: Ciechocinek, Inowrocław and Wieniec Zdrój. Out of these Ciechocinek is the most renowned lowland health resort in Poland.

For bike afficionados there are many bicycle routes, including 162 km of the International Bicycle Route R-1 connecting France with Russia. Additionally, over 100 hiking trails of the total length of over 2900 km and motor routes - like “Piast Trail” awaits tourists. Enthusiasts of spending the one’s time in peace and quietness, in the countryside, can make use of many agritourist offers.

Tourists are served by tourist information centres located in the region’s biggest and most attractive cities.

The Kujawsko-Pomorskie region is unique in the whole of Poland as it is said to provide a double pleasure of sightseeing. As its name indicates it contains two in one. Our region links two distinctive historical and geographical areas, located on both banks of the Vistula - the longest Polish river. Therefore everything is double. Starting from the name of the province itself through its capital cities to monuments of culture and attractions of nature.

Bydgoszcz and Toruń are the most important cities in the region. Located close to one another, they are excellently connected by fast roads, railways and waterways. Together they create a double capital city of the province.
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Bydgoszcz is the seat of the ‘Governor’ (Wojewoda). The city can be visited for business or for pleasure. You can get on with business here and at the same time do inexpensive shopping. The distinctive element is its numerous parks and green areas and the walks along the River Brda provide an unforgettable experience. Picturesque bridges lead to Mill Island (Wyspa Młyńska) and to the area of the so-called Venice of Bydgoszcz. From here, within easy reach, are preserved granaries, a medieval cathedral and art nouveau town houses. A modern opera house nearby reminds us of one more asset of Bydgoszcz - a lively music life.

Toruń is the seat of the regional government. The city is a prestigious university centre and a centre of Gothic architecture. Owing to its monuments, the Old Town, with its Town Hall from the 14th century, town houses and the remaining sections of its walls, it was put on the UNESCO World Heritage List. The outstanding astronomer, Nicolaus Copernicus was born and lived in Toruń. Walking through the market or along the river you can still feel his spirit and from the city’s planetarium his universal energy. Toruń is famous for the production of delicious gingerbread and in many places you can find the aromatic scent of these sweet delicacies, baked according to a 500 year-old recipe.
When you want to learn about the most valuable monuments in Kujawsko-Pomorskie you should see them from two perspectives. On one side there are unique wooden buildings, on the other red brick Gothic architecture. The finest example of a wooden monument is Biskupin, the pre-Slav village known also as the ‘Polish Pompeii’ where a 2700 year-old prehistoric settlement was found with defensive walls, a gate and cottages still excellently preserved. Archaeological festivals are held in Biskupin and many Polish historical films have been made there.

Monuments in brick are the product of the activities of the Teutonic Order in this area, for instance castles and churches. The buildings are mostly located on picturesque hills or along rivers, in small towns they provide the unique medieval character. In their shadow you can rest, admire the light and the slender shapes created by the hands of medieval builders. Inside you can feel the spirit of former times encouraging a historical or religious reflection. The majority of such monuments are located in Toruń and in the Chełmińska district. Golub-Dobrzyń is an example of a well-preserved Teutonic castle. Every year spectacular tournaments are held in which knights from Poland and abroad compete. The cathedral of the Assumption of St. Mary in Chełmno is a famous Gothic church. The relicts of St. Valentine are kept there and therefore the city is considered the capital of those in love. During St. Valentine’s Day the streets of Chełmno are bathed in red and the window displays of shops are full of romantic and interesting gifts.
The landscape of the **Kujawsko-Pomorskie Province** has also had a twofold influence and owes its form to the particular role of two religious orders. The first are the **Teutonic Knights** and the second the **Mennonites**, mysterious and industrious emigrants from the Netherlands who were a characteristic group of Anabaptists. They came to Poland to escape the anti-reformation and religious persecution and found hospitality and tolerance, and therefore they settled here. In the area of Kujawsko-Pomorskie they found their ‘promised land’. For more than two centuries they built anti-flood embankments, ditches, locks, bridges and causeways, windmills and Lutheran churches. They were extraordinary masters of water engineering. Their history is reflected in their works and there are a lot of them. Even today the remains of distinctive Mennonite buildings and cemeteries are preserved along the Vistula Valley from Nowe through Grudziądz, Bydgoszcz and Toruń to Włocławek. In order to admire this outstanding heritage it is worth going to the area of Gruczno near Świecie. This is a great place for explorers of new taste experiences as a **festival of ‘flavour’ is held annually in Gruczno**. You can taste many specialities from the whole region among them excellent honey, wines, preserved pork products and the famous plum jam.

**The Kujawsko-Pomorskie region** is the mecca for those seeking healthy regeneration, physical purification and biological balance. The region can be said to have a double cure at **two renowned health resorts** where clients can use the largest sources of brine in Europe. The first is **Ciechocinek**, the other **Inowroclaw**. The iodine and ozone in the air work as an excellent balm to cure many illnesses. Brine flowing down the wooden structure creates a unique and fresh microclimate, helpful for both people and plants. Green parks around these ‘graduation towers’ demonstrate this. Paths covered with flowers create pleasant scenery for walks and bicycle rides. In both resorts many cultural events are held providing an excellent entertainment for clients. Therefore many famous Polish celebrities are frequent guests in Ciechocinek and Inowroclaw.
When writing about the Kujawsko-Pomorskie region one should not forget about the **two rivers: the Brda and Wda.** They flow through the **picturesque area** of Bory Tucholskie in the north-eastern part of the region, are both rich in fish species, including a delicious trout. The Brda winds between beautiful banks and rapidly runs through thick forests where fallen tree trunks provide many attractions during canoeing rallies. In his youth, **Karol Wojtyła, later Pope John Paul II**, canoed there. The Brda is known for an extremely difficult section known as ‘Hell’ but after passing through it you can reach **Zalew Koronowski**, one of the largest reservoirs in the region. The Wda is calmer, lazily winding among scented fields and woods, better for family tourism, and it finally reaches the Vistula near Świecie. An additional attraction is the chance to meet beavers while it flows through the ‘Rezerwat Krzywe Koło’, a unusual place where it seems as if the river had mistaken its direction creating a strange loop.

**Lovers of active tourism who wish to visit Kujawsko-Pomorskie** will be satisfied twice as much. You can reach the region both by bike and on foot. From the west via Europe’s longest international cycling route *(Euro Route R-1)*, marked with a green bike on a white background with R-1 below. It runs from France, via the Netherlands, Germany and Poland to the border of the Kaliningrad region. In this area it runs via the old seat of the Cistercians - Koronowo, and the Teutonic red brick towns on the Vistula - Świecie and Grudziądz. The section is typically low-lying, calm and beautiful. From the north-west you can reach the region on foot by a part of the Camino de Santiago (Road of St James), a part of a longer route from Olsztyn to Toruń and at the same time coinciding with the international foot path E-11. The route is marked with the characteristic shell of St. James and in this region the route begins in the popular Brodnickie lake district. Then it goes through the picturesque valley of the River Drwęca, through beautiful Brodnica, known as the Gate of Mazury, and Golub-Dobrzyń famous for its medieval tournaments.

You can list many double sightseeing advantages of the region and everybody will find something for body and soul. You will leave the region much richer, healthier and wiser than you could have expected.