

COUNTRY

A territory defined in geographical, cultural and economic terms, less frequently in political terms, distinguished because of some specific features that make up its identity; in political terms, it is sometimes identified with the state.

In geographical terms, the notion refers to a specific geographical location (e.g. Poland is a country between the Bug and the Oder, the Baltic Sea and the Tatras), terrain, climatic conditions. In cultural terms, the word "country" refers to the population of a territory that manages it in its own way through the type of economy used, organisation of space, buildings, use of the environment, cuisine, values, laws and customs, religion including ritual and rite, language, cultural distinctiveness expressed in tradition and folklore, linguistic or dialectal specificity. The term remains semantically close to the following notions: land (e.g. Polish land, foreign land), homeland (when used in relation to one's own country), fatherland (country as a cultural and material heritage), place (understood in terms of residence).

A specific ideology is often built around the notion of "country" which finds expression in patriotic attitudes, sense of identity with a given territory, cultivation of tradition. This ideology is influenced, among others, by the mythology and history of the population living in a given country (including memory and its specific interpretation).

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